

**Social cohesion and the Church: Exploring Racial Integration in a Methodist
Congregation**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that **Social Cohesion and the Church: Exploring Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation** is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

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

(The thesis will not be examined unless this statement has been submitted.)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. M. ...', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval shape.

SIGNATURE

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SUMMARY

Post-apartheid South Africa has identified social cohesion as one of its major programmes. The country continues to struggle with, amongst other challenges, issues of racism. Using the Inter Group Theory, this study aimed to reflect on social cohesion by exploring racial integration on a case study of a former Methodist Church. Interviews were conducted with clergy, lay leaders and ordinary members of the congregation. Each group of participants were asked questions specific to their roles and responsibilities in the church. The research questions were linked to three objectives that sought to establish how the participants experienced racial integration, how they understood its implementation and their view of the Methodist vision of unity. The study used the interpretivism paradigm to investigate racial integration.

Analysis of the responses demonstrated that participants understood and experienced racial integration differently. There is evidence of forms of social relations, dynamics of managing diversity, challenges of whiteness, assimilation and the increase in black presence in a congregation. Results showed that best ways of implementing racial integration hinges more on intentional efforts that related to the appointment of representative leadership, design of transformative education programmes, inclusive worship and a strategic use of language. The Methodist normative vision of unity is based, amongst other things, on the ecclesiastical concept of Connexionalism and the commitment to a "One and Undivided Church."

It is recommended that racially diverse or multiracial churches must articulate their broad visions of unity that shall serve as norms of unity and reconciliation to the local churches. Churches must find ways of translating their commitments to racial integration from the abstract theoretical statements to practical programmes of implementation. The Practical Theology value of this study is to assist congregations on how to facilitate racial integration as part of their identity.

Key Terms

Social Cohesion; Racial Integration; Multiracial Churches; Critical Race Theory; Intergroup Contact Theory; Whiteness, Congregational Studies; Anti-bias; Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope; Methodist Church, One and Undivided Church; Connexionalism; Inclusive Worship; Unity

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DEDICATION

I am a product of a wonderful and loving extended family – an extensive African network of grandparents, uncles, aunts and legion of cousins. My grandfather, Monewang and grandmother, Morwa, are the rock-foundation upon which this family is grounded. This great galaxy of souls has bequeathed to me my identity and invested in me the view of life that I hold. It is to these that I dedicate this study.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BMC	Black Methodist Consultation
CAQDAS	Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church of Southern Africa
DRMC	Dutch Reformed Mission Church
EMMU	Education for Ministry and Mission Unit
ICT	Institute of Contextual Theology
IJR	Institute of Justice and Reconciliation
MCSA	Methodist Church of Southern of Africa
MISTRA	Mapungubwe Institute of Strategic Reflection
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
UDF	United Democratic Front
USA	United States of America
WCC	World Council of Churches
WARC	World Alliance of Reformed Churches

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

1.1. Introduction

This was an empirical study of social cohesion in South Africa looking at the concept of racial integration in the Methodist Church within the field of Practical Theology. As a science, Practical Theology focuses on the needs and experiences of people. The value of empirical research is that it assists in providing "...a critical, methodological verifiable theological theory of today's praxis...Through research, a practical theological theory is empirically tested, and evaluated" (Hermans and Moore 2004:4). This study used the Intergroup Contact Theory of Gordon W Allport to provide a theoretical framework for racial integration. Intergroup Contact Theory is appropriate in that it focuses on how different racial groups of Eden Methodist Church interacted.

This study was set in the broader literature of social cohesion. Amongst the primary challenges facing the democratic South Africa in all its constituent parts – the state, the government and civil society which includes the Church, has been the implementation of social cohesion.

Social cohesion is a very fluid concept that is used differently in literature and in different societies. It is used to describe a desired frame and norms for a particular nation or community. It relates to issues of a nation's social fabric and social change. Green and Janmaat have identified that it is a term that is multifaceted, emotive and ideological 'quasi-concept' that influences social policy (Green and Janmaat 2011:2). They go on to argue that most definitions of social cohesion are more descriptive of the social attitudes and behaviours entered through a social contract in a particular context. Some of these attitudes and behaviours include shared values, sense of identity and belonging, tolerance and respect of others, interpersonal and institutional trust, civic cooperation, active civic participation and law-abiding behaviour (Green and Janmaat 2011:).

Social cohesion is "...the belief – held by citizens in a given nation state – that they share a moral community, which enables them to trust each other" (Larsen 2013: 3). The trust level in society has a serious bearing on where citizens view and regard others. It influences whether others are perceived as untrustworthy, unworthy and underserving or even dangerous or whether they are viewed as trustworthy, worthy

and deserving. It is the perceptions held about others that determine where they are to be placed in the political and socio-economic strata of that particular nation state or even community.

Andreas Feige argues that social cohesion;

... indicates a social, especially affective-emotional binding of people to a social 'construction'. Usually, this construction is a more or less small group, in which one feels voluntarily as a member that is welcome... [where] the positive valence of the described phenomenon refers to the attractiveness of a social construction for individuals, which leads them into further affirmed interactions with other individuals in exactly the same social construction (in Grab and Charbonnier 2014:14).

Focusing on social cohesion in the West, Dragolov and colleagues formulate a definition of social cohesion being "the quality of social cooperation and togetherness of a collective defined in geopolitical terms, expressed in the attitudes and behaviours of its members" (Dragolov et al 2016:1). They go further to centre their definition on the core aspects of; resilient social relations, a positive emotional connectedness of community members, focus on the common good which included solidarity and civic participation.

A team of international scholars, using sub-Saharan Africa as a focus area, established social cohesion in Africa by tracing the history of divisions and attempting to map a cohesive future (Hino et al 2019:1). They acknowledge that social cohesion is a complex concept with many perspectives but argue that at its centre is the understanding of a society that is 'greater than therefore protective of its various parts'. "Such a society allows its individual members and their several smaller communities, of cultural, regional, gendered, or religious belonging to pursue mutually fruitful relationships with confidence" (Hino et al 2019:1). They further argue that social cohesion is founded on three major elements of identity, equality and trust.

Social cohesion in the South African context is impacted on by several factors that are social, political, economic and cultural. This includes "the ethnic diversity of society, actual or perceived racism, political dispensation, inequality and poverty, migration and immigration, and rates of crime and violence" (Wakeford 2013:6). Also linked to

social cohesion are concepts of social justice, social solidarity and social capital formation (Johnston 2014:191).

The researchers at the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA) chose to link the concept social cohesion to that of nation formation together and understood social cohesion as “generally community based and located at a micro-social and sub-national level” while nation building “on the other hand, is nationally oriented and thus located at the macro-social level” (MISTRA 2014:99).

It is Cattle, who in his book *Community Cohesion*, translates the macro concept of social cohesion to micro community level and links it to race and diversity. Developing a programme for community cohesion, he concludes;

Community cohesion, therefore, asserts a new model of multiculturalism, one in which a common vision and sense of belonging is built, with justice and fairness at its heart and where diversity is seen as an enriching and positive experience for all faiths and cultures, including for the majority community. This will depend, to a large extent, upon whether people have created meaningful relationships and mutual respect, as a result of positive interaction, across cultural boundaries (Cattle 2008:172).

The concept of racial integration is in some literature covered under the subject of racial diversity. Racial integration is for Peller; “...a social vision opposed to racism, in each realm in which it manifests itself within consciousness, integration means overcoming prejudice based on skin colour...” (in Crenshaw 1995:129). There is a need for the appreciation and conscious management of diversity as an important ingredient to integration. The point of departure for diversity, argues Walden, is recognising that the world is becoming diverse as people migrate and whilst other institutions of society engage in diversity management and training, the church is always lacking behind. He makes the point; “As a practical theologian within the context of church diversity, I analyse the interactions (including inconsistencies) between beliefs and actions in order to create strategies that can enhance congregations on a horizon of faith “(Walden 2015: xii).

In a highly religious society like South Africa, the Church presents a great opportunity for racial integration. The post-apartheid migration of Black South Africans from rural areas and townships into suburbs and formally white congregations present a

wonderful opportunity for racial intergroup contact. These multiracial congregations “... are important in two specific sociological ways: opportunities for interracial contact and multiracial networks” (Tavares 2011:440). Studying social contact for close interracial adolescent friendships in the US, Tavares concluded that “...increased opportunities for interracial social contact have implications for the racial composition of friendship structures. This reinforces a long-standing line of research in social contact theory that suggests that ‘contact’ has many benefits that have positive consequences for intergroup relations” (Tavares 2011: 450). Writing in the context of the USA, Luke has observed that integrated churches benefit more white people who engage less in stereotyping, have lower levels of social distance and develop progressive racial attitudes than others (Luke 2012:9).

1.2. Background

The system of apartheid, introduced by the National Party in 1948, was built on the unholy fertile ground of the long years of colonialism. The form of colonialism that found expression in South Africa has been called, by the liberation movement, colonialism of a special type which defines the co-existence of the colonising white oppressive group who did not rule the colonised black group from a distant seat of power like London or Paris but within a common geographic space (Wolpe 1990:29; Kolasa 1967:19; Marais 2001:266). Central to the apartheid system was the ideology of racial segregation or “separate development” based on a sense of superiority of the minority white people over the black majority. “Segregation was the name coined in the early twentieth-century South Africa for the set of government policies and social practices which sought to regulate the relationship between white and black, colonisers and colonised” (Beinart and Dubow 1995:1). Apartheid was labelled a system because it had so many complex constituent parts and aspects - political, social, cultural and economic, which were interrelated and designed and governed by different policies and pieces of legislation to entrench this ideology (Ashforth in Olsen and Van Beek 2016: 373).

One of the pillars of apartheid was the Group Areas Act of 1950 which was designed to manage the allocation of residential areas according to different races as classified

in the Population Registration Act. “Towns and cities were to be divided into group areas for the exclusive ownership and occupation of a designated group. People not of the prescribed designated group would be forced to leave and take up residence in the group area set aside for their group” (Christopher 2001: 103). It is the Group Areas Act that created what the government called black spots which were black residential areas which were designated for white occupation (Erb 2009:199; Evans 1997:127; Muiu 2008: 67). This led to the forced removal of black people to black townships or locations and Bantustans where black people were resettled whilst whites remained in the well-resourced and better serviced suburbs (Mtungwa 2008:8).

The Group Areas Act segregated not only residential areas but even the places of worship. Denominations had to build churches for the different racial congregations. Thus, no worshippers could move from their residential areas to worship with other groups in their churches (Spencer 1997:97; DeYoung et al 2003:9; Schaefer 2008:83). In 1981, the newly elected President (now called Presiding Bishop) of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Rev Dr Simon Gqubule likened the Group Areas Act to Nazism except that there were no gas chambers. He challenged the Methodist Church to address the matter of the Group Areas Act within its jurisdiction (Madise 2014).

Apartheid was given a theological justification by the Afrikaner led Dutch Reformed Church. The *Kerkbode*, the official newsletter of the Dutch Reformed Church wrote in 1948; “As a church, we have always worked purposefully for the separation of the races. In this regard apartheid can rightfully be called church policy.” (in Boesak 2005:118) Thus the Church and the State interacted and cooperated in developing the system of apartheid. “Within this theological framework or triangle, the DRC was not only seeking a safe haven, but it was also backed unashamedly by the powers of the state and vice versa” (Cilliers and Nell 2011: 4).

The Dutch Reformed Church was the most divided of the South African Churches with the Black, Coloured, Indian and White strands (Wallis and Hollyday 2005:3; Kuperus 1999: xi). The white DRC was then created into being an enclave – a safe haven for the Afrikaner community. Cilliers and Nell advances the anthropologist Mary Douglas’ explanation of the concept of the enclave; “According to her, an enclave is formed usually by a dissenting minority who develop a social unit in order to maintain strong boundaries” (Cilliers and Nell 2011: 4). Right defines Enclave theology as

a theology based narrowly in a single tradition that seeks not to learn from other traditions and to enrich them, but instead to topple and defeat them, or at least to withstand them... It is not really interested in dialogue but in rectitude and hegemony ... Enclave theology makes itself look good, at least in its own eyes, by making others look bad (in Cummings 2015: 97).

In the enclave, the minority projects itself, out of anxiety and through liturgy, preaching and teaching, as pure and different from the others.

The English-speaking Churches, like the Methodist Church, were themselves not innocent in their racism and racial divisions. Although they did make statements and resolutions against apartheid, they were, as Charles Villa-Vicencio titled his book, *Trapped in apartheid* (1988). "Villa-Vicencio spoke of racism in these churches as 'an all-pervading heresy'" (Boesak 2005:147).

Whereas the apartheid spatial planning patterns remain today, there has been a movement of black people, especially the middle class to formerly white suburbs (Niemonen 2002:190; Saff 1998:66).

This movement of blacks into white suburbs is sometimes presented as a sign of emerging of previously racially divided segments of the middle class into one that is genuinely 'non-racial', enjoying shared lifestyles and interests – a species of the euphoric 'rainbowism' presented by in so many advertisements (Southall 2016:182).

These changes have also affected the former white churches as black people attended because of convenience, to worship with their fellow white believers.

Despite the democratic changes that have taken place, there is evidence that discrimination is still taking place in many congregations including the Methodist Church. Hankela observes;

Exclusionary boundaries also feature in different ways in the broader South African society. The transition to democratic governance has not resulted in an era of collective celebration of difference, 'a rainbow nation'... thus also within churches, the 'rainbow people of God' continue to experience, (re)construct and challenge exclusionary boundaries along racial and other socially constructed lines of difference (Hankela 2016:1).

1.3. Research Question

South Africa may be a post-colonial and post-apartheid nation but is certainly not a post-racial society. Colonialism and apartheid may have been officially dismantled and laws repealed but the challenges of racial prejudice, racism and white supremacy still persist.

This study was motivated by the fact that there has been limited study of racial integration in the Methodist Church since the advent of democracy in 1994. In this reflection on the Glen Methodist Church Bentley concludes;

Admittedly, social integration and true reconciliation in the South African context is still far away. Sitting and waiting for the situation to change will only produce one fruit, namely no change. If the church takes its role of being an instrument of transformation, reconciliation and integration seriously, we would soon have a so-called social revival on our hands. Imagine, 13 million South Africans seriously working towards transformation and racial integration. We cannot but be encouraged by the prospects and possibilities that such a commitment among almost a quarter of the South African population must have on the broader social context (in Smith et al 2014: 145ff).

The year 2018 marked the 60th year of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's statement that the church is 'One and Undivided.' The Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church, Rev Siwa, addressing the 2015 Conference pointed out that the Methodist Church will develop a programme to celebrate the Statement; "The year 2018 marks 60 years since that declaration. So, in 2017, we will launch the focus on unity – reflecting on the impact of that resolution on our life together, culminating into the 2018 Conference. I suggest that we declare the 2018 Conference – 'Obedience 2018' in the Spirit of Obedience 81" (in MCSA: 2015). Part of the challenge that the Methodist Church will face will be to evaluate its ecclesiology against that statement. Despite this declaration, no programme was undertaken to mark this.

The Methodist Church on the other hand has its polity – structures, systems and processes based on the concept of Connexionalism. Connexionalism is about the interconnectedness, interdependence of the different organs

Not only were the Methodists gathered by Mr Wesley into societies, but these societies were united to each other. Mr Wesley called them, 'United societies.' They were not independent of one another, having separate and antagonistic interests. That would have been ruinous to the whole work of God. Congregational independency would have been Christianity in impotency; whereas Methodist Connexionalism was Christianity in resistless power. The various societies were united together in bonds of sympathy and affection and united to Wesley as their common head. He was the head of the family; great centre of unity; key-stone of the arch; the sun of the system (Harwood 1854 :59-60).

The concept of Connexionalism is more than just governance structures that related in a systemic way. At the heart of Connexionalism is the spiritual understanding of covenantal relationship. This theology finds best expression in St Paul's teaching of the church as the Body of Christ with its constituent parts interrelated.

The British Methodist Church is one that has done enough interpretation and advocacy on the concept of Connexionalism. Richey quotes on their Conference Statement: Called to Love and Praise;

Although this principle has not always come to expression in a complete or balanced way in Methodist structures and practice, it enshrines a vital truth about the nature of the Church. It witnesses to a mutuality and interdependence which derive from the participation of all Christians through Christ in the very life of God himself (sic) (in Gibson, Forsaith and Wellings 2013:257).

This study provides insight on how one Methodist Congregation, Eden Methodist Church, has been able to live up to the above Statement and wrestled with racial integration and assists the Methodist Church establish how to successfully manage racial integration. The church will have the opportunity to benchmark itself and draw lessons on what it may need to improve moving forward.

Creating a racially integrated church from a single race or monoculture is a contribution of the church to the project of national unity and reconciliation. The imperative is for the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to demonstrate racial unity as witness. "But witnessing is more than an individualistic endeavour. Just as our personal lives can provide people with a witness of God's might, witnessing is also possible through what

people observe in our Christian institutions” (Yancey 2003:45). “The Church is called a living embodied community of witness to the gift of creating the unity of humankind...” (Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard 2006:84).

The Church of God has the responsibility to model to the world what Martin Luther King, Jr called the beloved community that serves as the earthly manifestation of the Reign or *Kindom* (Kingdom) of God (Benson et al 2012:15; Siebold 2000:91).

In King’s thought, there is no clear distinction between the concept of the beloved community and the actualisation of justice. King’s understanding of the church was, in broad terms, considered a community of persons who demonstrate the form of love toward each other that exhibited the life and practices of Christ. Reconciliation, it would seem, also becomes actualised in this beloved (*agapagos*) community (Hill 2007:82).

The beloved community is a community that marks reconciliation, inclusiveness, the power of love, liberation and human dignity. Thus “Segregation was counter to the reality and actualisation of the beloved community, because it denied the possibility of brotherhood with justice and dignity” (Hill 2007:83).

Racial integration is a form of reconciliation the church of God is also a custodian and advocate of. Boesak argues that throughout his ministry as General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches and as chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Archbishop Tutu championed the concept of reconciliation between black and white (in Boesak and DeYoung 2012: 131). Tutu’s reconciliation is influenced by both the African spirituality of *Ubuntu* and the Christian faith (Tutu and Allen 2013:28). Tutu advocated that;

Apartheid holds that Christ has not in fact broken down the dividing wall of partition that used to divide Jew from Gentile, rich from poor, slave from free. Apartheid denies the unity of the family of God... there is neither black, white, Indian nor Coloured, but a brother, a sister – one family, God’s family, the ‘rainbow people of God (Graybill 2002:30).

Racial integration is, for Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard, about building an inclusive church that is open to all of God’s people. (Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard 2006: 88). This is a counter-cultural church whose inclusivity is founded in the

work of Christ and the freedom of the Holy Spirit. This inclusive nature of God should be reflected in the structures, offices, forms of ministry and practices of the church. The inclusive church, whose other dimension is racial integration, argue Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard, must be seen as ongoing and a challenging process. It is a demanding process and path rather than an assured result and is more than rules and procedures. It is a commitment to live with and alongside those who are not like us. It is a difficult path of unlearning ingrained stereotypes and prejudiced habits of thought, and learning to be open to new voices, experiences, and images of the divine (Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard 2006: 88-89).

At the centre of an inclusive, reconciling, community of the beloved are the two Christian sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist which serve as models of unity. The two sacraments are modelled on the inclusive nature of the God who is, through the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, three persons in one. "Within God there is both unity and diversity: or in other words – unity without uniformity, or – diversity without division" (Sharrock 2012:125).

In an article titled Exploring the Practical Theological Study of Congregations, Schoeman engages in the discipline of congregational studies from a practical theological ecclesiology with emphasis on the description of congregations (2015a). He points out that congregations can be functional or organisational in approach. The functional are those that can be seeker-sensitive, purpose-driven, or small-group based and the organisational is in terms of its structure, procedures, organisation, or decision-making processes (Schoeman 2015a). Whereas the study of congregations and ecclesiology from other theological disciplines can focus on other areas such as the history, the polity and doctrinal perspectives, Practical Theology focuses on a particular parish or congregation and its functioning and local practices. It is in fact about discerning God's praxis in a local community of faith (Schoeman 2015a). Schoeman draws from scholars such as Williams and Brouwer to argue that as practical theological discipline, congregational studies "emphasises the need to develop a 'local theology' to explain the position of the congregation within the culture of the community, referring to integration, the maintenance of stability, and transformation" (Schoeman 2015a). Schoeman further provides Nieman's definition as a broad consensus that; "...congregational studies is the disciplined process of

examining a congregation holistically that uses multiple research methods” (Schoeman 2015a).

The Church of Christ, including the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, has the moral imperative to cooperate with other sectors of society in contributing to the racial transformation and social cohesion in the South African nation. The Church has however not taken the task to the level it is supposed to. Bentley observes that after the fall of Apartheid the Methodist Church “committed to social change, like that of several denomination, was filled with good intentions but struggled to deliver” (Bentley 2014). The Church fell into the trap of believing that the democracy that was ushered through the elections of 1994 plus the subsequent change in many Apartheid legislations and the establishment of many democratic institutions were adequate in transforming society. Bentley draws from Peter Storey who argues that part of the reason of the church missing in action is that “...church leaders whose theological clarity had been forged in the head and burden of the struggle were plain weary” (Bentley 2014).

Pillay argues that “... the church has to lead the way, in conjunction with others, so that all may have the fullness of life in the context of racial harmony, economic justice, peace and inclusivity” (Pillay 2017).

Racially integrated churches are more than just a matter of demographics or bringing different racial groups together for political or ecclesiastical correctness. Garces-Foley points out that numerical diversity is a starting point but not the goal (2007:82). The qualitative aspect of a successful racially integrated church is an inclusive diverse community (Garces-Foley 2007: 82). This integrated community should be evident in the congregational leadership, structures, worship and mission. The South African church has however not intentionally taken up the issue of racial diversity to the level that it should be.

The research question that this study sought to answer is: **How does racial integration in a Methodist Church contribute towards social cohesion?**

The three objectives of the research were to:

- a. Assess the congregation’s understanding and experience of racial integration.

- b. Establish how their understanding of racial integration was implemented in their congregational life.
- c. Establish how this understanding is aligned to the Methodist vision of unity and social cohesion

The issue of race relations is a complex concept with several interpretations and layered meanings. The first objective therefore seeks to establish how the congregation understands the dynamics and variables that make racial integration. The second objective is intended to see what actual practices are carried out in the implementation of the of racial integration against their own understanding. The Methodist Church's polity of Connexionalism is about the connectedness of its different structures from society (local parish), circuits and the entire denomination. The study sought to establish if the notion of racial integration finds expression in the structures (Leaders' Meeting, Stewardship and Leadership of Mission Groups), worship, small groups and even where there are fellowship opportunities. The third objective sought, therefore, to establish how this congregational practice is aligned to Methodist vision, mission, and structures in relation to social cohesion in general and racial integration in particular.

1.4. The Rationale of the Study

The challenge in post-apartheid South Africa is that there is very little research that has been done on racial integration in the Church in general and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in particular. Hankela makes this point; "Yet, to date there has been little empirical work done in the context of local congregations on diversity and social divisions, even from the perspective of race only a few studies have been undertaken in such contexts" (Hankela 2016:2).

The South African Reconciliation barometer of the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation has since 2003 provided a researched measure of the populace's attitudes to national reconciliation, nation building, social cohesion and transformation. The 2019 barometer points out that; "In a nutshell, South Africans want reconciliation, and they want unity. But the country has a long way to go in addressing the many

limiting factors that would – if addressed – help facilitate reconciliation, social cohesion and unity processes” (Potgieter 2019:9).

Hesselmans considers South Africa to be a “post-apartheid but not post-race society”. He points out how racial categories have been used depending on what people wanted to achieve at particular points.

South Africa today then displays a schizophrenic image when it comes to issues of race. On the one hand, it touts a democratic triumph over apartheid and pride in a constitution based on non-racialism... Simultaneously, the country continues to embrace the former regime’s despised group categories. Scepticism regarding the post-apartheid transition into a so-called rainbow nation has mounted in recent years. The very term reconciliation now holds for South Africans across the population groups a negative association with failed justice and increasing chaos rather than the stability people had hoped for... (Hesselmans 2018:55).

1.5. Contribution to Practical Theology

This study is located within the field of Practical Theology which is

...a dynamic process of reflective, critical inquiry into the praxis of the church in the world and God’s purposes for humanity, carried out in the light of Christian Scripture and tradition, and in critical dialogue other sources of knowledge. As a theological discipline its primary purpose is to ensure that the church’s public proclamations and praxis in the world faithfully reflect the nature and purpose of God... (Anderson 2001:22).

Practical Theology must further be understood as what Schleiermacher calls, the theory of praxis (Immink 2005:3). This understanding is that Practical Theology is interested in the local real context of the believers. It does not impose abstract theology that is developed somewhere. Praxis is what holds a creative and dialectical tension between practice and theory through reflective analysis. Macallan, drawing from Bevans that praxis is “reflected-upon action and acted-upon reflection” (Macallan

2014:107) or “Practice illustrates theory and theory explains practice” (Watkins 2013:27). This becomes a continuous spiral or loop (Root 2007:20).

The contribution of this study to the discipline of Practical Theology is to add to the sub-field of congregational studies, with focus on congregational identity. Racial integration contributes to the identity of a congregation. It is important for the congregation to know who they are (Nel 2009). Congregational identity is organically linked to the missional identity of the congregation. Schoeman argues that the congregation as a social entity also could shape the identity of its members. “In the formation of an identity, social groups play a significant role and, for the same reason, a congregation should play a notable role in the formation of its members’ religious identity” (Schoeman 2015). A racially integrating congregation could build members who are anti-racist in outlook thus contributing to social cohesion.

Congregational identities are influenced by both their denominational and local ecclesiologies (Nel 2009). The denominational ecclesiology is the doctrines, the traditions and practices that a denomination has developed over a course of time. The local ecclesiology is regarding the congregation’s immediate social, cultural and socio-political context and its response to that context. It is about the internal practices and external ministry dispositions of a particular congregation. Those practices and dispositions can influence the community in which a particular congregation is located. At a national level those practices can contribute to a national discourse.

Naidoo points out the importance of inclusive congregational identity in a racialised society such as South Africa. Advocating for the importance of leadership in this congregational identity she argues;

Providing leadership involves providing safe spaces to have discussions about the relationship between faith, culture and race and the congregation’s current practice. It involves envisioning what a congregation might become and seeing the connections between present reality and a vision for the future. To sustain inclusiveness as a core belief, congregational leadership needs to make the emphasis at every turn in teaching and practices so that it becomes a lived reality for all members (Naidoo 2019).

1.6. Definitions

Although there are many definitions that are used in literature and practice on the concepts this study is engaging, the following serve as working definitions.

1.6.1. Race

Morning defines race as "...a system for classifying human beings that is grounded in the belief that they embody inherited and biological characteristics that identify them as members of racial groups" (Morning 2011:21). Race is therefore a social and not biological construct.

The concept of Black is used here according to the Broad-Based Economic Empowerment Act No 53 of 2003 which includes Africans, Coloureds and Indians. This is the concept that was used by the liberation movement from the time of the struggle against apartheid.

1.6.2. Racism

The preferred definition of racism is; "prejudice plus the power of systems and institutions" (Barndt 2011:116). Short as it may appear, this definition recognises that individuals or groups may have racial prejudices against others, but racism is more than just bias. Racism is fed and sustained by systems, structures, policies and institutions that provide the prejudicial individual and group power to oppress others.

Barndt goes further to explain that;

Institutional racism takes place when an institution is shaped and structured in a way that it effectively serves and is accountable to only one racial group. While at the same time, it does not effectively serve nor is accountable to other groups (Barndt 2011:116).

1.6.3. Racial integration

Although used in the context of schools in South Africa, the South African Human Rights Commission's definition of racial integration has substance. It is understood to "mean fundamental changes not only in personal attitudes of learners and educators but also in the institutional arrangement, policies, ethos of the school..." (Vally and Dalamba 1999:24). The same goes for racial integration in the church. It has to do with the attitudes of members and leaders and all the ecclesiastical structures. Integration here is more than the mechanical process of bringing people of diverse groups together.

1.6.4. Social cohesion

Social cohesion is about the transformation of society for a common vision of unity and cooperation for the common good.

Social cohesion refers to the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion (Green and Janmaat 2011:18).

1.7. Methodological Framework

The research methodology provides the researcher with a framework or road map that they can use to make choices to guide the project. The methodological framework has interpretivism as its paradigm; the qualitative as the approach; the case study method and uses Osmer's Four Tasks as its practical theology focus.

This study subscribes to the interpretivism paradigm as an outlook to investigate the phenomenon of racial integration. Interpretivism is a subjective epistemology whose ontological belief is socially constructed realities and recognises that observers are "contaminated by their worldviews, concepts, backgrounds" (Rehman and Alharthi 2016). It is a way through which the researcher interprets the world through the perspective of the research participants (Bonache and Festing 2020)

The research approach that has been used is the qualitative research method which uses words and not numbers as data (Braun and Clarke 2013: 4). The qualitative research is more about understanding and meaning people make of their contexts and lived experiences (Merriam and Tisdell 2016:15). It sought to generate from the local meanings of the identified congregation's context "narrow but rich data" that has thick descriptions with emerging patterns and interpretation whilst being aware of differences and divergence (Merriam and Tisdell 2016:4). It recognises that whatever questions are asked, and answers provided are not the absolute reality or truth.

Herman and Schoeman advise that research strategies and design must be chosen based on the research goal, the research question and the specific type of knowledge to be developed. The qualitative approach assists with deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied, which is in this case racial integration. Unlike the quantitative approach which assists with generalisation through large samples and external validity, the qualitative chooses small samples and labour-intensive processes of data collection like interviews or observation, and data analysis (Hermans and Schoeman 2015).

The case study was chosen as a method because it provides an opportunity to give special attention to observation, reconstruction and analysis of a particular case that is being studied. It "strives to highlight the features or attributes of a social life" (Hamel et al 1993:2). Yin goes on to point out that the case study method "...allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events..." (Yin 2003:2).

Like all methods, the case studies have advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include the fact that case studies are strong, recognise complexity; 'embeddedness' of social truth; are a step to action; have real-life applications, allow examination of complex interrelationships; can reveal unexpected insights; can be scaled to suit the side of the study (Basse 1999:23; Cottrell 2014:163).

The disadvantages include that the case study method is only appropriate as an exploratory phase (Yin 2003:3); it is difficult to demonstrate the reliability of results (Naumes and Naumes 2006: 64); may not be representative of what happens in general and judgements about what is significant are subjective (Cottrell 2014: 163).

It is important to note that generalisations in the findings of this study may not be universal but may be found only in some congregations. Case studies are never designed to produce scientific generalisations (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000:98). Patton points out that the best that can be done with case studies is to extrapolate rather than generalise (in Boeije 2010:180). Schofield supports that the goal of case studies is not to produce a standardised set of results (in Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000:71). Parker makes the same point that case studies provide narrative descriptions where inferences can be made about other situations (in Pivec 2006:122).

The power of a case study lies in its attention to the local situation and not how it represents other cases in general (Chiam 2018:58). It provides “a highly valid account of the one ‘case’” (Best 2012: 98). The case study generates rather than tests hypotheses. The hypotheses can be evaluated through other studies (Adams et al 2007:112). Generalisation, on the other hand refers to the extent to which the results of one case study can be extended to be valid in other situations. (Veenman 2008 :44). (Stake 1978 page number?) identifies naturalistic generalisation as one of the categories that is developed by a person from experience. Hill and Millar posit that the researcher must provide other narrative information the reader may be familiar with and have personal account with so they can detect researcher bias. (in Saracho 2015:537). On the other hand, analytic generalisation takes place in a multi-case study where the findings of one case study is assessed to fit with other cases and with patterns from other research or theory (Shaw and Holland 2014 :89; Beard 2008 :160). Thus, it should be noted that generalisation will not be everywhere but may be found in some congregations.

One of the leading scholars of Practical Theology, Rick Osmer, has identified four interconnected tasks of the discipline that are engaged in a hermeneutical circle (Hermans and Schoeman 2015). These are;

- Descriptive-empirical: What is going on? Gathering information to better understand particular episodes, situations, or contexts.
- Interpretive: Why is this going on? Entering into a dialogue with the social sciences to interpret and explain why certain actions and patterns are taking place.

- Normative: What ought to be going on? Raising normative questions from the perspectives of theology, ethics and other fields.
- Pragmatic: How might we respond? Forming an action plan and undertaking specific responses that seek to shape the episode, situation, or context in desirable directions.

Whereas the pastoral and ecclesial leadership may be reflective practitioners of a particular praxis, Practical Theology scholars bring into this critical thinking, knowledge production through research to be tested by the epistemic community and then teaching of the newly produced scientific knowledge (Hermans and Schoeman 2015). The scope of Practical Theology has since widened from just studying what the clergy were doing in the Church context to what all believers could be doing in the church and in the public domain.

This study only used Osmer's first three tasks of the descriptive-empirical, the interpretive and the normative. It reflected on the Methodist Church's vision of unity as a norm. It observed, through the theoretical lens, what is taking place in regard with racial integration within the structures and practices Eden Methodist Church, especially in relation to the statement of a "one and undivided church." It interpreted by establishing from this congregation, the rationale of what is happening. It further sought to establish what the normative standards can be.

1.8. Theoretical Framework

This study used the Intergroup Contact Theory advanced by Allport in his classic book: *The Nature of Prejudice* published in 1954.

The basic premise of the contact hypothesis is that contact between individuals who belong to different groups can foster the development of more positive out-group attitudes (Vezzali and Stathi 2017:1). Conversely lack of exposure to outgroup members leads to negative attitudes or what Allport calls the fear of the strange (Levy and Hughes 2010:31).

Contact theory has been used in different contexts including that of racial integration. Different scholars have reflected on the success and failures of the intergroup contact

theory. Allport is very clear that contact on its own is not adequate. The success of the intergroup contact theory is best implemented in certain “optimal” conditions. These conditions included equal status, interactions, the pursuit of superordinate common goals, support by institutional authority figures and norms (Vezzali and Stathi 2017:1 Stephan and Stephan 2001:20; Tavares 2011:440); Pettigrew 1998:66).

1.8.1. Sampling

This is a case study of Eden Methodist Church which is a former white congregation in one of the suburbs of Gauteng. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the various categories of participants for the different valuable information they were to provide. Three sets of research questions were set for the clergy, lay leaders and general members. Purposive sampling is used because these participants would fit the profile needed. “Perhaps the most intuitive way to think of purposive sampling is that you choose study participants based on the purpose of their involvement in the study” (Guest, Namey and Mitchel 2013:48). It targets individuals who have information and are knowledgeable about the issues being researched (Check and Schutt 2012:104; Daniel 2012:87; Padgett 2012:73)

The sample for the interviews were 15 participants comprising of three clergy (former and current); 5 lay leadership [stewards], 7 members who were involved in mission groups and would thus provide comprehensive information. Two of the clergy were the previous white ministers who provided essential information on the state of the church before the migration of blacks into East Rand and the impact of commitment to a multiracial congregation reflective of a new South Africa. The succeeding black minister provided information on the current life of the congregation and the racial dynamics that manifest there. Clergy were chosen because of the influence in leading and directing the Church. The three ministers – two white and one black were the only ones who served the congregation since its establishment in 1994. The relative few numbers of whites are because of the white flight that took place over the history of the church.

The three stewards were of different races and preferably knowledgeable of the history of the church over a period. Methodist stewards serve as “senior” lay leaders of a

congregation. Their duties are both administrative and pastoral. They provide support to small groups and provide lay oversight over the business of the congregation (MCSA 2016).

1.8.2. Data Collection

In-depth interviews were employed as methods of data collection. There were 15 interviewees – including clergy, stewards and members. Interviewing was chosen because it is a form of enquiry and knowing by listening to the stories and experiences of the participants. “Telling stories is essentially a meaning-making process. When people tell their stories, they select details of their experience from their stream of consciousness...” (Seidman 2006:8).

Furthermore, interviews were chosen because they create a safe space where interviewees can talk openly about their experiences of a sensitive topic such as racial integration (Edwards and Holland 2013:77). “The aim of the interview, as with any qualitative research data collection tool is, it to explore the ‘insider perspective’. To capture, participants’ own words, their thoughts, perceptions, feelings and experiences” (Holloway 2005:39).

Interviews are even relevant because they have the power to address matters that can be as complex and emotive as racial integration and social cohesion. They have power in that they can;

...examine the context of thought, feeling, and action and can be a way of exploring relationships between different aspects of a situation. Interviewing is a powerful way of helping people to make explicit things that have hitherto been implicit – to articulate their tacit perceptions, feelings and understanding. (Arksey and Knight 1999 :32).

1.8.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis is where the mined data was converted into information that responded to the identified research question. This study analysed data through the open coding which is a process of;

...segmenting of data into relevant categories and the naming of these categories with codes while simultaneously generating the categories from the data. In the reassembling phase the categories are related to one another to generate theoretical understanding of the social phenomenon under study in terms of the search questions (Boeije 2010:77).

Categories or themes are concepts or ideas that stand for a phenomenon. As many categories as possible were generated to allow openness to whatever emerged out of the data (Neergaard and Ulhoi 2007:137). This task started with taking the large volume of data that has been collected and then processed through a standard analytic procedures to the point that it is "...clear, understandable, insightful, trustworthy and even original analysis" (Gibbs 2007:1).

The ATLAS.TI which is part of the Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), has been used to enhance the analysis of the data.

By using ATLAS.TI, it becomes much easier to analyse data systematically and to ask questions that you otherwise would not ask because the manual tasks involved would be too time consuming. Even large volumes of data and those of different media types can be structured and integrated very quickly with the aid of software (Friese 2014:1).

Although computer aided programmes are good tools for analysis, the researcher also has responsibility of quality assurance. This point is made clearer by Gibbs;

However, in much the same way as a word processor will not write meaningful text for you, but makes the process of writing and editing a lot easier, using CAQDAS can make qualitative analysis easier, more accurate, more reliable and more transparent, but the programme will never do the reading and thinking for you. CAQDAS has a range of tools for producing reports and summaries, but the interpretation of these is down to you, the researcher (Gibbs 2007:106).

1.9. The Role of the Researcher

Whatever approach to the research study, any research disrupts the space of the participants who must now give of their time and other resources. Thus, the researcher

needs to be aware of their role as an “instrument or tool” in the whole process of the research and develop ways that are going to ensure that the research goes smoothly. These ways include issues of entry, rapport, reciprocity and personal biography (Marshall and Rossman 2011: 112ff).

The issue of race is extremely sensitive in the world generally but more so in South Africa with its history of racial tension and segregation. It has been very pertinent for the researcher to be transparent and build and maintain trust right through the process of the interview until they exited (Salkind 2010: 1160).

I am the member of the Black Methodist Consultation (BMC) which is a formation within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. The BMC, which I have served in three terms as its chair, was established to address racism in the Church and empower black people to stand for their rights. Noting that this particular study is taking the contextual approach, which is subjective in nature, it has been very important for the researcher to be conscious of the fact that he does not come neutral into the research. King and Horrocks advise that the researcher rather than remaining neutral, must declare the perspectives that influence their interpretation of the work (Salkind 2010: 1160).

The researcher has been aware of his own preconceived ideas, biases and positions. The issue of subjectivity and objectivity in research in general and in social sciences in particular, is very important. Objectivity relates with the values and methods that the researchers bring to ensure that the results of the study are not skewed to personal preferences or bias (Cottrell 2014:92). Douglas points out that values have a direct and indirect role in research. “Keeping values to their proper roles requires some detachment, or disinterestedness, a traditional aspect of objectivity” (Douglas in Jarvie and Zamora-Bonilla 2011:525).

So, the researcher in this study has ensured that the study relies fully on the collected data from the participants. The importance of objective evidence from different independent sources is made “... when different evidential sources, not of which is causally dependent on the others, point toward the same hypothesis, our confidence in the objectivity... is substantially increased” (Douglas in Jarvie and Zamora-Bonilla 2011:525).

1.10. Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations are important in research in general but more so in qualitative research that includes human subjects. Ethics is about the moral behaviour of the researcher in protecting people in a research project. Although ethics covers the entire design of the research project, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, are the most important areas of concern.

... informed consent is important for promoting trust between subjects and investigators, because it helps to assure subjects that investigators will treat them with respect and protect them from harm...The consent form provides a written record of this agreement, but the process of consent includes much more than reading signing a form and encompasses... To help solidify trust, investigators should communicate honestly and openly with subjects during the consent process (Resnik 2018 :113).

The first point of entry into the community of the participants was after receiving a letter from Leaders Meeting of the Eden Methodist congregation, signed by the Circuit Superintendent, giving permission to the researcher to interview the participants (See Appendix 1). The researcher furthermore requested for the commitment of the participants by providing them with a consent letter to sign (See Appendix 2). Respondents were voluntary and were allowed to withdraw at any given time without any negative repercussion.

Consent included commitment to confidentiality and anonymity in which the names of the congregation and the participants were not to be revealed unless they consciously chose otherwise. In research “the duty of confidentiality is taken to mean that identifiable information about individuals collected during the process of research will not be disclosed” (Wiles 2013:7). Anonymity was applied by using pseudonyms for the participants, changing the name of the congregation and locations or any other way that ensured that the real identities of the study were not revealed.

The researcher applied for ethical clearance to the College of Human Sciences. Universities have Research Ethics Committee (REC) or equivalents thereof whose main function is to ensure that researchers take seriously ethical and moral considerations when undertaking a study.

The REC is the conscience of the scientific research community, and the protector of human research participants. Its primary role is to safeguard the dignity, rights, safety and wellbeing of all actual and potential human subjects withing the research enterprise in general (Kithinji and Ikingura in Kruger et al 2014:26).

1.11. Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction and background

In this section the study was introduced with the concept of racial integration being the centre. The chapter provides a background that speaks from traces the system of apartheid focusing in particular on its pillar of the Group Areas Act of 1950 which designed the Apartheid Spatial Planning that created Bantustan, black spots and townships. The impact of this spatial planning on the church led to churches divided on racial lines.

The chapter further traced the role of the churches – the Dutch Reformed Church provided an enclave and safe haven for the Afrikaner Community. It provided the theological rationale for Apartheid. The chapter also points to the English-speaking churches that actively issued resolutions and statements condemning apartheid.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review explored issues pertinent to understanding the study's central theme of social cohesion. Fundamental to these issues is the concepts of race and racism whose meaning in the world in general and in South Africa, in particular.

The chapter further analyses a number of concepts like multiracialism and diversity management, multiculturalism, non-racialism and anti-racism. The race-related philosophies of Black Consciousness and Black Theology as responses to racism are also explored.

The chapter also focuses on literature that relates to the main concept of racial integration. Finally, the dynamics of race and culture – multi-cultural, cross-cultural and inter-cultural are considered with the intention of determining how they related to social cohesion in general and racial integration in particular.

Chapter 3 Fieldwork

This chapter established how data was collected using the interview option from a sample that included clergy, lay leaders and congregants. The chapter describes the data analysis process that was undertaken using the ATLAS.TI software which assisted in developing codes that were categorised into five themes.

The chapter then went into an extensive mining of quotes to strengthen the five themes of: the congregation's understanding and lived experience of racial integration, the intentional efforts of leadership in facilitating racial integration, the impact that the leaders and congregants felt about racial integration, the challenges of racial integration and the identified indicators of racial integration.

Chapter 4: Discussion

This chapter focused on the findings of the research. It started by reminding what was set out to be done. The chapter, as in the previous chapter used the three research questions as the framework. This was integrated with the themes that have been generated. The theory of Group Contact is integrated into the findings to establish its appropriateness.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This final chapter provides take-aways – which will be a few hypotheses from the study. It further provides to the Church in general and the Methodist Church in particular recommendations that can assist with racial integration in the future. It goes on to provide the limitations relating to the different elements of the study. The chapter then identifies potential future research projects that the church can undertake to embellish the findings of this particular research study. It ends with summative conclusions.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This was an empirical study of social cohesion in South Africa looking at the concept of racial integration in the Methodist Church within the field of Practical Theology. A literature review is a systematic exploration and examination that a researcher undertakes on the topic they are studying. “It critically analyses, evaluates, and synthesises research findings, theories, and practices by scholars and researcher that are related to an area of focus” (Efron and Ravid 2019 :3). It is an extensive reference related to the research and connecting the textual sources with the researcher’s position. It is like a dialogue with established researchers on the topic and a process with activities that can also assist in the formulation of research questions (Ridley 2012:2-3). It is “a written argument that promotes a thesis position by building a case from credible evidence based on previous research” (Machi and McEvoy 2012:3).

This chapter focused on four broad categories of literature that relates to the study, starting from the general theoretical concepts to the specific context of the Methodist Church. The first category focuses on social cohesion as the main and overall concept on which the study is based. The second focus area is on the theoretical level of race as an integral ingredient and contributing factor to social cohesion. It addresses the areas of Critical Race Theory, racism and racial integration with sub-focused headings on multiracialism and diversity management; multiculturalism; non-racialism; anti-racism and Black Theology, Black Power and Black Consciousness. To move from the general to the specific, the third focus area narrows the literature to the Church and theology with special focus on: the Church Struggle against apartheid; the enclave theology; Multi-cultural, Cross-cultural and Inter-Cultural Churches; The Methodist Church and racial integration.

2.2. Social cohesion in South Africa

Although social cohesion as an outcome is a desire of many nations of the world, it is more so in South Africa because of its history of colonialism and apartheid and the deep divisions that went with all that. Whereas 1994 ushered a period of the

democratic rule and legislative transformation, the legacy of apartheid remains intact in the residues that are evident today.

The ideal of social cohesion in South Africa finds expression within the vision of the South African struggle as articulated and executed by those in the Congress tradition and the Mass Democratic Movement. This vision is stated as: a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa (Motshekga in Plaatjies 2013:46; Kotze 2018:23; Nduka-Eze 2012: 2018; Frankental and Sichone 2005:205).

This vision recognises the importance of living together rather than apart. It advocates for the unity of South Africa. "... the unity of all South Africans is seen as a *sine qua non* for the creation of a South African nation. At the core of this is an imagined community which is the South African nation." (MISTRA 2014:59)

This nation building, which closely anchors the notion of social cohesion has, according to the National Development Commission, as its aim

... to use the Constitution as a foundation for the building of a new identity through a common citizenship and equal rights and the avoidance of ethnically defined federalism. The Constitution's shared values and visions of a prosperous, non-racial society not only provides a common identity but 'a common destiny (in Johnston 2014: 194).

The Commission further advocates that South Africans should be able to, say by 2030; "We are a community of multiple, overlapping identities, cosmopolitan in our nationhood. Our multiculturalism is a defining element of our indigeneity" (in Johnston 2014:194).

Scholars have observed that social cohesion on its own is not adequate unless linked to a positive and constructive outcome. This is important because there could be situations where groups or nations are cohesive for a wrong purpose. Palmary makes an example of mafias or white groups linked to the Anglo Boer War who united for the wrong national outcomes. On the other hand, social cohesion can be for a positive outcome such as nation building. Reflecting on the Department of Arts and Culture's Strategy on Social cohesion and Nation Building, Palmary writes;

In contrast the problem statement that forms the basis for the social cohesion and nation building strategy states that: "The challenge, therefore, is to enhance

social cohesion and foster the development of a shared South African identity which incorporates diversity in a democratic dispensation. This relates directly to the translation of the rights and responsibilities of both the State and its citizens into social reality (Palmary 2015).

The Department of Arts and Culture, which is the custodian of the project of social cohesion and National Building in South Africa, defines social cohesion as "...the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities" (DAC 2015). Katie Day identifies the "common good" as essential to social cohesion. "The common good implies common-ness, cohesion, connectiveness" (in Kim2017:216).

The Poverty and Inequality Initiative, together with other partners such as the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and the University of Cape Town, in a policy brief titled; Defining and Measuring Social cohesion in South Africa, have developed a working definition of social cohesion as; "Social cohesion is the extent to which people are cooperative, within and across group boundaries, without coercion or purely self-interested motivation" (OECD 2018). These partners went further, through research to identify four systemic and structural areas in which South Africans perceived the divisions to be manifesting themselves. These areas are 1. Economics: money, class, unemployment, poverty, hunger, the gap between the rich and the poor; 2. Politics: patronage, exclusion and empty promises; 3. Race: Racism and discrimination; 4. Culture: tribalism, customs and religious rites and language. (Poverty and Inequality Initiative) Whereas Social cohesion is as broad as defined and articulated above, the focus of this research is on racial integration and the contribution of the church to that.

The partners went on to develop what they call the social cohesion Index based on five dimensions of social cohesion. The five are,

- **Inclusion:** Refers primarily to access and participation in economic and social life and includes quality of life indicators.
- **Belonging:** Refers to identity, shared norms and values, and feelings of acceptance and belonging in society

- **Social Relationship:** Refers to social networks, trust, and the acceptance and value placed on diversity in society
- **Participation:** Refers to active involvement in political life
- **Legitimacy:** Refers to trust in institutions and feelings of representation

If the Church were to use this index, it would have to ask itself how much inclusion, belonging, social relationship, participation and legitimacy finds expression within its life. This could be at the macro, meso and micro levels of the structures of the church.

In the report he edited for the Gauteng City-Region Observatory, Ballard articulates through a diagram, a vicious cycle of wicked problems that are so contextual to South Africa. The cycle starts with social problems that include denials of privilege, active exclusion, disguised prejudice, exploitation, systemic exclusion, expressed prejudice and violence. He goes on to identify some of the causes that lead to the problems. These include unresolved trauma, spatial separation, crime and corruption, race-thinking, impunity, norms and beliefs and instrumental use of prejudice. These causes instead lead to such effects as; stifled economic growth, death and injury, idea of social divides reinforced, trauma, antisocial behaviour normalised, internalised oppression and social disconnection (Ballard 2019: 22).

There are a number of terms that relate to each other that are important in the relationship between the vision of an inclusive and cohesive society. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), identified the following interrelated terminology.

- **Social Integration:** Is a dynamic process in which societies promote values, relations and institutions that enable all people to participate in social, economic, cultural and political life based on equality of rights, equity and dignity.
- **Social Inclusion:** Is a multi-dimensional process of ensuring opportunities for all people regardless of their background.
- **Social Exclusion:** Is a process that put barriers that exclude people based on their social identities such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture or language.

- **Social Cohesion:** Is about elements that bring and hold together people in a society. It is about creating space for belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy.
- **Social Participation.** Is an act allowing access to decision making processes. It creates mutual trust which forms the basis for shared responsibilities towards community and society.

Focusing on Social Cohesion in the Gauteng Province of South Africa, Ballard presents a report of the Gauteng City-Region Observatory, which is a partnership of the Gauteng Provincial Government with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), Wits University and University of Johannesburg, identified other social concepts that form dimensions of social cohesion (Ballard 2019)

- **Common Values and Civic Culture:** This relates to the minimum common values and civic culture that the nation must promote. It is important for it to go beyond nation building whose focus is about the South African-ness that tend to exclude Foreign Nationals living in South Africa.
- **Social Order and Social Control:** Refers to the day-to-day absence of conflict and more harmony through tolerance amongst different social groups. This should not about the suppress dissent, contestations different perspectives through debate.
- **Social Solidarity and Reduced Inequality:** Is about the equal economic opportunities and harmonious development through distribution of wealth and just sharing and other transformative interventions.
- **Social Networks and Social Capital:** These are such social relations as family and community that support and sustain people. It however stretches beyond the immediate family and local communities.
- **Territorial Belonging and Identity:** The link between place and identity is very strong in the social cohesion discourse. This makes people invest in the place and identity groups to which they belong. People must still learn to transcend the confines of their narrow spaces and commit to wider society.

Religion in general and Christian churches, in particular have an important role to play in the intersection of intergroup contact and social cohesion. Cloete adds to this mix

an essential element of social capital which is about. The community nature of churches allows for contact through fellowship. Thus, Cloete asserts,

Joining congregations is not merely an act of finding spiritual meaning, but also provides a social context where people meet and form social networks conducive to social capital formation... This togetherness is likely to enhance the possibility that members will internalise the norms of the group and share in activities with other members (bonding social capital) and most congregations have opportunities for members to reach out to people outside their religious groups (Cloete 2006).

The challenge with the South African Government's Strategy on Social cohesion which links this to Nation Building is when it contradicts the preamble of the South African Constitution which ... and emphasises citizenship. Again, Palmary argues,

What is intriguing in this segment of the vision of the strategy is that it moves from a constitutional reference to everyone living in South Africa to a need for unity in citizenship. This move is evident throughout the policy which shifts from statements about justice and equity to citizenship taking for granted that these are connected. Thus, whilst there are moments where the document addresses South Africa as a geographical space, there is also a constant reference to citizens as the ones that need cohesion (Palmary 2015).

The weakness of this is that it deliberately or ignorantly fails to recognise the presence Foreign Nationals who, as per the constitution, live in South Africa. Failure to recognise Foreign Nationals will also lead to an emphasis on racial integration between black and white South Africans. This expression may find itself even in our churches where these Foreign Nationals also worship.

There has now been a call for society to move from the notion of citizenship which is narrow in character to global and cultural citizenship. This is a citizenship that transcends the sovereignty of individual states to "formations of transnational identities with their own rights, responsibilities, loyalties and values that cut across the territorial boundaries of states." (Chidester et al 2003:299)

Scholars have identified social capital as an important resource for social cohesion. Chidester, Dexter and James appropriate social capital at government, business, labour and community levels. At the community level, they argue,

For a community, social capital is a kind of social kinship. In ethnographic literature, the term, 'fictive kinship', been used for relations outside of the family that work just like family relations. In a local community, social capital, as a kind of 'fictive kinship', is accumulated in and through social networks, informed by trust, sympathy and mutual obligation, which enable people to act together in advancing common interests (Chidester et al 2003: 330).

It is this understanding of 'fictive kinship' that the Church of Christ is expected to develop. Christian fellowship is about congregations developing family relations beyond blood relations. The diverse community that makes multiracial and multicultural congregations therefore has the responsibility to integrate all races and cultural groups that worship in their midst.

The churches in South Africa, which according to Kumalo form 74% of the total population of the country in 43 000 congregations, has a role to play in the development of social cohesion (Kumalo in Wilhelm and Charbonnier 2014:61). Linking Social cohesion with social development, Kumalo argues,

The solution is the new vision for the church to enable its people to re-invent form of identity, belonging social cohesion and participation...Only then will we be able to see the dream of a new world order which will come through social cohesion and social development will become a reality in the continent of Africa (Kumalo in Wilhelm and Charbonnier 2014:7).

2.3. Critical Race Theory, Racism and Racial integration

Critical Race Theory is an academic and social scientific concept that was developed in the 1970s by a movement of radical scholars and activists like Derrick Bell, Kimberly Crenshaw, James Freeman Richard Delgado and others to analyse the concept of race and racism (Delgado and Stefancic 2012:4). Bradely uses Taylor's definition of Critical Race Theory as; "a form of oppositional scholarship, CRT challenges the

experience of whites as the normative standard and grounds its conceptual framework in the distinctive experiences of people of colour” (in Farmer and Farmer 2020: 128).

At the core of Critical Race Theory is the argument that race is a social construct than a biological reality and that racism is more than just a matter of racial prejudice or bias. Advocates of Critical Race Theory goes beyond the reduction of race relations and racial integration to mediating between individuals and amongst groups. They locate the theory and studies within such disciplines as history, economics, sociology, anthropology and legal jurisprudence and are focused on “studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism and power” (Delgado and Stefancic 2012:3). Racial hierarchies determine allocates benefits based on race. Critical Race Theory engages with policies, structures and systems upon which racism and white supremacy are based.

Race Matters. This is how African American intellectual, scholar, theologian and activist, Cornel West titled his seminal book. In the book, West blends philosophy, sociology and political commentary on issues of race and racism. In the book, West points out how his was haunted by WEB Du Bois statement; “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour line”.

In a mysterious way, this classic twosome posed the most fundamental challenges to my basic aim in life: to speak truth to power with love so that the quality of everyday life for ordinary people is enhanced and white supremacy is stripped of its authority and legitimacy (West 1994: XIV).

There are academics who trace the foundation of Critical Race Theory to the work of Du Bois. Rabaka posits that Du Bois linked race with class and had argued that racism coupled with capitalism and colonialism deepened the conflicts amongst the racial oppressors and the racially oppressed. (In Farmer and Farmer 2020: 24)

The theme, Race Matters, was again taken up by the South African scholar, Zimitri Erasmus in her book, Race Otherwise, she went to articulate the importance of understanding race when she wrote,

Race Matters. IT MATTERS because of the meanings we give to it. How and why race matters, and how and why we continue to make race matter, has to

do with ways in which history, power and politics shape the frames within which meaning is made, contested, and renegotiated. (Erasmus 2001: XXII).

Theoretical perspectives of race and racism have developed so much in the social sciences. Whereas this used to be an insignificant part of only sociology, today there is an increase in the academic and research fields in Political Science, Economics, Anthropology, Psychology and even Theology. (Solomos and Back 1996:1ff; Erasmus 2001: XXII) This work has been enhanced by Marxists of different shades who pointed out the intersectionality of race and racism with class and other studies as gender, culture and economics. An example of such writers is Miles whose "...work constitutes an attempt to reclaim the study of racism from a politicised sociological framework and locate it squarely in Marxist theorisation of social conflict" (Solomos and Back 1996:10)

Research further demonstrates that the understanding of race and racism is strongly contextual. It is important to understand the history, the time and the space a particular expression of racism takes place. It is for this reason that, although the elements of racism exist within the system of Apartheid, Apartheid was itself a specific example within the context of South Africa. Thus, Goldberg is quoted to have written,

Race has fashioned and continues to mould personal and social identity, the bounds of who one is and can be, of where one chooses to be or is placed, what social and private spaces one can and dare to enter or penetrate. Race inscribes and circumscribes the experiences of space and time, of geography and history, just as race itself acquires its specificity in terms of space-time correlates (in Solomos and Back 1996:99).

Whereas there are people who have reduced racism to just the individual behaviour, prejudice and discrimination of people, racism is much more complex and multi-layered. It is important to note the existence of institutionalised racism that is systemic and structural in character. Singleton employs a short and yet powerful definition of this racism as advanced by Henze, Katz, Norte, Sather and Walker; racism = racial prejudice + institutional power. They distinguish between individual racial prejudice which black people can have against white people but because black people do not have individual and collective economic power, their prejudice has not impact on those that they discriminate against (Singleton 2015:53).

It is that understanding of racism that assist us to understand Apartheid as a system and institutionalised racism. Satgar articulates this well when he writes,

This institutionalised form racism had its roots in 350 years of capitalist development involving slavery, colonialism, genocidal violence and segregation. The white privilege entrenched in this society benefited the white minority, despite some disagreeing with apartheid while others were simply 'unaware' of this racist reality. (in Satgar 2019:3).

Thus, in addressing racism in South Africa today, it is important to note that there are still lingering vestiges of the racist apartheid system. This racism was violently oppressive and exploitative. The lingering nature the apartheid racism manifest itself in many sectors of society – corporate, education, sports, culture and even the Church.

This is the observation of concentrating on individual bias at the expense of the collective was also articulated a today's young South Africans as represented by a young South African political commentator and member of the Rhodes Must Fall Movement, Sizwe Mpfu-Walsh;

Progress must mean more than just changing racist attitudes. It must mean more than hosting 'race summits or marches against racism'. It must mean uprooting and ultimately destroying the remnants of white supremacy...Radical and structural changes to our economy and society are the only way out of this conjuncture (Mpfu-Walsh 2017:78-79).

The discourse on race and racism has so many concepts that are informed by ideological considerations. These range from the notion of multiracialism to anti-racism. These range from a liberal understanding to a more radical and revolutionary social action.

2.3.1. Multiracialism

The concept of multiracialism has been handled differently in different parts of the world. There are mixed-race sociologists who have understood multiracialism (Strmic-Pawl 2016:6). Multiracialism is understood as racial binaries or multiple identities (Orelus 2012:18). In this case multiracialism has to do with many variable factors such like cultural attachment, early experience and socialisation, political awareness and

orientation, spirituality and other social identities. This understanding even led to the rise of what has come to be known as the Multiracial Movement which is made by mixed-race individuals and families who established community organisations, wrote publications and participated in political activism (Dalmage 2004:2). In the United States, famous people like Barack Obama, Tiger Woods, Naomi Osaka and many others who are born from interracial marriages, have become symbols of this understanding of multiracialism.

There are also those who understand multiracialism as the bringing together of different races. This has been the dominant understanding in South Africa where multiracialism has been frowned upon by those who are progressive. Writing in the context of education, Asumah explains; "Multiracial schools are those which 'allow' black or those private schools which allow blacks for economic reasons. The differences in race or culture are given significance even if the intention is to foster tolerance and understanding of difference" (in Asumah and Johnston-Anumonwo 2002:205). He comes to a bold assertion; "Multiracialism does not attack the hegemony of the state; thus, it tends to be accepted by those who want to maintain the status quo" (in Asumah and Johnston-Anumonwo 2002:205).

Multi-racialism is more the conscious and yet artificial bringing together of the different racial groups with the hope that there will be co-existence. Its starting point is "...admitting the division of the country into 'national groups', celebrating diversity and acknowledging that they all deserve respect for their languages, cultures, and so on." (Johnston 2014:85) In critiquing multiracialism Sexton argues that "...the principal political effects of multiracialism are neither a fundamental challenge into the living legacies of white supremacy ..." (Sexton 2008:1). In this understanding, multiracialism refuses to deal with the fundamental power relations that regulates how the different racial groups co-exist. Although he advocates for a radical understanding of multiracialism, the progressive critique of the concept in the South African context is well captured by Robert Fatton who writes,

It is true that in its early formulation, multiracialism was marked by the ascendancy of the missionary-liberalism of a westernised, African petty bourgeoisie which sought to gain the respect of white authorities rather than the loyalty of the African masses. It is also true that multiracialism could and indeed

did degenerate into a white paternalism and relegated Africans to secondary roles. Finally, it is also true that multiracialism downgrade and ultimately contributed to the denigration of any sense of pride in an African identity and decidedly promoted distinct European heritage and set of traditions (Fatton 1986:3).

There have also been debates about the notion of colour-blindness withing the discourse about multiracialism. "Colour-blindness as it pertains to racial issues is a laudable goal since it would denote a complete lack of racial prejudice. Perhaps one day we can have a colour-blind society. But in today's world so-called colour-blindness is a denial of the fact that racial identity continues to play an important role in our lives" (Yancey 2008:18).

The most radical rejection of multiracialism is advocated by Lesch and Douglas who, in advocating for an Africanist position, argue,

Against multiracialism, we have this objection, that the history of South Africa has fostered group prejudices and antagonisms, and if we maintain the same group exclusiveness, parading under the term multiracialism... Further, multiracialism is in fact a pandering to European bigotry and arrogance. It is a method of safeguarding white interests irrespective of population figures (Lesch and Douglas 2007:93).

An argument should therefore be made that authentic racial integration in South Africa cannot be based on the equal number of people who are brought together. Any artificial quotas have to be proportional to the racial demographics.

American scholar Elmer Towns embellishes this point when he critically reflects on multiracialism,

There is a great difference between interracial and multiracial churches. When a church is multiracial, it simply means it has members of different races that are attending the services. For instance, you may say that a church is made up of 20 percent Hispanic, 30 percent African-America, and 50 percent Anglo-Saxon. However, just because different races attend a service does not mean it is an integrated or interracial church (Towns 2014:).

In a lengthy legal argument, Brassey evaluates multiracialism against non-racialism. He concludes, based on South Africa's history of apartheid on pure law, multiracialism is wrong because our constitution rejects race-based classifications. He submits,

When mandated by a race that is socially superordinate, 'separate but equal' is a pernicious doctrine that serves to demean, marginalise and subjugate members of the subservient race... Our lived experience tells us the same thing about the policy of separate development, a policy consciously crafted in the belief that races are to be separately defined, disaggregated and managed (Brassey 2019).

He goes further to conclude,

Here it is enough to observe that, by espousing multiracialism, mechanistic and inflexible as the system is, the Court has undermined the development of a genuine non-racial jurisprudence in our country. Under the latter philosophy, which is foreshadowed by aspects of our common law, recourse to race as a criterion for decision-making would be permissible only if legitimate aims could reasonably be attained by no other means (Brassey 2019).

2.3.2. Non-Racialism

The South Africa Constitution has, with the influence of the liberation movement, articulated the commitment of the country to the vision of a non-racial society. The concept of non-racialism is so common amongst many progressive South Africans and the liberation organisations that they represent. A cursory survey of literature does point out that the concept has been so popular in the hearts and minds of people without an in-depth definition thereof. This is even more so in post-apartheid society (Everatt 2009: Taylor and Foster 1999:328; Taylor 1994 :77; Johnston 2014:300).

Taylor and Foster advance Van Diepen's definition that: "non-racialism meant rejecting official racial categorisation and racial segregation and advancing integration through a united struggle to build a democratic society in which racial divisions would be swept away by the forging of a common South African identity (Taylor and Foster 1999:328).

Non-racialism has historically been understood as a negation of divisions based on race as it was articulated as part of the Apartheid policy. The point of departure is a total rejection of race as a determinant in managing human relations. There is recognition that whilst racial identities with which people relate or are boxed into, race is a social construct without any scientific concept. Failure to recognise racial classifications which must be eradicated, will be a wrong departure point.

Johnston's analysis with worth quoting at length,

The essential meaning of non-racialism is to fight racism. A non-racial society is one in which people are not differentiated by racial criteria (which in any case have no ontological status). However, a society from which statutory, racial differentiation has been removed is not non-racial. To act as if it is so, is to be in denial of the persistence and resilience of racism and to fail to understand that nature of real non-racialism. Not only do the structural effects of past racial discrimination persist, but under conditions of political freedom which outlaw its overt expression, racism is forced to express itself in new, covert and coded ways (Johnston 2014:300).

Non-racialism must be understood as a utopian society that is under constant construction. It has several pillars that are important as a guide towards that utopia. These include,

- Confirmation of the human race as the only scientific race that exists.
- Affirmation of the black and other races that was wounded by such systems as slavery, colonialism, apartheid and others.
- Integration of racial groups as an ongoing process of nation building.
- Political consciousness and spiritual commitment towards integration of races
- Dismantling any psychological, social, cultural, economic factors that have supported racism
- Promote racial inclusiveness with justice and empowerment of those who were previously excluded

True non-racialism has an element of radical hospitality as Chief Phatakile Holomisa of the South African Congress of Traditional Leaders asserts; "non-racialism has

always been practised by the Natives of this country since the day the white man set foot on its soil. He was welcome as any human being and stranger would be; he was fed and given shelter as any hungry and weary traveller would be” (Holomisa 2007: 81).

Non-racialism within the South African progressive/liberation movement has been a total rejection of the concept of multi-racialism which seek to analyse the South African society based on the black and white social groups (Taylor 1994:79). Multi-racialism is the valueless bringing of numbers of different races without any substantive agenda to change the power relations of those who come together. It is more of a cosmetic form that does not transform the culture of a particular organisation like the Church.

Colour blindness calls for the abolition of racial identities and argues just for the common human race. It is hoped that if people are urged to cease to think along racial lines, then racial inequality will stop. However, Anderson argues that colour blindness has failed “... to dismantle entrenched patterns of racial segregation, undermine unconscious racial stigmatisation and discrimination challenge informal practices of racial avoidance such as white flight, end coded racial appeals...” (Anderson 2010: 113).

Non-Racialism has, however been attacked by disgruntled whites as a form of reverse racism because it seeks to reverse the legacy of apartheid on race relations. Such criticism has focused on such interventions as Black Economic Empowerment as continuing to racialise South African society. There is a notion amongst many leaders who wittingly or unwittingly advocate for the notion of colour blindness. They always state that they were brought up not to see any colour and thus not racist. This notion of colour blindness is usually coupled with the notion of merit in assuming positions of responsibility and leadership. “More often than not, the colour-blind perspective objectively served to hide institutionalised racism or discriminatory attitudes...” Hermann Giliomee has been a fierce critique of non-racialism arguing that it “...conceals the African demand for power and control of the widest range of political institutions” (Hughes 2011:)

Non-racialism has also been criticised from the left by proponents of Black Consciousness as a liberal idea that is not radical enough (Howarth 2000: 183). Allan Zinn points to a newspaper article that Black Consciousness proponent and academic

Xolela Mangcu wrote in the Sunday Times of 16 August 2015 titled; “Let the battle against racism define us – not non-racialism” (Zinn 2016: 131). The arguments advanced by these hinges around the fact that race and racism, for them, is not an abstract figment of imagination but a reality that must be confronted. Zinn goes further to draw from social commentator and media personality, Eusebius McKaiser who labelled non-racialism as; “Kumbaya politics and crawling up the behinds of whites” (Zinn 2016: 147).

It is, political activist, organic intellectual and former member of the militant New Unity Movement, the late Dr Neville Alexander who held in dialectical tension, the notion of non-racialism that is anti-racist in nature. Dr Alexander dispelled the concept of race as a scientific matter. Alexander went further to articulate what Zinn considers “non-racialism’s most important partial modalities...the road to dignity for all people. He deliberately emphasised the need for people to learn each other’s languages, and more importantly, to create the social, cultural, and economic environments in which the cultural multiplicity of the world could flourish” (Ibid:157). Another criticism of non-racialism that Zinn identifies is that which Pillay called the “erasure of difference” (Zinn 2016:157).

Lately, it is the young Mporu-Walsh who sharply criticises what he understands to be the African National Congress’s diluted version of non-racialism as colour-blindness.

This was never the intended meaning of non-racialism. Non-racialism’s original formulation might better be articulated as transcendence, i.e., the state of having overcome racial subjugation. Phrased this way, non-racialism is a destination, not strategy (Mporu-Walsh 2017:77).

2.3.3. Anti-Racism

The anti-racist approach is, on the other hand, one that seeks to intentionally recognise the existence of racial groups as they come together and to confront racism as a philosophy that exists within the dominant group. The anti-racist approach is one that goes to further confront the manifestation of racism and its exclusionary tendencies. Anti-racism is based on critical political consciousness. The anti-racism approach is one that starts with a critical analysis of racism that it is more than just

racial prejudice. It is prejudice plus the power of systems and institutions.” Racism happens when the collective prejudices of one racial group are enforced by the system and institutions of a society, for the benefit and advantage of that racial group and to the detriment and disadvantage of all other groups” (Barndt 2011:85). See also (Waller 1998:51; Lewis 2014:32).

Articulating the importance of acknowledging difference as the starting point of the anti-racist approach, Black Liberation Theologian Anthony Reddie argues,

Unity does not mean that we all have to be the same. If that were what God had intended then we would have all been created exactly alike... The body of Christ is about recognising difference. The body should be concerned with providing opportunities for all marginalised and oppressed peoples to have their choices, preferences and identities recognised, and for the existing power structures to be overturned in order that those elements can be realised (Reddie 2009: 11-12).

The anti-racism approach is where the existence of racism is acknowledged and challenged actively.

This requires a dismantling of institutionalised practices of racism... and bringing about changes in attitudes and behaviour. Anti-racists understand that eliminating racism requires restructuring power relationships in the economic, political and cultural institutions in the society and creating new conditions for interpersonal interactions (HSRC 1999: 35-36).

This argument can however be countered by Robert Sobukwe’s stance on race. Sobukwe, like Alexander, rejected the notion of race and advocated for what he called just the one human race (Driver 2000:164; Thorn 2006:51; Perkins and Cronley 2006:307).

Anti-racism should be seen as the utopian and “race transcendent vision” that moves beyond the obsession with such criteria as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and other human attributes.

2.3.4. Black Theology, Black Power and Black Consciousness

Black Liberation Theology had its seeds planted by Black Church leaders who led the struggles of Black people in slave plantation through the Jim Crow era in the USA. This informal theology was only developed into an academic discipline in the 1960s by the late African American theologian, James Cone who came to be regarded as its father. It also became a popular theology of liberation and spiritual programme against racism. Inspired by the Black Power Movement in the United States of America, it became the articulation of Black faith amid racial injustice. It was articulated as a “constructive theological alternative to white theology from the standpoint of the black revolution” (Cone 1985:20) James Cone, who came to be regarded as the father of Black Theology, goes further to point how this theology exposed the racism in the Church.

Although Blacks have always identified racist acts as un-Christian, they had seldom claimed that racism in white churches excluded them from the Christian community... The prophetic denunciation of white racism also made members of the black clergy realise that an alternative theology was needed if they were going to develop an interpretation of the gospel that would empower blacks in their liberation struggle (Cone 1985:81).

The eminent Black Theology scholar and Editor-in-Chief of *Black Theology: An International Journal*, Anthony Reddie, hastens to point out that Black Theology was not conceived to be just a theological discipline (Reddie 2012: xi). It is meant to provide activists with a methodological framework to assist in analysis that empowers for active resistance against racism and white supremacy. Bradely observes that Black Liberation Theology, which predates Critical Race Theory, also wrestles with the intersection of race, racism and white supremacy (in Farmer and Farmer 2020: 128).

Black Theology is more than a reactionary discipline against whiteness. In rejecting the notion of colour-blindness and instead advancing the embrace of existence of different races, Reddie advocates for the affirmation of radical appropriation of blackness as a counter to white hegemony.

Reddie writes boldly,

Black theology wants to argue for the particularity of Blackness; meaning that it is in our very Blackness that God is not only revealed, but also understood within the realms of our Blackness and the experiences that emerge from being Black. I want people to see my Blackness. God created me as a Black man and I do not believe for one second that God made a mistake in doing so. So, when you see me, please see me as a Black male; but ascribe to my Blackness the positive elements that have traditionally been reserved for Whiteness and White people (Reddie 2009 :50-51).

Black Theology of Liberation is an affirmation of blackness and black identity, humanity and dignity (Reddie 2012:2; Van Aarde 2016). Blackness here is more than just the skin colour but has to do with material conditions and the lived experience of black oppression, exploitation, marginalisation and related suffering. Thus, Black Theology recognises the importance of both black consciousness and black power in transforming the material conditions of black people. For Malcom X black consciousness and black power was about political solidarity cultural pride through Pan Africanism (Hopkins 2005: 11). It is about drawing boundaries and making the oppressor aware that they have overstepped the mark. James Cone also draws from the lessons of Malcom X and the Black Panthers that black power is about saying to the oppressor, a No that “means that death is preferable to life, if the latter is devoid of freedom” (Cone 2018:).

Black Theology is a conscious theological discipline that interprets the Christian faith using the black experience as a focus. It takes this black experience as starting point and allows it to be the hermeneutical lens through which the Holy Scriptures are interpreted and understood. The focus on the black experience is not to romanticise it but is instead understood as praxis that needs total transformation. This is important because the black experience of racial oppression and class exploitation. This Reddie and Jagessar argue without apology,

Black theology begins with the material reality of the Black experience as its point of departure. Scripture sits in dialectical tension with the Black experience and does not precede it. To suggest that Scripture is the primary or even the

only site of revelation is to fail to take the Black experience and the material reality of the Black self seriously (Reddie and Jagessar 2007:5).

On the other hand, Allan Boesak wrote in his seminal book, *Farewell to Innocence*,

Black Theology is the theological reflection of Black Christians on the situation in which they live and on their struggle for liberation. Blacks ask: What does it mean to believe in Jesus Christ when one is Black and living in a world controlled by white racists? And what if these racists all themselves Christian also (Boesak 1976:1).

Black theologians go further to argue that it is not every theology that is done by a black person that can be termed Black Theology. In other words, black in this case is more than just the pigmentation of skin. There must be a clear critical consciousness and commitment to the radical transformation of the black experience of oppression.

The raging spirit of both the Black Power Movement and Black Theology had an impact on the South African struggle. Black Consciousness, which was led by the late Steve Bantu Biko, covered different sectors of society – academia, culture, sports, politics and religion. Biko articulated this new student driven philosophy as,

...Black Consciousness is in essence the realisation by the black man (sic) of the need to rally together with his brothers (sic) around the cause of their oppression – the blackness of their skin – and to operate a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude (in Pohlandt-McCormick 1976:336).

The relationship between Black Consciousness and Black Theology was cemented right from the beginning. Amongst those who participated in Black Consciousness were black Seminary students and black clergy. The racism in the Church that manifested itself in such matters as differentiated leadership and salaries.

Any assessment of the relationship between Black Consciousness and Black Theology must, therefore, take cognisance of their interdependency and mutual influence. The Black Consciousness movement certainly aroused black theologians to question their theological insights, and impressed upon them the necessity of relating their faith to black self-awareness (Kretzschmar 1986 :61).

Writing in the latest edition of his seminal book, *Farewell to Innocence*, Prof James Boesak pointed out that Black Consciousness is the power of self-identification. Black Power is the courage to be black and a counter-power to the white power of domination and subjugation of black People. It seeks to dismantle the white power and resource structures with their instruments of control, injustice and violence (Boesak 2015 :57-59). Drawing from Boesak, Van Aarde calls for what he calls a third wave of Black Theology in South Africa. It is a theology that must address racism and restore human dignity (Van Aarde 2016). Mosala is also cited as a proponent of a third wave. This has to do with the continuation of imbalances of power, exaggeration ethnic conflict by the colonisers and the replacement of white rulers by black rulers without the black majority experiencing the economic benefits of freedom (Van Aarde 2016). The third phase of Black Theology, even in a democratic state, must remember that Black Theology was never about the powerful but the powerless and the silenced. It must continue to demonstrate solidarity with the poor (West 2010:9).

Black Theology is rooted in the Christian faith and can therefore “be broadly understood as the self-conscious attempt to undertake rational and disciplined conversation about God and God’s revelation to Black people in the world, looking at the past and the present, and imagining the future” (Reddie 2012:2). This conversation about God is one that leads to Christian redemptive action. Rooted in the Christian faith, Black Theology is Christocentric. Its redemptive and transformative work is modelled in the person of Christ as demonstrated in the Gospels. Reddie points out to the importance of liberative texts such as Luke 4:16-19 and Matthew 25:31-46 to point to how God, in Christ was the liberator on the side of the oppressed (Reddie 2012:2). Jesus Christ was understood as the liberator whose ministry and death were on behalf of the poor (Cone 1985: 64).

Former President of the Black Consciousness’ Azanian People Organisation [AZAPO] and theologian, Itumeleng Mosala, takes a radical critical stance against many Black Theologians including James Cone, Cornel West, Alan Boesak, Desmond Tutu including his Methodist elders Simon Gqubule and Khoza Mgojo who uncritically claim the scriptures to be the Word of God. For Mosala, all theology including the dominant White Theology has ideological roots (Mosala 1989: 1), He views Black Theology as elitist and not yet the property of the toiling masses because of the class positions and class commitments of those who advocate for it (Mosala 1989:14). He critiques Black

Theologians for their “enslavement” and generalisation of the whole Bible as the Word of God without seeing the class contradictions within the Bible.

Mosala offers, as an alternative, the class approach to Black Theology of Liberation’s reading of the Bible an execution of the struggle. For Mosala, the title of his other chapter captures what must happen: *The Historical and Cultural Struggles of the Black People as a Hermeneutical Starting Point for Black Theology*. He goes on to assert liberation is not purely moral or spiritual but is material and is about the productive forces that include the combination of the means of production like land, cattle, machinery, raw materials with human labour (Mosala 1989: 67). Thus, reappropriating this salient point, it means that racial integration is more than just reconciling groups of people but also the “productive forces.” Failure to do so will produce flawed racial integration where the means of production have not been shared.

The challenge with Mosala is he over-reaches with class analysis as a definition of reality and thus reading of scripture. He minimises if not dismisses other sources of meaning. Scripture is also a source of meaning. Literary meaning is also inclusive of culture, art and imagination that goes beyond class as a tool for meaning.

2.3.5. The Theory of Racial Formation

Omi and Winant advances what they consider the theory of racial formation which is; “... the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed.” (Omi and Winant 2014:109). Although propagated in the 1980s in the USA, Daniel Martinez and others have edited a book titled *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century* which is a collection of essays, in which other scholars and activists are engaging it as a theoretical framework for understanding the changing concept of race on other categories and other contexts. (HoSang et al 2012) The theory of racial formation has been developed in the USA, but its tenets find expression the design and implementation of the South African system of Apartheid.

Omi and Winant view racial formation as a social process of “making up people” which is full of confusion and contradictions. “Concepts of race prove to be unreliable as supposed boundaries shift, slippages occur, realignments become evident, and new collectivities emerge.” (Omi and Winant 2014:106) Race is always defined through

flawed scientific categories. The point is further supported by other scholars who argue that race is a social construct (Ferrante-Wallace and Brown 2001; Andreasen 1999; Frankenberg 1993; Sussman 2014)

In most cases, it is the powerful state that imposes the race classifications on the marginalised groups. Whereas Omi and Winant write within the American context, their assertion was equally true in Apartheid South Africa where the minority government classified people through the Race Classification Act also known as the Population Registration Act. The people were classified in this hierarchy of preferential treatment –Europeans (white), Asians (Indians), persons of mixed race (coloured) and the natives or *Bantu* (African). (Dolby 2001:21; Gunkel 2010:29; Scheid 2015:6; Schaefer 2008:80) Local Race Classification Boards were appointed to decide the race of people.

The challenge of race classification is that it is always leading to the process of “othering.”. “Othering is a process that distortedly objectifies groups of subjects by excluding them from the community of ‘selves’.” (Syad 2016:1) Milkie et al argue that usually the inner group accords itself a higher status and presents itself as superior, competent and more trustworthy than the others. (McLeod 2014:550) This process is usually used as a justification for prejudicial isolation of other groups based on such attributes as class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and other categories. It is used to determine social interactions and hierarchies that end up identifying who is to be treated as friend or foe. (Omi and Winant 2014:105)

At the heart of racial formation, like all the other “othering” social stratification processes, is the issue of power relations. Most of the time the power of the dominant group accords itself the ability to dispense benefits. It is this that leads to the marginalised groups to resist from below as they engage in self-identification. (Omi and Winant 2014:106)

Omi and Winant point out that although there are other categories of classification that have shaped American society, race is the master category. (Omi and Winant 2014: 106). It is the same in South Africa, that the racial classification of the Apartheid system has shaped the history, the polity and structure of South African society.

There is however, the phenomenon of intersectionality, where race, as the master category, has interacted with other categories of gender and class to shape and to

produce a different variation of dynamics. (Omi and Winant 2014:106) In the South African context, it is this intersectionality that has led to what South African feminist have called the triple oppression of black women on racial, class and gender basis. (Hassim 2006:43; Walker 1990:2; Hook 2004:293). This triple oppression has impacted on the life of blacks in different sectors of society – corporate, government, judiciary and such religious institutions as the Church. This dynamic has implications for racial integration and power relations in a place like the Eden Methodist Church where some of the black domestic workers could be worshipping with their white employers and must interact with them in worship, small groups and even in the governance structures.

Omi and Winant's theory of racial formation has several concepts that talk to the process and how to respond to it. These concepts are racialisation, racial projects, racism and racial politics.

Racialisation: This is defined as "... the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group." (Omi and Winant 2014: 111). Race is always socially categorised on the objective or illusory basis. The objective dimension is based on biological differences "ranging from such familiar phenomic markers as skin colour, hair texture, or eye shape, to more obscure human variations occurring at the genetic or genomic levels." (Omi and Winant 2014: 109) On the other hand the illusion of race is based on the ideological identities influenced by the three paradigms of ethnicity, class and nation. (Omi and Winant 2014: 109) It is this classification that produced the three distinct basic racial categories of the Negroid, the Caucasoid and Mongoloid in the USA. In the South African context its focus is on the whites, Indian, coloured and black. This too has been flawed when it has to describe who Africans are. At an ideological level, blacks have been understood to include Africans, Indians and coloureds. There have been instances where the concept of coloured has been contested to be demeaning of the indigenous groups like the Khoi and San who have just been lumped as coloured. White South Africans have also contested the notion that seeks to exclude them from the African, arguing that they have no other home than Africa.

The Evolution of Race Consciousness. Omi and Winant trace the evolution of race through several interrelated situations and contexts which include the prehistory

documents in Bible to the modern conception the rise of Europe and the arrival of Europeans in the Americas. (2014: 112ff) The European explorers were the advance guard of merchant capitalism who “discovered” great opportunities beyond what they expected. Amongst what they “discovered” were the native people who were looked and acted different from them. This presented a challenge to the notion of race as they knew and understood it. However, it is the desire to dominate and exploit this “Species” that led to racial formations. “The conquest... was the first – and given the dramatic nature of the case, perhaps the greatest –racial formation project. Together with African slavery it produced the master category of race, the racial template...” (Omi and Winant 2014: 114).

Racial Projects: This is defined as “... an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial identities and meanings, and an effort to organise and distribute resources (economic, political, cultural) along particular racial lines.” (Omi and Winant 2024: 125) Racial projects are a structural or organised manifestations of the ideology. They happen through institutional policies and practices as well as in every day personal interactions. Apartheid had a myriad of racial projects in legislation, separate amenities and public services.

Racism: Omi and Winant argue that a racial project can be defined as racist “...if it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial significations and identities.” (2014: 128) They point out that racism is more than just a single or monolithic incidence or mere beliefs or attitudes but when there is a domination and a complex web of projects relating to relationships, practices and institutions. Just as there are racist project, there are also anti-racist project which are initiatives that are committed to the cause of ending or reducing racism. Some of these initiatives include affirmative action.

They classify America as a despotism – a country whose history has been that of white identity and hegemony and has negated the “other” through law and custom. This despotism further manifested itself in the psyche in the minds of the Americans. The despotism also consolidated the racial consciousness and resistance through organisation that opposed this racial formation (Omi and Winant 2014:131).

2.3.6. Racial integration

The South African history of Apartheid was mostly about racial segregation. Central to the transformation of society since the advent of democracy has been that racial integration is an element of social cohesion. There are many concepts based on ideological, philosophical and contextual dynamics that deal with the issues of race. Whatever the terms, what is important is a sound practical theology with practical strategies of facilitating the of racial implementation integration.

Whatever the different terms and concepts, a broad reflection on racial integration points out that it is undertaken by leaders and congregations that are courageous because it is a complex and very emotive matter. It must be undertaken boldly and yet sensitively. Writing from the American context, Christerson and co-authors point out how many organisations all over the world are struggling with this issue.

Debates swirl around such often loosely defined and easily misunderstood terms as separation, desegregation, pluralism, integration, and assimilation.... what are the costs and benefits of these processes for the individuals and groups involved in them, and for society as a whole (Christerson et al 2005:2)?

The subject of racial integration is generally used in relation with housing and education in the United States. In her seminal book, *The Integration Imperative*, Elizabeth Anderson develops a theory of integration to residential housing and neighbourhoods. She develops a theory whose points can be adapted to racial integration in any institution, especially the Church. Anderson writes of integration; “Integration in a diverse society expands our networks of cooperation and provides a steppingstone to a cosmopolitan identity, which offers the prospect of rewarding relations with people across the globe” (Anderson 2010:2).

For Anderson, racial integration is a racial justice matter and is very critical of the “non-integrative” approaches such as “multiculturalist celebrations of racial diversity” (Anderson 2011:1). Anderson, who is rooted in Political Philosophy, uses the non-ideal theory which is “a diagnosis of injustices in our actual world, rather than from a picture of an ideal world” (Anderson 2010:3).

Integrationist an antidote to the challenge of segregation. “Integrationist the negation of segregation: it consists in comprehensive intergroup association in terms of

equality. This requires the full inclusion and participation as equal members of all races in all social domains..." (Anderson 2010: 112).

Anderson contrasts integration with three other concepts of desegregation, colour blindness and assimilation. Desegregation is an intervention where all legal barriers that hinder intergroup contact are abolished and the alternative enforced. It is a very necessary elementary intervention but does go far in facilitating integration. Laws can be put in place, but this does not necessarily alter power relations and human prejudices.

Racial integration, on the other hand is an intentional intervention that recognises the existence of racial identities and uses "race-conscious" interventions to racial unity. It is comfortable for some degree of racial solidarity and affiliation as part of countering the impact of racial segregation and oppression.

Anderson advances four stages of racial integration which are formal desegregation; spatial integration; formal social integration and informal social integration. Formal desegregation, as pointed out takes place when an institution employs formal policies and legislation to enforce the abolition of racial divisions. Spatial integration takes place when the public spaces and facilities are declared accessible to all. In the context of the church, it is about opening church property to all races for worship and use for ministry and mission. It is possible for the space to be made open and yet the different races still do not integrate. "Formal social integration occurs when members of different races cooperate in accordance with institutionally defined social roles, and all races occupy all roles in enough numbers that roles are not racially identified" (Anderson 2010: 116).

It happens when the dominant race fully accepts the other races as *bona fide* members of a particular congregation. When they are elected to positions of responsibility and respected as equals. Informal social integration is one that does not rely on compliance with policies and legal prescripts that seek to enforce cooperation. It takes place when members, genuinely interact and cooperate with those of a different race. It happens when people of different races take their own private initiatives to break racial barriers, cross boundaries and build bridges based on total acceptance, not tolerance, and trust. "It happens when members of different races form friendships, date, marry, bear children or adopt different race children" (Anderson 2010: 116).

Social integration is the highest form of community building, or fellowship based on agape rather than political correctness or public relations.

Reflecting on Anderson's theory, Sundstrom argues;

Integration can be thought of as a simple, quantitative demographic goal, as the result of secure political belonging and full inclusion as a citizen with access to social goods and rights that attend that status, or it can focus on the relations between persons and their interaction across social activities (Sundstrom 2013:2).

Important in this assertion are the notions of belonging, inclusion, access to social goods and relations between people and their social activities. It is these notions that are crucial even in a Church context where believers go to live the gospel imperative without any legal coercion.

The South African academic project on racial integration in the church has been heavily dependent on the USA where they are ahead on the matter and have done extensive research. Much reflection in the South African context has also focused on integration in schools. In 1999 the South African Human Commission published a report on a Study on Racism, 'Racial integration' and Segregation in Public Secondary Schools. Writing about racial integration in institutions of higher learning, Bazana and Mogotsi observe that whilst the South African government has been promulgating pieces of legislation aimed at racial integration, research has been scant (Bazana and Mogotsi 2017).

Crain Soudien argues that any discussion of community, integration and nation must acknowledge the fact that history and broad social sciences are a "constructed field". Influenced by Carr, Soudien agrees that the approach taken in the analysis and interpretation of integration and community or nation, is dependent on who the historian and social commentator is (Soudien 2004: 89).

Any attempt to address the project of racial integration has to understand how race as a difference was treated in society in general and in South Africa in particular. In the South African context, the notion of race as a difference is complex because it has to include such elements as class, gender, culture and even politics. Reflecting on integrationist South African schools, Soudien draws more from African National

Congress theorist and eminent scholar, Harold Wolpe who called for a more complex and systemic analysis of the South African race relations (Soudien 2004: 90ff). Important to any project of racial integration must be the appreciation of power as a factor that influences whatever has to happen. That power is found both in language used to describe concepts as well privilege as a social status.

Most of the lessons that can be learned about racial integration at a congregational level is drawn from the USA. Although the American context is very different from South Africa in history, demographics, and even socio-political and cultural dynamics, there are principles that multiracial churches in South Africa can learn from those. In his book titled *People of the Dream: Multiracial Congregations in the United States*, Michael Emerson argues that it is important to study congregations because of the role that religion plays in the United States of America.

Congregations are places where Americans most often go to seek the meaning of life, to worship, to find direction, and to receive social support. Major life events happen within these groups... Clergy and congregations are the number one place Americans turn to when they have serious problems, more than government or human and health service professionals (Emerson 2010:7).

This points out to the power the church must influence members of society.

Emerson goes further to point out to a study of three multiracial Seventh Day Adventist congregations that James Parker did in the South African context - where he identified five stages through which churches move from being uni-racial or monocultural to being multicultural (2010:171).

- **Status Quo.** Is where there are changes in demographics, but the culture and identity of the congregation remains the same. There is more tolerance than engagement.
- **Assimilation and Hegemony.** Everybody notices the increase in diversity and there is expectation by the dominant group that the new should adapt to the original racial group's way of doing church.
- **Limited Integration.** The new racial group has its members participating and starting to occupy positions of responsibility. This leads to uneasiness of the original group that feels that they are losing control.

- **Integration and Disintegration.** There is a decline in the original group and new culture of the increasing new group. This leads to an intention to engage the changing dynamics and redefine the identity of the congregation.
- **Stabilisation and Reorganisation.** The congregation's newly defined identity is entrenched with multiracial power relations, structures, processes and responsibilities. Parker concludes by saying that "not all multiracial congregations reach this stage, and if they do not, they rarely remain multiracial."

In his treatment of the phenomenon of multiracial churches, Rodney Woo starts with a working definition; "The multiracial congregation is composed of racially diverse believers united by their faith in Christ, who make disciples of all the nations in anticipation of the ultimate reunion around the throne" (Woo 2009:14). Woo goes on to emphasise a paradigm that is both biblical and practical. Whilst the church can borrow from other social sciences in fostering the process of integration, this must be anchored in sound theology especially biblical foundations (Woo 2009: 2ff; Chin 2012:68ff; DeYoung et al 2003:7ff).

There are also other identified intentional practical factors or what Anderson and Cabellon call building blocks that range from vision, rules of engagement, relationships, worship, the role of leadership and mission (DeYmaz 2013:43; Anderson and Cabellon 2010:7ff). A congregation that seeks to be multiracial must craft a God given and people-owned vision and not a vision that is imposed by leadership. The role of committed leadership is to continuously communicate this vision to the congregation and rally the members behind it. The commitment to racial integration must be visible in such settings as worship, structures and mission outreaches. It is only as members are brought together in settings such as small groups that they build organic and durable relationships.

2.4. The Church and Theology

2.4.1. The Church's Struggle Against Apartheid

The history of the South African Church's efforts in racial reconciliation, since the official introduction of Apartheid by the National party can be traced back to the World Council of Churches' Conference at Cottesloe, Johannesburg in 1960 (Walshe in Elphick and Davenport 1997: 385). This interracial representative Conference of protestant clergy and laity was held as a response to the Sharpeville massacre in which the apartheid government shot dead sixty black people and the banning of the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress and the imprisonment and exile of many political leaders (Botman in Vugt and Cloete: 2000: 106; Hellmann in Hellmann and Reinl 19979: 22).

The impact of the Cottesloe Conference led to the Christian Institute and the South African Council of Churches issuing a historic statement in 1968 titled; The Message to the People of South Africa which discredited apartheid as a heresy and a novel gospel built on the theory of separation and a deviation from the purpose of Christ and the rejection of the central beliefs of the Christian Gospel (Botman in Vugt and Cloete: 2000: 106; Livingston 2014:34).

There are other initiatives through which the South African Ecumenical Church confronted the racist system of apartheid. These included the Kairos Document (1985), the National Initiative for Reconciliation (1985), the SACC's Soweto Conference on 'Confessing Guilt' (1989), the Rustenburg Conference and the Cape Town Consultation of the World Council of Churches (1991) (Cochrane, De Gruchy and Martin 1999:4).

2.4.2. The Enclave Theology

Whilst racial transformation was taking place post 1994 in South Africa, some of the institutions including the Church withdrew into an enclave. There are scholars, mostly Afrikaners from the Dutch Reformed Church who have reflected on their Church's withdrawal into the "enclave". They use anthropologist, Mary Douglas' concept of 'the enclave' where "... a dissenting minority who develop a social unit in order to maintain

strong boundaries” (Cilliers and Nel 2011). Cilliers and Nel draw from Douglas where she argues that,

An enclave community can be recognised and described. It is not mysterious or unique. It starts in characteristic situations and faces characteristic problems. These invite specific solutions, the institutions in which the solutions are tried call forth a specific type of spirituality (Cilliers and Nel 2011).

The concept of enclave is used in theology is an opposite of those who choose to be ecumenical. The ground their identity and practice on a theology that is competitive and not embracing of other traditions. Enclave theology is,

...based narrowly in a single tradition that seeks not to learn from other traditions and to enrich them, but instead to topple and defeat them, or at least to withstand them. Enclave theology is polemical theology even when it assumes an irenic facade. Its limited agenda makes it difficult for it to take other traditions seriously and deal with them fairly. Whether openly or secretly, it is not really interested in dialogue but in rectitude and hegemony. It harbours the attitude that the ecumenical movement will succeed only as other traditions abandon their fundamental convictions, where they are incompatible with those of the enclave, in order to embrace the enclave's doctrinal purity. ... Enclave theology makes itself look good, at least in its own eyes, by making others look bad (Hunsinger 2008:1).

Those who subscribe to the enclave build boundaries and walls and do not value the contributions of other traditions. There is no appreciation of the diversity that others bring into the collective. Enclave theology, in the South African context has failed to welcome the opportunities to contribute to reconciliation, social cohesion and nation building. The enclave has its focus on excluding, resisting and opposing the ‘other’. It anxiously views the other as danger. (Cilliers 2012). Furthermore, “hegemonic and enclavement theology have systemically and pragmatically disempowered and eliminated communality or creative multicultural communities that could develop and explore the creative power of diversity in society” (Dames:128).

This exclusionary theology of the enclave can best be countered by the theology of embrace advanced Miroslav Volf in his book; *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Embrace is a welcoming and

healing spirituality based on the gospel understanding of reconciliation. Embrace is a “sacrament” that is about building inclusive institutions that are based on community and communion.

The only way to peace is through embrace--that is, after the parties have forgiven and repented, for without forgiveness and repentance embrace is a masquerade. An embrace always involves a double movement of aperture and closure. I open my arms to create space in myself for the other. The open arms are a sign both of discontent at being myself only and of desire to include the other. They are an invitation to the other to come in and feel at home with me, to belong to me (Volf 1993).

Unlike the enclave, embrace creates a sense of hospitality and belonging. The one person opens the arms in order to hug and give love to the other. Embrace, points out Volf, does not assimilate. It allows the other person to be – to be independent and with their own identity.

In an embrace I also close my arms around the other--not tightly, so as to crush her and assimilate her forcefully into myself--for that would not be an embrace but a concealed power-act of exclusion--but gently, so as to tell her that I do not want to be without her in her otherness. I want her to remain independent and true to her genuine self, to maintain her identity and, as such, to become part of me so that she can enrich me with what she has and I do not (Volf 1993).

2.4.3. Multi-Cultural, Cross-Cultural and Inter-Cultural Churches

Philosophical labels describing churches of different races can be problematic. There is an array of terms that include the use of descriptions of race, culture and ethnicity. There are academics who have written about multi-racial and even multi-ethnic congregations. Yet others have written and used such terms as multi-cultural, cross-cultural and inter-cultural churches. The cultural factor or dynamic points to something more complex than just race. There are congregations that may be made up of the same race and yet there are cultural or ethnic dynamics that relate to class, ethnicity, geographic region or country of origin. A congregation could be made up of black people who may be of the same race and yet some from the rural Limpopo, or urban

Tshwane or migrant Zimbabweans and so on. Acknowledging this point Resane writes,

A multicultural church is beyond multiracial composition. It is multicultural, because it has diverse cultures in its membership and composition. Post-apartheid South Africa experiences a high influx of people from other parts of Africa and other continents, especially Asia. These migrants are part of the South African society, and the church remains with a pivotal role to assimilate these into a host society. (Resane 2020)

Whatever the distinct terms, they refer to something different from the mono-racial or mono-cultural congregations. The United Church of Canada uses the three concepts of Multi-cultural, Cross-cultural and Inter-cultural. (Church of Canada: <http://www.united-church.ca/files/intercultural/multicultural-cross-cultural-intercultural>)

Multi-cultural could suggest those that recognise the difference and only choose to exist separately alongside with each other with tolerance being the operative value. If not well treated, this can be a situation where groups only celebrate each other's diversity without addressing any power dynamics that need to be changed. On the other hand, cross-cultural could be about an intentional project of building bridges and crossing boundaries. Again, cultural differences may only be addressed as God's gift without any influence of each other. If there is no adequate vigilance, those who cross boundaries can easily, when it suits them, return to their culture of privilege and dominance. The inter-cultural is about the believers in different groups interacting, not for a convenient short period, but on a sustained basis with those of a different culture. This an organic arrangement, facilitated for people to value each other's cultures as gifts for mutual benefit.

Truth is that there are theologians and church leaders who employ the above terms and yet move the stated philosophical limitations. What is important is moving beyond these labels and establishing if certain building blocks and factors are in place. Literature seems to suggest certain common practical principles and processes in integrating churches whether on the base of race, culture or ethnicity. The blocks include the following, inclusive worship, diverse leadership, and overarching goal, intentionality, personal skills, location, adaptability. (Yancey 2008)

Leadership appears to be a constant that several experts of multicultural and multiracial churches raise (Yancey 2008; Plueddemann 2009; Foster 1997). “Leading in a multicultural and diverse environment is like playing several instruments. It partly calls for different attitudes and skills, restraint in passing judgement and the ability to recognise that familiar tunes may have to be played differently” (Hofstede in Plueddemann 2009:11) Foster argues that such a leader must be transformative by avoiding the *status quo* and nurture change. The leader must always be anticipatory of situations, facilitate relations and manage power dynamics in the diverse groups (Foster 1997: 116ff). The multicultural church is an intentional commitment to build a rainbow community with different cultures.

The challenge of multi-racial and multi-cultural churches is when the process of integration only ends with bringing people together without dealing with the fundamentals of what brought the divisions about. Any such process makes the integration a mere cosmetic tokenism. It is important for the stated objective of the interaction to include such issues as consciousness and conscientising, racial justice, addressing power relations and equity. Thus, writing in the complex South African context, Naidoo asserts,

Multiracial congregations can show how they are actively working to overcome the racial stereotyping and the attached power relations, so that all are able to enjoy an equal seat and voice at the table without ignoring or de-emphasising structural realities (Naidoo 2017).

Resane advocates for intervention tool called Difficult Dialogue with three practical elements of; change of church space into a centre of learning; utilisation of people’s stories and striving for a church culture that reflect multiculturalism and diversity. Difficult Dialogue is a process of engagement learnt from Universities in the USA and is being used in some South African universities to facilitate dialogue. It includes speaking, listening and enquiring. Those who engage in this process acknowledge difference and suspend judgement. (Resane 2020)

Furthermore, Resane argues that true multiculturalism and diversity must be reflected across the structures of the church starting with membership until leadership. Resane is worth quoting at length,

A truly multicultural congregation in South Africa is one in which the membership and leadership are multiracial, multi-ethnic, and share power and influence over the church's governance, worship, theology and doctrine, and programming. The leadership is intentional to shape its preaching, teaching and worship on a regular basis. These intentions expose members to theological views and worship styles from different cultural backgrounds. A truly multicultural congregation recognises that not one cultural group has a complete understanding of God's kingdom... (Resane 2020).

2.4.4. The Methodist Church and Racial integration

The Methodist Church' public commitment to social cohesion in general and racial integration can be traced from the theology and missional practice of its founder, John Wesley. John Wesley's theology of scriptural holiness was about the personal and social holiness. For John Wesley, inward holiness, which is private and individualistic was meaningless if it did not lead to practical involvement or faith in action which led to the reform of society. "For Wesley, scriptural holiness – to experience for ourselves and invite other to experience the grace of God through Jesus Christ, and as grace filled people change society to be just and merciful" (Martin 2008:37).

Methodist Theologian, Dion Forster, draws from one of the Methodists of Southern Africa's eminent leaders, Peter Storey of John Wesley's contribution to racism in general and the system of apartheid in particular. Storey argues that Wesley did not engage in the concept of racism which was only coined in the 20th century but instead engaged in the pathology of slavery which was rife at that time. Storey posits,

In his opposition to this most degrading of all racist practices Wesley moved from simply seeking the conversion of the slaves, and the amelioration of some of the horrific conditions under which they laboured, to joining those, led by the Quakers, who were working for the total abolition of slavery itself (in Forster 2008).

In an article titled; The Quest for Identity in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Storey traces the identity of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa from its establishment by the John and Charles Wesley in the 18th Century England to its

missionary settlement on the African continent until the current epoch (in Conradie and Klaasen 2014). Influenced by John Wesley, the Methodist Church has been located with the poor, the working class and against such exploitative practices like slavery (in Conradie 2014: 82ff). Storey argues that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's identity is influenced by doctrinal, racial and cultural issues. He argues that the regional and national denominational structures are "multiracial" in nature. It a country that is 80% with historical white dominant cultural and structural ethos. He observes that the post-apartheid identity of the Church is becoming more African influenced but also middle-class oriented.

Methodist Scholars point out to what can be referred to as major markers to the engagement of the Church with issues with missional transformation (Forster 2008; Benjamin and Dlamini, Chikote 2011:46). These are the Church's Statement of 'One and Undivided' in 1958, the formation of the Black Methodist Consultation in 1975, the Obedience 81 Conference in 1981, the Journey to the New Land Programme of the 1990s and the Mission Congress in 2004. To these can be added the concept of Geographic or Integrating Circuits and the second Mission Congress which was held in 2016.

All of these were anchored on the 1958 statement which the Church declared its "conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided" (Cracknell and White 2005:76; Kulijian 2013: 71; Yrigoyen and Warrick 2013: 342). The full declaration read,

Like other parts of the life of our country, the church is facing choices which will determine her future development, and in particular the choice between unity and division. The Conference, in prayer and heart-searching, expressed its conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided, trusting in the leading of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition (MCSA 1958).

There are Methodist leaders such as Abel Hendricks who as Church President in 1976, wrote a letter to be read in all churches urging examination of internal racist trends and Stanley Mogoba, who at his induction as Presiding Bishop in 1988 called for a non-racial Church (Venter 2007:53). In 1962 the Church published a document on 'multiracial' worship, and in 1970 Rev Peter Storey submitted to the Methodist

Renewal Commission a document entitled Towards Inclusive Congregations. “Storey outlined a three-year plan to convert an inner-city congregation to one that is ‘racially inclusive’” (Venter 2007:53).

The Black Methodist Church was established in 1975 by a group of Methodist Ministers led by the Black Consciousness activist, Rev Nkathathazo Baartman who became its first chairperson.

Ordained in 1966, Baartman had deep roots in the black consciousness movement, which was now at the height of its influence. He summoned a consultation of black ministers, to meet at St John’s Methodist Church in Bloemfontein, in May 1975, to reflect on the ministry of the church from a black perspective... (Balía 1994:27).

The Black Methodist Consultation was influenced by both the philosophy of Black Consciousness as it was championed by Steve Biko and Black Theology. (Venter 2007:54).

Methodist theologian Mtshiselwa observes that; “The view that the BMC emerged as an activist formation within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) that sought to redress racism during the apartheid rule in South Africa, is not only conclusive, but generally accepted.” (Mtshiselwa 2015)

Kumalo (2018) has identified the following as BMC objectives at the time:

- *Equal representation in the structures of the church.*
- *Same treatment of all Methodist ministers, especially regarding stations.*
- *Dismantling of old traditions, customs and racism.*
- *Growth of African spirituality.*
- *Equality in financial remuneration of ministers.*
- *The combining of synods instead of two separate ones based on race.*
- *The development of black consciousness and political awareness amongst black clergy.*

The sentiment of the BMC on racial integration is well captured by Balía who writes,

The BMC believed the integration of circuits did not necessarily mean that people would worship together. The spirituality of the Black Church was furthermore a unique contribution which blacks should not abandon or be ashamed of. 'Integration of services should not just be a coming together on Sunday services to absolve the consciences of the whites, and it should not be furthering the westernisation of the church. One of the prerequisites of integration was that the blacks and the whites should see each other as equals (Balila 1994: 29-30).

Obedience 81 was a conference that was attended by 800 Methodists in which they committed to racial unity at congregational level (Venter 2007:53). Robert Vosloo points out that The Message of Obedience 81 declares; "What we have heard convicts us that every Methodist must witness against the disease which infects all our people and leaves none unscathed in our Church and country. We call upon every Methodist to reject apartheid" (in Bongmba 2015:415). The Journey to the New Land is a process of ecclesiological renewal which was launched at the Convocation that was held in Benoni and took place between 1992 and 1997. Although this has not been reflected in the final documents of the Church, Kumalo points out that one of the calls or commitments that the Church made was on racism;

This call came as a concern raised predominantly by black Methodists who were tired of talking about unity, yet remaining separate. The convocation made it clear that the Church had resisted apartheid, but it still had a long way to go to overcome the divisions in its own fellowship (Kumalo 2006).

The Methodist Church introduced an integrating programme called Geographic Circuits to transform and intervene in the Apartheid special planning.

This programme was a direct challenge to the apartheid government's programme of forced separation. The principle was for Methodist societies (congregations) and circuits (a grouping of congregations) who were geographically aligned to form a new circuit that included people of various population groups... Only in 1993 did the Methodist Church take the bold decision to compel the formation of geographic. By this time the name had changed to integrated (Benjamin 2015:58).

The Methodist Church held its second Mission Congress in October 2016 in Pietermaritzburg under the theme “Igniting Mission –Breaking Barriers.” Addressing the 2016 Methodist Conference on the same theme just a month earlier, the Presiding Bishop, Rev Z Siwa said,

We need to reflect deeply and strive to become a society that embraces difference and demonstrates a better reality. Whilst the context is ever changing, there are realities that have remained the same. Perceptions of racial superiority and the pain of the marginalised, continue to haunt us. The church must be at the forefront of the mission drive to transform this reality. Yes, the church has the potential to lead in the mission of transforming realities. Above all God is calling us now to journey together with the God of life throughout the length and breadth of the Connexion as a true transforming discipleship movement (in MCSA 2016).

The discourse of the Methodist’s Church’s vision and practice on racial integration cannot be complete without a reflection on the role of the Black Methodist Consultation (BMC). The BMC is a “formation within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa” which was established in 1975 by the Rev Ernest Nkhathazo Baartman to counter the injustice racism and white supremacy. The concept of “formation within the MCSA” is an intentional and principled stand that the BMC is not a formal structure of the institutional church. It started as Black Ministers Consultation and opened to laity in 1976. The current mission statement of the BMC is, “To Transform the MCSA into a truly African Church by challenging the Eurocentric power structure, ethos and practices of the MCSA by equipping Black Methodists to contribute meaningfully and actively in the MCSA given the context of Africans” (BMC Website).

CHAPTER 3: FIELDWORK

3.1. Introduction

The main question of this research was to establish how racial integration in a Methodist Church contributes towards social cohesion.

The three objectives of the research were to:

- a. Assess the congregation's understanding and experience of racial integration.
- b. Establish how their understanding of racial integration was implemented in their congregational life.
- c. Establish how this understanding is aligned to the Methodist vision of unity and social cohesion

The research investigated the question using the case study approach. A case study method is a kind of research that concentrates on one thing which could be a person, an institution, an event and looks at it in detail without generalising (Thomas 2011:3). In this chapter, the history and social location of Eden Methodist Church as a congregation is described. The chapter went further to explain the participants who were selected from clergy leadership, lay leaders and general congregants. Furthermore, the data analysis, procedure and presentation of the data, the research findings and emerging themes are described.

3.2. Background to the Sample

Eden Methodist Church (the name of the congregation has been changed to maintain anonymity) is a middle-class suburban congregation based in what was originally referred to as the East Rand. It is a former white Methodist Church that was founded around 1994 in a different suburb from where it currently located. The congregation's history of transformation was impacted by the history of freedom and democracy in South Africa. It was impacted by the changes that came to former white suburbs due to the changes of the Apartheid Spatial Planning and the consequent Group Areas

Act. Apartheid Spatial Planning refers to the policy where black human settlements like homelands and townships were located far from places with economic and investment opportunities. (Mohamed in Kochendorfer-Lucius and Pleskovic 2009:213). The membership of the congregation changed from being majority white to being predominantly black. As more black people moved into the greater East Rand suburbs, more whites left to upmarket places. As more black people came to join the congregation, more white people left to surrounding Methodist congregations that were still predominantly white. Some went to other white denominations, especially the growing number of white dominated family churches or ministries.

The estimated current demographics of the congregation membership are around 20 whites, 1350 Africans, 50 coloureds and Indians and about 150 foreign nationals. The membership is mostly young and with an average age of 50. It is because of this that it has a vibrant Wesley Guild (Youth Organisation) with a membership of around 80 and a large Sunday School (Children's Ministry) of around two hundred. It is the vibrancy of the Sunday School that is reported to be the draw card of the young adult parents. The congregation is middle class with many being civil servants and others working for the corporate sector. African members of the Church are mostly migrants from outside Gauteng.

Eden can now safely be totally referred to as a former white church. Although there are still a few white people in the congregation, the congregation can technically be regarded as a predominantly black church with all practices of black churches taking place. These practices include the introduction of black organisations with such typical black services like the Covenant and Good Friday-Easter services with all-night revival services and the preaching of the Seven Words of Jesus on the Cross. The Covenant Service is an annual service of commitment which John Wesley introduced to Methodism and is very popular in the black congregations (Cracknell and White 2005:186; Wood in O'Brien and Carey 2015:190). This includes the regular singing of the *Siyakudumisa (Te Deum Laudamus)*. The *Te Deum*, which is referred to as the hymn of the Church has been sung in the Church since the time St Benedict (Marumo 2019).

The Eden Methodist Church's mission is expressed through traditional Methodist organisations and informal mission groups that are open to anyone who want to serve. These mission groups and organisations include:

- Ladies of Hope is the original women's organisation that was created to serve all women from diverse racial groups.
- The Women's Manyano is a Prayer and Service Union that stands for "holiness of life, purity of speech, temperance and service to the glory of God and for the extension of God's Kingdom."
- The Young Women' Manyano is similar to the Women's Manyano but focuses on younger or unmarried women
- The Young Men's Guild is uniformed organisation of men and strives "to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ for continuous healing and transformation of the church and communities."
- The Local Preachers Association is a formation of lay Methodist Preachers who support, especially in large rural areas with several congregations, the circuit ministers by preaching the gospel of Christ
- The Wesley Guild is a structure of church youth who come to "band together to help one another to grow in Christian maturity, to have fun and serve the needs of the society as they see it."
- Worship Ministry has three teams that lead worship specific to the ethos of a particular service from the three that exist at Eden
- The Healing Team comprises of members who have been equipped "...to pray with people for healing."
- The Counselling Team is made of members who have been trained and are supervised by a psychologist to "... journey with people who need someone to talk to explore certain areas of life in general."
- Outreach and Prison Visit Ministry

The identity and ethos of Eden is captured in the profile of the congregation that includes their unique logo which represents inclusivity and hospitality of the vulnerable

and marginalised of society. This logo of the welcoming cross stands tall outside their Church, building, hangs on their walls and is used in their documents. It is a congregation that recognised the past divisions and hurts and is committed to the healing and transformation of society.

The sentiment of this message of the embracing love of God further finds expression in the core values of the congregation which emphasise the importance of companionship of all congregants and the connecting of different people and creating opportunities for a diverse community.

The congregation is currently having three services. The 07:00, which has more white members, mostly the older folk and small number of blacks, is described as the contemplative service and has Eucharist celebrated every week; the 09:00 which has more black young adults, is a contemporary service with choruses accompanied by a band with musical instruments and the 11:00 service is a hundred percent black service that uses the historical Book of Offices and Common Prayer liturgy now translated in African languages. Although there is no agreed terminology, Methodist congregations in each setting label their services based mostly on the type of liturgy and music used in that particular service (Clarke 2018: 155). Writing in the context of the United Methodist Church in the United States of America, Hickman notes age and technological developments as variables in the labelling of the services.

Music in worship was changing, too, due in no small measure to electronics. Pipe organs and acoustic pianos were increasingly supplemented or replaced by a variety of other acoustic and electronic instruments. Congregations became increasingly used to amplified sound in worship and sometimes preferred it (Hickman 2011:).

3.3 Practical Theology

The focus of this research is to understand racial integration not just as an abstract philosophical concept but its contribution to Practical Theology in general and congregational studies and identity in particular. It will provide to both the theory and practice of racial integration. In recognising the fact that theology can be practical, and

practice can be theological. There is so much to need for knowledge and practice to assist racially integrating congregations in South Africa.

Anderson writes about the dialectical relationship between theology and practice,

If theory precedes and determines practice, then practice tends to be concerned primarily with methods, techniques and strategies for ministry, lacking theological substance. If practice takes priority over theory ministry tends to be based on pragmatic results rather than prophetic revelation. All good practice include practice... theory without good practice is invalid theory (Anderson 2001:14).

It is this theory and practice on racial integration that this study contributes to. It will assist many such racially diverse congregations to respond to the what must be done and the how to do it. It is, as Anderson further points out, about congregations to be, to live, to act and reflect on the actions both within the congregation and its missional identity in the world.

Anderson takes this point further and argues convincingly,

Any theology that cannot respond to the question 'What should we do?' and 'How should we live?' operates within the confines of the outer envelope... At the same time, it is precisely when practical theology engages the outer envelope in its action-reflection process that it becomes a living and vital theology of the church and its mission in the world (Anderson 2001:28).

Community, of whatever type, is the setting within which Practical Theology finds expression. It is in the communal life – including that of a congregation that the theory and practice of Christian beliefs are applied and reflected upon. Ward argue,

Most significantly, every believer is situated in the life, thought, and practices of a community. Theologians learn to think about God by sharing in a communal conversation that characterises the Church. So, while practical theology may be complex and at times hard to pin down, a clue to making any sense of it lies in what it means to be in the middle of the Christian community (Ward 2017).

3.4. Sampling Profile of Participants

The entire sample was randomly selected and was made up of a racially diverse group of people that included Africans, whites, a coloured and an Indian. There was gender and age mix across the whole sample. All the participants were part of the journey of racial integration during different times since Eden Methodist Church moved to the East Rand which is a period that spans over twenty years.

The sample of the interviews was 15 participants comprising three clergy former and current clergy; five lay leadership [stewards] and seven members who were involved in the mission groups. The racial proportion of the sample was eight Africans, five whites, one coloured and one Indian. These reflected a rough ratio because the white membership had declined due to white flight. The number of clergies interviewed is historical in that since its establishment in 1994, the congregation has had only three ministers two of which were white and one black.

The identification of the three clergy were straight forward and done by their mere vocation and responsibility. The incumbent clergy identified several lay leaders and ordinary members. I contacted several of them and selected those who were keen, open and available to be interviewed. There are those who could not be available due to their pressing schedules. I had requested that the sample be diverse in the demographics of race and age. The clergy were selected because they are custodians of the Church' theological culture and spiritual ethos. The lay leaders are, alongside the clergy, the leaders who collectively provide the strategic mission direction of the Church. The lay members are, on the other hand, those who participate and experience any transformation, including racial integration, that the Church undertakes.

3.5. Research Process: Interviews

The qualitative research interview is appropriate for the purpose of this study. Interviewing is a social practice that involves "... an unearthing of pre-existing meaning nuggets from the depths of the respondent, while others argue that it should be and unbound and creative process where the researcher is free to construct appealing

stories” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:18). Furthermore, at the “root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman 2006:9).

Face-to-face and telephonic interviews were conducted with participants who live outside Gauteng. All the interviews were electronically recorded on the mobile phone. The choice of the physical space was very important in the face-to-face interviews. “The physical space in which an interview is located can have a strong influence on how it proceeds. Three aspects of the physical environment are especially important: comfort, privacy and quiet” (King and Horrocks 2010:42). The resident minister allowed the researcher to use a church office which was convenient. In some instances, the researcher met with the participants in the comfort of their homes. The interviews were later then transcribed.

An interview is a live social interaction where the space of the temporal unfolding, the tone of the voice, and the bodily expressions are immediately available to the participants in the face-to-face conversation, but they are not accessible to the out-of-context reader of the transcript. The audio recording of the interview involves a first abstraction from the live physical presence of the conversing persons, with a loss of body language such as posture and gestures (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:178).

There were six questions for each of the three different groups of participants. There were specific questions for the clergy, for the lay leaders and for the general members. Each set of questions were meant to extract particular information based on the location of these groups in the congregation. The interview questions sought to elucidate on the three research questions (The list of question can be found in the Appendix 3).

The Clergy

- a. What has been the attitude of the founding members of Eden towards the change in racial demographics?
- b. In what way did Eden align to the Methodist commitment of a One and Undivided Church?

- c. What practical initiatives did the leadership of Eden undertake to realise racial integration?
- d. What have been the benefits of racial integration to Eden?
- e. What have been the challenges of racial integration?
- f. What social relations amongst members exist beyond the formal church relations?

Lay Leadership (Stewards)

- a. What is your view of a racially integrated congregation?
- b. In what practical ways has Eden demonstrated racial integration?
- c. What have been the benefits of racial integration to Eden?
- d. What have been the challenges of racial integration?
- e. What needs to be done to improve on racial integration at Eden?
- f. What social relations amongst members exist beyond the formal church relations?

The Members

- a. What are the marks of true racial unity in a local congregation?
- b. In what way has Eden demonstrated racial unity?
- c. What has been the response of the members to the coming together of different races at Eden?
- d. What have been the benefits of racial integration to Eden?
- e. What have been the challenges of racial integration?
- f. What social relations amongst members exist beyond the formal church relations?

3.6. Analysis and Presentation of Data

3.6.1 Data Analysis Procedure

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) has been described as a set of systematic techniques that analyses texts, images and themes. Content analysis includes the interpretation of texts and has a descriptive focus (Drisko and Maschi 2016:82; Krippendorff 2004:3). It includes assigning parts of the collected material to categories of a coding frame). Schreier goes on to identify the eight steps of Qualitative Content Analysis as:

1. Deciding on your research question
2. Selecting your material
3. Building a coding frame
4. Dividing your material into units of coding
5. Evaluating and modifying your coding frame
6. Main analysis
7. Interpreting and presenting our finding (Schreier 2012: 1).

The researcher started by listening to the interview recordings and reading the transcripts. This assisted to internalise the interview and appreciate how the interview contributed to the topic. The researcher then used the Atlas.TI – a scientific academic analysing software for qualitative data. He used the software to organise and structure the collected data.

The software programme developed by Muhr available in English and offers processing possibilities at both the textual, for example interview to be interpreted and the interpretations or coding that belong to it, a 'hermeneutic' unit is formed on the screen. The principal strategy of the programme can be characterised as 'VISE': Visualisation, Integration, Serendipity and Exploration. Textual locations can be marked, ordered, commented or related to one another for a better overview (Ohlbrecht 2004 :380).

3.6.2 Reconceptualisation of Data

Each transcript was read, cleaned and manually coded using key words that related to the topic. All these are words that related to social cohesion and racial integration like diversity, assimilation, multiculturalism. I then individually coded each transcript staying closer to the list. It was then captured into the ATLAS.TI. ATLAS.TI as part of the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) is a code-based theory building software package that assist "... to test relationships between issues, concepts and themes to develop broader or higher order categories, or... to develop more detailed specific codes where certain conditions combine in the data" (Lewins and Silver 2007:7). Codifying is about arranging, grouping and linking qualitative data in a systematic order that ensures meaning and explanation (Saldana 2013:9).

Categories were created by grouping together similar ideas. A generated report produced a list of categories (The list can be found in Appendix 4) All these categories had different strengths and were sometimes overlapping. The frequency of the categories assisted in developing the following themes:

- Social Relations
- Managing Diversity
- Community Demographics
- Whiteness and White Hegemony
- Assimilation
- Black Presence
- Representative Leadership
- Transformative Education Programmes
- Inclusive Worship
- Language

The researcher was able to identify, from the transcripts, quotations that supported the different categories.

3.6.3 Findings on the Research Objectives

I have attempted to answer the research objectives by answering each of the research questions. The identified categories have been analysed and linked to these research objectives as per the diagram below.

Objective 1: Assess the congregation's understanding and experience of racial integration. This generated the following categories which serve as focus areas: Social relations; Managing Diversity; Whiteness and White Hegemony; Assimilation and Black Presence.

Objective 2: Establish how their understanding of racial integration was implemented in their congregational life. The following focus areas emerged: Representative Leadership; Transformative Education Programmes; Inclusive Worship and Language.

Objective 3: Establish how this understanding is aligned to the Methodist vision of unity and social cohesion

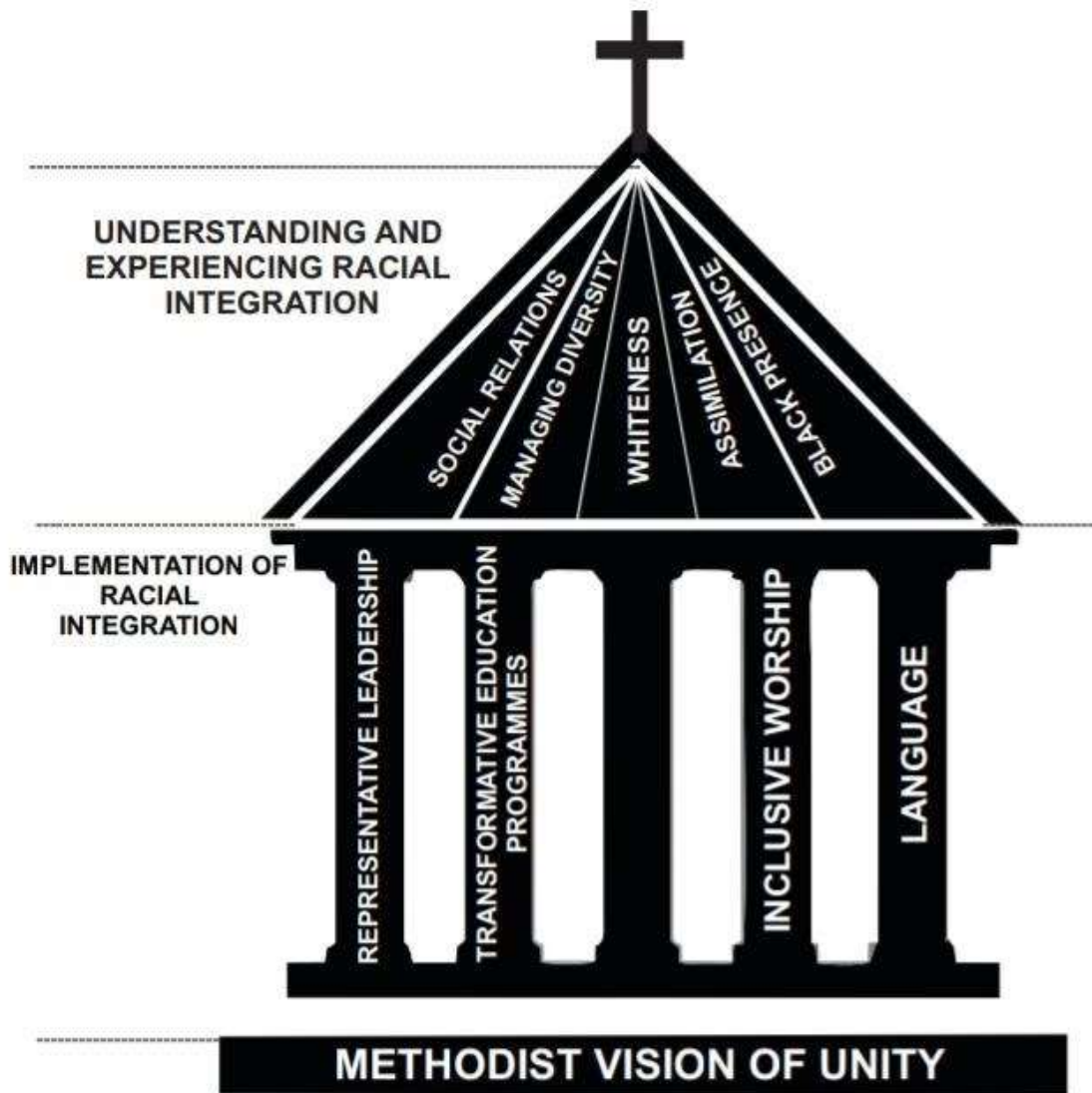


Figure 3.1: Diagram with categories linked to the research objectives

In the data presentation in this section, I have been guided by the data-theory coupling which presents the data in a structure that tells, then shows and then tells (Golden-Biddle and Locke :52-57). This structure is also referred to by other scholars as the SQC (Set-up, Quote and Comment) pattern. It starts with an introductory paragraph that provides the set-up or context in order to make sense of the raw data that will be presented next. Next is raw data in the form of a quote from the fieldwork. The last part is the comment that provides a brief commentary to the quote. The quotes are taken from the interview transcripts (See Appendix 5). Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the participants. The transcripts have been numbered according to the participants and the paragraphs have been numbered and the main

part of the quote has been bolded. These are coded in the form P1:1 where P1 is participant number 1 and the 1 refers to the paragraph in the script.

3.6.3.1. Findings on Objective 1: Assess the Congregation's Understanding and Experience of Racial Integration

The first objective is about understanding the congregation's, through the participants, understanding and experience of racial integration. The participants, sharing in the direct interviews, drew their understanding of racial integration from both their observation as well as their experience at Eden Methodist Church. There are some of the participants who had positive observations and experiences of racial integration while others had negative experiences at Eden.

Some of the positive observations and lived experience of the participants included social relations, diversity, unity and community. There are others who had negative observations

3.6.3.1.1. Social Relations

The Participants grappled with their observation and experience of race relations in general but also personal and social relations in particular. There were mixed experiences in terms of how people related inside the church and beyond. Whilst some members raised concerns about white people who would pretend not to know them when outside church premises, there are those that built personal friendships with people they met at church. Genuine social relations normally manifest themselves more and better as friendship. This is very important in this socially changing and unpredictable world in which traditional and more established points of social care – family, work, community – are reduced to eroded from the centre of people's life worlds.

Some members of the church-related outside of church in their personal capacity through cell meetings/house calling meetings. Participant 3 who is a clergy person observed and appreciated this,

I think within worship groups there were **friendships that involved going to people's homes**. I think perhaps not into the completely spontaneous space,

but into the semiformal space. That definitely happened, **that people were choosing to be together**. I am picturing faces in the worship team. I would say those groups were famous for that thing. The relationships endured for a few years after we left that were cross racial (P3:26).

To some extent, people in the church did have relations outside of the church and created a space to support one another outside of church. It appears that the more people interacted together, the chances increased for them to build social relations beyond the church. These relations happen when people actively choose to create them.

The more people relate in church and extend their relations outside the Church, the more they come to know and become support to each other. Participant 6 demonstrates how people who have shown interest in each other and sharing in their joys.

*It was people coming to church and feeling at home enough to stay there welcomed. She **became a good friend of mine** and I can remember going to her son's wedding in the township. I am not in touch with her anymore, but I kept in touch with her for a long time. It was just **people being naturally and warmly together and interested in one other. Comforting and helping each other in times of sadness and difficulty, celebrating with each other in times of joy, learning to understand each other differences, realising that there are differences and if we don't understand them, we can't respect them properly. That's what important** (P6:06).*

A point is being made that part of the intentionality is understanding differences and creating support. Those who have engaged in such relationships have pointed at how those have benefitted them. The building of social relationships is not an instant exercise. It is a stained process that takes time.

Participants 1 and 2 also observed and reflected on the social dynamics and relations that existed beyond the church premises.

There were a number of relationships, particularly which of the remnants with Mandela Settlement, their relationship continued in various forms. Even myself I'm not something other than Eden. I was a member of Eden just like anyone

else. **Significant relationships that have touched my life.** Some of my **closest friends during that time have been black people and remain so.** Certainly, from my own perspective and that's stuff is crucial. It's quite interesting the way I have been talking about a congregation as if I am separate from it. I have benefitted as much as anyone else. The stuff progresses, it's on going. I think we will only learn when we do have relationships that they check us. **The relationships that I formed at Eden certainly are relationships where people have spoken into my life. I am not sure I would have been easily received have it not been for the good relationships** (P1:28).

P2:27: But I don't have any doubt that wherever there were relationships could be formed or they were formed between a black and white people those could have progressed. For instance, if I think of **Sipho and James I think they became friends. They did more things outside the church.** There were pockets of it. And again, it's not going to happen very... **It's a process, it's taking time...** (P2:28).

Children and youth tend to find it relatively easier to build social relations that went beyond the Church. They related very well and were more integrated than their parents. Sunday School and the youth club were a breeding space for the deepening of relations. This was also influenced by the schools that these children attended, which were racially integrated. Participant 9, who had been a youth leader and had the opportunity to spend time with the young people shared a relationship amongst youth that went romantic until the mixed couple married.

People were suddenly caught up that my life choices I might make it differently in light of my life experiences. Certainly, **seeing the young people there was no issue around dating across racial lines. They were colour blind.** The parents were engaging with that as well because they had to reflect on that. **I did a wedding of one those couple last year.** The way they were being able together, both families were from Eden. **Both of their theology had been framed through Eden.** The wedding had an amazing sense of freedom to be with each other, to be humorous with each other, real generosity. I think it impacted people socially, it impacted people's decisions around the way forward (P9:24).

P9:22: Yes (inaudible) married each other. It was amazing to go to that wedding last year. **All of those youths are still friends and were at the wedding.** That was quite an amazing experience. **Ten years later, to walk into a wedding and they are a multiracial group of friends, still friends with each other, still connecting and work with each other.** That was very interesting for me... (P9:32).

The same observation was made by Participant 12.

There used to be a youth pastor without appropriating this and giving Eden credit for it. **I think it was a year or two ago that two kids got married one Indian one white.** I always look at that as a testimony to what **Eden was really about that you bring people together in the same space and they relate beyond their racial definition** (P12:26).

It does appear that youth do not carry the same historical baggage that the system of apartheid – with its separation, imposed on their parents. Love has the power and ability to transcend any racial differences and barriers. This is more so if everybody commits to efforts of strengthening social relations. The impression is given that blacks were doing more in investing in these relations that extended beyond the Church premises. This is certainly the observation and experience of participants 10 and 11.

There were a few engagements outside of the church life. People having coffee together. We had covenant groups where people would gather, have conversations people would gather to have tea parties and stuff like that, **which was encouraging life beyond the church.** That didn't seem to pay off well. We then had picnics in the church and we would after the service invite families to come and mingle and have a big picnic here. **Again, we saw black people embracing the opportunity and the white just decided not to come.** So, whatever we did to try and make the whites feel that we want to be one community, just didn't work and mind you even this thing of picnics and stuff is a white culture. So, blacks really tried in this community to try and accommodate and embrace the culture that they were not used to, but that didn't work. **So, I think there was an attempt to have engagements just beyond the church life as it were, but that didn't pay off** (P10:38).

Yes, there were. The prayer groups, the smaller thing like the Potter's House that one goes to. **It's a smaller group and from that you form stronger friendships.** One would then perhaps for a meal away from church. So yes, you can create friendship, so yes you can create friendship groups (P11:22).

Participants 12 noticed how people were able to demonstrate hospitality at their homes as they shared in meals. Thus, demonstrating social relations that went beyond just worshipping together.

One of the first thing was the way in which the congregation was encouraged to relate so not merely as people who go to the same church but people who can also **visit each other at each other's houses have meals together and learn to know a little bit more about each other** in other ways relate at more than just as church goers. So that was deliberate (P12:06).

Black people, steeped in the communality of African culture, find it builds communal networks. Celebratory efforts that deepen community and fellowship, like social gatherings, are always more attractive to them. This is the not necessarily the same with white people whose culture tends to be private and individualised.

3.6.3.1.2. Managing Diversity

Diversity was seen as an integral part of the church in terms of transformation and racial integration. Several members understood, observed and experienced diversity as a positive expression of racial integration. The participants were more descriptive and affirming of the importance of diversity.

Diversity is viewed as more a resource than a liability to racial integration and community and social cohesion. It is understood as something that is Christian. Participants 2 and 8 who are both black lay leaders, appreciated this diversity as a source of creativity as people brought different contributions of who they are.

diversity is a very integral part of our life as a community. That we recognise that **we are different but in Christ we are one and more importantly as a community** (P2:20).

You need to come out with a feeling that there is recognition of diversity. That **diversity is recognising that we are stronger in our diversity**. In other words, our **diversity doesn't break us up, but it gives a nice flavour**. It gives creativity things done differently but they are all in the praise of God (P2:04)

In my view, a racially integrated church would mean a **church that goes beyond the colour bodies** particularly where we are a church that would have these various services and you would have one service stipulated, even if it's not said, but for a particular colour, mainly your early morning services and then your later on services are the separated for the blacks more than anything. But and **an integrated church is a church that embraces each other**, embraces diversity and **embraces various cultures that are there** (P8:02).

Diversity is understood as going beyond colour and intensifies social cohesion when it also embraces different cultures. The Anti-Bias Programme is a tool that facilitates diversity beyond just the racial. Participant 12 observed that.

One of the things that at Eden we were very strong on is teaching. **We did the diversity, we called it Anti-Bias**, the diversity course and how that **helped was to assist people to begin to see their capability in any form of discrimination whether be gender or albinism or ageism or racism, classism**. So that course what quite key in ensuring that you **get people to understand why we are trying to live the way we are** and also to **begin to share some of those racial stereotypes and bias that people have in a formal setting**, I alluded earlier to the fact that we encouraged visits to each other's houses, so that was quite important to Eden (P12:08).

It is important to employ tools that are intentional in creating opportunities, space and in developing tools that foster diversity. Participant 2 recognised the importance of worship as a creative space for entrenching diversity.

We introduced **the 11:00 service which brought in a whole different dimension**. That was really to say **diversity does not mean we do away with what is African and how it's worshipped, but we open up the stage**. We have got three services which **allows people to be able to move and they have got different flavours** those three services (P2:20).

3.6.3.1.3. Community Demographics

The racial integration of the residential community in which a former white Church exists, does have an influence on the racial integration of that particular Church. Eden Methodist Church points out that racial integration was impacted by an influx of black people into the neighbourhood. The reactive outflux of whites did itself impact on the racial profile of the congregation. The factor of the changing community demographics and its impact on the church was noted by a diverse number of participants that included participants 1, 5, 13 and 14

Participant 1 noted that black people started moving in and occupying townhouses that were previously occupied by whites who were now relocating. This context is important because those black people would go to churches in their community. In his view, Eden integrated quickly because of this phenomenon. A congregation that is well incarnated in the life of a community is likely to draw membership from that community.

When they were being broken down that was during the end of apartheid so **when townhouses were built, they were being filled by both black and white**. It was probably unique in the country. I know people have said a whole lot of stuff about the ability to integrate a congregation and I think Eden did integrate quicker and more substantially than other congregations, **but I think largely it was due to the context**. I don't think people certainly myself taking much credit for that. **Black people were in that area**. Even if it was an all-white church to begin with, certainly when we moved across to the other side, **the surrounding community was not an all-white community at that stage** (P1:02).

Participant 5 also noted the changing demographics of the East Rand, the community in which Eden exists. For this participant it is the responsibility of leadership to observe the changing nature of the community and establish how that should benefit the local church. It is a good thing for a congregation to reflect the demographics of its own community.

So, I am tempted to also think that **the change in demographics of East Rand had a lot to do with the change in the church as well**, but still the church still

needs to have that introspection to say how did we get to this point... if indeed the leadership can see that **racial integration has lot of benefits for us**, then they will begin to shape the life of the church in such a way that it would be attractive for people who are not black (P5:84).

A responsive Eden is, for Participant 12, one that would recognise that the changing demographics affected children's ministry as those moving in brought their children. The best response for such ministry is ensuring that the Sunday School teachers were alive to the importance of racial mix or integration.

Yes, it was quite strong. **As the community integrated, they bring children and the deliberate thing there was to ensure that you had teachers who could become sensitive to the dynamics in terms of the demographics** but as you know Sunday School teachers are really volunteers so it would be a mix of encouraging others but some were people who were quite passionate about Sunday School. (P12:22)

Participant 13, echoing the sentiments of others, makes a point that there could not be an expectation of the demographics of the church to be different from those of its community. The population percentage of the neighbourhood would be reflected in the Church.

If things change around East Rand community because East Rand community is also maybe 80 or 90 % black. I think **it won't be fair to expect the change to be different from what you see outside** (P13:46).

The changing community demographics also impacted the local schools where children started to mix. Participant 14 expected that racial integration at schools to be relate and impact the Church.

One observation would be that it is because most of these kids go to the same school. Of course, in terms of **how they relate would be adapting to what they had been doing all along at their schools**. It did seem easy and no contentions at all (P14:16).

Participant 9 who was a youth leader and therefore had access to young people beyond the church space, was aware of the community dynamics that included what happened at the schools. The public schools where integration was happening

appeared to be making progress. Not so at private schools where Whites were still the majority. There is an observation that young people started dating across the colour line.

The key thing for us was obviously trying and **engage with East Rand, which is a diverse community. Our youth was very diverse.** We never had a single couple date the same race, in the 5 years I was there. That was very interesting that every single couple was multiracial. **The youth were multiracial in terms of their engaging with each other.** The biggest gap I felt and I experienced was **private school kids struggled.** In particular, white private school kids. In the surrounding schools, the previously advantaged schools, the private ones were still 50% or more whites (P9:14).

3.6.3.1.4. Whiteness and White Hegemony

Participants identified the issue of whiteness as their experience in Eden. This whiteness manifest itself in white hegemony, white privilege and white flight. The concept of white hegemony relates to the dominance, influence and control of white people in society including the church.

It is reported that as soon as the number of black people increased and they asserted themselves, white people started leaving. The concept of white flight happens when white people feel they are in the minority and that the white hegemony is being challenged by something different, they simply leave. They usually use what appears to be innocent reason or motives that makes them relocate.

It is notable that the observation on whiteness, white hegemony and white flight was done across by leaders and members of all races.

Eden Methodist Church also experienced a huge amount of white flight. It was the same observation that when black people increased in number, white people started leaving. This was an observation of Participant 2 who is a black whilst participant 3 is white clergy. Those who leave used what was meant to be legitimate excuses like the wellbeing of their children.

Very interestingly it has been a situation where obviously, it reflects in terms of the parents where they are. I remember when you kind of have a shift from being majority white to black a congregation by in large. One of the things which we sat down with a number of **white folks is that they felt that their children didn't have space in terms of worshipping and being programmes and so on** (P2:14).

Participant 2 points out that the perception of white people having the blame and guilt as reasons that undermine racial integration and social cohesion. According to this participant it would seem that white victimhood happens and white people feel that any referral to the past is an attack on them. It further appears that then black people get accused of being stuck in the past.

P3:2 My sense in hindsight, is from where I am now looking back, is that **white people likely got off or the liberal thing is we have moved on let's not talk about the past**. I think the discomfort was probably especially the **last folk to leave was more around dealing with the discomfort of teaching than worship**. I don't think that was the issues so much as; **I feel uncomfortable, I feel like I am blamed, white guilt and stuff, I think** (P3:04).

The impression of those at Eden is that there is reluctance to embrace racial integration even when the Church is majority black with English culture. It is as if white people resist this change.

I have taken more so here because Eden was operating not linking in the traditional black Methodist church at all when I was there. **We were still an English church with black memberships. When you start to integrate ways of doing church, there is resistance of white people moving into traditionally black spaces**. The knowledge that **white leadership that comes in makes certain assumptions that don't give people space**. I can only speak for myself and my experiences. There is resistance... (P 3:18).

Participant 6 has the impression that there are those who the departure of the white minister as an excuse for them to move on.

The white people leaving the church and going. It always happens with change of ministers some people tend to follow an individual rather than belong to the

church. **After the white Minister left, quite a few people went.** I think the church was going dynamic and limbo then. I think the people left who really struggled to find a place to settle themselves after that. **They couldn't find a comfortable place where they felt they had the same stimulation and challenge.** It was different for them (P6:38).

Participant 8 reports that the leadership at Eden was dominated by white people and challenging it gave the impression that one was a rebel.

If you tried to challenge the *status quo* you would be seen as a rebel in church. The leadership was dominated by white people and the tradition was done by white people totally. We would only sing the 1 or 2 black songs that would be it. It was the song that they wanted (P8:20).

On the other hand, the same participant felt the leadership was more embracing of white culture at the expense of the black one. It appeared that black people had to stand up and assert themselves in order for their leadership to be recognised.

I would strongly feel the **then leadership embraced the culture of white people more than black people. Black people had to fight for themselves to be recognised within Eden at large.** It is the same black people in leadership with James that we lost black people as well that this people have turned into a black organisation by bringing these organisations (P8:20).

The financial resources of white people and threat to leave seem to have been used as a power leverage against racial integration and stumbling block to blacks providing leadership. Participant 8 felt that whites were thinking that the congregation would collapse if white people left.

Who felt that they had to go even to a point of telling us in VLG meetings that **if you do this you are in danger of losing white people. If white people go, the church can forget and shut down because church is balancing on white people's funds.** They would have correctly thought that because black people have never been given a chance to lead and a chance to contribute into the church (P8:50).

Participant 4 points out to the existence of a superiority and inferiority complex where white people think that they possess superior attributes over other races. White

superiority and supremacy are beliefs that white people possess that they have been endowed with natural traits that qualify them. In the case of Eden, this was about the allocation of microphones for those who were going to sing. For Participant 14, the mics were allocated even despite what was good or not good in singing.

We still have the number one superiority /inferiority complex. **Superiority that is on the part of the white who felt they are still superior and they would just make you feel that. Inferiority complex on the part of blacks** such that maybe when they are around white you see that they behave differently than when they are with one of their kind. Number two, whatever I mentioned on number one would contribute to egotism, being egotistic. They would be that competition of egos whether in leadership, whether at meetings whether at worship. For instance, I will make an example that at the worship team **we had certain individuals were appointed that they were the ones designated to have the mics no matter how not so good they are in terms of singing.** Given that they are that particular colour they made it standard that at the time these are the people who would be leading until such time where there was an increase in the microphones and there was a wider participation in terms of singing (P14:22).

The arrival of more black people and the introduction of organisations which are a black way of doing church and expressing faith appear to have led to unhappiness amongst white people. It is observed that the unhappiness of white people led to many of them leaving the Church. White flight is a phenomenon, the world over, where white people always leave residential areas or institutions such as school and church whenever the population of black people increases in those. It is interesting that the phenomenon of white flight was observed also by white participants. Participant 1 thinks that white people left because their “way” of doing church was changing.

When **white people started feeling that the way they are used to of doing church was changing, white people left** (P1:18).

Participant 1 further observed white privilege and entitlement. White privilege is the unfair advantages that white people have over black people in institutional settings.

Our Sunday School was adapting into being honouring the children present and from their context. **Whites started leaving** before and I will tell you how and

when that happened. It wasn't about numbers; it was about the way of doing things. **Whites stay as long as the white way is in operation. When white way of doing church changes whites leave** (P1:16).

This white privilege manifests itself in the form of dominance. Where whites feel that their dominance is declining, argues Participant 3, they simply leave. They are comfortable to stay for as long as they have the control of the space. They usually move to other spaces where there is white dominance and privilege. The Grapevine Church is reported to have provided an alternative space for them.

White people are not good at being a minority. My sense is whenever they get to a place of discomfort even living as community shift, **we move away we go somewhere where we have a number dominance...** we have got leadership, we are in control space, people move out they don't stay (P 3:12)

By the time I got there the people that remained this was their natural environment. White people were comfortable but **I think the founding members had long gone.** A lot of them **went to the Grapevine Church, which was a nice white space** (P3:6).

Participant 10 notes language became yet another excuse. This was, it seemed, now less about content but more about pronunciation. Again, children were to be protected against this. This is even though pronunciation and accents are part of the diversity that exists whenever different nations of people come together. English itself is spoken in different parts of the world using different accents. Even amongst the English themselves, there are different dialect and accents of the language.

When I arrived, there were beginning to be more blacks coming into the community, and which then resulted in **some of the founding members getting a bit unsettled. They started leaving** and they and **those who had not left started moving from the later service to the earlier service.** So, you almost had the 08:00 then as the one for the founding members and the 09:00 sorry the 10:00 the service for those who are coming in to the community which again left them feeling a little bit confined and they started leaving in numbers. **Some were complaining about their children not being able to play the games they used to because now the games that the new members of the community were playing, they were claiming, to be different.** The

language as well was an issue in terms of ... even though it is still English but the pronunciation was confusing to their children. So, it was a huge challenge towards the end they then ended up leaving (P10:2).

Participant 10 points to the allegation of dishonesty of those who claimed to have relocated and yet would still be found in the same neighbourhood. It is reported that they would be found at the same community malls and restaurants.

I made an interesting observation for many **reasons most of the people who left this community said they were relocating and I would bump into them at the shopping centres.** I'll be surprised that this person still lives here. In some restaurants that's where you'd find them and it's shocking to see how many **whites are still in this community** (P10:32).

3.6.3.1.5. Assimilation

Strongly related to the concept of whiteness and white hegemony is the manifestation of assimilation. With the concept of assimilation comes tolerance or accommodation, where one group is being accommodated by another group instead of the two being brought together and having one common group. The process at Eden was viewed as assimilation rather than integration, with whites and blacks having mutual and equal opportunities of directing the life of the Church.

In our case study, it is black people who felt that they were being assimilated into whiteness and learn the way things were done according to the former white church. Even after being at Eden for a long time, there seems to be no acknowledgement of black presence. Whereas it is usually the minority who must adjust and integrate into the majority, the situation at Eden is as if blacks experienced assimilation from when they were the minority until when they were the majority. Although the Church ended up with an overwhelming majority of black people, the church appeared to have still been conducted in the "English way." Nobody challenged the *status quo*. Black people felt that they were being accommodated instead of being tolerated or accepted. This was again evident in worship where they would be a perceived squeezing of one or two hymns to accommodate blacks. Most of worship – especially the songs, were used to favour white people.

The issue of assimilation was notably observed by two white Clergy, participants 1 and 3 as well as two black members, participants 5 and 14. Assimilation happens not in a dramatic and noticeable way but is very subtle with the effects only felt by the conscious. This is the point made by participant 1.

What we have is we have black and white people coming together. **Black people being assimilated into whiteness and white ways. Even though they are quite hard to describe but we could feel them.** The moment it begins to shift in the other direction, **there is no acknowledgement that black people have been here for more than ten years** doing in a way that was less than familiar to them. Suddenly then the moment that shift happens, white people leave, and it's like what the hell, it's absolutely unbelievable (P1:18).

The fact that black people were later the majority appear to have meant nothing. The English and liberal way took over. Racial integration becomes very superficial in a context where it is even difficult to challenge the *status quo* as participant 3 indicates was the situation. That seems to be always the case with the dominant cultures. They manifest themselves not in an imposing way.

...have subsequent thinking that goes the different ways of doing church, so Eden did a liberal English way of doing church. **Racially it was pretty much 97% black, but we did church in an English way. In the 3 years that I was there we never got challenged in that** (P 3:8).

Sometimes the dominated groups participate and contribute to their own assimilation. They may sometime think that they are accommodating others, as participant 5 thinks, only to find that they are being dominated and assimilated. Failure to challenge white people to learn African languages could undermine racial integration and impoverish social cohesion.

The very thing - for example going back to the example of worship that let us have different languages and that we are tolerating each other. Let us make sure that we accommodate you. **Maybe that's another word to use - accommodate instead of tolerate.** We accommodate you. Let's just have a song that's in isiXhosa. Let's have a song in Afrikaans. Let's have a song in English. **We are accommodating people** but when we are not allowing you who is not familiar with a Sesotho song for an example, the space to also

connect with others such as making sure that there are translations for that song. Once we put translations, we are inviting you into that space where it's not a space where we are saying okay now it's a turn for Zulus in this worship. We are saying even though there are people who are speaking Sotho and there is a Sotho song up there you as an English-speaking person can also be on that journey with people by making sure that there are translations there. It is having deliberate **act because once you put up saying let's accommodate people, you put up whatever you are putting up in in your congregation to accommodate people.** Once you go a step further to say that how do we then make sure that even those who are outside and not accommodated here are part of this then you are creating that integration (P5:08).

Assimilation includes appeasing black people with a sprinkling of few songs in worship as participant 14 observes. Any superficial and token way of doing such an important act of Church like worship could fail to facilitate genuine integration

You get that in a Sunday. There would be two, three, four vernacular songs to try and squeeze in and **make people of colour to be comfortable.** Which were welcomed slowly nicely because some of the songs were nice and groovy and people would just jump around and dance around as we sung Vuma vuma. **They were songs talking to most people of European descent** if I may say for white people (P14:6).

Sometimes the appeasement and compromise were presumably done in selecting songs of different languages but in a manner that was comfortable to white people. Participant 1 points out that the content is diverse, but the container is white. True integrating worship is one that takes both the form and the substance seriously.

White way, when you start the kind of shaping of worship. For example, I could introduce songs in different languages, but those **songs were placed into an order of service that white people were familiar with.** Therefore, **the container is still white. What's in the container is the diversity, but the container is still white** (P1:18).

3.6.3.1.6. Black Presence

The introduction of a black service and black organisations is reported to have disrupted the existing dominant culture and made some congregants uncomfortable. There are some of the participants who viewed this as ending the 'Eden way of being and doing church'. The introduction of the *Manyanos* (black traditional/uniformed organisations) were seen to bring a divide between people who wanted the established Eden way and those who embraced the black traditional organisations. The organisations were also perceived to have created a divide between black South Africans and other African nationals who did not relate.

Black organisations were seen to contribute to the lack of integration. Groups like the Women's Manyano were seen as dominant and lacking the grace and respect to give space to others. There was a query as to why they should be allowed to exist because they were viewed to be creating exclusion. They were seen to also be side-lining African people from outside South Africa. The black organisations were seen to have made many people uncomfortable. They were associated with the introduction of African worship which included the beating of drums which made white people unhappy. There is further recognition that those unhappy included some black people.

The observation on the attitude towards black organisations was made by participants 6 and 8 who are lay leaders and participant 5 who is an ordinary member. Participant 6 alleges that those in the Manyano were both dominant and disrespectful and did not give space to others.

...think there is **lack of integration on the basis of those who are in those organisations and those who are not in terms of respect**. One group, traditional groups like Manyano which is usually the dominant one and not **becoming dominant and lacking graciousness in respecting and giving space to other** which are going to be numerically smaller. Not every person sees themselves as a Manyano person. It was very interesting watching that coming in. I think there was leakage of membership because we didn't have it. People were going to churches that had the historical organisations because they missed and wanted them (P6:54).

The attitude towards the organisations was based on hearsay. The negative attitude happened even though there was a majority that preferred them as part of their African way of worship. They were seen as participant 6 says, undermining the opportunity for racial integration. Integration appears to have been understood as keeping the *status quo*.

Yes, the uniform. **I heard so much that was negative and I thought to myself, why are we having them?** I really understand there was a huge groundswell of people really wanted it. **I think in itself it creates an exclusion** of those who aren't part of it. If I was heading the spiritual community there is an area that needs integration. **You no longer got the opportunity for racial integration** other than yes you got people from outside South Africa who need to be respected and integrated from Zimbabwe, from Malawi, from Uganda, Zambabwe and Nigeria. **You have got the other African people, but you don't have black situation anymore.** There are less than 5 people that are left that are white for example. But **I think there is a challenge in integration that has been created by the bringing of the organisations** (P6:65).

Participant 8 noted the dissatisfaction that came with the establishment of these organisations.

They will never come out and be direct but in the sense, they say they are either too old or too busy the businesses require and they need them and their families. But **there was a huge dissatisfaction when the black traditional organisations came in.** The first one was Wesley Guild **they felt very uncomfortable** but they saw was the youngsters at ease and then **aboMama launched and that was a big hoo-ha even the Amadodana came and that just steeled them off** (P8:8).

The introduction of the black way of doing Church in general and worship in particular was viewed by participant 8, as chasing white people away because they were feeling uncomfortable.

Not one that when change wants to come about within that society you find a particular race mainly the white race exiting church because it goes against their tradition and culture of what they are used to do. To me, it's the church that works together regardless of race and colour where you are not focusing

on because you now bringing what we call your **Black Methodist organisational culture into a church like Eden you are now at risk of losing white people because they don't feel comfortable**, until we can close that gap, we still have problems (P8:02).

An increase in the number of black people was perceived as a threat. According to participant 8, there are those who viewed that as turning the Church into a township, a sentiment that has undertones of inferiority.

Then you have the 11 o'clock service which is the *Siyakudumisa* (sing the *Te Deum*). In all that coming, they just saw turning, in fact the **remarks of saying that we are turning this church into a location church we are turning this church into a black church**. But not just from white people but even black people who had have been in the church for a long time who adhered to the culture of 7:30 and 9:00 service which we wondered how because you are still black, I guess people see themselves in a different way (P8:8).

Black people enjoy drums as part of the African heritage. This was however, according to participant 8, not a welcome matter as white people did not like what they considered noisy drums. There is always an assertion by white people that blacks are noisy to the levels of intolerance.

You couldn't **just play drums and get too excited and white people did not want that as much still**. Even though they wanted a quiet service they wanted the 9:00 to be noisy but not too noisy (P8:28).

It is not only white people who had problems with black organisations. Participant 5 indicates that there are blacks who protected the white dominated version of racial integration, who also left. Sometimes where there is assimilation, black people who will want to protect such a version of racial integration. They may not want to alienate white people.

In fact, when things started changing ... the first Manyano that was introduced was the Wesley Guild, then probably two years later they introduced the woman's Manyano, they introduced iYMG, then they introduced Barwetsana (Young Women) and now they even have Abashumayeli (lay preachers.) Once

that starts happening, **those black people who protected the integration started leaving** Eden (P 5:50).

3.6.3.2. Findings on Objective 2: Establish the Understanding of the Implementation of Racial integration in the Congregation

The second objective was about establishing how the participants understood the implementation of racial integration at Eden Methodist Church. The participants were able to identify what they viewed as intentional efforts that contributed positively to the implementation of racial integration at the Eden congregation of the Methodist Church. Intentionality is very important principle in racial integration of churches.

There are several factors that participants identified as important efforts of integration at Eden. Leadership was identified as an important variable with an important role in driving racial integration in the Church. The gradual identification and inclusion of black leaders was a welcome effort. Transformative education programmes were identified to have had a positive role in the implementation of racial integration at Eden. Inclusive Worship and Language were also identified as those intentional interventions that facilitated racial integration.

3.6.3.2.1. Representative Leadership

The leadership of Eden was reportedly initially all white until black people moved in and started participating. There was an intentional effort of having a leadership team that was representative of different racial groups and bringing in black ministers. The Visionary Leadership Group, which is based on annual commitments relating to worship, generosity, a form of service, became the drivers of racial integration at Eden. The role of clergy and lay leadership was seen as an important catalyst.

It is remarkable to note that leadership was identified by a cross-section of black and white leaders and members. Participant's 5, 12, 8 and 14 raised the issue of intentionality of racial representativity in the leadership structure.

It is reported that the leadership at Eden had racial integration as a vision and it was deliberate effort to have representative and inclusive leadership as participant 5

indicates. This speaks to the strategic role that leadership plays in facilitating racial integration. Leadership cannot afford to be bystanders and hope that things will just happen without any intervention.

I think the other area where Eden has done well is that **the leadership was deliberate in making sure there was a representation**. They have a **representative leadership** team that is called the Visionary Leadership Group (P 5:04).

Representative leadership is one that is inclusive of all the demographics present in a particular congregation seeking to transform. In the case of Eden, racial mix was done not only through elections, as participant 12 shared, but also through persuasion of those who would otherwise have been reluctant to come and participate and offer that leadership. People were identified and persuaded to come be part of the leadership mix. Leadership was seen as being consistent to implement plans at the bottom and at the top.

The composition primarily came as you would understand you had a journey where you were coming from a largely white community and as we were going through the transition there was **a deliberate effort of inclusion in the leadership**. So, you had to move from your normal. This is how you make sure that in your nomination you became **deliberate about including people who would otherwise** not be... persuaded. If I think of myself, I thought I am not ready. **I was persuaded to come to leadership**. And so were others and **eventually you had a racial mix** (P12:18).

This exercise of racial integration through leadership mix was not instant. Participant 8 observed it to have been a gradual and protracted process that encouraged black people to continue availing themselves.

The history of Eden is that the majority of people in leadership back then used to be white people and **slowly there was of mixture of black people coming in**. (P8:06).

Participant 14 observed some people who went to represent them at decision making structures and ensuring that there was alignment of what happened at the top of these leadership structures with what was implemented with members at the bottom.

Within leadership structures at the time well there were people involved in leadership of the church. It's just that I wasn't that much kind of having a focus as to what kind of transpired within those formations. Yet I do know that there are gentlemen that we also were with at our worship team they would go and be **representing us at whatever leadership meeting or leadership conferences**. It still also went to that level that **what they want to implement at the bottom was also implemented or done at the top. (14:10)**.

Participant 9 who is a lay leader observed how the leadership ensured that all the congregational structures reflected transformation. It is important to ensure that the mix and inclusion happens across all the formations and mission groups existing in a particular congregation. That will ensure that racial integration is systemic rather than isolated. Transformation was viewed as embodying justice by hiring and paying fairly those that were employed. Not only those who were appointed in the formal clerical vocations, but the labour practice also demonstrated justice.

There was a strong intentionality in that it wasn't just on the wall, it was embodied in the building, **it was embodied leadership structures, it was embodied in the hiring, it was embodied in the way salaries were paid.**

There were many different aspects that embodied that. (P9:8)

Participant 9, observed the importance of influence in the context of Eden. Leadership, in its elementary definition, is more than just the occupation of positions. It is about making a difference and influencing those that are led. Racial integration was cast into a vision for all those who are leading to be able to imagine the common destiny for the congregation. A common vision ensures harmony amongst those who serve to influence people.

...think the biggest gift of Eden was that there was significant work done on helping a key group of leaders, influence makers. **They weren't just leaders in formal leadership, they were influencers.** That group of **people were helped to think theologically and oriented towards the vision of racial inclusion.** Without that group, I don't know how you do the work (P9:28).

The values and commitment of the Visionary Leadership Group played a major role and made a remarkable impact. This was noticed by participants 1, 5, 9 and 11 which include clergy and ordinary members.

Participant 1 reported that, to ensure that it had impact, the leadership team had to make annual commitments of worship, generosity, service and breathing that sustained this intentionality. What was referred to as “breathing” was a commitment to “... some encounter, engagement, teaching, learning experience in the year and breathing out service and justice.”

So, we have the Visionary Leadership Group. The Visionary Leadership Group is **based on annual commitments and they agreed to five different things**. So, it was worship, it was generosity, some form of service, some form of...so we use the breathing in breathing out. So, breathing in **they must sign up for some encounter, engagement, teaching, learning experience in the year and breathing out service and justice**. For example, one of the things that came out of that was some people started going out to disciple, breathing in throughout the evening week. When disciples finished, **the same group spent three hours the same amount of time at night driving around East Rand locating homeless communities**, which finally led to the beginning of a roving medical and food ministries where they would go out to homeless communities (P 1:12).

The culture at Eden Methodist Church made sure that those in leadership did not develop a culture of entitlement to leadership positions. The commitment was through an annual covenant that those in leadership had to make as Participant 1 asserts. This kind of arrangement also ensured that there is no complacency. Those who lead were to, in the main, understand their role as that of generous service to the people. participant 1 noted the use of an annual covenant to ensure commitment.

Visionary Leadership Group had a **yearly covenant where you sign for one year**. There was **no eternal position on leadership** and commitment to worship service, generosity, the other one, study internal when you are breathing in, sort of thing. (P1:12).

In fact, participant 9, links service to sacrificial and for the benefit of others. In doing that, they were modelling to others who may have harboured aspirations of leadership, to know that service and servanthood must be internalised as personal culture and demonstrated to those following.

The visionary leadership was a real sense in that the way **leadership was embodied to service to others**. That means **sometimes sacrificing**. Certainly, for the incumbents there was sacrificial element of saying I am **willing to give something up to make space for somebody else**. That strong dynamic as if it were. Certainly, **visionary leaders led by example**. They **led people of any race or class that dynamic. Serving by their own behaviour**. It **was not a top-down kind** of we are telling you to behave but the **visionary leaders modelled what worship looked like and what community looked like**. (P9:10).

Eden leadership was labelled exemplary as they engaged in practical and sacrificial acts of service where they even visited the homeless. There was intentional mentoring and guiding of this leadership. For participant 11, this kind of leadership was not just modelling but was indirectly mentoring those with the potential to lead. Sometimes demonstrating leadership has power than just the theoretical text-book knowledge.

What you do need is very strong leadership, **creating a situation that is going draw people in**. Someone with a vision of where you want it to be and **mentorships workshops on how you can do it** (P11:20).

3.6.3.2.2. Transformative Education Programmes

The Church designed transformative education programmes with strong contextual theological basis. The design of these programmes offered the members of Eden an experiential space where members of different racial backgrounds could fellowship, interact, learn and grow.

The transformative educational programmes at Eden Methodist Church included the Foundation Course, Disciples, Manna and Mercy and Anti-Bias. Manna and Mercy which was focused on social justice and the Anti-Bias Programme was where people were made aware of their biases towards others who are different from themselves.

To facilitate transformation, the courses were made to speak to the context that Eden as a Church in South Africa was facing. Important in that context is the history of apartheid which was predicated on racial discrimination. They were designed to assist people to grow their spiritual life to the point of going to live one's purpose in the world. There is further appreciation of how the programmes addressed issues of

transformation and social justice. They were catalyst for racial integration as they also assisted people to move from mere tolerance of each other to integration.

The Transformative Education Programmes were affirmed by a cross-section of participants across race and roles within Eden Methodist Church. Participant 1 isolates the importance of context in ensuring transformation happens. South Africa has contextual theology as part of its heritage in dismantling the system of apartheid. Racial integration must be understood in that historical context and efforts must be made addressing such.

... I designed the Foundation Course which was running the same as Alpha like a 13-week course, but **it was contextual theology on South Africa. We studied our apartheid history of South Africa** (P1:04).

Participant 1 further emphasises this context in the light of understanding what it means to be Church and of Christ. Both the ecclesiology and Christology need to be applied to the context of racial integration so that it is not just sociological.

A lot of the theology was happening. I think three things that I would work on constantly is context, context, and context. The next will be Church; **what does it mean to be Church and Christ. So, context, Church and Christ** (P1:30).

Participant 1 makes an example with the foundation course to emphasise that although it could be used anywhere, it had to make sense in the context.

..., **any of those courses they can be anywhere in the world, but you have to contextualise them.** The foundation course which was contextual theology was what every other course needed to be rooted in them. (P1:04).

Several transformative courses were designed to cultivate the spiritual discipline of the personal reading of the Bible and studying it in groups with other believers. Participant 4 has observed that at the heart of the Foundational course was racial integration and transformation within the Church. This approach ensured that those who join the Church understand, from the very beginning the values of the congregation. In other words, they were orientated and inducted into the culture of racial integration and social cohesion. Furthermore inclusivity, integration and transformation were presented and imperatives that should happen in the congregation as participant 4 indicates.

So, programmes; yes, **the inclusivity in activities within the church**; yes, **they were introduced and facilitated** such that we had what we call the Foundation Course and even the extended courses that is beyond that foundation course for people that would want to even study the Bible further. At the **foundation she actually emphasised the issue of integration** more such that she **actually indicated that we are at that transformation and it's something that we need to happen within the church**. That is were basically it started or was triggered (P4:8).

The transformative nature of the education programmes included making sure that there were consciousness and social justice for the vulnerable. They are the ones, as participant 6 argued, who must be beneficiaries of any intentional outcome of racial integration.

... emphasis and the Foundation Course is if you would ask, small groups. Let me some of the education courses disciple 1 and 2, where the ministry of the least, last and the lost **was a conscious teaching in that social justice** coming into that (P 6:28).

The transformative programme such as Manna and Mercy were designed to create opportunities for people to fellowship and engage. Robust engagement ensures that the quality of integration is authentic and not just a token. This is the point that participant 5 makes.

... the teachings classes that we used to go on were very good. I remember Manna and Mercy was very good and **people used to come and it was a fellowshiping space over....** Yes, disciples brought people together you know... **people got to really integrate instead of tolerating each other** (P 5:24).

The anti-bias programme was one of the efforts of the church towards understanding diversity. The anti-bias programme is an approach to education and methodology that facilitate the respecting and embracing differences and acting against bias and unfairness. It offers practical guidance for confronting and eliminating barriers of prejudice, misinformation, and bias about specific aspects of personal and social identity. The programmes assisted people to make mental and spiritual shifts with

clear consciousness of issues. The impact of this shift in consciousness was identified in people's daily lives beyond Church.

It is not enough for transformation to happen only within the Church. The test of such transformative programmes as the anti-bias lies more outside the Church than inside. It is outside the Church that the shift in social cohesion must be demonstrable. participant 1 points out that anti-bias can show any hidden biases that a person may have.

There is no doubt around antibias stuff. The **people who did it made a significant shift**. For me the significant shift is, it doesn't always play itself out within the church. **It plays itself out in people's lives, in people's business, in people's schools**, that sort of thing. There is no doubt about it, that change had a huge impact on me. **The antibias stuff influenced me greatly, having thought I was beyond questions on issues of race and the antibias taught me pretty smartly that it wasn't okay.** (P1:14).

Transformation happens when people become aware of the biases they carry and make them areas of attention, focus and correction. Participant 8 noted that the seminars assisted in that regard.

The anti- bias seminars were designed to **help us to acknowledge that we all have biases** and not to **clean them up but to at least to become aware of how we felt about things** (P 8:6).

Participant 9 observed that the work of racial integration and such programmes as anti-bias happens when safe and fair spaces are created for people to engage. The Participant further asserted that genuine change and growth requires honesty and trust

The very key work of the anti-bias in particular was the **creating of a fair space for people to voice their concerns their confusion their questions**, express who they were and be welcomed into that space. People had the **opportunity to be quite honest because there was a safe space created through the anti-bias programme, where there was trust** for each other and that we all want to do this work and **we want to grow** and we want to understand. What an easy work through very difficult way, but it gave quite a depth to the work

and **people could be honest**. It is **through honesty that people learnt, and people moved** (P9:18)

Racial integration is best grounded in transformation. Participant 12 appreciated transformative education programmes in that they assisted people to make sense of the diversity that was being encouraged. The anti-bias programme covered areas that are more than just racial diversity. It exposed and addressed other biases such as disability, age and gender.

One of the things that were very strong at Eden is teaching. We did the diversity, we called it anti-Bias, the diversity course and how that **helped was to assist people to begin to see their capability in any form of discrimination** whether be gender or albinism or ageism or racism, classism. So that course what quite key in ensuring that you **get people to understand why we are trying to live the way we are and also to begin to share some of those racial stereotypes and bias that people have in a formal setting**. I alluded earlier to the fact that we encouraged visits to each other's houses, so that was quite important to Eden (P12:8).

The Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope was introduced at Eden as an intervention to foster integration by helping the rich and privileged, especially the white congregants, to learn and appreciate the history and experiences of oppression and suffering that black people went through in South Africa. This was done by the rich and privileged whites, in the main, visiting the homes and communities of the poor and oppressed blacks. This also brought a shift in the consciousness of the privileged white members of the Church.

Participants 6 and 9, who are white leaders, spoke well of the pilgrimage. The pilgrimage was, according to participant 6, another way of facilitating transformation. It is not adequate for the white people to only meet blacks in the sheltered space of sanctuary. Through the pilgrimage they were able to go and experience their lived reality.

The pilgrimage of pain and hope where there was of group of people that were taken and stayed in the township and worshipped in the township church as well as all the other things pilgrimage did all. **That was another attempt of integration (P6:10)**.

The pilgrimage provided the participants with an opportunity to reflect on their own lives in comparison to their hosts. This, participant 9 believes, has facilitated a shift. Paradigm shift is the ability to develop a new perspective and thinking on a particular issue. The pilgrimage was designed for the visits to be reciprocal so that the host become the pilgrim the next time. It was at that time, for participant 9, that his extravagant life was exposed with embarrassment. Embarrassment is not adequate, if it is not followed by a shift in values and belief.

The big thing on pilgrimage of pain and hope **was to reflect on their own life**. People travel to each other's house. **One week you are looking at somebody's life**. The next week you are looking at how that person looked at your life. It was that first and second **part together that led people real shift**. When I was for example into the township **and I stayed with somebody and I bring that person into my own home** and I realise that I am almost embarrassed by my extravagance or the way I live, then I need to reconcile on that (P9:20).

Participants in this study have found transformative education programmes to be meaningful and powerful intervention in the process of racial integration. A well facilitated process of racial integration contributes in the building of social cohesion.

3.6.3.2.3. Inclusive Worship

Inclusive worship was found to be part of intentional efforts towards the implementation of racial integration. A racially integrated church was seen, by the participants, as one where everyone (from different racial backgrounds) can worship freely, with one purpose and loving people regardless of their background. It is where people from different races, and backgrounds, can co-exist and worship together. Although there were complaints about worship, inclusive worship was viewed as one of the intentional efforts of integration.

Participant 9 observed the struggle that was there with new inclusive multiracial and multicultural worship. Racial integration and transformation include some amount of compromise and sacrifice. It happens in worship, when everybody, as participant 9 points out, lose a little of the kind of worship style they are used to in order for

something new and unique to emerge. Change becomes helpful when everybody embraces the discomfort and unfamiliarity of the new way.

I don't think **anyone was absolutely comfortable in the new worship style that was multilingual, multilanguage, those dynamics**. It was a new wine skin. People were used to either in the traditional township music or charismatic modern music or traditional English Methodist hymns or Afrikaans. **Suddenly they are getting snippets of that. It was hard for people sometimes to even sing another language or learn another way of being in worship**. Those are some of the difficulties (P9:26).

Worship is best when it is integrated not just in the songs and those who lead it. Participant 12 advances the same and argues for the importance of a mix in racial demographics so that worship can cultivate integration.

It will have, I suppose a few levels but the first is in terms of demographics, getting a mix of people who live within the community who choose to worship together. So racially, integration that means especially for the context within I come from, **a deliberate effort to make sure that you match and integrate different traditions in humble worship**, how you interact and all of those things (P12:2).

Participant 5 also raises the importance of participation and goes on to advances the importance of language in the design of worship. To facilitate racial integration, true worship must avoid unhelpful ticking of boxes but ensures the coming together of people from different cultural backgrounds.

...its thinking just beyond ... saying okay how do we make sure that ... these ones also have a space here, but making sure that we are actively all doing what needs to be done, **so at this time it's worshipping, how do we make sure that all of us are active in worshipping and language does not become a barrier** ... race does not become a barrier... cultural practice in worship does not become a barrier, so, thinking outside of just saying make sure there is this for these people because blacks worship like this, whites worship like this, tick box to say well there is space for them, once you think outside of that and look for even better means to **make sure people come together, you move to now integration** (P5:08).

For participant 11, integrating worship happens when all members worship with a sense of purpose. Once again, that ensures that the act of worship is meaningful and is deliberate in contributing to racial integration.

Everybody is worshipping with a common purpose and all the groups are multi-racial. (P11:02).

When done intentionally and genuinely, worship has the power to lift the experiences of those gathered and fellowshiping to transcend their differences and instead experience the integrated community God wishes for the Church.

3.6.3.2.4. Language

Participants observed the importance of an inclusive language policy as an intentional intervention in the implementation of racial integration. The leadership at Eden used inclusive language as a creative tool in the of implementation of racial integration. Language plays an important role in how one's reality is constructed, and the meanings attached to one's experiences even in church. Language forms how one expresses themselves and plays an important role in how people worship.

Participant 1, 3 and 8 found the mixing of English and vernacular songs in services as a progressive way of facilitating racial integration. On its own, music is a universal language that can lift people into a transcendent experience. Participant 1 submitted that language in worship was intentionally used to make people feel that they belong and are recognised. There was also the practice of using translations so that people can follow the songs that were being sung.

Things that helped obviously stuff like deliberates around music, changing music. People I remember saying why are we singing songs that are in languages other than English because no one else is here and then I said precisely **why we need to sing songs so that when someone comes, they have something that can say to them they belong or they are recognised** (P1:02).

Participant 3 noted that although liturgy was in English, singing was in different languages. This seems to have provided a balanced approach to worship.

The language component was, **we will sing in different languages but liturgy was always English**. I think Eden's model in my time we didn't challenge it when I was there. Afterwards they began to be that there was one way of doing church in which all were welcome. It was liberal English version of church in which all were welcome (P3:8).

Participant 7 also raised the importance of inclusive language in worship and noted that there was an intentional move not to exclude anybody.

It catered for everybody for both for all languages. Like I said our songs and everything is in English. **I love to sing the mixed languages**. I would love to be able to speak a language to be honest. But it's my fault, it's not nobody's fault. But when James was there it was predominantly English but **they did not exclude the other languages**. Now it's more the other way (P7:4).

Participant 9 noticed that people were encouraged to even speak and pray in their own languages. The use of translations was another way of ensuring that language is used as a tool for communication in breaking barriers. Failure to provide translation can lead to the marginalisation of Black preachers who cannot speak English.

Worship **intentionally used different languages**. People were **encouraged to pray in their mother tongue, people were encouraged to sing in their mother tongue**. All those were intentionally used around that. **We offered translation for sermons**. When I was there no one took it up, but it was offered regularly. The worship style was quite diverse, **multilingual**, multiple styles from old traditional Methodist to modern day songs *et cetera* were all intentionally used. **People were greeted in their own language. People were encouraged to speak and if they want translation**, they were allowed that space (P9:12).

Participant 10 observed that Eden went beyond using just the South African languages and included Swahili, Nigerian and other languages of the continent. This is important because racial integration is more than the inclusion of black South Africans alone. Social cohesion includes recognising the presence of other black people from the African continent and even the diaspora.

Worship is to a larger degree integrated in the sense that the languages are different. We sing in different languages, **not limited to the eleven official languages. We sing in Swahili, we sing in Nigerian, we sing in any other language that we feel there are people who are from those nations** (P10:18).

Language has contributed to the dividing of South African society. Thus, used properly and progressively, it can be a powerful tool in the reversal of that history and thus fostering social cohesion.

3.6.3.3. Findings on Objective 3: Establish the Alignment of the Understanding of Racial integration to the Methodist Vision of Unity and Social cohesion

The third objective was about establishing whether there is any alignment to the Methodist Church's vision of unity and social cohesion. This also became an analysis question under point 6 of chapter 4. Eden Methodist Church is a unique congregation that is dealing with racial integration at two levels. The first is that Eden Methodist Church is part of what the Methodist Church calls the Geographic or Integrating Circuit. A Methodist Circuit is a collective of individual congregations or societies. A circuit is part of Methodist polity and ethos of Connexionalism which is about the pulling of resources together. The second level of racial integration is that Eden is a former white congregation that has undergone racial demographic changes over time.

The alignment to the Methodist vision of unity and social cohesion as embedded in the commitment of a 'One and Undivided Church', was posed to only the clergy leadership. They reflected on the statement and provided different perspectives as to whether this vision of a "one and undivided church" is attainable.

Participant 1 is worth quoting at length since she was very bold and articulate on the reflection of "one and undivided church." She responded more in a Systematic theological way that is very philosophical in nature. The Participant found the statement a paradox in that it is both true and false. The Church was found to be one

family and yet divided. The contradiction of a professed statement and unmatching lived reality is not uncommon in the Church.

The issue of “one and undivided”, **the statement is both true and false at the same time. We are one, theologically that is, true and un-theologically that is true.** We are one, it’s not a debate. Whether you understand the sense or not, the whole issue, but un-theologically we are one, theologically we are one. For me today we do honour the gospel. **We need to state that is the case and then try and live it. The truth is we are one and we are divided. We are not undivided.** We are one having theology that is love of neighbour as yourself. In other words, your neighbour is part of yourself. When asked your mother and sister and brother are here to see you, you say, I have my family. **We are all family; we are all one. The other truth is we are divided. Our role is to become who we really are.** It’s not becoming somebody different (P 1:16).

Whilst the Church is theologically one, participant 1 went on to observe it to be divided on several levels that include race and class. Eden was, at the same time, seen to have grappled with what it means to be one and undivided. The intersectionality of race, class and gender is a very important element in building social cohesion in the South African context. The manifestation of apartheid was about the generally white people who were economically better off than poor blacks.

The truth is, I live in denial of who I am. **I am one with you but I live in denial with that. My living doesn’t honour our oneness.** I think that’s the far more honest take on that statement. Fundamentally, **I have a difficulty with that statement.** I know the history of it and whatever **I think theologically that’s what we should from the debate whether we are one or not.** I don’t think it’s a debate whether we are divided or not, of course we are divided. **We are divided on a million different things not least colour and class.** For me that’s crucial (P1:16).

Participant 3 also presented a mixed response. There was creation of spaces for unity in worship and language. These were clear commitments to unity through integration.

I think Eden was trying to do that. The vision at that stage, with hindsight I can’t evaluate. At the time **Eden was trying to hold together different races and languages in a worship space that was unified. The language component**

was, we will sing in different languages but liturgy was always English. I think Eden's model in my time we didn't challenge it when I was there (P3:8).

The contradiction of progress and conservatism was noted in that whilst it tried to have inclusivity, church was still done in English. Participant 3 submitted that the Church started as one and undivided when intentional efforts were put in place, but it soon lost that when white people including the founders left. It started by being very welcoming through worship.

Afterwards they **began to be that there was one way of doing church in which all were welcome.** It was liberal English version of church in which all were welcome. Particularly for me, for the languages but also that you could have someone who slept in the bush last night as well as someone who arrived in a luxurious car sitting in the same space was part of Eden's great gift then. **I think worship was at heart. It was one of the best educated and theologically taught congregation.** James' principles around teaching had meant that those in leadership had been well taught. They have a theology that was about finding the other and openness. I have subsequent thinking that goes the different ways of doing church, so Eden did a liberal English way of doing church. **Racially it was pretty much 97% black, but we did church in an English way. In the 3 years that I was there we never got challenge in that.** (P3:8).

Participant 10, on the other hand, seems to register a regret of a congregation that sought to align to the statement of "a one and undivided church" in the beginning but somehow lost it on the way. The observation was, again, that inclusion went beyond just race. Eden Methodist Church was seen as a flagship of unity but that was not sustained. Those who had prided as the founders of this unity started leaving the Church.

We've tried in the past to include as many people as there would be in this community, in terms of race, in terms of age, in terms of gender, which we were hoping then that this would be the kind of the flagship of that unity. **This church started as one and undivided but it soon proved to be a futile exercise** where then those that were being accommodated and were

celebrated as **the founders of the community decided to abandon that vision and leave** (P10:8).

3.7. Conclusion

There are a number of understandings, experiences, intentional interventions that took place at Eden Methodist Church. Different participants perceived and interpreted these a negative way while again, different participants viewed and experienced others in a positive way. The general view on the alignment to the Methodist vision of unity has invited mixed reactions.

Eden Methodist Church was generally a white church until it started the process of integration. From being 90% white, the church has now become more than 90% black. Different members of the church have experienced Eden differently before the country's 1994 democratic transformation and after the church relocated to a new site and opened to black members. While the congregation's member participants were generally optimistic and positive about their experience of the integration process, the leaders who were privy to the background processes and struggles towards achieving integration, were more cautious. There were many challenges that the different members of the church experienced towards achieving racial integration. The integration process was not a smooth transition for the church, with some members embracing change and others being resistant to the change. The social relations of the community in which Eden Methodist Church was situated, influenced some relational dynamics in the church. There are people who experienced unity and community at varying degrees within Eden Methodist Church.

There are people who recognised the existence of whiteness within the congregation. For black people, the process was rather of assimilation than integration, in a sense that there were some changes being made to the church, especially in terms of worship, to accommodate other races, rather than a completely transformed system built for all races. Subtle racism was prevalent at this stage. While some members related outside of church, others found that racial differences occurred outside of the church while members related well in the church. Transformation was not an overnight

experience, but it was seen as a process that took much effort from ministers and the leadership structures of the church.

The Eden Methodist Church was generally perceived to have been intentional in its efforts to achieve racial integration and to be inclusive. The leadership – clergy and laity were very deliberate in facilitating and creating an enabling environment for racial integration. The Creative Leadership Team was set up and managed for the direct purpose of guiding these efforts. Some of these efforts of the church included transformative educational programmes that aimed at helping congregants to become aware of their biases and change some behaviours. Inclusive worship relates to providing space to all racial groups to participate in the worship groups and for songs and hymns to be in different languages. Language, especially in worship services, was also used as a tool of inclusion.

The process of integration had an impact on the church and its members. The advent of democracy in 1994 required the Church to transform in all areas of its life. The impact of this transformation was both positive and negative. To instil integration in the church, the preaching changed to issues relating to justice and transformation within the church in line with the society. Some of the congregants appreciated the positive impact especially the continuing integration and public witness. Eden came to be known as a Church where current public issues were addressed both in the pulpit and in other church programmes.

The negative impact manifested itself mostly in white flight. While the church started attracting more Africans, Coloured and Indians, White people left the church. The phenomenon of white flight refers to the tendency of white people moving or migrating from racially mixed urban areas to more homogeneous suburban areas.

Different members observed certain challenges towards integration. Individuals who fear change become a hindrance to the process of integration. They fight to maintain the *status quo* and resist efforts towards changing the way church was conducted. Entitlement by the dominant group to the control and culture of the congregation is one of the challenges towards racial integration. One racial group will feel that they own the church space and are entitled to privileges within the church space. These privileges relate to worship, preaching and the administration of the church in general. The church later introduced the traditional organisations like the *Manyano* (Women

Prayer Union), *Amadodana* (Men's Guild) and Wesley Guild (Youth Organisation) to accommodate the black traditional congregants. It is interesting to note that whilst the introduction of the black organisations was perceived by some as a positive step that assisted in growing the congregation, there are others who perceived it as a negative thing that led to what could be termed black take over. The intersectionality of the presence of African Foreign Nationals and the issue of tribalism put a different challenge in the congregation's efforts on racial integration.

There are different markers or indicators of a racially integrated church identified by the participants. A racially integrated church is seen as one where everyone (from different racial backgrounds) can worship freely, with one purpose and where people love others regardless of their background. A common vision or goal and common objectives are a positive sign of integration. The more visible signs of cohesion include inclusive worship, community and radical hospitality.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The main aim of this research was to reflect on social cohesion by exploring the process of racial integration in a former Methodist Church.

The three objectives of the research were to:

- d. Assess the congregation's understanding and experience of racial integration.
- e. Establish how their understanding of racial integration was implemented in their congregational life.
- f. Establish how this understanding is aligned to the Methodist vision of unity and social cohesion

The data drawn from the Eden Methodist Church case study has provided theoretical learnings that are relevant to assist any church engaging in the process of racial integration. The case study provides learnings on understanding racial integration and the dynamics related in implementing it in churches. It further provides vision of unity that any church can use as a norm that guides their implementation of racial integration.

In this chapter, I will interpret and discuss the findings of the case study by focusing on three areas of racial integration and their broader relevance to the practices of multicultural churches. The first focus is on the understanding of racial integration and the challenges that churches face. The second focus is on how racial integration can be implemented in churches. The third focus is on the normative vision of racial integration drawing from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and other Churches in South Africa. I will conclude with the practical reflection of how racial integration supports social cohesion and the contribution of the study on Congregational studies and congregational identity.

4.2. Richard Osmer's Four Task Model of Practical Theology

As a practical theologian who grew up and participated in the South African struggle, my theology was influenced by such prophetic ecumenical organisations like the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the Institute of Contextual Theology (ICT). The book: *In Word and Deed: Towards a Practical Theology for Social Transformation*, has influenced and shaped by practical theological formation. In the book, influenced and supported by that SACC and the ICT, the authors argue that the South African Practical Theology

... remains indelibly marked by a long history of conquest and oppression for the black members of our society; conversely, by a taken-for-granted status of privilege and power on the part of most whites or their representatives in institutions of state, business and society (Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen 1991:1).

The vestiges of that 'history of conquest and oppression' are what this study is seeking to address. The current challenges of racial division and lack of cohesion are because of that long struggle. The response to the impact of Apartheid has never been the responsibility of an individualised leadership both in the Church and in society. Thus, even a practical theological response has to be systemic, integrated and holistic. Thus, Cochrane and partners were able to capture this understanding well when the asserted,

More broadly, by practical theology we mean that disciplined, reflective theological activity which seeks to relate the faith of the Christian community to its life, mission and social praxis. In this sense, practical theology is an integral part of the theological task as a whole and should not be artificially removed from that whole (Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen 1991:2).

The commitment of approach posits that social transformation is the intended outcome of the practical theology that is being undertaken. It a transformation that is inspired by a faith commitment and takes seriously social-ecclesial analysis that addresses oppressive policies, exploitative systems and power structures. It is Practical Theology that is not dependent on the clerical technician but is an enterprise of the whole faith community.

In this chapter, I discuss the finding of the research using, as framework, Richard Osmer's four-step or four tasks model. In his book; *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, Osmer points out that Practical Theologians have four tasks to undertake whenever they have a church situation to address. In fact, he offers these tasks to primarily congregational leaders – who are not just clergy in order that they be effective interpretive guides for their congregations. These four tasks are: the Descriptive-Empirical: Priestly Listening; the Interpretive: Sagely Wisdom; the Normative: Prophetic Discernment and the Pragmatic: Servant Leadership. It is important to note that these tasks are not linear in nature. They must be understood to be “mutually influential” in nature (Latini 2011:8). In another source, Osmer points out that his framework may not be original and has been used by others. He calls them “a paradigm of reflective practice” (Osmer 2011 page number?). Osmer's framework builds on the models that were developed by other theologians like Don Browning's: *A Fundamental Practical Theology* (Schweizer in Dean et al 2019: xv)

The Descriptive-Empirical task establishes what is taking place. “We gain as much data as possible about the situation or context so that we can describe it from many angles or points of view” (Latini 2011:8). This task is about painting a vivid picture of the situation or issue that is being studied – in this case study the focus is racial integration. Klaasen points out that the primary focus of this task is more practice of the Christian community than theory (Klaasen 2014). Osmer refers to this task as priestly listening which entails the spirituality of presence where the “congregational leader” engages in an I-Thou relationship as they attend to others openly, attentively and prayerfully (Osmer 2008:33-34).

The Interpretive task seeks to analyse and dissect the situation by asking the why question. It is about making sense of the practices under study. It requires the application of the hermeneutical tools of reason and experience. This task is sagely wisdom because, for Osmer, it is undertaken for learned congregations' who need learned leaders who also love God. “The spirituality of such leaders is characterised by three qualities: thoughtfulness, theoretical interpretation, and wise judgement, which may be viewed along lines of a continuum” (Osmer 2008:82).

The Normative seeks to establish what can be considered as the norms and standards that should guide the practical theologian's practice on the particular issue. These

norms and standards are heavily influenced by theological discourse in general and the Gospel of Christ in particular. It is about the what “ought” to be (Klaasen 2014). This task entails prophetic discernment which draws from the ministry of the prophets of Jesus Christ which is about being embracing what Abraham Heschel, Jurgen Moltmann and Walter Brueggemann calls the divine pathos of God (Osmer 2008: 136-137). It is about weeping and being in solidarity with the God who suffers with God’s people.

Prophetic discernment arises when those who have the ‘first fruits of the Spirit’ groan inwardly with the groaning of creation, with ‘sighs too deep for words’...The words of grace and hope that leaders have to offer emerge from their sympathetic identification with God’s Word, who entered fully into the suffering of reaction and redeemed this condition (Osmer 2008: 137).

The Pragmatic establishes, given all the facts provided in the previous task, what is the most responsible and practical thing to be done? It is about what the faith community needs to engage in. It is “the task of forming and enacting strategies of action that influence events in ways that are desirable” (Osmer 2008: 176). In this task, which is framed as servant leaders, Osmer identifies three forms of leadership. The Task Competence is about a leader who performs well in their role. The Transactional Leadership that takes the form reciprocity and mutual exchange in influencing those led. The Transformational Leadership is about “leading an organisation through a process of ‘deep change’ in its identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures.” (Osmer 2008: 178).

4.3. Intergroup Contact Theory

The Intergroup Contact Theory advanced by Allport in his classic book: *The Nature of Prejudice*, published in 1954, helps interpret the findings from the case study and provides theoretical framework for the study. There is evidence that the bringing together of racial groups into a common social setting like the Church does not automatically translate to integration. In a highly religious society like South Africa, the Church presents a great opportunity for racial integration. The post-apartheid migration of black South Africans from rural areas and townships into suburbs and

formally white congregations present a great opportunity for racial intergroup contact. These multiracial congregations "... are important in two specific sociological ways: opportunities for interracial contact and multiracial networks" (Tavares 2011:440).

The case study does provided evidence that the success of the Intergroup Contact Theory is best implemented in certain "optimal" conditions. These conditions included equal status, interactions, the pursuit of superordinate common goals, support by institutional authority figures and norms (Vezzali Stephan and Stephan 2001:20; Tavares 2011:440); Pettigrew 1998:66). It takes a sustained intentional initiative to lessen tensions and foster integration.

The case study pointed out the importance of institutional leadership taking the lead and guiding the integrating groups to a common vision. Allport argued that different groups that come together intentionally can reduce their level of prejudice and conflict. He posited,

Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal-status contact between majority and minority groups in pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional support (i.e. by law, custom, or local atmosphere), and if it is of the sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between member of the two groups (Stephan and Stephan 2001 :20).

It is clear, drawing from Allport, that authentic racial integration happens when blacks and whites who come into contact in a Church space, must meet as equal partners.

Scholars such as Saguy, Tropp and Hawi have pointed out to the weakness of Contact Theory in neglecting the impact of power dynamics between groups. They argued that,

Traditionally, contact research has granted limited attention to ways in which differences in group power impact the dynamics of intergroup contact. For over fifty years, the assumption seems to have been that advantaged and disadvantaged group members alike benefit from contact that is generally pleasant and focuses on goals that the groups share in common (Hewstone and Hodson 2013:124).

The issue of power is particularly important in the context of South Africa with its history of exclusion that was based on the oppressive system of apartheid. Apartheid was oppressive in many ways – politically, culturally and economically. These factors are thus very important to address for genuine encounter to happen.

On the other hand, Emerson and Yancey have added that these conditions require non-superficial contact, contact that is cooperative instead of competitive and contact that is not coerced. They instead promote and argue that interracial contact that promote voluntary, egalitarian, cooperative, intimate contact generate positive interracial relationships (Emerson and Yancey 2011:74). The power of intentional and well managed contact leads to members wanting to participate and contribute. They interact not out of such pressures as guilt or political correctness. Such contact is more covenantal and there is the mutual desire to want to contribute and change society. Intentional and well managed contact affords the existent groups – the majority and the minority to listen to each other.

Stephan and Stephan, who point out that different scholars have, over a period, increased the scope of conditions, revised the contact theory and identified four factors that affect the outcomes of the theory contact (Stephan and Stephan 2001:20). These are societal factors, situational factors, person factors and mediating factors. The societal factors would, in the context of South Africa include the historical and structural nature of the system of apartheid and its lingering impact on communities that include the church even after the advent of democracy. The situational, which includes the contextual and cultural factors of that particular setting of a community such as Eden in our case study. The person factor refers to such individual particularities like traits, attitudes, ideology and even beliefs. The socialisation of the individual members of the congregation influences how much predisposed they are to the any message that is about integration and transformation. The mediating factors are about the cognitive and emotional responses of the individual participants.

Intergroup Contact Theory is, as evidenced in the case study also about the social relations that those who come together build. Studying social contact for close interracial adolescent friendships in the US, Tavares concluded that

...increased opportunities for interracial social contract have implications for the racial composition of friendship structures. This reinforces a long-standing line

of research in social contact theory that suggests that 'contact' has many benefits that have positive consequences for intergroup relations (Tavares 2011: 450).

Pettigrew (1998) built on the contact theory and identified four processes that can strengthen the contact theory and mediate attitude change. Learning about the outgroup helps corrects any negatives views held. Behaviour-change assists in the change of attitude. Generating effective ties by reducing anxiety and increasing positive emotions. Ingroup appraisals can assist the ingroup to be aware that their norms and customs are not the only ways to manage the social world.

Today the world has experienced an exponential increase in opportunities of different groups encountering (Boin et al: 2021) each other thus increasing the need and demand for social cohesion efforts. This increased mixing of groups has been termed 'super-diversity' (Vertovec in Hewstone: 2006). Almost every modern society is experiencing an increase in immigration (McKenna et al 2018). This immigration establishes communities with groups diverse on religion, race and ethnicity. Intergroup Contact contributes immensely to social cohesion. Intergroup contact has a measure of impact in reducing prejudice and improving attitudes with the encountered outgroup.

The growing complex theory of intergroup contact grew from a simple "contact hypothesis" advanced by Allport in 1954. Whereas there are still scholars who hold a different view, the growing body of knowledge in the theory points out that; "Others believe intergroup interaction is an essential part of any remedy for reducing prejudice and conflict between groups" (Pettigrew et al 2011).

A team of researchers undertook a recent study wherein they studied "the generalisation of intergroup contact effects." They concluded that "intergroup contact not only improves attitudes towards an encountered group member but also the outgroup as a whole (i.e., primary transfer effects), to other outgroups (i.e., secondary transfer effects), and even enhances cognitive functioning beyond intergroup relations (i.e., tertiary transfer effect)" (Boin et al 2021; Meleady 2019).

In one research on the relationship between ethnic diversity and social cohesion, concluded that the relationship between ethnic diversity and social cohesion is mediated by a positive intergroup contact (McKenna et al:2018). Mediated contact has been found to reduce perceptions of threat and improve generalised trust. In another

similar study, the researchers concluded established the same argument that positive intergroup contact is a driver in changing people's attitudes towards outgroups in diverse communities and in reversing the declining cohesion (Laurence et al 2019).

To have impact on social cohesion, intergroup contact must be conceived as a learned competency and must be about meaningful contact. It is a learned competency "because a part of living together is learning to live together" (Hewstone 2006). It is about

Intergroup contact has an enormous potential to influence policy. Hewstone states;

In a world of increasingly diverse societies, contact is an idea whose time has come. Yet, neither I nor my many collaborators have ever been so naïve as to argue that contact is the solution. As an intervention, intergroup contact cannot possibly deal with all the problems posed by intergroup conflict, and in numerous places I have acknowledged the value of these other approaches... But it is difficult to imagine successful reduction of prejudice or intergroup conflict without sustained, positive contact between members of the two previously antipathetic groups. Contact is not the solution, but it must be part of any solution to the challenge posed by the enduring power of prejudice and its pernicious consequences (Hewstone: 2006).

Masondo wrote a paper reflecting on the role of African Indigenous Churches (AICs) as resources for democracy and social cohesion. Amongst the several points he makes are the importance of community building and cultural justice. African Indigenous Churches put community at its centre with 'closely knit extended families as parts that provide a sense of belonging (Masondo 2014). This community has core values and beliefs that serve as the glue that hold the community together. He goes further to assert,

The AICs have powerful rituals of inclusion that are used for the incorporation of new members into the group. Such rituals also confer an identity on those new members. The church as an established social institution has an established order, mode of operation as well as a social profile. Inclusion into the group is carefully managed in order for the candidate to fit into the group (Masondo 2014).

The South African Constitution, in Section 15(1) of the Bill of Rights accords everyone the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion. Masondo goes on to draw from this and argue for cultural justice that moves from mere tolerance of the cultures of others, to respecting and accepting them (Masondo 2014). He advocates for the recognition of all these cultures. “They need to be given social and intellectual space to grow and thrive” (Masondo 2014).

Intergroup contact has a role and effect on social cohesion that is able to impact on forgiveness. Dion Foster observes a challenge in South Africa; “To some extent, South Africans do not truly encounter one another in meaningful engagement, or in spaces of shared meaning. In other words, there is both a hermeneutic and a social barrier to forgiveness in South Africa” (Forster 2018). In this context, Forster asserts that the Church is worse in its failure to provide South Africans an opportunity for encounter or contact. He makes a salient observation,

While South Africans have had to learn to live and work together in certain public spaces, such as workplaces and schools, there is no such pressure, or expectation, for unity, or at least engagement in diversity, within the Church. This is telling, since it seems to expose that when persons have the privilege of choice as to whom they will associate with, they choose not to encounter difference, but rather to retreat to the safety of the familiar. Black Christians and white Christians have separate spaces of worship, different cultures, liturgies, languages, and even theologies. These are largely related to their respective social identities, which are deeply shaped by South Africa’s history of colonialism and apartheid (Forster 2014).

Drawing from Ricoeur’s work on translation, Forster goes to length to critique what he calls the politics of forgiveness which is transactional in nature. It is reconciliation that is based on justice that is marked by such demands for reparation, the return of land, the transformation of the economy and mitigation against white privilege. He recognises the importance of all these that but argues that these “transactions are not adequate.” He argues that important as reparation is, no amount of price can be adequate to compensate for the pain of the dehumanising violence of apartheid (Forster 2014). He goes further to call for reconciliation that is both political and theological or spiritual in nature. This is dependent, as Ricoeur argues, on the act of

hospitality which is about “living with the other in order to take that other to one’s home as a guest. In this sense we can speak of a translation ethos whose goal would be to repeat at the cultural and spiritual level the gesture of linguistic hospitality...” (in Forster 2014).

Foster points out the importance of encounter and engagement when dealing with forgiveness. He shares how he undertook reflection on the topic in his engagement with research on forgiveness. Together with the students he facilitated dialogue and engagement between the participants and the ‘critical reflection on the self.’ He reports,

We worked carefully towards conceptual translation, and also ontological translation, in the encounters between the black and the white Christians. They gathered for a series of intercultural engagements in which they read and discussed texts of forgiveness. This was often a contested and volatile process. Yet, something of their commitment to the prose of justice and the poetics of agape unlocked a wonderful gift (Foster 2018).

In their longitudinal study on intergroup contact in South Africa, a team of researchers posits that; “Intergroup contact remains limited in South Africa and often characterised by a sense of discomfort and mistrust” (Swart, Christ and Voci 2011). They go on to report that “large proportions of South Africans from all population groups report having no cross-groups friends, and they find it hard to imagine ever having a cross-group friend” (Swart, Christ and Voci :2011).

Another group of scholars investigated the social identity model of collective action and what they labelled the ‘sedative effect of intergroup contact among black and white students in South Africa (Cakal et al: 2011). They made an assertion that,

The fact that inequality and injustice endure despite increased contact suggests that contact alone may not be sufficient to bring about social change. In the two studies that we report, we attempt to integrate these two approaches (intergroup contact and collective action) towards a more contextual social psychological model (Pettigrew, 1991) aimed at understanding the intergroup processes leading to social change (Cakal, Hewstone, Schwär and Heath:2011).

4.4. Churches Understanding and Experience Racial integration

The focus of this study was about how one particular congregation in the Methodist Church tradition understands racial integration as way for us to learn about how this process happens and the potential for inter-racialism or multiculturalism for the church in general. From this research study different themes were found, and these are indicators that I shall discuss in this chapter. These include the ideas of how people relate socially, how racial diversity is managed in the church; the impact of whiteness and white hegemony on church structures; how assimilation affect racial integration and understanding black presence or black takeover. These concepts have together shaped how people experience racial integration.

4.4.1. Social Relations

Social relations are very important as an experience of the process of racial integration in such institutions like the Church. Although it is important to observe the process of integration within the church, social relations continue to exist beyond the confines of the Church as people become friends. Several participants noted the development of these social relations where many members of Eden became friends even beyond the church premises. These included people visiting each other's homes,

...friendships that involved going to people's homes... (where) that people were choosing to be together (P3:26).

Members became available and offered each other pastoral support in times of adversities,

“... people being naturally and warmly together and interested in one other. Comforting and helping each other in times of sadness (P6:06).

The spirit of fellowship grows as people chose to be naturally and warmly together and interested in each other. Interracial social relations have “social consciousness” their point of departure and always intended to expose and transgress a context where this is not expected (Monteith 2000:2-3). They are, in their own way, a protest statement against any divisions. Such relationships can make it more difficult for racial stereotypes and animosity to develop” (Yancey 2003:60). For that to happen, those in these relationships must privately and publicly repudiate those who push racial biases

Koinonia is a theological understanding of the web of social relations that exists amongst believers. *Koinonia* the Greek biblical concept of communion or fellowship. *Koinonia* relates to interpersonal relations amongst members of the ecclesiastical community and the communion with Christ (LaVerdiere 1998:22). At the heart of *koinonia* are reciprocating virtues and values of commonality, participation, mutuality, reciprocity, solidarity, togetherness, union and unity (Fuchs 2008:10; Moser 2017:256). *Koinonia* is about understanding that “people are one in Christ, though they may differ radically” (Nel 2018: 206).

Social relations in the context of racial integration have the potential to cement and deepen relationships beyond the institution where the interaction happens. It does, however, not necessarily mean that because people have acquaintances across race, there is no racism or racial prejudices. There is a possibility that without alertness, these acquaintances can just remain superficial and tokens. Writing from the American context Branson and Martinez assert,

This understanding affects intercultural relationships. On an individual level people assume that they are not racist because they have social acquaintances that are from ethnic minorities. Since they work together, served together in the military and some even attend the same church, they assume that they have done the hard work of dealing with racism. The harder questions of structural injustice or privilege are not addressed (or even recognised as issues to be addressed). This is a major challenge for relational leadership – how can we create environments and shape conversations so that this complexity receives attention (Branson and Martinez 2011 :141).

It is not adequate to reduce interracial friendships to only individual relations that do not embrace justice as an imperative of reconciliation (Slade 2009:77ff). Failure to do is what has led to phenomenon of white liberals who considered themselves friends of the natives. This friendship was and continues to be what Soske and Walsh call the politics of friendship in South Africa. It is “a mode of liberal colonial power” (Walsh and Soske 2016:4). In his book, *Friends of the Natives: The Inconvenient Past of South African Liberalism*, Eddy Maloka, assist us to understand what politics of friendship is about.

In his book Maloka explains how “friends of the natives” referred to liberals as “handful of whites, mainly males, who were inspired by an inflated understanding of their role” (Maloka 2014:5). They are “paternalistic protectors of the poor, helpless and defenceless natives where the natives are just passive objects at the mercy of these friends (Maloka 2014:19). The conquered and colonised natives were viewed as a problem and irritation to be subdued, contained and controlled (Maloka 2014:20-21).

Reflecting on this politics of friendship in post-apartheid South Africa, social activist, Sisonke Msimang posits; “Now that the season of realpolitik is upon us and the rainbow myth is receding, we must ask ourselves whether we still need a framework of reconciliation that presupposes friendship across races as an important and useful barometer of the health of the nation.” (Walsh and Soske 2016:32). Our option on the matter of friendship is not either or but both and Msimang herself argues that we hold in balance the improvement of the material conditions of black people and the desire for blacks and whites to be friends but on an equally dignified level. (Walsh and Soske:32)

True integration happens in a context where social relations and power dynamics are consciously managed. Authentic social relations and friendships should include social responsibilities and obligations to each other. “Discipleship and community are difficult concepts to develop among people who do not value interpersonal obligation and deep long-lasting social commitments” (Branson and Martinez 2011:144). Msimang argues that unchecked power relations can lead to “manipulation and domination even by those with good intentions.” (Walsh and Soske 2016:34).

One of the challenges in social relations in multiracial churches is that of homophily – a phenomenon where people are attracted and move to people who are similar to them. Yuan and Gay (2006) describe it as a theory of self-categorisation where similarity breeds connections and birds of a feather flock together. “Homophily is often assumed to be the guiding principle in social relationships, both in terms of the networks to which people belong and their dyadic relationships” (Vincent, Neal and Iqbal 2018:5). Homophily applies to all kinds of relations and networks beyond race. These include gender, race, age, education level and economic status (Murase, Jo, Torok et al. 2019; Yuan and Gay 2006)

They further draw from Bunnell who also contributes,

... highlight the paradox between the centrality of friendship relations to personal lives and ongoing marginal status friendship has had in the social sciences when they note that 'friendship is the means through which people across the world maintain intimate social relations [and are] an important part of what makes us... human ... although friends and friendship are more likely to be consigned to the preface or acknowledgements of books and articles than to feature in conceptualisation or substantive content (Vincent, Neal and Iqbal 2018:6).

To counter to homophily, it is very important for leaders, clergy and lay, of multiracial churches to be intentional in making multiracial friendships. (Koo 2019:153) In this way leaders take a moral high ground and become exemplary as they model to the members the need to establish interracial relations that go beyond the church boundaries. Bridging is the ability to create ties with people from outside one's own group (Yuan and Gay 2006).

Young people are warmer and more open to building social relations that go beyond the confines of the church.

They are more able to cross racial barriers than the adult folk. They can date across racial lines. This was evident in the case study,

... seeing the young people there was no issue around dating across racial lines. They were colour blind (P9:24).

Participant 9 further notes that the friendships of these young people lasted long,

Ten years later, to walk into a wedding and they are a multiracial group of friends, still friends with each other, still connecting and work with each other. That was very interesting for me... (P9:32).

Interracial romantic relationships do go through pressures from different quarters in society. These factors include family and societal disapproval, language barriers, cultural and traditional barriers (Orbe and Harris 2015:211). Churches themselves can be sources of support or opposition (Childs 2005:61)

Focusing on multiracial friendships amongst students, Sheets observed that,

The critical resources – companionship, personal guidance, social power, and personal support provided by friendship connections...appeared to be a key variable in multiracial students' opportunity to express and endorse racial and ethnic awareness, self-identification, preferences, behaviours associated with multiracial identity development. Friendships allowed students to practice and 'negotiate racial spaces' within a variety of situations, and locations. Intimate rather than casual, peer-group friendship networks influenced how and under what conditions these students self-labelled and affiliated (in Wallace 2004:139-140).

It is very important to note that white and black people have different understanding and practices of social relations. Whites tend to be individualistic in nature whilst black people are communal and collective. This understanding is raised by (Rah 2010:90) who writes in the context of multiculturalism and identifies what he calls the individual-focused versus group-focused orientation. There is with the individualistic culture, emphasis on the individual initiative, traits, priorities and privacy. People emphasise their personal time and space. There is however with the group-focused culture, emphasis on cooperation, belonging, community and sharing" (Rah 2010:90).

Writing in the context of Britain, Patten observes; "British people often see church as an organisation that needs to be run well, whereas those from collectivist cultures see church as a family where everyone has responsibility for one another (and their children) in the same way as if they were one large extended family" (Patten 2016:).

Social relations are indeed one small ingredient contributing to racial integration and the macro project of social cohesion. What is important is to ensure that friendship is more than just feel-good, tokenistic, paternalistic and superficial friendships but authentic relations with depth and substance. These must not be reduced to individual liaisons but seek to deal and be conscious of the history of structural racism and systemic oppression that have brought us to where we are. These should not be relations that are just public relations that seek to soothe white guilt because of the apartheid past. It must be honest friendship that is rooted in integrity, ethics and justice. It is more about social solidarity than being saviours who do things on behalf of black people.

4.4.2 Managing Authentic Diversity

A racially integrated church is one where people feel welcomed and can relate well with one another regardless of their background, colour, sexual orientation, and socio-economic. It is a place where people experience diversity. Participant 2 recognised this at Eden and articulated it,

... **diversity is a very integral part of our life as a community.** That we recognise that **we are different but in Christ we are one and more importantly as a community** (P2:20).

Diversity is this organic nature of the Church's unity that is anchored in diversity that Paul articulated,

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many (1 Corinthians 12: 12-14).

The metaphor of the Body of Christ points out to an understanding of the Church as a living organism with many different parts that cooperates provides a theological understanding of the identity of the Church as unity in diversity. Paul goes on to demonstrate how all the different parts are interdependent and cooperative. Thus, to be Church is to be a communion with familial bonds where all members experience a sense of belonging, inclusion and common purpose despite their racial and ethnic differences. In this unity the Church is not just different parts brought together but is rather a new creation and spiritual Body of Christ. Paul's texts to different congregations speak to the centrality of this diversity where there is neither Jew nor Greek. (Sharrock 2006: 255; Widmer in Presa 2016:224).

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him (Romans 10:12).

As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there

is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:27-28).

This diversity is experienced, in multiracial congregations, in small groups, in worship, in leadership and as people provided pastoral support to each other. “The universality of the Church involves, on the one hand, a most solid unity, and on the other, a plurality and diversification, which do not obstruct unity, but rather confers upon its character of ‘communion’” (Evans 1994:174).

Successful multiracial churches are those that look at difference more as a resource and blessing to be managed rather than a frustrating burden. “Church diversity in the form of cross-racial pastoral ministry and multicultural ministry is a sign of people’s spiritual commitment to God” (Walden 2015:page number?). Here, authentic diversity is the basis of mutual interdependence (Rhoads 1996:7).

Creating a diverse church must be a conscious and intentional endeavour. There is a sense in which the collective leadership must cultivate the climate and institutionalise diversity. This understanding of diversity clarifies that diversity has to be displayed, seen and experienced not just in one dimension but areas that include small groups, children and youth ministries, in worship but most important in leadership.

William identifies several practical things that point out the importance of intentionality in diversity.

- Ensuring that our stage represented diversity
- Being intentional about visual announcements and media -ensuring they reflected diversity
- Challenging each ministry (youth, worship, children, small groups, etc) to be sure that the diversity is reflected in leadership
- Making sure diversity was reflected in our governing boards (Williams 2011:140).

The understanding of diversity is one that is captured by John in the book of Revelation where observed,

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before

the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!' (Revelation 7:9-10).

Multiracial and multicultural churches by their very nature are about the existence of different races and cultures. Any responsible integration of these groups demands that those in leadership of such churches manage diversity which is first and foremost about acknowledging and managing differences. Diversity is about awareness of the biases that people bring into diverse groups. Participant 12 at Eden recognised this,

...get people to understand why we are trying to live the way we are and also to begin to share some of those racial stereotypes and bias that people have in a formal setting... (P12:08).

Authentic diversity is about "understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance towards embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of divisions and differences contained within each individual" (Naidoo 2015:71). Drawing from what Miroslav Volf called "theology of embrace", Foster advocates for what he calls 'embracing differences.' Thus, points out,

Volf suggested that we are called to embrace others because we are created to reflect the fellowship that exists in the triune God (Foster 1197:1). He further advances what he calls 'practices of embrace' which he articulates thus; 'I refer to the movement of different peoples in community that seek to be close to others without losing the integrity of their own identities' (Foster 1997:1).

The bringing together of different categories and groups of people is, on its own, not a magic wand. It is important for the diversity to be anchored on the values of justice. *God Loves Diversity and Justice* is a relevant title of a book that speaks out to the fact that diversity without justice is hollow. Its editor Suzanne Scholz argues in the introduction that God loves diversity and justice is not just a catchy statement but a normative claim (in Scholz 2013:1). Rieger warns that most of the time diversity is co-opted by powers that be which include free-market capitalism and mainline religion. Most of the time religion celebrate religion to only fill the pews without power. Thus, Rieger argues offers justice an antidote to hollow diversity,

Justice in this context demands not merely a superficial appreciation of diversity but also a deeper understanding of how diversity has been used and misused by the powers that be, and what needs to change in order to be able to truly honour diversity without oppression and exploitation (in Scholz 2013: 119).

The shortcomings of diversity management are well articulated by Unisa based theologian, Cobus Wyngaard, who argues that,

... while the theological reflection on diversity creates language, which draws white Christians out of their enclosed spaces, into a place where deeper relationships with black South Africans can be formed, it fails to draw white Christians into a deeper reflection on their own identity. As a consequence, it fails to develop a theology that can engage with critical issues of “race” in a post-apartheid South Africa (Van Wyngaard 2014:58).

The problem with diversity is when the focus is only on a happy feeling without addressing the substance and essence of segregation which are power relations.

Many denominations are already searching for new paths forward beyond the fading lure diversity. Many churches have already begun to use the language of anti-racism and are even developing programmes of training and organising to address the issue of racism and anti-racism (Barndt 2011:79).

Noting the progressive definition in critical race theory that racism is more than just racial prejudice, it is important to address power dynamics in any diverse group because if not, the whole efforts of racial integration may be undermined. Any management of racial diversity without dealing with issues of race and power lead to poor racial integration. The management of diversity and thus racial contact demands the importance of acknowledging and managing power dynamics. (Naidoo 2015:71). Power relations in diverse groups are usually complex and systemic. There sometimes intersection of race, class and gender, culture and ideology. Any simplification of these intersections makes it difficult to address the complexity of diversity. To effectively address power relations, diversity must be understood as “fundamentally a matter of justice” (Naidoo 2015:72).

In their article titled; Diversity: Negotiating Difference in Christian Communities, Naidoo and De Beer, investigate the challenges diversity in the context of the Christian

Church in South Africa today. They observe that the immediate reaction of those in the Church is to spontaneously “other” rather than embrace (Naidoo and De Beer 2016). The challenge that they identify regarding diversity include once more the issue of power relations that create boundaries between different groups. The draw from Goduka and Cross assert that, “Conceptualisations of diversity range from tolerance of difference, ‘affirmation’ or ‘celebration of diversity to diversity as a strategy for embracing, or accommodating or engaging difference” (Naidoo and De Beer 2016). They assert that diversity in South Africa has been managed in those institutions where there have been good leadership.

4.4.3 Critical Whiteness Studies

Whiteness is a challenging factor in the implementation of racial integration in many institutions including the Church. Critical whiteness theory is about understanding the concept of whiteness and how the power and privilege of whiteness are produced in different institutions. Critical whiteness theory,

... investigates the historical rise of ‘whiteness’ as a cultural and symbolic value and basis of subject formation. It also traces the material effects of whiteness on specific communities of subjects defined as ‘not white’, ‘not-quite white’ or in transition. Rather than being devoted to the demonisation of white males or females (as some media reports have suggested) whiteness theory helps us to better understand the mechanisms of subject formation and reproduction... (Nicol 2004).

Elliot points out that Critical White Theory or Studies must be understood as a branch of Critical Race Theory which is concerned with unjust social systems where racism is the norm (Elliot 2021: 21)

The concept of whiteness is a socio-political one that has been forged over a period of slavery, colonial conquest and with Christianity falsely used to cement it. Melissa Steyn calls it a” master narrative of whiteness” and asserts that it was present throughout the history of Europe’s colonial relations with other worlds,

The broad contours of the ideology that was to shape Europe's relationship with its others can be seen in medieval representations of the earth, which placed Christendom... at the centre of maps of the world. These representations gave way in the sixteenth century to images that unequivocally centred Europe, often portrayed in classical trappings, celebrating not only its Christianity, but also its commerce, and in time, its empire... (Steyn 2001:3).

Steyn goes further to argue that,

In tandem with these development in the way Africans were viewed, the whiteness of Europeans had been established. Ostensibly their light skin signified a natural grouping of people, who through a superiority 'endogenously determined... occupied a dominant relationship to darker skinned people... While not particularly unifying across troublesome ethnic boundaries within Europe, the invention of whiteness provided people from Europe with a supranationalism that enabled them to ensure that the emerging social formations brought about by European expansion were articulated to their greatest self-interest (Steyn 2001:5).

Writing in his seminal book titled: *White Theology: Outing Supremacy in Modernity*, Perkinson argues

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in America, black slaves absorbed, appropriated, and actually 'stole, from their white masters a blondy-haired, blue-eyed Jesus of orthodox Christian doctrine who was 'blackened' in their reconstruction of him not so much in feature as in figure, not so much in skin tone as in bodily bearing, not so much in content of preaching as in meaning (Perkinson 2004:7).

A critical understanding of whiteness will contribute positively to an understanding of race anti-racism and racial integration. Frankenberg defines whiteness "a location of structural advantage of privilege, how white people look at themselves in relation to others and the unnamed cultural practices (in Applebaum 2016). White people sometimes carry the belief that the privileges that they enjoy is because of their own hard work versus the laziness of black people. They fail to appreciate that these are unearned benefits that accrued from the oppressive and exploitative system of apartheid colonialism.

Critical whiteness theory assists to establish the material effects of whiteness on specific communities of subjects defined as not being white (Nicoll 2004). Critical Whiteness theory exposes and makes whiteness visible with the intention of exposing and dismantling its hidden power. "White norms permeate white dominated society, yet these norms appear to be common and value neutral to social groups that benefit from them" (Appelbaum 2016). This you will see expressed in books, media and films where white actors are cast as leaders, beautiful and heroes (McBean 2019). This whiteness continues to manifest itself in technology, governance, cultural, language and other areas of advancement. Whiteness came to be equated with civilisation, renaissance and even supremacy whereas other races, especially the black race, were seen as primitive, barbaric and savage in nature.

Dominant culture of whiteness with related privilege, are factors that need to be strongly addressed if racial integration is going to be successful. Korie L Edwards reflected on a study in the US titled the National Congregations Study which showed that interracial churches are impacted by whiteness. "The cultures and structures of interracial churches emulate those commonly observed in white churches." The worship styles and practices mainly suit the desire of whites" (Edwards 2008:).

Whiteness or white hegemony has been a phenomenon that manifest itself as a reaction to racial integration. This internalised superiority manifested itself even in English-speaking Churches like the Methodists. Whiteness and white hegemony became the dominant way of doing church.

Hegemony refers to the ideal representation of the interests of privileged groups as universal interests, which are then accepted by the masses as the natural, political, and social order' (Orlowski 2011:2). Whereas it can be in terms of class or gender, hegemony can also be racial. 'White hegemony is a form of rule where whites dominate society with the consent of racial minorities. Racial minorities acknowledge whites' dominant status as legitimate and affirm (if only passively) the culture and structures that sustain it' (Edwards 2008:122).

Several participants experienced this in the case study of Eden Methodist Church. Participant 4 observed this,

Superiority that is on the part of the white who felt they are still superior and they would just make you feel that. Inferiority complex on the part of

blacks such that maybe when they are around white you see that they behave differently than when they are with one of their kind (P14:22).

The maintenance of white hegemony was also ben enforced by black people who preferred the former ways of doing church and the colonial structures of the Methodist church. There are sometimes dynamics of superiority and inferiority complex between blacks and whites within the church. This phenomenon is not surprising because the new black Elites have come to “embrace the socio-economic, political and legal position once held by the white oppressor” (Elliot 2021: 22).

There is always the idea that white people are the financial backbone of the church and that to have them leave will cripple it. White people perceived to assume power over the church because of their financial power.

This whiteness continues to manifest itself in technology, governance, cultural, language and other areas of advancement. Whiteness came to be equated with civilization, renaissance and even supremacy whereas other races, especially the black race, were seen as primitive, barbaric and savage in nature. Resane makes the point,

White people often are unable to let go the idea that they are somehow better, smarter, more likely to be intellectuals and even that they are kinder than black neighbours or residents. This attitude continues to control the norms, ethos and ideologies of public spaces such as schools, movie theatres, shopping centres, churches, *et cetera*. White normativists not only control spaces, but also policies, practices, standards, *et cetera*, as a way of controlling these public spaces (Resane 2021)

The system of Apartheid became, in the South African context, a grand scheme of this whiteness and white hegemony. It was extended to regulate race relations. It went on to shape society and interpret even life itself.

It accorded white people power, privilege and entitlement that has nothing to do with their natural endowment. “Whiteness invokes power relations. It will be argued throughout that whiteness represents normality, dominance and control” (Garner 2007:9).

Drawing from the work of South African Missiologist, Klippies Kritzinger, Van Wyngaard, points out to the uniqueness and particularity of the South African whiteness,

This implies that while international descriptions of whiteness can be helpful, it is important to describe whiteness in South Africa with reference to its particularity as well. Kritzinger's work is deeply conscious of this. This is evident in his conscious choice not only to choose black theologians as his primary interlocutors for critically describing whiteness, but to explicitly choose South African black theologians. What we find in his description of whiteness, therefore, does reveal aspects of how whiteness is constructed globally (such as the relation to economic power), but it also reveals the particularities of South African whiteness (such as the particular way in which whiteness is tied to land and/or language) and it also highlights that whiteness in South Africa has changed over time (primarily in how whiteness is constructed (Van Wyngaard 2016).

White people have gone to shape intentionally and sometime unaware every facet of life including the governance of institutions after their European image. This unfortunately has come to include the Church of Christ. White theology became the silent representation and articulation of the understanding of the Christian faith through the white lens. Black people became objects that need to be transformed and in the case of the Christian religion became objects of evangelism and conversion. This conversion included stripping them of their culture and ways of life. White people, led by the Dutch Reformed Church, appropriated to themselves the status of being "God-elect" chosen race like the biblical Israelites, to lead and bring light to the heathen black people.

Working from the assumption that white Europeans are the elected people of God, the Christian social space was reinterpreted around black and white bodies. Whiteness became the marker of salvation, with blackness the reminder that salvation was unlikely or impossible (Van Wyngaard 2015:9).

There is no evidence that the ushering in of freedom and democracy in 1994 has brought any consciousness and transformation amongst white South Africans. South African white people continue, despite being on the African continent, to view

themselves as superior to black people. Addressing a Conference organised by MISTRA, Melisa Steyn observed that white people are in denial about the changed racial landscape. She asks a vexing question that all white South Africans should wrestle with.

The question that arises is how white South Africans will be dealt with the new wave of awareness and self-assertion in black South Africans. It seems that many have not done the necessary homework for the first phase of racial realignment that played itself out in the first twenty years of democracy, a phase which in truth required little more than recognition of the damage, injury and hurt wrought by the unjust past, and a willingness to be less exclusionary... many will be unprepared for the new phase in which the hegemony of whiteness will surely unravel even more (Steyn 2018:12).

Steyn goes further to identify a challenge.

The challenge is whether, in a context where whiteness does not dominate the organs of the state, and is profoundly challenged in other social domains, it can reconfigure itself as supportive, not dominant, as it has operated historically. For this, white South Africans will have to do the difficult work of recognising the relational nature of racial formations, acknowledge the implications of whiteness in racial injustice, and display a willingness to work for a different social compact (Steyn 2018: 12).

To be able to contribute meaningfully to the social cohesion project white people have a task to reflect and commit themselves to contributing to the transformation of our society.

It will require moving from denial and avoidance of uncomfortable emotions, through the temptation to escape into white fragility or retreat into spaces where secret lives of hostility to the demands of the current society can be lived. Rather they should feel emotions appropriate to the decolonial context – which may include some guilt and shame, but also outrage at inequality and suffering, compassion and generosity as they recognise the need for a radical rearrangement of society (Steyn 2018 :14).

Articulating and advancing his Black Theology, James Cone critiqued white theology within the context of the USA,

Unfortunately, American white theology has not been involved in the struggle for black liberation. It has been basically a theology of the white oppressor, giving religious sanction to the genocide of Amerindians and the enslavement of Africans. From the beginning to present day, American white theological thought has been 'patriotic; either by defining the theological task independent of black suffering... or by defining Christianity as compatible with white racism ... (Cone 2010:4).

White people are generally fine with racial integration if it does not threaten white hegemony. Related to whiteness and white hegemony is the concept of white flight which happens when white people feel they are in the minority and that their power and influence is being challenged by something different, they simply leave. Woo quotes Edwards and Emerson who define white flight as "...when there is an exodus of white people leaving an area due to racial, economic, social and educational changes (Woo 2009:26).

Edwards noted this in a study he did of Crosstown church in the Us.

White attendees were most likely to remove themselves from congregational life altogether when white structural dominance was threatened. Both when Pastor Barnes was appointed as the first African-American pastor of Crosstown and when there was potentially a second African American to be appointed, whites left the Church (Edwards 2008:129).

Edwards further observes of white who he calls experimenters who embrace multiracial worship on condition it suits their dominant white culture,

They have some, *albeit* limited, tolerance for different ways of doing worship and structuring congregational life. But their tie to the church is weakest. They want to attend interracial church, but it must be one where their preferred practices are dominant. If the possibility emerges that their desires may not be met, they are inclined to leave. They will not engage conflicts to rectify differences (Edwards 2008:129).

White people usually use what appear to be innocent reason or motives that makes them relocate. This is an observation that Prof Jonathan Jansen observed in the work he does running anti-racism workshops in South Africa and the world,

The problem is that most parents in schools do not want change. They would leave if the black student numbers reached a “tipping point” in enrolments; it’s called white flight. They would remove their children if the number of black teachers grew to an uncomfortable level. They would have all kinds of excuses for not offering an African language as a second language alternative or soccer as a major school sport. Those are facts (Jansen 2021).

Whites, like at Eden Methodist Church, like using the welfare and safety of their children as a flimsy excuse for their racism. Several participants including participant 10 noted that

Some were complaining about their children not being able to play the games they used to because now the games that the new members of the community were playing, they were claiming, to be different. The language as well was an issue in terms of ... even though it is still English but the pronunciation was confusing to their children. So, it was a huge challenge towards the end they then ended up leaving (P10:2).

A team of researchers in the USA discovered this in their research on racial integration in a number of congregations. Their finding at Crosstown Community Church is worth quoting at length,

These white parents of very young children are already contemplating the effect attending a largely black youth group would have on their children. Despite the lack of actual evidence, they believe that the youth group, with the ‘harder core’, ‘community’ kids, is not a safe place for their children. Furthermore, they suggest that their children may not be able to meet their ‘fullest potential’ attending a predominantly black youth group (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005:77).

Mulder points out that, in South Africa, white flight started in the residential areas and included “political transformation, as well. That is, white flight included the crafting of a new type of conservatism” (Mulder 2015:5).

4.4.4 Assimilation

Where whiteness is strong and black people are weak and not assertive, assimilation takes over. Writing in the context of the South African schools, Vandeyar defines assimilation as; “The process of assimilation occurs when one ethnic or cultural group acquires the behaviour, values, perspectives, ethos and characteristics of another ethnic group and sheds its own cultural characteristics” (Vandeyar 2010).

White people become tolerant of black people in their midst but want black people to accept and adopt the white way of doing church. Assimilation is a process whereby individuals and groups are absorbed into the dominant culture in a particular society. It is an extreme form of acculturation which involves “taking the traits of the dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially distinguishable from other members of society” (Pauls 2019). Although assimilation has been studied in migration studies, it is also strong in religious circles. This was identified even in our case study,

Black people being assimilated into whiteness and white ways. Even though they are quite hard to describe but we could feel them (P1:18).

In the South African historical missionary context, assimilation was a more pronounced intentional project alongside colonialism and imperialism. Masondo argues that the aim of Christian missionaries was to reform indigenous people in their image and alter their consciousness. “African converts were removed from the community and placed in mission station, where missionaries attempted to alter their worldview to Christianity or Western ways of *sekgowa*” (Masondo 2018). The Black Christian converts were expected to break with their identity and submerge themselves into the new Western culture of the missionaries which alienated them from their own communities (Mokhoathi 2020).

Assimilation is mostly a subtle process of making a group of people behave like the dominant group. The classic definition of assimilation described a process of melding where new arrivals acquire the values, outlook, and behaviour of the receiving society and over time become incorporated into that society’s common cultural life (Schaefer 2008:104). In other instances, assimilation is a voluntary sacrifice of the dominated group.

The dominant appears to be welcoming but sets standards that the others must conform to. Chinn quotes Randy Woodley who argues,

This standard may be in *décor*, dress, language or any other areas with the church's culture. If you are visiting from outside the particular group... then you usually understand that you are welcome only if you conform to the 'comfort zone' of those who govern the system. Outsiders are welcome as long as they mind the 'local customs (Chinn 2001:83).

In the case of multiracial Churches sometimes black people can be treated as if they do not exist. They are present but are not noticed. In the South African context, assimilation happens even when black people increase in number and end up being the majority.

... so, Eden did a liberal English way of doing church. Racially it was pretty much 97% black, but we did church in an English way. In the 3 years that I was there we never got challenge in that... (P 3:8).

This demonstrates that power has little to do with numbers but power. Black people get subjected to the white cultural expressions of doing Church.

Assimilation takes place in the different facets of church life but get more pronounced in worship. It is mostly the dominant group that leads worship – they design the liturgy and choose the songs.

This assimilation process welcomes new people from different racial backgrounds and worship traditions but encourages newcomers to integrate into the majority system. Although the worship style may be somewhat new, the majority group is patient with the new worshiper. Over a period of time, the new worshiper is expected to adjust to fit into the accepted style of worship that is expressed by the majority group (Woo 2009:193).

Participant 1 noticed this at Eden,

White way, when you start the kind of shaping of worship. For example, I could introduce songs in different languages, but those **songs were placed into order of service that white people were familiar with.** Therefore, **the**

container is still white. What's in the container is the diversity, but the container is still white (P1:18).

Sibani postulates on how Western culture eroded the African way of worship. African traditional drums have been replaced with Western bands and dance has been discarded with African worshippers turned into “iroko trees that stand very erect in the place of worship” (Sibani 2018). This was a concern at Eden where there was concern about ‘noisy African drums as participant 8 observed,

You couldn't just play drums and get too excited and white people did not want that as much still. Even though they wanted a quiet service they wanted the 9:00 to be noisy but not too noisy (P8:28).

4.4.5. Black Presence or Black Takeover

The increase in black presence, if not managed well can lead to what can be considered as “black tack over”. This is the phenomenon where black people arrive in a racially transitioning congregation – assert themselves and use their numbers to take over the congregation at the expense of those that they may have found there.

The establishment of black organisations as part of the black Church's identity and platforms of doing Church have been moot points in racially integrating churches in South Africa. Kumalo notes, at the Central Methodist Church in Durban, a point similar to Eden Methodist Church. For Black members,

...there was no local Methodist Church without the uniformed organisations. Most of the black members came from congregations in rural areas and urban townships where the uniformed organisations were the church. For them, it was not possible to have mission without the Young Men's Guild, the Women's Manyano Movement, the Young Women's Manyano Movement and the Wesley Guild. These form the basis of a local Methodist Church from which mission can be conceptualised, initiated, supported, prayed for and carried out (Kumalo 2009: 168-169).

This has led in many instances of whites complaining and using these as an excuse to the failure of any racial integration. This was no different at Eden where participant 6 was very vocal about the introduction of black traditional organisations;

I heard so much that was negative and I thought to myself, why are we having them... I think there is a challenge in integration that has been created by the bringing of the organisations (P6:65).

Kumalo notes a complaint similar to those at Eden Methodist Church. A white member at the Durban Church complained.

These people [sic] (black members) have never understood that Central is not a church, but rather a mission, that is to serve the needs of the city. They came here and they want to maintain their tradition of a black traditional church as they do in the townships and rural places, using uniformed organisations at the centre of the church. This is not what this place is for; this place is for reaching out to the inner-city not for Manyanos and the Young Men's Guild (Kumalo 2009:168).

There have been instances where "black takeover" has been more an unfounded preconceived perception than a reality. Cooper has observed that just the move of black people into formerly white spaces is taken as a "kind of cultural assault and "hostile takeover" (in Ogletree and Sarat 2017:120).

This attitude suggests that for a congregation to be truly racially integrated, black people must strip themselves totally of their African identity. It is as if multiracialism and multiculturalism must negate and erase African cultural expressions of being and doing Church. The vexing question is whether there can be authentic racial integration and multiculturalism that is able to embrace the black- African experience? Ward embellishes the point,

... theology is helpful when it brings a healing, liberation that is not fearful of engagement with the environments within which it is working; adversely, theology is a hindrance when it is oppressive, hegemonic and fearful of engagements with the environments within which it is working. Either way, where theology is being done, whether through colonial assimilation or being

authentically rooted in the land, its people, its languages, its spiritual and material histories, these Christian mind-sets are being formed (Ward 2017).

Black Consciousness and the related black power and assertion are part of what any successful non-racial integration must grapple with in order to address whiteness and counter white flight. It is only when blacks are articulate and assertive that integration becomes genuine and meaningful. Noting that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa is a church in Africa with black Africans being in the majority, such initiatives as the establishment of black Organisations are a true reflection of what such a Church must reflect. Racial integration in an African Church cannot reflect a white British colonial church. Participant 3, who is a white minister, was emphatic in calling for the decolonising of the Methodist Church.

The one point is that spirituality will be the pathway to decolonialism in religion. I love that statement because it's about experience. That for me, the experience of God is a process that which we move out of this colonial space. There is a lovely line by someone writing about education: decolonialism is about being prepared understanding what is in the centre. I think we run a colonial church. In the centre is the old English European way of doing things. At our structural level we assume that's the way it is. Certainly, at a congregational level in Eden then and in Knysna, we have to find ways to shift the centre for a moment to put the African way of doing things in the centre. It may not be coming. I may not be necessarily comfortable with it. But it's good, it's ok. To do that process of living with the discomfort of not being the centre of the universe. Which I think the colonial space has meant for white people that we don't even see that we are not centre of the universe. And how we do that is hard. I think people want a way. In a local congregation, it's those conversations that are becoming helpful. That my way is not always the only way. I do wonder whether as a white leader one is able to lead that process or whether one has to step out of the way. I think you need to step out of the way and create space for others to lead and to model following black leadership (P3:22).

Participant 3 goes further to clarify further on the need for decoloniality. Decoloniality could create space for expressed spirituality. Spirituality, the participant argues, has the ability to transform a colonial structure. The spiritual movement is seen as moving

beyond formal religion. The participants go on to affirm the spirituality in the Manyanos (black traditional organisations).

Here is Maldonado Torres, one of his principles or the key issues around decoloniality is that it creates space for the spiritual. That spirituality is about experience and the whole coloniality process is about rationalism about either or, the dichotomies, black, white mind-spirit. He says that when you create space for spiritual experience, it challenges the colonial framework of religion. Spirituality shifts us out of the easy category of head soul whatever. That when you look at people's spiritual experience it transforms colonial structure. Maldonado Torres links creativity, eroticism and spirituality. The experiential creative space has been essential in the decolonial process. For as a student of spirituality, spirituality often moves outside of religious framework and structure and is not particularly concerned with that.

I'm not sure if we are seeing it in our church but I think it might be a place of transformation. Although maybe we are seeing it, maybe the movement in the Manyano is something of spirituality that unsettled some of our more rigid western European structure stuff. I'm not sure, that's what I'm thinking about (Participant 3:24).

The project to decolonise public institutions has gained momentum in the world. There has emerged an increase body of knowledge through Critical Decolonial scholars. There is need to extend that focus to the Church in Africa which was established by missionaries who worked closely with colonialists. Colonial implications of missionary endeavour had an impact on the indigenous people at three levels; coloniality of power, the coloniality of knowledge and the coloniality of being (Seroto 2018). The very being is inclusive of the spirituality of people. Seroto goes to draw from the African scholars such as Ngugi wa Thiongo and Ndlovu-Gatsheni to note that the worst form colonisation is the epistemological one which focuses on imagination and the mind (Seroto 2018). Ngugi wa Thiong'o has long argued,

Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to

the world. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control (in Seroto 2018).

Thus, any targeted decolonial initiative, must in the church context, address worship, governance and polity. Worship is one are through which the cultural being of people can be expressed.

Black Organisations or Manyanos are vehicles that, in the main, carry this African culture as expressed in oragnisation or structure and mostly worship. Jansen articulates this appreciation what the Manyanos are when she writes,

Manyanos are well established all over South Africa and are usually Methodist, though other church groups and unions also have manyanos. By 1911, about a million (26.2%) of all black South Africans were Christian, and in 1946 the figure had risen to four million [52.6%), with the majority being Methodist or Anglican. Most were women, and they preferred to come together in separate church groups as manyanos. The sense of community and support of a Manyano prayer group is highly valued by members, many of whom endure long and lonely working hours” (Jansen 2019:55).

4.4.6. The Experience of Other Churches

There are churches have themselves wrestled with the process of racial integration within their denominations. Writing on the history of churches in South Africa, Carstens noted how the English-speaking churches were divided between those that were pietistic confining themselves to individual spiritual matters and those with some social concern with social justice (in Robertson and Whitten1978:97). He argued that although churches like the Anglican, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic did commit themselves to the principle of non-racialism, they were “gravely impaired by discriminatory practices and racist attitudes that prevail among the white members” (in Robertson and Whitten 1978:98). There was always a disjuncture and contradiction between their professed statements and practice which brought a morass of ambiguity, compromise, and hypocrisy. The racial discrimination had manifested itself in the positions of leadership and stipends paid (in Robertson and Whitten 1978:98).

South African Churches were generally influenced by the South African Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches on their stance on Racism. The World Council of Churches' Cottesloe Consultation in Johannesburg was seminal with impact on the Church in South Africa. The Consultation was called after the Sharpeville massacre where 69 Black people had been killed by the apartheid policy on 21 March 1960. The Cottesloe Consultation issued a statement that affirmed that apartheid was an unjust political statement. It went on to make a call for South African churches to be involved in the struggle against apartheid. This later led to the formation of the establishment of the South African Council of Churches (Kim 2017 :47). It was in 1968, after its formation, that the SACC issued a statement titled; Message to the People, in which it declared the unity of all people was the will of God.

I will here reflect on two South African churches - the Dutch Reformed Church and the Anglican Church in Southern Africa and how they dealt with issues of race, racism and racial integration.

4.4.6.1. The Dutch Reformed Churches

The Dutch Reformed Church's engagement with issues of race is historically unique because the Dutch Reformed Church was the theological and spiritual cornerstone of the system of apartheid (Nelson 2003). Schoeman quotes former Vice Chancellor of the University of the Free State, Prof Jonathan Jansen, who asserted in a weekend newspaper that the Church is one of the primary socialisation institutions in society and blames the Dutch Reformed Church for having entrenched racism in South Africa. (Schoeman 2010). The Afrikaners had come to believe that, like the Jews in the bible, they were the chosen race (Nelson 2003).

The history of the DRC which was established in 1652, the year of the arrival of white Jan Van Riebeeck. Schoeman points out that in its first 150 years the white settlers and the black converts belonged to one church until later when the black sister churches for Africans, coloureds and Indians were established (Schoeman 2010). The DRC did, for a very long time, called itself the "mother" church whilst its black counterparts were referred to as the daughter churches that were treated as dependent objects of mission (Hasselmans 2018:68; Baron 2019).

Beyers Naude is regarded by the many to have the prophetic and voice of reason who stood against the pervasive racism that came with the formal introduction of the system of apartheid within the Afrikaner community in general and the DRC in particular. Naude had grown and had been a rising star within the *Afrikaner Boerder Bond* a secretive organisation of male Afrikaners with access to institutions of power throughout the country. Naude's Damascus conversion experience came at the World Council of Churches' Cottesloe Consultation that was held in Johannesburg in 1960. Instead of embracing Naude, the DRC defrocked him and he went to join the African sister Church and worshipped with Rev Sam Buti in the black township of Alexander. He was embraced by blacks and later became the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. He was later to be coopted by the African National Congress in its delegation that went to meet the National Party government at the Grooteschoor meeting.

The racism of the DRC met with opposition from the ecumenical movement led by the South African Council of Churches. Chief amongst the opponents was the Rev Dr James Boesak who campaigned against the DRC and went on to influence the World Alliance of Reformed Churches General Assembly in 1982 where he as leading bible studies, to declare apartheid a heresy and to expel the DRC from its membership (Plaatjies-van Huffel 2018). The DRC, through the influence of the South African government had left the World Council of Churches after the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960 (Buda 2018).

The DRC has attempted to address the issues of racism through a research survey tool called "Church Mirror" which is undertaken every four years (Schoeman 2010). The church measured over a period of time three important racial transformation variables amongst its ministers and leaders. The first is social acceptance (the relational openness, closeness and intimacy of an individual or groups with their own or those of the other groups); church unity with the sister churches and racism (Schoeman 2010). Schoeman reports that the results show that the participants preferred their "own" than those of the "other" groups. They have displayed not enthusiasm to church unity and racism was not an issue for them. (Schoeman 2010). This view and attitude towards racial integration is very deeply seated,

The Afrikaners' traditional fear of racial equality between white and black derives from an aversion to miscegenation. Afrikaners have always believed that if they are to be true to their primary calling of bringing Christianity to the heathen, they must preserve their racial identity (Nelson 2003).

Afrikaner Theologian, Hasselmans, traces in his seminal book; *Racial integration in the Church of Apartheid*, the “tortuous turnabout” of the DRC in the new South Africa where it accepted its mistake in supporting the defunct system of apartheid and later denounced racial and ethnic divisions (Hasselmans 2018: 1). He apologetically labels the story of reformed churches as complex (Hasselmans 2018:2). Chapter 3 of Hasselmans' book aptly describes the theology that has driven the Reformed churches – *Talking Unity, Living Apart*. They envision “one unified Reformed church with room and respect for local distinctions” (Hasselmans 2018:99). Chapter 4 similarly captures these intended relationships against the practice; *Joining in Prayer, but Not in the Pews* (Hasselmans 2018:149).

4.4.6.2. The Anglican Church in Southern Africa

The Anglican Church has itself had its good share of racism over the course of history. In a Master's thesis, Ntshangase picks up on the appointment of Bishop Zulu who was the first Black Bishop (Ntshangase 2020). He records how a certain white priest would not move out of the rectory reserved for the bishop arguing that it was meant for white people. Prof Simangaliso Kumalo and Henry Mbaya quote, Bishop Zulu on how he struggled with racism in society in general and in the Anglican Church in particular,

I could dilate endlessly upon my own personal experiences and the humiliations I have suffered as an individual person on account of my colour. I refer to it all because every black man has experienced it and hated it. Nearly every class of white person has had his share in treating me as less than man – missionaries and bishops of my own Church; ordinary white men of the working class assaulted me for failing to call them Boss... the group of professors who in utter disregard for his status as political leader of black South Africa sent the late Chief Luthuli and me to drink tea in a little cell that served them for a kitchen; or the State President who turned down my appeal for temporary asylum in a

bishop's house situated in a white town while I built mine in a black town (Kumalo and Mbaya 2015).

Kumalo and Mbaya go further to point the struggle that the bishop had within the Anglican Church itself,

His appointment as Bishop of Zululand brought about some dilemma and confusion among many white Anglicans. Some saw the development as a plausible one and an indication that the Anglican Church was living up to its principles and practising what it preached. However, many whites were deeply shocked. A newspaper reporter narrated the reaction of a white Anglican housewife to the news of the election of Zulu as the first black Bishop of Zululand: 'I know it's silly. I know he is a good chap but I don't like the idea of him confirming my daughter (Kumalo and Mbaya 2015).

In an interview with the Anglican Journal, Archbishop Thabo Makgoba remembers the racial tensions that came with the appointment of Desmond Tutu as first the bishop of Johannesburg and later the first Black Archbishop (in Gardner 2021). Even there, the issue of residential accommodation posed a challenge of sorts. Cowell (1985) submitted an article to the New York Times recording a serious racial tension that manifested at an Anglican Synod that was held in Pietermaritzburg in 1985. The racial conflict sharpened around the appointment of white priests as chaplains to the then South African National Defence Force which was fighting in Namibia. The whites, whose children were conscripted in the army defended the practice whilst blacks pointed to how the SANDF was also killing black children in the townships. Cowell points highlights that whites "who make up 20 percent of South Africa's two million Anglicans, but are said to contribute 8- percent of the church's money – say they feel the nation's politics should be kept out of the pulpit" The response of the then Archbishop Phillip Russel's was even at that time very prophetic; "if the church is not to say what it believes God is saying because this might cause a falloff in income as people leave the church, this would put it right into the hands of the devil." (Cowell 1985).

An interesting proxy of the Anglican Church's battles for racial integration happened at the then St Paul's Theological College and its transition to the now College of the Transfiguration. Mbaya documents how St Paul, a whites only seminary later

amalgamated with St Bede and others (Mbaya 2018). He records how the coming together of the black and white students led to rife racial conflicts amongst students, staff and even among domestic staff. The tensions included contestation around colonial symbols that included plaques that captured English war heroes with derogatory statements towards black people. The tensions led to the students establishing the black Forum which was meant to conscientise students (Mbaya 2018:219). The change to African ethos that happened there included the transformation of worship with multiple languages being used in liturgy and hymns (Mbaya date?:201). The leaning toward Black Theology of Liberation influenced the seminary community to the point that a Fiona Bulman would recall,

It was an opportunity to recognise our white privilege and what that was doing in separating us from a large part of our Christian family and more widely the people of our country. It operated on the basis of a radical reading of scripture from below, with the emphasis on our common humanity as being made in the image of God. It looked at the experiences of oppression experienced by white people in the form of being confined to a specific role in society., the lack of freedom of association, expression, art and culture. It looked for signs of suffering and of hope shared by others. It encouraged forming bonds of understanding and mutual support across the then rigid barriers of race and class (Mbaya 2018: 200).

It is this progressive disposition and culture of transformation that these students would take into their parishes in the future. The then warden of the college, Rev Hewitt, who managed the transition of the amalgamation noted a student of that time, Thabo Makgoba, very early. He recognised Makgoba as “an outstanding person with great leadership skills” that assisted to calmly manage racial tensions (Mbaya 2018:210).

4.5. The Implementation of Racial integration in Churches

In this section we will discuss the major practices that churches employ as seen from this case study and could be evident in many other churches. To interrogate praxis is the heart of practical theology. To see how things are and to evaluate its performance so that practices can be enhanced in their congregational use.

In this section I will explore the concepts of intentionality which is a vital concept to change management. I further want to look at how representative leadership is important in motivating for racial integration; how inclusive language is an important tool in facilitating integration; how inclusive worship has the potential to sustain racial integration and the helpfulness of sustainable transformative programmes is sustaining racial integration.

4.5.1. Intentionality

The Eden case study finds resonance in wider literature that intentionality is fundamental ingredient in facilitating any racial integration. It points out that authentic integration in multiracial and multicultural churches happens not by chance but through conscious and deliberate efforts – processes and interventions. Chinn asserts that intentionality is more of an attitude with deliberate steps (Chinn 2012:20).

Advancing what he calls Difficult Dialogue, Rasane argues for the power of intentionality in managing racial integration,

A truly multicultural congregation in South Africa is one in which the membership and leadership are multiracial, multi-ethnic, and share power and influence over the church's governance, worship, theology and doctrine, and programming. The leadership is intentional to shape its preaching, teaching and worship on a regular basis. These intentions expose members to theological views and worship styles from different cultural backgrounds (Rasane 2020).

Naidoo embellishes this point on intentionality when she writes,

To move from a mono-cultural setting, which simply mirrors the societal divisions, involves 'overcoming embedded customs of social distance'... which must be an intentional and 'requires a shift in core values and worldview'... These types of congregations do not take shape instinctively but involves developing a shared inclusive identity that goes beyond individual racial and cultural identities... Here, congregations need to teach oneness, create activities to experience oneness and encourage this unity through combined interpersonal fellowship (Naidoo 2017 page number?).

The principle of intentionality is very complimentary to that of a vision or overarching goal in building multiracial or multicultural churches.

But intentionality is distinct from those other principles in that intentionality consists of the attitude that recognises that achieving these principles and developing multiracial congregation will be the result of not accepting the normal way things are done in our society (Yancey 2003:112)

Indeed, churches that have relatively succeeded in undertaking racial or cultural integration point out to the importance of intentional efforts of diverse leadership, inclusive language policy and inclusive worship practice as important ingredients. These point out to the point that intentionality, on its own, is not enough. Intentionality must be followed by practical actions.

To create a harmonious mixture from different-coloured ingredients requires intentionality; likewise, a multi-ethnic church does not just happen. Planters and reformers alike must first identify and then take intentional steps to turn their vision into reality (DeYmaz 2020:56).

4.5.2. Representative Leadership

Leadership has a very important role to play in the facilitation and guiding of racial integration in a congregation. Leadership has in any organisation, the responsibility to set the vision for the general membership to work towards realising that vision. In a context such as the Church, this collective leadership includes both the clergy and laity. The principle of intentionality is ensuring that a racially integrating congregation has diverse, inclusive and representative leadership like Visionary Leadership Group of Eden Methodist Church.

Diverse leadership that is multiracial conveys acceptance and a willingness to share power. People in the racial minority want to see if there are leaders who can relate to them. Diverse leadership tells the congregation that there is relationship and a partnership to minister to all congregants (Chinn 2012:20).

Leadership has strong efficacy when the leaders intentionally influence those that they lead. It is this intentionality that was also exercised in our case study at Eden,

... was a **deliberate effort of inclusion in the leadership**. So, you had to move from your normal. This is how you make sure that in your nomination you became **deliberate about including people who would otherwise** not be... persuaded. If I think of myself, I thought I am not ready. **I was persuaded to come to leadership**. And so were others and **eventually you had a racial mix** (P12:18).

Influence is the “epicentre of leadership” (Merritt 2016:146). Leaders must emulate Christ who influenced from the essence of his being (Oqden and Meyer 2008:22; Fadling 2017:92ff). That happens when the leaders intentionally influence others for such good as racial integration. Participant 9 argues that there was a great effort in making leaders at Eden to be influencers,

They weren’t just leaders in formal leadership, they were influencers. That group of **people were helped to think theologically and oriented towards the vision of racial inclusion**. Without that group, I don’t know how you do the work (P9:28).

Sheffield has identified the multicultural leader to be a person who:

- **Envisions the eschatological reality.** Develops a theology of culture and diversity. Able to construct and communicate a story of the multicultural congregation as an embryonic form of the heavenly kingdom.
- **Embodies the relationships.** Lives a way of life that reinforces the values and practices. Has authentic relationships and intercultural dialogue flowing from a spirituality rooted in servanthood.
- **Embeds the vision.** Communicates values and practices that define group identity and power dynamics. Ownership of the vision at all levels is built via collaborative engagement.
- **Embraces cultural diversity.** Develops understanding about how cultures are shaped by beliefs, values and behaviours. Moves from ethnocentrism, and minimising difference, to hearing “the other” fully –without passing judgment.

- **Enables intercultural empowerment.** Creates an environment where diverse voices interact with equal standing. Where power is de-centralised and all can engage confidently.

The leadership at Eden were identified as exemplary. Their leadership include sacrificial service to others. Thus, participant 9 observes,

The visionary leadership was a real sense in that the way **leadership was embodied to service to others**. That means **sometimes sacrificing**. Certainly, for the incumbents there was sacrificial element of saying I am **willing to give something up to make space for somebody else**. That strong dynamic as if it were. Certainly, **visionary leaders led by example**. They **led people of any race or class that dynamic. Serving by their own behaviour**. It **was not a top-down kind** of we are telling you to behave but the **visionary leaders modelled what worship looked like and what community looked like** (P9:10).

4.5.3. Inclusive Language

South Africa has a chequered history with the role of language in society. The apartheid government used language is a tool of division and domination rather than unity and social cohesion. The student uprisings of 1976 were triggered by the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction and communication on the black populace.

Thus, the reverse should suggest that language has the potential, if used intentionally, to bring people of a diverse community together. “As is well-known, language is a carrier or conveyer of socio-cultural values and beliefs and a socialising instrument, and as such has re-ifying power...Language is used to promote the interests of the dominant social classes” (Webb 2002:22).

Many scholars, writing on the multilingual, multi-ethnic, multicultural or cross-cultural churches, identify inclusive language as an important factor in fostering racial or cultural integration (Bowers 2006:116; Kraft 2015: viii).

In multicultural church ministry, all members ought to be conscious of the power dynamics and should be attentive to how they are welcoming or not welcoming other groups into the fabric of their church life.... Do not allow language barriers to be an excuse for not getting to know one another at a deeper level. Millions of people who speak different languages, including church folk, take part in meaningful secular activities such as athletic events, shopping, house services music, and dance: language barriers do not prevent them from participating. It is ironic that cultural conflict does not seem to occur in such secular events at the same rate or intensity as it does in religious institutions (Walden 2015:88).

The participants identified the importance of language as one of the intentional efforts that the leadership at Eden used to facilitate racial integration.

It catered for everybody for both for all languages. Like I said our songs and everything is in English. **I love to sing the mixed languages.** I would love to be able to speak a language to be honest. But it's my fault, it's not nobody's fault. But when James was there it was predominantly English but **they did not exclude the other languages** Now it's more the other way (P7:4).

Eden was so intentional with their inclusive language that they went beyond the South African languages,

We sing in different languages, **not limited to the eleven official languages.** **We sing in Swahili, we sing in Nigerian, we sing in any other language that we feel there are people who are from those nations** (P10:18).

The importance of inclusive language was also recognised by the leadership of The Cross-Way Church who intentionally adopted English as part of their welcoming policy. "By using English as a language of worship, they wanted to make sure that the church and its activities were open to all believers in the area who wanted to join" (Kurien 2017: 141).

Inclusive and integrated language is very helpful even in the design of liturgies and the choice of hymns and choruses that are to be sung in a multiracial church. The best way to include racial groups who may not understand a particular language is to put the relevant translation. This helps that group to understand and internalise what is being read or sung. A group of researchers in the USA observed the

creative use of translations between English and Spanish at Brookside Church they worked on.

... the service provides translation through headphones to people who are primarily Spanish speakers. One or two songs during the service are also sung in Spanish, and the Bible is read in both English and Spanish. For some, this combination of languages adds to the spiritual richness of the service (Christerson, Edwards and Emerson 2005:77).

Mark DeYmaz reports about how in their church they had to make a progressive sacrifice in order to accommodate Latinos who could not speak English. He writes that just after a visit of four of them, the Church leadership decided to invest in translation equipment.

Nevertheless, we concluded that this intentional step was the only way to accommodate Spanish speakers and, therefore, one that had to be taken in order to realise our dream of becoming a multi-ethnic church. To this day we continue such practices, and at the one point recently, 16 percent of our congregation could be described as Hispanic or of Latin descent... And as regular part of our Sunday morning experience, we sing often in both languages. Even the way we staff our church is a direct result of such early and intentional steps (DeYmaz 2007: 56).

4.5.4 Inclusive Worship

Worship is one intervention, if done consciously, has the power to facilitate and contribute towards racial integration. True worship is one that stimulates the whole human being heart, mind and soul. The word 'worship' derived from Latin is about recognising someone as worthy. Just like its secular use where mayors and judges are called "Your Worship", it is, in the context of Christian worship, about according to God the worth. It is about recognising God as Lord and worthy of our focus and service (Graig-Wild 2002:23). Such worship is one where the whole congregation can look beyond themselves and their individual or group preferences but at how to encounter and be intimate with God. Formative worship is one whose criteria is one "by which we judge the effectiveness of worship should not be the arbitrariness of our own

personal tastes, not the value-laden base of the different strands of church tradition” (Graig-Wild 2002:33).

Diverse and inclusive worship can assist a congregation to move an exclusive mono-culture to a diverse and inclusive multi-cultural one. Participant 5, who is a member of the worship team at Eden notes

...its thinking just beyond ... saying okay how do we make sure that ... these ones also have a space here, but making sure that we are actively all doing what needs to be done, **so at this time its worshiping, how do we make sure that all of us are active in worshiping and language does not become a barrier** ... race does not become a barrier... cultural practice in worship does not become a barrier, so, thinking outside of just saying make sure there is this for these people because blacks worship like this, whites worship like this, tick box to say well there is space for them, once you think outside of that and look for even better means to **make sure people come together, you move to now integration** (P5:08).

Transforming worship has three effects argues Graig-Wild,

- Worship forms the individual worshipper into the person God wants them to be
- Worship forms individual Christians into the people of God, the Body of Christ
- Worship transforms the world and the whole created order (Graig-Wild 2002:34).

It is always a challenge to transition from the way they have been doing something to a new arrangement. Racial integration and transformation do however demand that people be open to learn, unlearn and sometimes even relearn. This was so in Eden Methodist Church where some people were steeped in traditional African worship whilst others enjoyed the charismatic modern music of choruses accompanied by a musical band whilst others just wanted to remain with the English Methodist hymns of John and Charles Wesley.

Worship does have the power to influence the Church for integration and transformation.

Likewise in worship, as we connect with each other in community, we encounter God. If the worship experience and practice is filled with people coming from different ethnic backgrounds, social ranks and ways of eating, then there will be opportunity to enjoy God's presence together. This guiding image of communion at the Table of Christ is central to why we participate in cross-cultural worship. The table communicates fellowship with others (across differences, as Jesus modelled) and with God (Van Opstal 2016:25).

Eucharist is one element of worship that is a place of division and yet has a great potential to facilitate cohesion in a congregation. The Lord's Table is meant to be a place of inclusion and solidarity.

The Lord's Table, which should be the meal that unites us, is frequently the place where cultural divisions among us, is frequently the place where cultural divisions among us are most manifest. In many congregations of our day wars are being fought over issues related to culture and worship such as the shape of the liturgy, the choice of music, the style of prayer and preaching, the nature of congregational mission, and matter of who is invited and welcomed to the Table (Blount and Tisdale 2001: ix).

John Wesley understood worship in general and the Lord's Supper as a time and place where all -the seekers and the believers are welcome and renewed. "This sharing of the common cup and bread where all are grateful recipients of God's grace, no matter the differences in education, social status, culture, language or race, becomes a powerful witness/martyrion to the onlooking world" (Sheffield 2014:6).

The book. *Conflict and Communion*, is a collection of papers by Methodist scholars as per the subtitle, about reconciliation and restorative justice at Christ's table. In the introduction of the book, Thomas Porter asserts; "On this journey, I have developed a growing conviction that it is at the Table of Holy Communion that we will find the place, the time, the ritual, and the spiritual power for healing relationships and doing the work of reconciliation in this world" (in Porter 2006:10)

It is at the table that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the host welcomes all of God's people as they are. God's people are welcomed "as authentic and truthful" and they come through "interconnection and interdependence" (in Porter 2006: 11). Thus, Felton writes in another chapter; assert in another chapter,

No one is excluded from the Table of the Lord. All may come and receive bread; all are in need of grace. At this Table all human distinctions vanish. There is neither righteous nor unrighteous, rich nor poor, black nor white, Asian nor Latino, male nor female, gay nor straight...The single chalice or cup of wine similarly expresses the hope of oneness (Porter 2006:30).

In another chapter, Goodpaster views Holy Communion as having the power to model community of people who “might not otherwise eat together or even associate with one another were it not for the Table” (in Porter 2006:38). He sees the Holy Communion as a community-making table that intentionally focuses on those missing and excluded from the table. He draws from the bishops of the United Methodist Church who advocated for the Beloved Community.

The Beloved Community is a dramatic sign of the presence in the world of the spirit of Jesus Christ, in which the walls of separation are broken down so that all – Jew and Gentile, male and female, young and old, slave and free, rich and poor, those near and those far away be one (in Porter 2006:44).

He draws from Martin Luther King Junior’s concept of the Beloved Community which was the vision of the coming together into a new relationship between the oppressor and oppressed. This beloved redemptive community is one that comes through reconciliation and justice based on non-violence. It transforms enemies into true friend as King preached in that famous sermon:

But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends. It is this type of understanding goodwill that will transform the deep gloom of the old age into the exuberant gladness of the new age. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of men [sic] (in Lee and Fosua 2012:6).

The beloved community is a safe space where all are welcome and God’s love reigns supreme (:6). It is a utopian messianic vision captured by Isaiah where enemies shall embrace each other, “The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and fatling together, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6).

Christian community is about the communion of saints, who are gathered joined by the common faith in the Lord. It is fraternal communion based on mutual love (Kaitholil 2001:18). It is a symbolic community meal celebrated by a meal community (Welker 2000: 29).

It is that community that was birthed by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost as Luke reports,

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as many had need (Acts 2:42-45).

This understanding of Christian community is like the African concept of community.

4.5.5. Transformative Education Programmes

Intentional efforts in racial integration include designing and implementing transformative education programmes that the congregation can be taken through. The concept of transformation has been so dominant in the South African discourse to the point that it is being used without a clear and common understanding. Sheffield draws from sciences and asserts,

Biology tells us that transformation is change that alters the general character and mode of life, as in an egg becoming an embryo, and embryo a foetus, a larva into an insect...In theology we are told transformation is a change in disposition, heart, or character, as in conversion (Sheffield 2008).

Writing in his seminal book, *Nobodies to Somebodies*, renowned Black Theologian, Anthony Reddie, draws from different education scholars to advance his notion of transformative education. Reddie advances American Christian Educationist Charles Foster who warns against the subtle factors of exclusivity, power relations and the othering of fellow believers within the faith community. Foster calls on believers in multicultural faith communities to adopt what he calls double consciousness where they affirm their own traditions whilst respecting those of other groups.

A primary context for the Religious Education of persons in multicultural contexts occurs not in isolation of their cultural experiences in teaching learning

activities or in the imposition of one cultural perspective over another, but at the intersection of their encounters with each other (Reddie 2003:50)

Reddie then goes on to draw from Brazilian Liberation Educationist Paulo Freire who, in partnership with Ira Shor, argues for education based on conscientisation, critical consciousness, dialogue and freedom.

Freire and Shor develop their notion of transformative education. They say this form of teaching possesses the power to change their relationship between the self, external knowledge and truth, has the potential not only to transform the classroom and the resulting practice of the teacher, but also contains the seeds for a wider transformation (Reddie 2003:83).

Reddie then goes on to quote South African anti-apartheid activists, Hope and Timmel, who developed their model that was developmental and liberationist in character. They argued,

Education is either designed to maintain the existing situation, imposing on the people values and the culture of the dominant class (i.e. domesticating people, as one tames an animal to obey its master's will) or education is designed to liberate people, helping them to become critical, creative, free, active and responsible members of society (in Reddie 2003:85).

Although there are universal principles and generic process to facilitate racial integration, the particularity of context is very important in ensuring this. Participant 1 was very strong in emphasising the importance of context in implementing programmes,

A lot of the theology was happening. I think three things that I would work on constantly is context, context, and context. The next will be Church; **what does it mean to be Church and Christ**. So, **context, Church and Christ** (P1:30).

Context and contextualisation of intervention is about observing the impact of Apartheid on South African society in general and the Church in particular. Reflecting on the importance of context in theology, Matheny writes,

We will see that what is new about these theologies is that they are holding up the importance of contextual methods in approaching the Christian life and faith.

These theologies are new in the willingness to connect the proclamation of the gospel and the living of the Christian faith to the historical, socio-cultural, political and cultural realities of the people who attempt to be Christian in land of the global South and East (Matheny 2012: xi).

Bevan argued that the importance of context in theology must be understood in the light of the radical incarnational nature of Christianity itself and 'sacramental nature of Christianity.' "Christians continue to encounter the incarnate God in the concrete things of this world..." (Bevans 2018 33-34). Furthermore, Bergmann asserts,

Today the word (context) also denotes the particular social, cultural and ecological situation within which a course of events takes place. A theological text, for instance, comes into being within a wider context, that is, it is determined by the traditions and circumstances that have an effect on the complex situation of the author or the reader (Bergmann2017:).

Leaders of multiracial and multicultural congregation can also employ prophetic - contextual preaching and bible study as worthy interventions in transforming congregations. The preacher must respect the context of the text and its original audience as well as the context of the present congregation (Linden 2015: 113). The Ujamaa Centre at the University of Kwa Zulu Natal has for years championed the use of contextual bible studies in transforming society. It uses the See-Judge- Act method which "begins with analysis of the local context (See), and the re-reads the Bible to allow the biblical text to speak to the context (Judge), and then moves to action as we respond to what God is saying (Act) (Ujamaa Centre 2014:4). Contextual Bible Study "encourages readers to read the Bible in ways appropriate to their own contexts and which allows them to engage in dialogue with one another to address current concerns in the light of the biblical texts" (Riches 2010:2).

Peter Storey is an example of the power of the pulpit in fostering racial transformation of the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg. He is reported to have declared to an interview panel for the post at the church,

The first thing I will want to do...is to integrate the congregation. If you are unhappy with that you shouldn't invite me...The third thing I would do is use the pulpit as a platform for engaging issues in our land today. You must know that will not always be comfortable (Kuljian 2013:58).

Storey later captures his conviction about the power of the pulpit and efficacy of preaching in facilitating racial integration.

For me, the moment of preaching lay at the heart of what ministry was about and far from thundering Sunday by Sunday about political issues, my passion was to offer people what Jesus called 'life in all its fullness.' I wanted everyone to know what a difference this Galilean carpenter could make to their lives, leaving them with a fresh vision of what he called the 'kingdom of God' – healed people in a healed world of right relationships – a world of joy and justice (Storey 2018:210).

One of the transformative education programmes that was introduced as an intentional effort at Eden Methodist Church was the Anti-Bias Programme. Although the Anti-bias programme addresses all kinds of prejudices, it is also effective for racial prejudices. The programme addresses biases not just related to racial groups but also sexuality, class and gender. People can confront their biases and the biases of other people towards them.

The anti-bias seminars were designed to **help us to acknowledge that we all have biases** and not to **clean them up but to at least to become aware of how we felt about things** (P 8:6).

Anti-bias is a principle and value-based programme that facilitates and assist people to embrace differences by recognising their own biases.

The heart of anti-bias education is a vision of a world in which all children and families can become successful, contributing members of their society. To achieve this goal, they need to experience affirmation of their identities and cultural ways of being and learn how to live and work together in diverse and inclusive environments (Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan and Nimmo 2015:9-10).

The impact of the Anti-bias programme was noted by one Eden member,

The very key work of the anti-bias in particular was the **creating of a fair space for people to voice their concerns their confusion their questions**, express who they were and be welcomed into that space. People had the **opportunity to be quite honest because there was a safe space created through the anti-bias programme, where there was a trust** of each other and that we all

want to do this work and **we want to grow** and we want to understand. What an easy work through very difficult way, but it gave quite a depth to the work and **people could be honest**. It is **through honesty that people learnt, and people moved** (P9:18).

Anti-bias has been used for children from Early Childhood Development to adults. A conceptual framework developed in the USA identified four goals with everyone

- will demonstrate awareness, confidence, family pride and positive social identities
- will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for differences; and deep, caring human connections.
- will increasingly recognise unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts
- will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions. (Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan and Nimmo 2015:9-10)

The Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope is one example of a practical transformative education programme that was undertaken at Eden Methodist Church.

The big thing on pilgrimage of pain and hope **was to reflect on their own life**. People travel to each other 's house. **One week you are looking at somebody's life**. The next week you are looking at how that person looked at your life. It was that first and second **part together that led people real shift**. When I was for example into the township **and I stayed with somebody and I bring that person into my own home** and I realise that I am almost embarrassed by my extravagance or the way I live, then I need to reconcile on that (P9:20)

This is a praxis-oriented programme where the privileged are taken on an immersion experience to visit those who were culturally, racially and culturally different and poor. Those who were live in privileged residential areas are taken to visit, worship and sleep over in the poor and underprivileged contexts such as townships and informal settlements.

The Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope was designed by a South African Methodist clergy, Rev Trevor Hudson at the height of the system of apartheid in South Africa. Read

Trevor Hudson's book, *A Mile in My Shoes*, describes the ethos, structure and processes of the programme.

Hudson designed this to take privileged white congregants in the communities he ministered in, to the poor townships in which the oppressed black majority were trapped in through the Act. In order to honour the hosting individuals, families and communities, Hudson evoked the sacred concept of pilgrimage which is different from an entertaining tourism. The visiting congregations were prepared to "...come as pilgrims, not as tourists; as learners, not as teachers; as receivers, not as givers; as listeners, not as talkers" (Hudson 2005:18). Oxley this point further on immersions and encounters. Indeed "... visitors become spectators of the drama of other people's lives and faith. They observe and, if given a chance, may reflect on what they have seen and heard" (Oxley 2002: 34). Crucial in encounters are the "terms and conditions of an encounter...who gets to set the terms of participation" (Bowen 2013:11).

Authentic immersions always take the forms of, encounter, reflection and transformation. The encounter is an incarnational experience where the pilgrims go to live with the poor blacks and experience their daily struggles and pain. They would then take the time to reflect on this and allow God's Holy Spirit to work on them as they changed and become critical and conscious beings. They were to return to their homes after their weekend experience with commitment to lead lives that seek to expand the vision of integration by crossing boundaries.

Writing in the context of the World Council of Churches' ecumenical education programme that employed immersions as a form of transformative learning, Oxley describes the concept of encounter,

When we encounter the 'other' – the other person, the other way of thinking or believing, the way of describing life, the other way of celebrating, the other way of worshipping, the other way of doing – we are given the opportunity to break out of our accustomed ways, our frames of reference. It is only an opportunity because the experience may do nothing at all for us. Worse, it may actually allow us to confirm our stereotypes (Oxley 2002:45).

Hudson's intervention emphasised transformation as an important outcome of the encounter. Christian encounter with the Other must be preceded by a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. This encounter with Jesus "challenges our socially

constructed meaning systems, creating dissonance in regard to our existing beliefs, assumptions, values, expectations and behaviours. This encounter with Someone so 'other' initiates a process of both spiritual and rational that transforms the mind, spirit, and body" (Sheffield 2008). This transformation is more a paradigm shift "is no small thing. To cease from objectifying 'those people over there' and begin welcoming them as neighbours and friends. This ecclesiological and anthropological move will not come without teaching, praying and mentoring" (Heath 2013 :11)

Spiritual transformation is about the individual experiencing total conversion which includes conversion, repentance, renewing of minds and total growth in God. Those who have had the personal encounter with Christ experienced continued renewal. "So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). This transformation is about growing in the likeness and being "conformed to the image" of Christ (Romans 8:29). This "grace-transformed lives" lead to the "every encounter with the stranger amongst us we find the possibility of being more and more conformed to the likeness of Christ" (Sheffield 2014:6).

4.5. Normative Vision of Racial Integration

In this section I seek to discuss and establish what can be considered the norms and standards for racial integration. This discussion focuses on a Methodist congregation which was the sample church of the study this denomination. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa has over the years grappled with the matter of racial integration through several initiatives that seek to establish what can be considered the normative vision of unity in the denomination.

I will look at how the Methodist Church has expressed its perspective on racial integration and social cohesion and establish how the Church has lived up to those intentions. In this section I will reflect on what may be considered Wesley's praxis of a multicultural society. The Methodist polity principle of Connexionalism remains the bedrock on which any process of social cohesion – including racial integration can be understood. The 1958 statement of a "One and Undivided Church" has served as the Church's expressed commitment over the years and is thus worth establishing the

extent of its influence over the years. Rev Dr Peter Storey who is an eminent Methodist and Ecumenical leader in South Africa, has been a forerunner and champion of racial integration in the congregations that he has ministered in. Thus, his contribution in captured in a document he sponsored to the Church's leadership titled: Towards a Racial integration in the MCSA, is worth a reflection. Obedience 81 was an important historical conference where the Church committed itself to racial unity at the height of the violent manifestation of the system of apartheid. The programme of Geographic Circuit was an intentional effort by the MCSA to contribute to an inclusive and racially integrated Church.

4.6.1. Towards Wesley's Praxis of Multicultural Society

Although Wesley lived in a monocultural society of 18th Century England and did not address the issue of racial integration directly, there are foundational principles that this father of Methodism has bequeathed to the Methodist tradition that can serve as theological clues to be employed for guiding a reflection on racial integration.

We too can draw from that tradition,

What is needed now is a Methodist theology that draws deeply from the Wesleyan wellspring of tradition. This will include a theological method of intense engagement, marked by an intentional opening to difference that draws from the past and present in vigorous dialogue, wrestles honestly and critically with differences, and opens to new directions that have not yet been envisioned. This will call forth a telos of love, built on the affirmation that God has planted love in all beings through prevenient grace and God works continually and eternally in human lives to sanctify us into holy beings in the image of God. Finally, a life-giving Methodist theology will yield an ethic of grace: seeing the grace in others, extending grace to those we name as "different" or "enemy," and awakening ourselves to the grace of God that is larger than all of us (Moore 2013:6).

Methodist Theologian, Dan Sheffield, draws from a John Wesley letter; A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity to develop what he considers a Wesleyan Theology

and Praxis in Multicultural Society. Wesley argued that a genuine Christian is one who is full of love for their neighbour. Such a Christian is,

... universal love, not confined to one sect or party, not restrained to those who agree with him in opinions, or in outward modes of worship, or to those who are allied to him by blood or recommended by nearness of place. Neither does he love those only that love him, or that are endeared to him by intimacy of acquaintance... It soars above all these scanty bounds, embracing neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies; yea, not only the good and gentle but also the forward, the evil and unthankful. For he loves every soul that God has made, every child of man, of whatever place or nation (in Sheffield 2014:2).

Wesley's position was so radical that he argued that not even those intimately related by blood should restrain a Christian to interact with others. A genuine Christian is one who can engage and worship with even strangers and enemies because of their love for all.

Wesley understood worship in general and the Lord's Supper as a time and place where all -the seekers and the believers are welcome and renewed. "This sharing of the common cup and bread where all are grateful recipients of God's grace, no matter the differences in education, social status, culture, language or race, becomes a powerful witness/martyrion to the onlooking world" (Sheffield :6).

John Wesley's teaching on holiness in general and social holiness provides a sound theological basis on which Methodists can ground their understanding of racial integration. To be holy simply means to be different and to be set apart. It is about the Christian faith being "a relational religion requiring participation Christian community" (Manskar 2013:3). Wesley' theology and praxis was commitment to "holiness of the heart" that is both and inward act of grace and outward embodiment through concrete actions (Steinwert 2013:3). He points out that to be Christian and thus, holiness, is not to withdraw from other people and their cultures. Holiness is to be part of Christian fellowship in the congregation and the love of God. It is about in connection. "Wesley's understanding of Christian people's relations, inward and outward, makes the Christian dependent on the relations he or she builds up or pull down. The social dimension of religion is inward but also outward" (Thaarup 2013:9)

It is this holiness that Christians become more and more like Jesus. Social holiness is, on the other hand, a virtue at the centre of whose heart "...is inclusiveness of all people at all levels of the church and society. It also includes the struggle for social and economic justice. Much emphasis is placed on the importance of human agency in "building the kingdom of God." The church is understood to be God's agent given the task and responsibility for building the kingdom of God (Manskar 2013:3).

4.6.2. Methodist Connexionalism

Methodist Connexionalism is a polity and ecclesiology that John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, bequeathed to this movement. Connexionalism is Methodist practice of *koinonia* which is about the connectedness of the different structures of the Methodist Church from the basic class meeting (small group) to the society (congregation) to a circuit (a group of congregations) to the district (equivalent of a diocese) to the Connexion (the coming together of districts). The Methodist Church in Britain released a statement on Connexionalism titled: Called to love and praise. In it the Church asserted,

Koinonia, then, denotes both what Christians share, and also that sharing is at the heart of Christian faith. Such koinonia involves a mutual sharing of spiritual and material resources, working together, and learning from one another. It is fundamental to the environment in which the Christian pilgrimage is undertaken. It implies togetherness, mutuality and reciprocity, requiring mutual recognition and a common acceptance of each other's identity (1999:26)

Articulating the importance of Connexionalism for the United Methodist Church in the USA, Rendel points out that Methodist people are covenantal people and its covenant is expressed through connection. "We are connected by a shared identity and promise to belong to one another as God connected to the Israelites in the original covenant" (Rendel 2012:18)

Fuchs draws from Robbins and Carter who advances an explanation,

Connexionalism emphasises the essential interrelatedness of the Church and its universal interdependence. It witnesses to the catholicity of God's love for

all people in the solidarity and interrelatedness of their humanity...It emphasises the Wesleyan principle that is not such a thing as a 'solitary Christian' and extends this principle to the relationships of congregations (Fuchs 2008:225).

Thus, Methodists are about Christians who are not solitary but are in solidarity with others. Christian solidarity is a commitment to the being and struggles of others. It is about locating the Church to a practical commitment of the struggles of the victims of injustice. It means "a particular kind of action, a lifestyle expressive of sympathy for an identification with the victimised" (Welch 2017:46). Solidarity has the power to make Christians of different races to be each other's keeper. Okafor argues that solidarity has the vexing theological questions of 'Cain, where is your brother Able?' and 'Who is my sister or brother to whom I am indebted in love and solidarity?' (Okafor 2014:3.). This solidarity is loving one's neighbour as oneself (Luke 10:27).

Connexionalism, in the context of racial integration and social cohesion relates to what Min calls the "solidarity of others" which responds to the dialectic of differentiation which makes us aware of the difference of others and the dialectic of interdependence which compels us to live together despite the difference. (Min 2004:1). He points out how Christianity provides resources worth retrieving for this purpose,

...the example of the historical Jesus in his solidarity with the marginalised others of society, his crucifixion and resurrection as signs of his solidarity in suffering and hope, the triune God as a communion of three persons in their difference, the incarnation as solidarity of the human and divine in their radical difference, the Holy Spirit as the source of communion in difference, the great but neglected doctrine of communion of saints in the body of Christ... (Min 2004:1).

Following on (Min 2004:1) and advancing a theology of global solidarity in a broken world, Reynolds argues that a community that creates a dialogical praxis of solidarity of other is one that "takes up and incarnates the ethical heft of this dynamic is humanising and good. It is a community that willingly exposes itself to and welcomes the other as central to its own healthy functioning" (Reynolds 2006:103). This is God's divine solidarity that is assumed in the incarnation of Jesus Christ and demonstrated in Christ's baptism, suffering and crucifixion and resurrection. In this divine solidarity

God becomes human that human beings might become God... when divine solidarity is specified in terms of solidarity with the poor, the excluded, the crucified ones of this world, then the mystery before us is truly wondrous and intensely challenging” (Reiser 200:7). Methodist Connexionalism is more than just an administrative system, it is ecclesiological and missional in character.

Thus, Methodist theology of Connexionalism is a negation of the western notion of individualism in favour of African communalism. The African communalism is best appreciated by understanding the interrelated concepts of personhood, community and the relationship between a community and person (Ikuenobe 2006:51). Africans locate their self-identity within that of community before that of the individual. African communalism has its structure elements that include kinship, interdependence, belonging, inclusiveness, egalitarianism mutual support and sharing. *Ujamaa*, as Kiswahili concept for “familyhood”, was the late Julius Nyerere’s socialist philosophy and policy based on African communalism. It based on the “cooperative spirit before the colonisers introduced the idea of individualism.... (and was) a blend of economic cooperation and racial and tribal harmony” (Mawere and Mubaya 2016:142).

Ubuntu is the African concept of personhood that is grounded in the plurality of community. It is a spirituality that has been championed in writing and practice by both the late President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu and reminds us of our common humanity. It is grounded in the profound African conviction of John Mbiti’s statement; “I am because we are” as opposed to Descartes’ western statement “I think, therefore I am” (Augsburger 1986:82). *Ubuntu* is a belief “that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye, that there is a oneness to humanity that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others and caring for those around us...” (Mathabane 2018:). It is a spirituality that is foundational to reconciliation and bridge-building and assisted South Africa to transcend the divisions of the past (Gade 2017:2). It assists facilitates cooperation between diverse groups of people. Tutu’s Theology of *Ubuntu* is grounded in the *imago dei* – the recognition that human beings are persons in community made in the image of the triune God (Battle 2009: 28). Inherent in the spirituality of *Ubuntu* is human dignity which each human being has irrespective of their social standing. All human beings of all races are endowed with the gift *Ubuntu*.

It its basic understanding, Connexionalism is about understanding St Paul's vision of the Church as the inclusive Body of Christ with all parts working together. "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." (1 Corinthians 12:12). It is further, as Paul counselled the Colossian church, about clothing themselves in love which clothes everything in perfect harmony. Drake argues that; "This bond is a reminder that a pattern of connexion is present in all our relationships; personal and communal as well as institutional" (in Marsh 2006 :137).

4.6.3 One and Undivided Church

The Methodist statement of a "One and Undivided Church" is paramount in establishing the Methodist norm on racial integration. (Venter 2007: 52; Yrigoyen and Warrick 2013:342) The Methodist Conference of 1958 passed a resolution that contributed and came to be celebrated as the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's vision of unity and social cohesion. That statement is recorded in the Minutes of Conference of 1958 as follows,

Like other parts of the life of our country, the church is facing choices which will determine her future development, and in particular the choice between unity and division. The Conference, in prayer and heart-searching, expressed its conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided, trusting to the leading of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition (Minutes of Conference 1958:202).

The resolution was passed ten years into the National Party's introduction of the system of apartheid which was based on what they called separate development. It was a system based on the divisions of our nation based on race. This conference resolution and statement was a delayed emboldened response to the different legislations that were reinforcing the apartheid system which had been declared as an official government policy in 1948. The Population Registration Act of 1950 identified, classified and registered South Africans into four hierarchical racial categories of white, Indian, coloured and African. The Group Areas Act of 1950 directed the different racial groups to be confined to the geographic areas to which they were assigned. The

Bantu Authorities Act of 1950 created homelands or *bantustans* which were little barren pockets of land to which Africans were assigned based on ethnicity. The Pass Act of 1952 directed black South Africans to carry little books that served as their identity with content pages that gave information about their employment details and regulated their movements. The Separate Amenities Act of 1953 assigned public amenities to different groups based on different quality.

In this statement, the Methodist Church nailed its flag to the mast and declared its public stance against the divisions that were driven by apartheid. In the statement, the Church declared its uncompromising stance for the imperative gospel value of unity. Thus, Conference went on to assert itself,

We do not pretend that there are no difficulties; barrier not only of prejudice but of real difference will have to be subordinated to the love which the Holy Spirit implants in our hearts. But this will be an expression in life of the message for which Methodism was created, the message of Scriptural Holiness and Perfect Love, whereby we follow our Lord in stretching out our hands to all men [sic] that they may be saved from all evil and may be brought into the unity of the household of God (MCSA 1958).

The statement was grounded in Methodist and Wesleyan theology of Scriptural Holiness and Perfect Love.

The statement located the Methodist Church in the praxis against apartheid and pointed out that the Church has a choice to, like the Afrikaner based Dutch Reformed Church, support the division of Apartheid or the unity. The racist ideology of apartheid was backed up by the white Dutch Reformed Church (Hankela 2014:89). Having provided the choice, the Methodist People chose to stand on the side of Christian unity trusting that God will lead them to this ideal.

Christian unity is about is founded in the unity that is demonstrated first in the relationship of the trinitarian God of Christians. It is unity that finds expression in the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ; “The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17: 22-23). It is unity that was not just for the Church’s sake but also for people who are outside the church community (Lathrop

2011:7). Earlier on in John verse 9 Christ points out that the unity he is praying for is specifically for the Church. It not an unprincipled inclusiveness that is at the expense of truth (Cassidy 2012:265). This is unity rooted in the relationships between people (Armstrong 2010:43).

The last World Methodist Conference held in 2016 had as its theme; “One: One God, One Faith, One People, One Mission.” The different speakers addressed this theme to unpack this concept of being one and undivided in Christ. The World Council of Churches Secretary, Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, in his keynote address pointed out that the Christian faith is relational and connectional and that to be one is to be accountable to God. He went on to assert; “The call to be one must reflect the values of the kingdom of justice, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. How we continued to combat racism and bigotry is a measure of our commitment to unity. We must hold ourselves to an attitude of mutual accountability” (Tveit 2016). He concluded with the words that to be one means to unite in what is life-giving: our faith and hope in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Although much progress has been made since 1958, this resolution remains in many ways, a statement of intent than reality. The first black president was elected in 1963 and for long period power was with white leadership until the 1986 when Rev Dr Mmutlanyane Stanley Mogoba was appointed the first black secretary (Cracknell and White 2005:76).

There is still much that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa needs to do to realise this utopian and egalitarian vision. There are many of its structures that reflect either subtle or overt signs of division alongside culture, class, gender, sexual orientation and even race itself. In his paper titled, Theory and Praxis: An Evaluation of the 1958 “One and Undivided” Mission Policy of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa 60 Years Later, a young Methodist clergy, Ntobeko Dlamini reflects on the implementation of the vision statement sixty years later and concludes;

Sixty years later, it is clear that the MCSA is still divided in terms of race and ethnicity. However, the Methodist people have learnt to gradually accept each other, worship together and allow leadership to eligible persons, regardless of skin colour. The most important thing to note in this study is that the "One and Undivided" mission policy is a vision the MCSA strives to achieve. It is like

perfection as understood by Wesleyans, we are never perfect, but we strive for perfection. This article concludes that Methodists are not "One and Undivided". This statement was a desire of the Methodist people. The Methodist people live in a divided society, which then influences the divisions in the church. However, the MCSA is still one church because of its people who strive towards oneness (Dlamini 2019).

The sentiment that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa is struggling with racial integration were echoed by former Bishop Paul Verryn who did so much in trying to foster racial integration as both Bishop of the Central Synod and superintendent minister of the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg. He is reported to have reflected on the struggle of the Church with integration and is quoted to have said,

One of its deepest struggles is to be non-racist. And so, for instance, I have ministers pleading with me to move them out of white contexts where whites still treat them like second class citizens and as if they're stupid and as if they're not, you know, they cannot be trusted pastorally... (in Hankela 1989: 90-91).

There several other scholars who point out that despite the declaration of this statement of unity, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has, throughout the course of time, struggled to realise that unity. Cracknell and White point out that despite the statement, the leadership of the MCSA remained "wholly in the hands of the white minority" (Cracknell and White 2005:76). Hankela observed that most Methodists continued to worship in racially segregated congregation (Hankela 2013:71). Balia's assertion was even stronger; "White racism continued to permeate much of religious life, like a 'monster', as the church was characterised by relentless discriminatory practices" (in Oosthuizen, Kitshoff and Dube 1994:27).

Forster considers the 1958 Conference statement of a "One and Undivided Church" "a truly significant and courageous one, not only for its time, but also certainly for the decades to come when the pressure to segregate would increase manifold" (Forster 2008). The statement became in many ways the bedrock and influence on the number of Methodist flagship initiatives against apartheid with its racial segregation. Those initiatives are dealt with in the following sections

4.6.4. Towards Racially Inclusive Church Congregations

In September of 1970, the Rev Peter Storey, who was minister of the Inner-City Mission in District Six (Buietekant St Church) submitted to the Methodist Church's Commission on the Renewal of the Church, a report titled, Towards Racially Inclusive Church Congregations. This was a proposal that sought to influence and encourage the MCSA to undertake a deliberate effort in establishing racially inclusive congregations.

In the Paper, Storey accused the Methodist Church to have "conformed in practice to the 'South African Way of Life' which it officially condemned" (Storey 1970). He went to challenge the Church to be alternative visible sign.

While struggling in every possible way to achieve such a reversal on the broad fronts of national life, the greatest service the Church can perform at this stage is to make visible the possibilities of inclusiveness in its own life. The mere existence of any inclusive group at present gives the lie to the basic premises of apartheid and exercises a ministry of hope far beyond its immediate surrounds" (Storey 1970: 1).

Storey goes on to define what he considers an inclusive congregation. He then argues for intentionality and warn against what he calls tokenism.

A congregation living the full life of God's people, expressed in Worship, Teaching, Sharing and Serving together. The test of inclusiveness lies not at the point of worship, where it is relatively easy, but in the Teaching, Sharing and Serving ministries where the focus is far more interpersonal. There is a difference between a 'mixed audience' and an 'inclusive people (Storey 1970: 2).

Storey the, like most of the experts who understand multiracial congregations, argue for the principle of intentionality.

A racially inclusive congregation cannot 'come about naturally' in the South African context. It is unreal to expect South Africans of any colour to be unselfconscious when entering into a relationship completely foreign to the norms and taboos which dominate every facet of their lives (Storey 1970: 1).

He embellished this by writing,

It follows that such a congregation must be deliberately planned. It will come about not by pretending an absence of prejudice, but by consciously identifying and facing our prejudice and wrestling with it every step of the way. A programme must be consciously planned to enable this to happen (Storey 1970: 1).

He went to suggest a three-year plan that includes

Finally, Storey warns against tokenism in any project of racial integration. This is worth quoting at great length

Because racial prejudice is almost synonymous with South Africanism and because it is extremely deep-rooted, it is more likely to be confirmed by acts of 'tokenism' which characterise our present approach...The benevolent paternalism which so often characterises such contact is being resented by those to whom these gestures are made (Storey 1970: 1).

Storey went on to minister to yet another inner-city church, the Central Methodist Mission in Johannesburg where he furthered his commitment to racially inclusive churches. Storey tells the story of Central City Mission in his autobiography titled; *I Beg to Differ*. He found Central as a lily-white congregation and allowed the Spirit of God to use him as he transformed into an inclusive Church that responded radically to the system of apartheid. "CMC needed to be irreversibly 'broken up' so the real world could come in..." (Storey 2018:216). Central became a model inclusive prophetic church as it ran transformative programmes that facilitated racial integration. The People Centre ran a restaurant in the time of the Separate Amenities Act that would not allow mixed restaurants. "It was exciting to see black and white people eating together for the first time, but even more astounding was the notion of elderly white women serving black customers" (Storey 2018:216-217). Storey had also said of the People Centre; "It was an underground subversive integration." (Kuljian 2013: 65).

Reflecting on the same concept of an inclusive congregation, Kumalo writes about Malcom Cooper's efforts in establishing a racially inclusive congregation at the Central Methodist Mission in Durban.

Cooper's understanding of a city church was that it needed to create a new community for members of the city. It was to be an alternative community that would enable people to find a home, refuge, peace, love and justice, no matter who they were, or what their colour or background was. It was to make Central a place where Christ was experienced, instead of one that drifted to the past by being based on racial, class or ethnic differences (Kumalo 2009: 152).

Cooper had written an open letter to the congregation; "I too have joined the Methodist people to who God is committing a vision of building a community church of people in the city, for the city, for Christ" (Kumalo 2009:152)

The commitment to building a racially integrating or multiracial/multicultural church is a commitment to building an inclusive church. This is about understanding the church as "a living, embodied community of witness to the gift of creation, the unity of humankind and the invitation to share in God's life which is at the heart of Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection" (Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard 2006:84)

An inclusive church is one that allows to be disrupted by the arrival of others who are different from its members and the Gospel of Christ. It is a "way that begins with being interrupted – which means also disrupted, challenged, and changed – by our neighbours who, in all kinds of ways, are 'other' than us, but always come bearing gifts – wonderful, strange and sometimes even difficult gifts – that we are invited, with curiosity, wild patience, delight and humility, to receive" (Barrett and Harley 2020:). An inclusive church is one that practices radical hospitality – not just a hospitality that is about tolerance of those visiting with the hope that they are briefly here with a temporary inconvenience. Radical hospitality "means the community seeks to welcome the voices, presence, and power of many groups – especially those who have been defined as The Other, pushed to the margins, cast out, silenced, closeted – in order to help shape the congregation's common life and mission" (Spellers 2006:15). An inclusive Church has an element of vulnerability and risk taking. It is being open to lose the 'what used' to be and going into uncharted terrains guided by the Holy Spirit. It says to those arriving in an established congregation; "Bring your culture, your voice, your whole self – we want to engage in truly mutual relationship" (Spellers 2006:64)

The Christian faith is by its very nature one that is inclusive in character and ethos. Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard made two important principles statements: The first is that “The Church should be inclusive because God is inclusive. The second is that; “Christianity is inclusive to its core” (Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard 2006:1). The Trinity is the foundation of this God who is an inclusive relationship of three person.

The inclusive Church can only ever be a response to, a trust in, an enjoyment of the inclusive God. It is not a social arrangement designed to satisfy any other end. But in entering into the life of the Trinity, we find that this experience of gratuitous love always invites us into new relationships, hopes, and struggles for a world more humane and whole. That exciting and dangerous invitation is the mission of those who have caught a glimpse of life-changing truth: God is love. God is inclusive (Shakespeare and Rayment-Pickard 2006:111-112).

Although writing in the context of inclusive youth ministry, Malan Nel makes the point about the Trinitarian God as the foundation of inclusiveness,

This being the case, it is also true for our corporate identity as the people of God, as created and recreated human beings. We are because of God, because God is. We are, however, taking the Trinity, as we confess it, serious, also as he(sic), we do not only have relationships, we are our relationships (Nel 2018:24-25).

4.6.5. Geographic or Integrating Circuits

Geographic or integrating Circuits were introduced to foster integration among a group of societies or congregations within a common geographic area that were previously divided along racial lines. It was envisaged that in coming together, Methodist congregation will cooperate and share in God’s mission.

Methodist minister and theologian Keith Benjamin quotes the original resolution which was:

The Conference considers that a necessary expression of our strategy for mission is the uniting of our people in multi-racial Circuits and Societies. The Conference therefore resolves:

- that ministers and laity in neighbouring Circuits either group themselves or be grouped by the District Chairman into regional teams, meeting regularly for co-ordination of effort and mutual assistance, under the general direction of the District Chairman;
- that District Synods initiate combined meetings of members of our three women's organisations at regional and Circuit levels and that men's and youth organisations be similarly drawn together;
- that District Local Preachers' organisations work towards racial integration;
- that inter-racial contact of our members be further promoted by regular meetings of people from neighbouring Circuits of different racial groups;
- that Liaison officers be regularly exchanged between Quarterly Meetings of such Circuits. District Chairmen are asked to bring this to the notice of Circuits;
- that District Synods seek to re-define Circuit boundaries on a geographical rather than a racial basis (2015:58-59).

It was envisaged that the Geographic Circuit will facilitate the coming together of black and white Methodists through mission structures and activities. Through Geographic Circuits Methodists would be integrated through their Circuit Quarterly Meetings – the highest decision-making body at in coming together of congregations.

Although no scientific evaluative research has not been undertaken to reflect on the progress of Geographic Circuits, anecdotal observation points out there are many challenges that are found in these Circuits. The Geographic/Integrating Circuits were never successful in integrating racial communities from different backgrounds. It is fact that the Apartheid spatial planning remains, even after 25 years of freedom and democracy, very intact. Geographic/Integrating Circuits have largely been seen as a failure. Dlamini makes an informed observation,

Although geographic circuits seemed to be a solution in response to racial divisions in the church, it was a nightmare to integrate societies and circuits, let alone to maintain a geographic society/circuit. Rev. David Schooling outlined the challenges he faced as a minister in a geographic circuit. Firstly, his argument was that the MCSA encourages societies and circuits at grassroots to integrate, but it is doing very little to guide the local ministers on how to achieve this mission. Secondly, geographic circuits bring together people who have totally different backgrounds and traditions. He states: "In a multi-racial society like Eshowe we have not found one thing that both black and white members like doing together. Thirdly, there is always a group that will dominate over the other" (Dlamini 2019).

4.6.6. Racial Justice in the British Methodist Church

In its report, *The Unfinished Agenda – Racial Justice and Inclusion in the Methodist Church*, the British Methodist Church, with which the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has historical relations, articulates the Church historic stance on racial justice and inclusion (British Methodist Church 2017). This report is based on four previous documents that were compiled over a period of fifty years. These documents are about how the denomination has addressed themes of – belonging and exclusion, assimilation, inclusive leadership and participation and tokenism. The Church declared that racism is sin,

Racism is a sin, and contrary to the imperatives of the Gospel. Biblically, it is against all that we perceive of the unmotivated, spontaneous, and indiscriminating love (agape) of God who, in Jesus Christ gave himself for all. As Christian people, we believe that with the coming of Jesus Christ, a new relationship was initiated between people of 'different origins' (The British Methodist Church 2001:68).

Central to the approach of the British Methodist Church is the element of justice and equality. Racism is understood as a phenomenon that runs deeper than individual prejudice. It is an ideology "assumed supremacy of white people over believed to be superior to black people" and can be traced to the history of colonialism, African and Caribbean slavery and indentured labour (British Methodist Church 2001:12).

4.6.7. The United Methodist Church

Similarly, the United Methodist Church, part of the worldwide Methodist family through the World Methodist Conference, moves from the premise of racism being sin that manifests itself unjust systems of power and access. Their commitment recognises the systemic link between racism in the church and society. Thus, they commit themselves,

We will work for equal and equitable opportunities in employment and promotion, education and training; in voting, access to public accommodations, and housing; to credit, loans, venture capital, and insurance; to positions of leadership and power in all elements of our life together; and to full participation in the Church and society (United Methodist Church accessed 2018).

4.6.8. Normative Vision of Unity of Other Churches

The Methodist Church is not the only church that has grappled with issues of racial integration. There are other so-called mainline churches in South Africa and in the world that have also focused on issues of race, racism and racial integration. There is a long history of struggle, of failure and continued commitment to grapple within their own context with the issues. This section focuses on two families of churches – the Reformed Churches in South Africa and the worldwide communion of Anglican churches.

4.6.8.1. The Normative Vision of the Reformed Churches

The Belhar Confession provides the Reformed Churches in South Africa what can be regarded as a normative vision on matters of race, racism and race relations. The Belhar Confession was drafted in 1982 by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) as a progressive response to the system of apartheid. The DRMC Synod that drafted the confession met soon after the World Alliance of Reformed Churches which had earlier declared Apartheid a heresy and expelled the Dutch Reformed Church. The Synod, which met at a small suburb of Belhar in Cape Town, after reflecting and concluding that Apartheid was not consistent with the gospel of Christ, appointed a

committee that included Prof James Boesak to go “draft a confession of faith” (Plaatjies-Van Huffel).

Part of the statements of the Belhar Confession read,

We believe ... that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted.

We believe ... that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged

We believe ... that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others. (Reformed Church in America 2021)

The Confession committed the church(es) to a common witness on issues of unity, reconciliation and justice.

It is a confession for the whole church seeking to be faithful to God, who stands in the midst of suffering of any and all expression. The Standards of Unity say little about the centrality of unity, reconciliation and justice in the church which are so eloquently expressed in the Belhar Confession (Plaatjies-Van Huffel).

The Belhar Confession has impacted on different churches differently. The Reformed Church in Africa was initially reluctant to accept it but did so after they amalgamated with the DRMC to form the Uniting Reformed Church of Africa. The Confession had an impact on members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches the world over including churches in America.

The Belhar Confession emerged out of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and is a guiding light today in the discourse on racism both in the global south and north. Racism lurks in both the global south and north; therefore, churches across the globe are scrutinising a document from the global South to help them. To this end in this article the author put the Belhar Confession in the historical setting of the discourse on racism... The confession provides a

scriptural and theological foundation for churches to stand where God stands with the marginalised and in so doing to become a church that is multi-ethnic and multicultural (Plaatjies-Van Huffel).

Christopher De La Cruz, a Presbyterian pastor in the US, urged members of his church to work at translating the Confession from mere statements into lived action and participate in God's work. He was bold in declaring,

The fact is, however, the General Assembly adopted it. It is part of the Book of Confessions, and the Belhar Confession is now in the same constitution as the Nicene Creed and the Heidelberg Confession, as long as this denominational body exists (De La Cruz 2017).

Those who opposed the Confession argued that it falls below the doctrinal standards of and should only be equated to the Barmen Declaration that the Protestant churches developed during the Nazi rule (Kopenkoskey 2019).

It was at the Presbyterian, USA General Assembly meeting in 2016, that Boesak, as co-author of the Confession, advocated for it to be adopted. He argued; "No other Confession has been so clear in its intentions: not only unity, but its foundationality; not just reconciliation, but its inescapability; not only justice, but its indivisibility" (in Brekke 2016).

4.6.8.2. Toward the Normative Vision of the Anglican Church in South Africa

The Anglican Communion News Service, an online website of the world-wide communion of Anglicans, ran an article titled; How are Anglicans around the World Fighting Racism Inside and Outside Church Structures (ACNS 2021) The article reports on how many of these churches are indeed participating in many initiatives and the Black Lives Movement in particular. It identified a resource of the US-based Episcopal Church who has a ministry called; Becoming Beloved Community, which is "a long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justices in personal lives, ministries, and society" (ACNS 2021). They have a resource 10-part film series called "Sacred Ground" which is a resource for this ministry. The Church of England on the other hand, has a Task Force on racism which produced a report which calls for the

move from lament to action. The report identified five key areas of focus “participation – including appointments, education, training and mentoring, young people, and governance and structures” (ACNS 2021).

The Anglican Church of Canada has developed; A Charter for Racial Justice in the Anglican Church of Canada (2021). Their beliefs provide sound theological norm for racial integration,

- God created the world and saw that it was good and created human beings in God’s own image.
- Jesus in his life and teaching actively sought to be in loving, right relationship with others, embracing those who were pushed out by society, while challenging the structures of his day that separated one group from another.
- God’s Holy Spirit breathes and gives life to all humanity and moves within God’s people to overcome separation and sin.
- In baptism we are given a new life of grace, a life of mutuality and community; and are incorporated into the Body of Christ, one body with many parts. In accepting the new life in Christ, we affirm that divisions of race have been put aside and that all come before God as equals.
- In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “persevere in resisting evil”, and whenever we sin, “to repent and return to the Lord”, and thereby commit ourselves to make a new beginning when we discover that we have offended God or injured others.
- Our struggle for racial justice requires new attitudes, new understandings and new relationships, and these must be reflected in the policies, structures, and practices of the church, as well as in the laws and institutions of society.

In June 2020, the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, had issued a statement entitled; Environmental Racism – When #BlackLives Don’t Matter” This was a statement responding to racism the world over. The statement, signed by the

Communion's archbishops including Thabo Makgoba, committed the Anglican churches to the following:

- Listening to voices of indigenous people.
- Recognising and challenging white privilege in society and the Church.
- Recognising the colonial past of the Anglican Communion, its ongoing Euro-centric values and the dominance of English.
- Identifying the need for further study and active listening around issues of racism.
- Recognising and challenging theological ideologies and social norms that perpetuate racism
- Acting in solidarity with vulnerable populations experiencing eco-injustice by actions such as: advocacy for policy change at national and regional levels; nonviolent protest; boycotts.
- Acting as a mediator between indigenous people and farmers or extractive industries, understanding the legal frameworks involved.

We can draw from the collective of the Anglican Communion elements that can contribute toward a normative vision of racial integration. It seems that the concept of the *Imago Dei* – which reminds us that all of humanity has been created in God's image is foundation of this. Relationships based on justice form a resource on which to sustain any racial transformation and integration. The sacrament of baptism reminds us all the need to resist evil. The Communion is confessional in acknowledging the English dominance and Eurocentric values that are still lingering in the provinces where the Anglican Church has been established.

4.7. Practical Theological Reflection of How Racial integration Supports Social cohesion

Social cohesion remains a noble goal in the transformation of South Africa with its long history of division. Many sectors of society are making their contribution in healing the nation and making the country a place for all. The Church is best placed

to play a major role in facilitating racial integration which is an important ingredient of social cohesion.

This study is located within the field of Practical Theology focusing on Congregational Studies and Congregational identity. Congregational studies focused on multiracial or multicultural is a growing field in other parts of the world. This study contributes in that field within the context of South Africa which has been going through processes of racial integration in different sectors.

The Intergroup Contact Theory provides a working theoretical framework on racial integration in churches. At its basic level, the theory points out that there are benefits of integration when different groups are brought together. Pettigrew is one of the scholars who have advanced the theory and added factors that are important. He argues for what he calls constructive contact which is more about long-term relationships than the short initial acquaintanceship (Pettigrew 1998).

This study points out how churches that are going through racial changes can be intentional in putting interventions that transform their identity from a monocultural to a multicultural entity. It affirmed the critical role that leadership plays in facilitating the racial integration and transformation in society and in the church. A leadership structure that is representative of the racial groups that are present in a congregation have the moral high ground and impact in driving a racial integration process. Such leadership must be seen and felt by the congregation to be practicing the integrated congregation that we are envisioning.

Intentional interventions include the development and implementation of powering and transformative educational programmes. These should provide both the theory underpinning the rationale and the practice for racial integration. They must include the creation of safe spaces for both encounter and dialogue.

Interventions such as inclusive worship have the power to build a new identity that is inviting to those who embrace diversity. Those leading inclusive worship in racially integrating churches should be deliberate in their choice of hymns and songs to be sung. This should be considerate of the racial and ethnic groups represented in a particular congregation. The same can be said on the creative use of liturgy. It must be liturgy that contributes towards fostering the envisaged integration. The sermons

that are preached and the hymns that are sung can deepen the faith of God's people and provide them with hope.

South Africa has a chequered history with language being a cause of division. This was so with the use of Afrikaans in education. The uprising that led to the tragedy of 16 June 1976 were mainly around language. Thus, language has the power to facilitate social relations and also heal communities that are divided. A Church that seeks to engage in a process of racial integration must use inclusive language.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The main question of this research was to establish how racial integration in a Methodist Church contributes towards social cohesion

The South African grand project of social cohesion is fragile as the nation remains racially divided. This project demands that every sector of society makes its contribution in the manner appropriate to its mandate and ethos. The Church, whose mandate is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to usher in the Reign or Kingdom of God with its values of forgiveness, love, justice, peace and reconciliation, has a responsibility to live up to this mandate. These are values that should, for theologians practically contribute to racial integration which is one dimension or component of social cohesion.

The history of the Church in South Africa points to the humble contributions that the Church, mainly through its different leaders, made in the past and continues to make today. The Christian church has the potential to make an impact on social cohesion.

This chapter looks at the take-aways or lessons that can enrich the Church of Christ in general. It offers recommendations on how to improve on pastoral work on racial integration. It goes on to establish possibilities for new research and finally provides a conclusion.

5.2. Practical Theology Methodology

I approached this study as a practical theologian with the interest of understanding and applying the dialectical interface between the practice and reflection of clergy and lay individuals on matters happening both inside and outside of the church. It is an activity of faith undertaken by believers.

The Church should be interested in social cohesion because the Church, in the context of Practical Theology, and as the community of faith, has a symbiotic relationship with the broader society. "Society is the larger community of communities encompassing the faithful, surrounding the faithful, from which the faithful come, to which the faithful

go, and in which the faithful live” (Bush 2016:3). This demonstrates that the Church cannot afford to be an ivory tower with “pie-in-the sky” theology that does not seek to transform the society within which it exists. Otherwise, the saying goes; “The things we do are the things we believe, the rest is just religious talk” (Steyn and Masango 2011).

Practical theology is a praxis-oriented academic discipline (Lawyer 2002; Kim 2007; Sheridan 2015). Praxis is an essential variable in doing Practical Theology.

To reflect on practice is to engage in praxis. Praxis is the Greek word meaning ‘practice...praxis refers to the process of reflection which attends to practice. It refers to any method that allows us to reflect critically or analytically on practice. Such a method is praxeological. Practical theology is a praxeological way of approaching theology. It brings theological reflection into critical dialogue with our practice (Bush 2016:4).

Although related to practice, the word praxis is more than just general empty practice. It is “a form of action which is value-directed, value-laden and profoundly saturated with meaning. In short, praxis thus refers to a practical form of knowledge that generates actions through which the church community lives out its beliefs” (Willows and Swinton 2001:14). On the other hand, liberationist practical theology is one that grounds “its reflection in the experience of persons who suffer the oppression generated by structures of and unequal power... ..pursues praxis, the rich interplay of theory and practice, which increases justice and recognition of the full humanity and equality of all persons” (Turpin in Calan and Mikoski 2014:153).

Liberation theology takes seriously the role of praxis in doing theology.

Liberation theology considers praxis as the fundamental locus of theology, the ‘place’ where theology occurs. Finally, liberation theology maintains the reality of a permanent dialectic between theory and practice here: a dialectic between theological theory and the political praxis of faith (Boff 2009: xxi -xxii).

Thus, as an exercise in Practical Theology, this study is a theological reflection on the experience racial integration and its contribution to social cohesion.

The praxis cycle consists of four stages that progressively build on each other to “make a difference to the local church as it seeks to live out its essence as a participant in

God's mission to the world" (Cameron 2010:16) i. The Experience observes what is happening; ii. Exploration establishes the reason by asking why things are happening; iii. Reflection tends to evaluate the experience in the light of the Christian resources of the scriptures and tradition and iv. Planning develops and action plan to guide future practice.

The other form of the pastoral cycle is the See-Judge-Act method of reflection that we used as young activists in the Young Christian Students and later in the Institute of Contextual Theology (Nolan 2006: xiv). This Method was developed by Catholic activist, Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, who used it with the Young Christian Workers in the 1920s in Europe. It is a hermeneutical and pedagogical circle that was also used by Contextual theologian Albert Nolan (Pobee 2017 :118; West in Botta and Andinach 2009:30).

The **See** in the method is about being mindful and observant of issues or situations in society. The subject who is seeing brings to the situation all their intuition and senses – they hear and feel the situation and are able to describe what they observe. The **Judge** in the method is about unpacking and analysing the situation by establishing the reasons and the connections of things. It employs tools of social analysis that borrows from other social sciences like sociology, politics, economics, anthropology and others in order to make sense of the phenomenon. Above all, the analysis draws from the theological resources to judge the situation using gospel standards and the teachings of the Church. The **Act** is about taking transformative action that seeks to transform the situation. In its authentic form, the method "...requires practice, reflection, review and to act – always act" (Stinson 2009:7).

Writing to unpack the University of Pretoria's Practical Theology, Steyn and Masango hasten to point out that the praxis of Practical Theology is not just an airy-fairy theoretical willingness or conviction but practical obedience (2011). It is thus not adequate to just engage with such concepts as racial integration and the intention to do without going to practically engage in it. To buttress the importance of action, they go on to quote Wise who states that; "If our concern to help ends with those who require little cost on our part, then we will not help many" (Steyn and Masango).

True to the nature of Practical Theology which is interdisciplinary in nature (Graham 2017; Botha 2014; Ganzevoort 2014; Muller 2013; Van der Westhuizen 2013), this

study does draw other branches of theology as well as social and human sciences. This assists practical theology “to be able to speak truthfully and meaningfully about human realities” (Cameron et al 2010: 29). Whilst arguing in support of interdisciplinary imperative of the Practical Theology, Mercer has however identified what she dubs the “conundrums” in the discipline. She argues that first; “interdisciplinarity renders our work too complex to achieve in the fullest sense of the term” and second; “interdisciplinarity scholarship interjects the work of practical theologians with identity-issues, functioning as a site for the performance of identities and the negotiation of power within the academy’s hierarchies of knowledge” (Mercer 2016:164).

5.3. Key Theoretical Learnings

Although the findings of the case study of the Eden Methodist Church cannot be used to generalise about racial integration in the church, the observations and findings made can make a considerable contribution to the national project of social cohesion. We can draw from the Case Study of Eden Methodist Church that there are certain lessons that can be taken away to be used and refined beyond the Methodist Church in other church settings. All these have the potential to enrich both the Church and the nation.

5.3.1 Racial integration Involves Intentionality

Racial integration is an outcome of an intentional strategic intervention. There must be a clear vision or goal that is developed by the collective community of faith. A common and shared vision ensure that there is a common understanding of the destiny that everyone is travelling towards. Everybody must understand what must be achieved – the practical milestones and measurable targets. To have impact, the leadership must clarify the vision and sustain it before the people and ensure that it is the people who buy-in, own the vision and internalise it within themselves. Everybody is to be mobilised to contribute to the implementation of the different elements of that vision.

5.3.2. Racial integration requires Representative Leadership

It takes a representative leadership of clergy and laity to point and model racial integration and mobilise the congregants behind the vision and identity. The consciousness and inclusiveness have to be visible, emulated and replicated in the different structures of the congregation. Leadership has the responsibility to set the scene and the tone of what vision and identity the Church is about.

5.3.3. Racial integration Happens When there is Authentic Encounter

Racial integration is more than just bringing different races together without facilitating authentic contact and encounter amongst them. True encounter happens when people are assisted to build deep social relations that go beyond superficial public relations and political correctness. It is about people being vulnerable to each other and wrestling with the challenges of building an inclusive community of faith which can be replicated in other institutions. The multiplicity of all these will contribute to the grand social cohesion.

5.3.4. Transformative Educational Programmes Can Support Racial integration

The local congregation engaging in racial integration must put in place transformative educational programmes that assist the members to wrestle with the theory and praxis of racial integration. These must be practical transformative education programmes that conscientise and develop critical consciousness of the people to understand the wrong of racism and any other forms of prejudice. Racial integration is thus about both theory and practice. It is about both the concept and ideas but also practical implementation.

5.3.5. Sound Practical Theology Can Ground Racial integration

Racial integration in any institution and the church, must be grounded on sound practical theological grounds and draw from the resources of our Christian faith tradition. There is a sense in which the Church must ensure that such resources as preaching, and worship are used to constantly deepen the spirituality of the congregation.

5.3.6. Power Relations, Social Justice and Equity are Important Values in Racial integration

Racial integration is more than just the interaction or encounter between individuals and groups. It is also about systemic and institutional racism. It includes addressing of power relations and is more about dismantling structure and systems. Linked with this is ensuring that racial integration is located within the struggles for social justice and equity.

5.4. Recommendations

Although different racially diverse churches in South Africa have wrestled with the issue of racial integration, there is need for them to clearly articulate their macro-denominational visions of unity. This will assist the local church or congregations to ground their local agenda and activities on something that has been articulated at the denominational level. These can be packaged into clear covenants or commitments that can be used to drive racial integration across local Churches. The Church must avoid the unintended danger of these statements becoming empty slogans that bother on poor public relations. The Church must, in the light of the history of colonial oppression, imperialist exploitation and apartheid discrimination – all of which were racist in nature, clarify the commitment to healing and engage in it. Church leaders must make intentional efforts to articulate the nature of the transformation that it they seek to achieve. Many sectors of society have spelled their own understanding of transformation through charters that all their stakeholders have agreed to.

Related with the clarifying of the integration and transformation commitment, the Church must be intentional in translating its broad commitments to transformation in general and racial integration, from abstract statements and resolutions to practical programmes with clear implementation processes. To make an impact, these programmes must have monitoring and evaluation instruments with clear measurable targets. Programme resources like biblical study and preaching materials with clear and sound theology must be developed to support the programmes.

The Church needs to equip its leaders both clergy and lay leaders to be champions of transformation in general and racial integration. The clergy and lay leaders must serve as programme champions and sponsors of this change. They must be empowered to speak the correct theological language to drive the programme of transformation at each other's sphere of influence. They must be in the forefront – seen and heard articulating the vision and the practical commitments to change.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

Although the sample of 15 participants has provided relative valuable information, it would have served better if the sample was bigger. The increase in the sample would have provided adequate white participants within the proper demographic ratios reflecting South Africa. The study sought not to focus on a “successful” congregation. It was therefore very important to stick with a congregation whose number of white congregants has gone down. It could, however, also have assisted to track those who have left the congregation to establish their understanding and experience of racial integration and understand their reasons for leaving.

Although a single case study in Practical Theology can be powerful, showing the complexity of an issue, and can discern practical wisdom in the situation and yet a case study can also “mislead and misdirect readers to stereotypes, one-sided assessments or oversimplified analysis” (Mercer 2016:33).

Most of extensive data on multiracial, interracial or multicultural churches has been done in the Western countries. Many academic research papers and books have been published in the USA. Whilst there are generalities that can be made in this regard,

there are socio-political and cultural factors and nuances that are important in grounding the study on the South African and African ground.

The study focused more on racial integration between individuals and did not address the challenges of institutional racism that is more structural and systemic in nature.

5.6. Possibilities of New Research

There is so much international research, especially in the United States of America, on racial integration. This research articulates, in different shades including Multiracial Churches, Interracial Churches or even multicultural churches, the challenges and practical interventions that mitigate against those. There is however relative inadequate literature on the same in South Africa. There is need for racially integrating churches, especially the missionary-instituted churches, to engage on research that is cultivated on the South African home soil with its own uniqueness and peculiarities.

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa must consider doing a qualitative study on the impact of the Methodist Church's statements and initiatives of, the "One and Undivided" Church since 1958 and the Geographic or Integrating Circuit since these commitments were made. The Geographic Circuit in particular, has been running for quite a considerable time that is long enough to measure impact. It is common practice in social programmes to develop a theory of change even after a strategy or programme has already been implemented. This theory of change will set the intended outcomes, establish the assumptions, identify the inputs or resources, the activities to be undertaken and the measurable outputs. This will assist the Church to be able, in the essence of Practical Theology, to engage in an ongoing hermeneutical circle that moves from action to reflection and back to action and then to reflection. Other Churches must, similarly, intentionally develop their own visions of unity to guide them in facilitating racial integration in their congregations.

The Church must engage in research to investigate the perceived white Methodist flight in general and the "exodus" of white Methodist clergy in particular. Many white people in the Methodist Church have withdrawn into a laager and do not want to participate in the life of the Church. Many appear to be leaving the Methodist Church

for the mushrooming white-dominated family churches. It would further assist to establish if this phenomenon is present in other racially diverse denominations.

The perceived notion of “black take-over” is worth an investigation to determine if it is a fact or a myth. Some white people have expressed concern about the increased presence of black people who come with their African cultural expressions of their faith through worldviews, worship rituals and forms of governance. White people have tended to, in more nuanced and subliminal ways, equated this “black take-over” to what some have come to refer to as “reversed racism.” Such research must seek to establish what will be fair racial integration in a society that is on the African continent with black people being in the majority.

Linked with this notion of “black take-over” is the concept of decoloniality that also needs to be investigated. The current struggles of students in the tertiary institutions have moved beyond the narrow focus on racism and have deepened racial transformation by addressing the phenomenon of decoloniality. Many Missionary Instituted churches have not engaged the subject matter to determine for themselves what vestiges of European colonial culture they must rid themselves of.

Linked to decoloniality is the concept of africanisation that the church must study. That study must determine whether the quest for racial transformation and integration is an antithesis to Africanisation or whether the two concepts are mutually exclusive. It must be asked, in a society where the demographics are largely black and African, whether treating racial transformation on 50-50 ratio is both logical and fair. It must be established if the shade of manifestation of racial integration or multiracialism and multiculturalism in a Church in Africa should be the same as a multiracial Church in Europe or in the USA. If not, what variables must be promoted?

There is need to study further, the intersection of racial integration with the issue of migration. Many former racially integrating congregations have the presence of Foreign Nationals in general and Africans in particular. Some of these speak their own languages like kiSwahili, Shona and other colonial languages like Portuguese and French. They sometimes tend to open their own French or Shona services. How can their needs be addressed in an integrated cosmopolitan congregation?

5.7. Conclusion

This study attempted to reflect on the understanding and lived experience of members of a church that was going through changes in terms of their racial profile. It has established that racial integration was understood and experienced differently. The study further sought to establish the members understanding on how this racial integration was being implemented. It has established the importance of intentional efforts in the areas of leadership, education programmes, worship and the use of language in fostering racial integration. The also attempted to establish what can be considered as normative vision of unity in churches. The Church has the responsibility to draw from the theological concepts of unity, community, justice and reconciliation to sustain racial integration.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1



The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

28th July 2017.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to confirm and acknowledge that we have given permission to **Rev Rasebusi Sidwell Mokgothu (30516137)**, your student who is studying for a PhD in Practical Theology (focusing on racial integration in a local church) to carry out research involving the community at

Rev Mokgothu is a Minister of Religion at The Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Our vision statement of a Christ-Healed Africa for the Healing of Nations allows us to tap into matters of transformation of our society at large.

We, as Methodist Church, have experienced significant changes in the demographics of the congregation – an area which Rev Mokgothu has identified as his target for research. We will support Rev Mokgothu by providing him with the necessary information on the history and change in demographics at Methodist Church.

If you have questions about us, you may contact us using the contact details provided below.

Kind Regards

A Christ-Healed Africa for the Healing of Nations

Appendix 2

Sidwell Mokgothu
P O Box 376
Silverton
0127

Informed Consent Form

This consent form is to check that you are happy with the information you have received about the study, that you are aware of your rights as a participant and to confirm that you wish to take part in the study.

Please tick as appropriate

	Yes	No
1. Did you understand the purpose of the research?		
2. Have you had the opportunity to discuss further questions with a member of the research team?		
3. Have you received enough information about the study to decide whether you want to take part?		
4. Do you understand that you are free to refuse to answer any questions?		
5. Do you understand that you may withdraw from the study at any time without giving your reasons, and that this will not affect future service provision in any way?		
6. Do you understand that the researcher will treat all information as confidential?		
7. Do you agree to take part in the study?		

Signature _____ Date _____

Name in block letters, please _____

I confirm that quotations from the interviews can be used in the final research report and other publications. I understand that these will be used anonymously.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name in block letters, please _____

Appendix 3

The Interview Questions

There were six questions for the three identified groups to be interviewed. They were focused on the specific category of the interviewees. The interview questions to elucidate on the three research objectives.

1. The Clergy

- 1.1. What has been the attitude of the founding members of Eden towards the change in racial demographics?
- 1.2. In what way did Eden align to the Methodist commitment of a One and Undivided Church?
- 1.3. What practical initiatives did the leadership of Eden undertake to realise racial integration?
- 1.4. What have been the benefits of racial integration to Eden?
- 1.5. What have been the challenges of racial integration?
- 1.6. What needs to be done to improve on racial integration at Eden?

2. Lay Leadership (Stewards)

- 2.1. What is your view of a racially integrated congregation?
- 2.2. In what way has Eden demonstrated racial integration?
- 2.3. What have been the benefits of racial integration to Eden?
- 2.4. What have been the challenges of racial integration?
- 2.5. What needs to be done to improve racial integration at Eden?

3. The Members

- 3.1. What is your opinion about different races worshipping together?
- 3.2. What are the marks of racial unity in a local congregation?
- 3.3. In what way has Eden demonstrated racial unity?
- 3.4. What has been the response of the members to coming together of different races at Eden?

3.5. In what way has the coming together of races been a challenge at Eden?

3.6. What has been the good thing about racial unity at Eden?

Appendix 4

CATEGORY LIST

THEMES	CATEGORIES	GROUNDED
1. Social Relations	Racial Demographics	6
	Relational Dynamics	26
2. Managing Diversity	Respect for Diversity	6
3. Community Demographics	Community Dynamics	9
4. Whiteness and White Hegemony	White Hegemony	22
	White Flight	19
	Subtle Racism	5
	Ownership of space	6
	Resistance to change	17
	Fear of Change	13
5. Assimilation	Disruption of Dominant Culture	12
	Assimilation	10
6. Black Presence	Traditional Organisations	11
	Intersectionality	9
	Identity	7
7. Representative Leadership	Leadership Structure	16
	Intentional Efforts	37
8. Transformative Education Programmes	Theological Framework	6
	Contextual Education	12
	Anti- Bias	6
	Transforming the Church	11
9. Inclusive Worship	Decolonising the Church	3
	Benefits of integration	20
10. Language	Language	11
	Process of change	9

Appendix 5

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 1: Clergy

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Telephonic Conversation

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: Casting your mind back to your time at Eden, what was the attitude of the founding members towards the change in racial demographics at that time when you were there?

02 Participant 1: So, sorry we need to clarify that it wasn't Eden when I arrived. It was Wanderers Methodist Church. That was the name of it. It was on the other side of the highway. Slowly but surely those plots were being sold and then small businesses maybe factories would be being built there. The church was kind of an adapted house. It didn't look like a church necessarily. In other words, you could drive past and you wouldn't know that you have gone past a community of church. It was kind of hidden. The community when I arrived there, I think it was it was about 50 people, maybe 50 in attendance on a Sunday morning, 99% white. **The history had been like a very insulate community. If someone was not there on a Sunday morning everyone would notice. It was one of those very close-knit communities with obviously several power dynamics. Things were being the way they have been for a long time and people were happy with that in themselves.** Two things happened before I arrived, from the interview whenever that takes place, 18 months before. The idea would be to move to the other side where people are living on the other side of the highway and not being surrounded by factories and business. I started the process before I even arrived. We purchased land where Eden is now, and we started planning even before I arrived. We were there for one year. We started in the first-year building with Eden and having to sell the place. A number of people left when I arrived. I had a bit of conflict when I arrived, actually straight away. Whatever the reasons white people leave. Obviously, it coincided with Vusi arriving in Mandela Settlement, so we were both new at the same time. We hit it off in a relationship and then we decided to do things together. We were planning to build a big place but we kept in mind our relationship with Mandela Settlement. We knew in relationship with Mandela Settlement why you can't build something else that (*inaudible*). We could spend more money on Eden if we wanted to and we deliberately decided not to. The relationship with Mandela Settlement influenced the economic decisions without a doubt. I can remember the debate around two things. One being on the size of the building. We decided to do smaller but expandable rather than straight away. Then we decided not to build an office block to begin with because we wanted to finish contributing towards the Mandela Settlement church. We decided never to pave the driveway in Eden, specifically. That was

actually a theological decision. I will tell you how that decision was made. People who were having encounters in Mandela Settlement. They actually said the whole of Mandela Settlement is dirt road. Wouldn't it be a good reminder to have a dirt road at Eden every week to be reminded? Why would we want to tar a road when people live like this every day? We only have to live like that for one hour a week. The other thing is the chairs - to go for plastic chairs. People were saying we must buy and again people having encounters in Mandela Settlement relationships said this is nonsense. Why would we spend a whole lot of money on chairs when in actual fact we are only sitting on them for a tiny amount time a week and we can use that money better spent. My relationship with Vusi in setting up a bridge between the two communities certainly saved a significant minority of people's mind and theology and viewpoint which made running Eden a whole lot easier. Like when we made economic decision basically on issues around what we pay people and stuff like that. People had a different perspective which they wouldn't have had they not have encounters with Mandela Settlement. Our relationship with Mandela Settlement over time certainly affected the theology. That's completely the effect on Mandela Settlement and everything attached to the discussion. That's what I can say is that having that encounter, certainly people have never had encounter before had their theology collapsed. Then we moved across, a number of things happened. One, East Rand was basically one of the first post-apartheid cities. Years ago, East Rand were just plots and house country and so the breaking up in the late 80s into townhouses. Economically it had no history of segregation in the form of townhouses. It had a history of segregation in the form of plots and houses. When they were being broken down that was during the end of apartheid so when townhouses were built, they were being filled by both black and white. It was probably unique in the country. I know people have said a whole lot of stuff about the ability to integrate a congregation and I think Eden did integrate quicker and more substantially than other congregations, but I think largely it was due to the context. I don't think people certainly myself taking much credit for that. Black people were in that area. Even if it was an all-white church to begin with, certainly when we moved across to the other side, the surrounding community was not an all-white community at that stage. **Things that helped obviously stuff like deliberates around music, changing music. People I remember saying why are we singing songs that in languages other than English because no one else is here and then I said precisely why we need to sing songs so that when someone comes, they have something that can say to them they belong. or they are recognised.** The worship was huge. Ironically our lack of expert worship team helped us. My experience especially in white churches where they are kind of hard (inaudible), they are the power blocked move. They love the way they worship; they worship the way they worship. We were never much good at that. We were always struggling along. It was much easier for us to move to vernacular worship because we didn't have much to lose (*inaudible*). Our so-called weakness in worship actually enabled us to cross the bridge quicker and easier. I think there was a couple of things; one was worship, creative leadership people, black people coming into leadership and just being able to manage and speak up and help us to grow and understand. For me Vusi has been helpful, helping challenge...providing opportunities. **One of the other things he was able to do was there is no way we could have got rid of the**

power dynamics between us and between our communities. What he was able to do was whenever we had encounters for next worship and also the pilgrimage of pain and hope when people from Eden would go and spend the weekend in Mandela Settlement. Vusi was enabling his community to see what a gift they were to Eden. That it wasn't a one-way traffic. His education was very helpful. I got a sense that people were really living into that, that they were a gift. All I can say is that the transformation of people that went in Eden, originally it was all white, many of them had never been in an informal settlement. Their lives were completely turned upside down. People resigned and changed jobs (inaudible), it affected their economics, it affected their marriages, it affected what schools they sent their children. It was completely and utterly profound. As Eden started changing, more and more black people started going to pilgrimage of pain and hope. Some of them had no experience of informal settlement. Some of them had grown up in the suburbs on one level. It was actually interesting how that penned itself out. An interesting dynamic is that some people in Mandela Settlement wanted a white person not a wealthy black person from Eden. There were interesting dynamics around that sort of stuff. What I can remember is those encounters with Mandela Settlement and people's involvement with the computer school, preschools in Mandela Settlement and then then the pilgrimage of pain and hope - they certainly shaped a significant remnant within Eden. That remnant certainly was the pestle for me about what I was preaching certainly I was not on my own. It was definitely a group of people who had a heightened consciousness, around stuff like that. I think that was quite significant. The time that I spent there most of was teaching. I would be teaching two three times a week. Part of every course that we ran had contextual stuff. We tried to deal with racism in a whole way. I think looking back, I'm not sure if we will do the same, to be honest.

03 SM: We will come to that point, the looking back. Can you say more about the courses? What kind of courses did you run?

04 Participant 1: Back in those days you remember it was like Alpha in certain white churches. They had run Alpha before I got there. For me Alpha is not theology. It's completely apolitical than theological. **I designed the foundation for discipleship which was running the same as Alpha like a 13-week course, but it was contextual theology on South Africa. We studied our apartheid history of South Africa.** It was bizarre if you ever say to me in the 1990s early 2000s that I will have to teach about Apartheid. I would say you've got to be kidding, but there it was and can't believe there is a lot of ignorance. The church involvement, History of Methodism, the South African Council of Churches. All that kind of history, the political history of the church struggle. I think that laid a foundation. So, the whole thing was if theology is not contextual then it's not theology. Into that what does the Holy Spirit mean? Into that what does it mean to be church? We came with confusion. It is impossible for an all-white church to be church. We came to that fact; white people came to that fact. Is impossible for us to be church as white people on our own. We cannot call ourselves church from what we have understood over the early church et cetera. Therefore, we have to do something about that and look at ourselves. ... Disciple, **any of those courses they can be anywhere in the world, but you have to contextualise them. The foundation course which was**

contextual theology was what every other course needed to be rooted in them. One of the questions is what we are doing doesn't change the context in what we are living in towards justice maybe we are just wasting our part. Not everyone, but a significant remnant bought into that. It played out itself not so much in the church on one level it played itself out in people's career choices. For example, some people said as a result they may not send their kids to private school even if they have money. They want their child to go to East Rand High School and experience the country. I think that's significant. So really, it was teaching and teaching kind of stuff.

05 SM: In terms of the pulpit?

06 Participant 1: The privilege of being a single pulpit. I don't know how any minister lead a church when they are not on the pulpit every week. We know most of our ministers are not because of the context. For me there is no way I could lead a community unless I am there every Sunday. Preaching moments need to be moments. It's the moment we can push the boundaries completely of learning and of imaginations. I was very fortunate. I could be there week in week out, most clergy don't have that privilege. One decision was when we finally built an office block. It would cost R150 000 for the little office block there. That year we gave away R150 000 to Mandela in investment to building up the church and the preschools. New people to Eden would say hang on I thought we are going to build an office block and why don't we first build the office block and wait until we have money for the gift. The remnants would come in and say we manage to build an office block but we can do so for another year, but we are committed to. So financially it made a huge difference in the way we conducted our finances. We had what we call the (*inaudible*) principle. We realised need to that we have unduly benefitted.

07 SM: What principle?

08 Participant 1: The (*inaudible*) principle. That was big when I first arrived at Eden. The (*inaudible*) principle was come on we need to realise that we have benefitted unjustly financially. When we are given money to Mandela Settlement, we are not asking for a thank you. We are paying back basically stolen goods, returning stuff. Don't think we are giving them a gift. We are returning stolen goods and now it's crucial. Financially that was the biggest thing for me always. How it influenced our discussions on what we could do and not. Then you get some people saying we can build the place past the size and then we can get past people and then we can get past the money and then we can give to Mandela Settlement. The remnant wasn't buying that. It was happening during the time of Northfield's renewal. Northfield Methodist was expanding their big park. A little bit later we had the whole (*inaudible*) kind of big plants. We were tempted with the same temptation to build a massive smart plant. The lapas for Sunday school was a completely economic decision based our relationship with the true context of our country. So, we are saying why are we going to spend brick and mortar? Why do we need four walls for children who will be here for two hours a week?

09 SM: So, you chose to do wendy houses and those *lapas*?

10 Participant 1: Yes absolutely. Again, it wasn't just saving money. It was saving money so that more money could go to pay for the preschools and the church

buildings in Mandela Settlement. I remember Vusi's entire salary was sponsored by the circuit which was mainly Eden. That's what enabled him, that's an interesting thing as well. He could tell you that he could do what he did because no one in his community told him or could hold him at ransom on finances. He could compel lay preachers; "You will have a meeting with me every Saturday at four o'clock and show me your sermon", which he did.

- 11 **SM:** The leadership structure, what was it called?
- 12 **Participant 1:** So, we have the Servant Leadership Team. The Visionary Leadership Group is based on annual commitments, and they agreed to five different things. So, it was worship, it was generosity, some form of service, some form of...so we use the breathing in breathing out. So, breathing in they must sign up for some encounter, engagement, teaching, learning experience in the year and breathing out service and justice. For example, one of the things that came out of that was some people started going out to disciple, breathing in throughout the evening week. When disciples finished, the same group spent three hours the same amount of time at night driving around East Rand locating homeless communities, which finally led to the beginning of a roving medical and food ministries where they would go out to homeless communities. Visionary Leadership Group had a yearly covenant where you sign for one year. There was no eternal position on leadership and commitment to worship service, generosity, the other one, study internal when you are breathing in, sort of thing
- 13 **SM:** The anti-bias? What contribution did it make?
- 14 **Participant 1:** **There is no doubt around antibias stuff. The people who did it made a significant shift. For me the significant shift is, it doesn't always play itself out within the church. It plays itself out in people's lives, in people's business, in people's schools, that sort of thing. There is no doubt about it, that change had a huge impact on me. The antibias stuff influenced me greatly, having thought I was beyond questions on issues of race and the antibias taught me pretty smartly that it wasn't okay. I remember that being crucial in taking my relationship with Vusi to another level of honesty. We could deal with a bit more.**
- 15 **SM:** Looking and reflecting back, in what way would you say Eden as a project aligned to the Methodist church's commitment of "one and undivided church?"
- 16 **Participant 1:** **The issue of "one and undivided", the statement is both true and false at the same time. We are one, theologically that is, true and untheologically that is true. We are one, it's not a debate. Whether you understand the sense or not, the whole issue, but untheologically we are one, theologically we are one. For me today we do honour the gospel. We need to state that is the case and then try and live it. The truth is we are one and we are divided. We are not undivided. We are one having theology, that is love neighbour as yourself. In other words, your neighbour is part of yourself. When asked your mother and sister and brother are here to see you, you say you have my family. We are all family; we are all one. The other truth is we are divided. Our role is to become who we really are. It's not becoming somebody different. The truth is I live in denial of who I am. I am one with you but I live in denial with that. My**

living doesn't honour our oneness. I think that's the far more honest take on that statement. Fundamentally, I have a difficulty with that statement. I know the history of it and whatever. I think theologically that's what we should from the debate whether we are one or not. I don't think it's a debate whether we are divided or not, of course we are divided. We are divided on a million different things not least colour and class. For me that's crucial. Eden tried live that out a bit. If I have to reflect back, what do I think? I think, I started getting this before I left. This kind of insight of when ...it started changing, whites left before I left. We mustn't think that shift only when I left then whites left. The demographics have changed completely. It was 90% black when I left, that's obviously vast different numbers. Remember we are starting with a small community of 51 and then you are getting to community of 800 people you can still have most those white people there but not making up necessarily more than 10%. A number of people went to Riverside that was big (inaudible), when the minister there started it. Mostly, if I can understand that was Sunday school. My experience is, not only in East Rand but in Kroonstad that when a community changes very often it's the children that divert diversity quicker. Black children started coming to Eden and very quickly they were the overwhelming majority. I think white parents were nervous that their kids were not given the Sunday school that they expected. My teaching is the best Sunday school we can offer is in actual fact the reality of the context we live in and people learn to relate and respect each other. That's the best thing we can offer you on the gospel, but they wanted their little bible stories. We had children coming from vast different class, backgrounds as well as race colour. Many of the people there went to Riverside and at Riverside they got the traditional white Sunday School and certainly running in a white way. **Our Sunday school was adapting into being honouring the children present and from their context. Whites started leaving before and I will tell you how and when that happened. It wasn't about numbers; it was about the way doing things. Whites stay as long as the white way is in operation. When white way of doing church changes whites leave.**

17 **SM:** What is the white way? Can you unpack the white way?

18 **Participant 1:** White way, when you start the kind of shaping of worship. For example, I could introduce songs in different languages, but those songs were placed into order of service that white people were familiar with. Therefore, the container is still white. What's in the container is the diversity, but the container is still white. When you start tempering with the container; the service continues longer or there is more spontaneity *et cetera*. Or some of those songs, I remember songs that would be sung would be put up onto the overhead projector and so it's planned. These dynamic songs that are being sung that are not planned then what's up there, kind of thing. I think time, I think emphasise on different things. **When white people started feeling that the way they are used to of doing church was changing, white people left.** Which then reflect on and question everything I have ever done. That's the story of our life. **What we have is we have black and white people coming together. Black people assimilating to whiteness and white ways. Even though they are quite hard to describe but we could feel them. The moment it begins to shift in the other direction, there is no acknowledgement that black people have been here for more than ten**

years doing in a way that was less than familiar to them. Suddenly then the moment that shift happens songs were placed into order of service that white, white people leave, and it's like what the hell, it's absolutely unbelievable. Here is the thing, Black people could stay there because they feel that it's a Methodist church even though the church service is done in very different way to what they may have been used to. Black people commit themselves; it seems to me it's like a brand. Methodist church is Methodist even though it's different we are Methodist. White people are more committed to the way of doing in than the actual denomination and their comfortability. No doubt obviously when there is a white leader there is an identification there. I am probably the last barricade before I leave. That is the sadness. My post affection of Eden is that it's like you never step into the same river twice because it's different water, but it's still the Nile River. It's still Eden but it's not the same, it's not Eden. For me I have taken that line of; I was there for a particular time and there was a particular water flowing and when you leave that water flow and then someone else has produced something else. I do remember there was a time when just as I challenged white people when it was all white, that sorry we can't be church like this. When it started changing having to say the same to other white people there and black people where are white people? When trying to hold that together, I am not sure I will anymore, you lose the thing at some point.

- 19 SM:** If you were invited to advice a church that is integrating, what is it that today, looking back that you would say or do differently?
- 20 Participant 1:** Sadly, I do think that. I have shifted over, even with the anti-bias stuff. I do it, but I do it mainly for whites to grapple with what it means to be white and privileged now. It's more of saying whites deal with your stuff. I shifted in that in myself. I am not convinced I will be trying so hard to integrate communities in the same way. If I have to go to an all-white community now. I would be dealing with it from a different angle of not trying to bring black people in but white really looking at what does it means to be white and that kind of stuff. I think I will do it from a different angle, I'm not sure.
- 21 SM:** Is racial integration more than just a mix of numbers?
- 22 Participant 1:** That was the thing. That's what I am trying to say and then I question whatever I did there. I know that it influenced people's lives, but it wasn't a commitment to this community of living something different. We would be here and that we learnt enough stay here and do church in way unfamiliar to ourselves until it become familiar. That didn't happen, people left. I would want to integrate a white community now knowing what I know so that at a certain stage whites will leave with that. That is profoundly disrespectful. We would joke about the East Rand high schools, that East Rand schools when I arrived like literally 90% white by the time. I left they were 90% black. Where did all the whites go? Then you start saying to white people hang on you say you don't have a problem with black people but how come when they arrive you leave? When someone arrives in a room you leave what does that tell you? I am not sure. I would not rush toward this kind of integration stuff thing unless it's grounded in much deeper self. I was more at that time, the end of 90s you can't be a church on your own. I'm not sure I will take that route again.

23 SM: Looking back, if there is anything like success, what are the benefits of racial integration, whatever form, whether with reflection numbers and so on, at its prime, what are the benefits?

24 Participant 1: The primary benefit is that we are reminded of each other's humanity. That for me is the biggest of sense of what Apartheid did. That Apartheid separated us on such degree that certainly white people would question the humanity of black people. That's what it did. Robbing people of humanity and preventing people from seeing people's humanity. There was no doubt that during the time there were significant relationships that challenged that inhumanity, prejudice and everything else. I have no doubt about it. I will tell you one story about very big white woman at Eden. She goes and spends a weekend at Mandela Settlement she is in a shack with an equally black woman. It's Sunday morning and the woman heats up the kettle and fills up the basin and tells her it's time to wash. She says no, her host insists and she then proceeds to wash her. That woman had told me that she had never been naked in front of another human for that 15 years. She was so ashamed of her body. The black woman that she was staying with had no shame about her body. She thought actually thought she was pretty cool as big as she was. She loved herself, she was like what's your problem. So, you have these two big women one unable to accept herself, one completely comfortable. The one completely comfortable now begins to wash with a cloth. We will never ever be able to calculate the healing at that moment.

25 SM: That's deep hey

26 Participant 1: That is the other thing that though we are focusing on colour all the time. It is interesting that the healings that took place was sometimes something other than colour although it was enhanced by it.

27 SM: You have in several ways touched on this but, let me ask the question formally. What social relations amongst members did you notice that existed beyond the formal church?

28 Participant 1: There were a number of relationships, particularly which of the remnants with Mandela Settlement, their relationship continued in various forms. Even myself I'm not something other than Eden. I was a member of Eden just like anyone else. Significant relationships that have touched my life. Some of my closest friends during that time have been black people and remain so. Certainly, from my own perspective and that's stuff is crucial. It's quite interesting the way I have been talking about a congregation as if I am separate from it. I have benefitted as much as anyone else. The stuff progresses, it's on going. I think we will only learn when we do have relationships that they check us. The relationships that I formed at Eden certainly are relationships where people have spoken into my life. I am not sure I would have been easily received have it not been for the good relationships. Obviously, I won't know to the extent for everyone.

29 SM: As we conclude, again I ask a question that you have touched on in several ways, but I want to put it specifically. What would you say is the theology of racial integration?

30 Participant 1: A lot of the theology was happening. I think three things that I would work on constantly is context, context, and context. The next will be Church; what does it mean to be Church and Christ. So, context, Church and

Christ. For me the issues around Christ were shaped around Paul would say preach Christ, preach Christ, crucified. For me that raises the question am I preaching Jesus that people have reason to crucify? That the powers have the reason to crucify, because if the powers do not have the reason to crucify my Jesus, then I am not preaching about Jesus. Does that make some sense? So, you can't separate context, Church and Christ. They are like opportunity if you take one away both of them... so the church is where Christ is incarnated into the context. But the crucified Christ? How do we know the crucified Christ? Are the principalities and powers at this moment wanting to crucify? I remember, I have the minister who shouted at me after my sermon in the church that I had HIV when I spoke about Mbeki. He said if Mbeki was white and was conducting the same policy the whole world will be very clear of what he is doing. Very clear (inaudible). That was the power of being around HIV, it's a huge thing. Am I preaching Christ crucified? Church is a contrast community that contrasting the power of being? Context is going to be anything that we do: who is it benefitting? Is it benefitting the marginalised or not? Those are the kinds of theological questions. One of things that I did do throughout the beginning, the story of Lazarus and the rich. I remember standing up and saying today I cannot preach a sermon because Mandela Settlement is around the corner and we haven't been there. How do you preach a sermon on Lazarus and the rich man if we haven't? So today there is going to be no sermon. If next week you would like to join me to go to Mandela Settlement with the minister there then let me know. Ten people put up their hands and that's how the pilgrimage of pain and hope started. The following week we came back as the ten people and myself and we shared about Lazarus and the rich man, from the rich man's perspective. That's how that began, it was driven by the text.

The other story that was crucial that we would live with for many years was the man with a withered hand. We would ask simple questions of who of the people with withered hands that excluded from our community, who is not here? What do we need to do, like Jesus invited with the withered hand here? Very importantly he didn't expect the person a withered hand to keep hiding his withered hands. In other words, the reason for exclusion your accent your language, rather stretch it out. The whole thing about included without assimilating to the dominant. That passage of scripture was crucial for many years around what we were doing. We noticed that people would always leave and wanted to kill Jesus. Part of the theology was the realisation that if we are indeed preaching Christ crucified, we may also be crucified to some degree or not, without wanting to stretch that point. I am not sure we did too much in the end.

31 SM: And the symbolism of the cross at Eden?

32 Participant 1: That was crucial. It's the context. Had it been under Apartheid what would the cross have been? It would have been a tormented cross, just embodying all the pain and suffering of Apartheid. Post -Apartheid I remember the years that we in there, the whole thing was what do we embody, what can the cross embody now? What is our work now? We called it the embracing cross because the Apartheid was the excluding cross. What does it mean to be embraced? The right arm is always the symbol of the powerful and sword the violent sword of state and Jesus cuts the powers to be short, bring down the

power. The left arm is the arm close to the heart and it is also the arm of the vulnerable the excluded, the marginalised. You notice on the cross that the left arm is higher. The whole design of the building is inclusion. The building is on a semi-circle, the lockers of the backroom are semi-circle. It was (inaudible) who changed the name to Eden. We didn't when we bought the property but after we bought and we had cut the lawn we realised that there was huge rock on the property. Again, it's context. We were trying to allow the land to give us a name and we could figure out what it would mean. If we call ourselves Eden that kind of stuff. So that was important during teaching times when I was there, that we always repeat the story. For when we moved there, we didn't move when the building was ready. We moved according to the Christian calendar. We moved on the first Sunday of Advent, which is the anniversary of Eden. Advent is the beginning of the Christian year. (Inaudible). We operate to a different calendar. When we got there was no roof. The children led us across. So, we walked from the previous church building, under the highway, through the desert, through the red sea. Under the highway we had our Holy Communion, Manna. We walked up to Eden and the children would lead us and they led us onto the property, and they walked down the building a few times. There are lots of opportunities which are symbolic there, which I think shaped people's theology a bit. I am not sure how much. One never knows.

33 SM: You did share time with Simon and the youth?

34 Participant 1: Yes

35 SM: Anything significant with the youth ministry?

36 Participant 1: For me the instruction kind of thing with him or not: we are not doing numbers and we are not doing entertainment. I would rather have five people who are serious about learning how to follow Jesus and invest in five people. After all Jesus only had twelve. We are not going to do the numbers game and we are not doing entertainment. We not here to entertain youth on a Friday night, quite interesting.

Participant 2: Congregant

SM: R Sidwell Mokgothu

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Tele Interview

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

- 01 SM:** What in your view are the marks of true racial unity in a local congregation?
- 02 Participant 2:** The marks of unity in an interracial congregation. I'm thinking about that because we have to be careful that you are still talking about individuals, it might be different and sit in differently. But to answer your question, there need to be a common goal. There need to be a sense of community. In other words, people have come together and once they do that, they will have discussed different views, but they have come up with a set of goals and objectives which are out there or not reflecting how different they are as different groups. That would mean for me that they would not put it under the carpet but that they have really discussed it and are comfortable that they are different in terms of different racial groups. They have gone beyond it and now they are talking about what is human, in a community.
- 03 SM:** What is it that are the marks that I would come out with and say at this church, there is something going on?
- 04 Participant 2:** You need to come out with a feeling that there is recognition of diversity. That diversity is recognising that we are stronger in our diversity. In other words, our diversity doesn't break us up, but it gives a nice flavour. It gives creativity things done differently but they are all in the praise of God.
- 05 SM:** In what way has Eden specifically as a congregation demonstrated racial unity?
- 06 Participant 2:** Well, we come a long way, from a pure white community back in the old apartheid days. There was a deliberate, back then, effort to invite other racial groups other than white and that was not a smooth process. That was trying to find out each other, what works for people being invited and mostly you find that it was black people of course as in the majority and what works for white people who were already there. To the extent that even though the things have changed around that the majority are black people now and less white people, there is at Eden always that recognition and sensitivity to that I'm not just me or I'm not just the only one who count. There is a very strong understanding of even before you talk about racial, that there is diversity.
- 07 SM:** If we go to the congregational life are you able to make comments on issues or areas such as worship leadership and even teachings?
- 08 Participant 2:** Worship first. If you are talking about worship what usually happens is like the front of the store, it's in the front but a lot of things have happened in the background. So, when you talk about worship you find that

there is different songs and different languages and so on depending on what kind of a mood you are in, soft and loud and so on. There has been that kind of recognition to the extent that when we worship we are even sensitive not just English and other languages but if we sing the different African languages, there is a sensitive about Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana in terms of the mix of the music the songs when we do sing so that's worship. It is still happening by in large in terms of the preaching in English to try and accommodate obviously assuming that English kind of encompasses a whole lot more people in terms of understanding. Whatever is not captured completely in terms of preaching in English the music, the song I think they try to accommodate that everyone is taken care of, so that's worship. Leadership we have got a diversity. When I started at Eden it was a pure white community. There was a deliberate move to try and include the other racial group in particular the black people, so that there is no talking to people coming in but there is that voice in the leadership. I know from personal experience that when I got in, I was involved in the leadership, encourage to be involved. I know a friend of mine Thabang was very much involved in that. There was a whole lot of accommodating that.

Today we are talking at Eden about which is more emphasises on women are involved as well. It's part of addressing the diversity issues in the majority of being black people there. We recognise that within black people there is also different groups and so.

- 09 SM:** Are you able to comment on leadership whether clergy or the laity championing issues of racial integration or any programmes?
- 10 Participant 2:** I can say that with the introduction of clergy in the Methodist church, they come at a given time for a certain period of time through invitations and so on it was very interesting to see. It was interesting to see new ministers coming in left on into that. To give an example, and again it shows that we have diversity discussions and trying and see where do we try and leave. Clergy led a lot of discussions around that and things which were supposed to happen for instance new programmes being introduced. They will take longer because it was to try and accommodate all the diverse issues involved. That was for me good to see that there is sensitivity towards that instead of rushing things. Lately has been obviously as I said that they kind of kept that going even though the clergy come in and out as in terms of the invitation and so on lately has been able to keep that going. Interestingly when new people come in at Eden, I have seen how they might come with different views but sooner or later they kind of get it exactly what's happening. In our discussions whether we invite new people or we have a welcome dinner or something like that, the message which comes out and when people get to Eden is, I am not even a Methodist, but I find Eden being a home for me. Eden is in East Rand; I am coming from a rural area but Eden this is where I can belong when I am in the city. From late they have been that push and it was very helpful encouraging to see that happening. I think for Clergy as well as they came, they kind of picked up on that.
- 11 SM:** What about Sunday School in this period that you have been there overall?
- 12 Participant 2:** Very interestingly it has been a situation where obviously, it reflects in terms of the parents where they are. I remember when you kind of have a shift from being majority white to black a congregation by in large. One

of the things which we sat down with a number of white folks is that they felt that their children didn't have space in terms of worshipping and being programmes and so on. I must add that the youth Church is not very big and it's something that I know that the leadership is working on as part to bring it up as an integral part of our... We have programmes on youth and so on but those are more recently now and we are by large very much a black community. When we moved from being pure white into black it was interesting to find that the parents said they don't have a space largely because the children or the youth they didn't find a place to go to or they were not enjoying it as much. There was a time when we had a youth pastor and things were really together. I think that we kind of lost the plot when we lost the youth pastor and we never really got somebody to get that going. That's really around the youth church. The person who is involved has been there for a very long time and she is very good. When I look her, and I am thinking that one day if she is not there this thing will fall flat. It shows how much of a talent she is.

- 13 SM:** Is it with Sunday school or with the youth
- 14 Participant 2:** That is with Sunday school then you go into the other, up to grade 7. What I am talking about is mainly from areas from grade 0 up to. And the youth is really young people, I have never really taken off in a real sense where you got young people who are working or youth people who are coming out of conformation or they are at high school. Only recently, it has taken the form of the Guild, the usual Wesley Guild formation for the youth. It's here and there kind of.... I am not happy with the programmes on that side.
- 15 SM:** Are you able to comment or reflect more on what you called the shift when there was now what you called black majority? What were the dynamics around that shift and this response from white congregants?
- 16 Participant 2:** Well, I do remember that for instance, the minister, James Visagie when he was still there was very strong in terms of inclusiveness and sensitive to diversity. I am sure he had a great period with Eden opening to other racial groups. A big part of it, I am sure depended on him being there because as soon as he left Eden, a whole lot of white people said that they have lost something or an anchor if I may call it that. So, it was important for the clergy who was there to do a balancing act. You find that white people might not have understood a number of things or the way the worship was going or certain decision in terms of the leadership. I think they were able to go to him and talk to him and understand and come along. I think when he left, he kind of was not with that. Nothing really against whatever the current clergy was or the leadership was there but I think the white people themselves felt not confident enough or didn't get the same kind of confidence to speak to the current leadership that was there when James left. I think that was very big dynamic in terms of that shift. How it would have if James was there, I don't know, how it would have continued but I know that when he left there was a big shift and it moved from being more predominately white to more predominately black.
- 17 SM:** Lessons we can draw from racial integration, just that dynamic you described?

- 18 Participant 2:** It is interesting to just recall in terms of how even after James had left, my feeling was that there was no lack of effort. The effort was still there to try and bring the community together. What lessons were there.....

Probably we are looking here at one level, to my experience when I was there a lot of things were done. I think with a departure of James however, it was prepared for or trying to kind of talk to people. I think at one level you need to kind of prepare people when there is change, not able to assume anything. Secondly the very difficult one is to kind of have a balance in terms of how long you do that but also understand is there anything else which can be done that to bring people together in a racially divided community. At a level they need to want to be there. They need to see something for themselves in the community. So, kind of you need to be able to say without saying I blame myself or I blame somebody else. Maybe that's the time when we say, okay it's good to part. This is not what it was because with (*inaudible*) another lesson probably. We go to a lot of discussions in terms of diversity, exactly what does that mean. Interestingly we did come to a point of saying you know what, diversity doesn't mean you are replacing one with the other but you are also saying you need to recognise there are differences in this part and so and how do you accommodate them. And you are going to have people pulling this way and that way. So, there is a need for a very strong leadership in that for as long as it goes. You can't have people in the same place all the time. You are going to have people leaving and new people coming in even in terms of leadership position. So, there is going to be movement. I think, finally it reflects in terms of the society or the context that we are in if you think about it. There is nothing you are going to do completely or successfully on your own at Eden which does not reflect what is happening in the broader society. You really have to be there. For me it's really to say not everything is going to be achieved. This is a journey, and that journey might take through generations, and it may not happen at my own time but never to stop trying in the process. I think that's a very important lesson to take on that. Never to be discouraged now that it is not happening in my own time, in my own generation and so on, but just make sure that you understand the building process there is a step by step, a brick on top of a brick process. As long as those values are kept which I think in the case of Eden we kept the that to a point that it's no longer about an issue about white and black member of the community. Because we are a largely black, we are sensitive even within the black community. That someone coming from Nigeria, they do not necessarily speak any of the languages, so we need to be sensitive about that. For me those are very important steps that need to be identified and reflect who Christ is and that he loves us all

- 19 SM:** What has been the response of members of Eden to the coming together of different races, then and now?

- 20 Participant 2:** Then and now. I think in appreciation of the differences which we have, people appreciate that and also this has been part of one way or the other of that coming together. They might not have understood all the time or agreed all the time. I know for instance every December or November we take a photo of the community. This is something which has been happening over the years. You can see clearly movement from a pure white community into largely black community. I think that on its own it kind of talks to people in terms

of where we come from. They might not even remember the detail or the very nitty gritty depths that we went through as we moved from that one racial group to the other. I think they kind of appreciate that when you are at Eden (1) you don't have to be a Methodist or coming from Methodist background you can find a home there even if you are a Presbyterian (2) diversity is a very integral part of our life as a community. That we recognise that we are different but in Christ we are one and more importantly as a community. (*Vernacular*) and we introduced the 11:00 service which brought in a whole different dimension. That was really to say diversity does not mean we do away with what is African and how it's worshipped, but we open up the stage. We have got three services which allow people to be able to move and they have got different flavours those three services. It's amazing how you can never rest and say listen I have arrived. I have often said it as well in our meetings that I don't think we can say that we have arrived. Whenever we get to that point, I think we have lost the plot. We need to be able to say what is God asking of me and in Christ am I doing the best that can happen. I think the community is very sensitised in terms of the racial groups we have but more than that the very different people we are because we are never the same even if it's the same racial group.

- 21 SM:** What have been the positive benefits of racial integration at Eden?
- 22 Participant 2:** Very much more positive than anything for me. What I found is without racial integration I will probably have a monotonous kind of life or community or participation in the community, sitting all the time. With racial integration, it has allowed that we think outside the box, we think more creatively. For me personally really, it's not to take for granted what God had imparted and has been doing. I also say sometimes we try box who God is and try deal with God in a much easier. I think for me it has allowed that I know that I can be able to see God from anywhere not all the time but sometimes. I can be able to appreciate that God can work even in the way that I don't think it's possible. I have the privilege to rely on God to be able to...the Holy Spirit to be able to move people to do things beyond our imaginations. I think for me that has been a gift which has allowed Eden to be a place where we can invite all kinds of people.
- 23 SM:** What is it that would have to be done to improve on racial integration?
- 24 Participant 2:** I think for me really and I will quote something is to be (inaudible) and know that God is God. I have often seen that as people we often depend on ourselves, even if we ask God to do something for us, we never give opportunity to see it happening because we have already taken over and do it ourselves. I think for something to work at Eden is to trust the process. I will an example for instance, a comment was made that you know that preacher preach very well in their language, isiZulu, and when they do preach in English, they are restricted. My comment was that; yes, I can appreciate that, but my belief is that the preacher preaching in English there is a growth opportunity. That preacher can read other avenues and areas that they couldn't if they were preaching in Zulu. Those that can have a hand in isiZulu, and they can be preaching in isiZulu and they can really do it very well, that's good and maybe they can still grow there, but I think there is another area of growth and I have no doubt. I have seen preachers who come to Eden, and they are not comfortable in preaching in English for instance but over time there has been

such great improvement and I am hoping that it's not just them preaching in English in preaching in other languages. Trusting God that he can use them in whatever way in whatever situation. So, for me for Eden my hope and prayer that we can trust in the process and more importantly trust that God is God.

25 SM: What are the challenges of racial integration generally?

26 Participant 2: It's moving someone from a comfortable space and meeting someone else halfway through, especially in the context of South Africa. Why should I be concerned about a white person? As soon as that person is able to say this is not just about me and by the way that refers to a whole lot of things where people can say God what are you saying at this moment and so it becomes a challenge in your face. Who has got to (inaudible) and certainly for me the challenge is that to recognise that this is a work that you can't do by yourself to integrate, to come and meet someone else halfway? By the way it's not just racial but in a whole lot of areas of our life. Maybe the other challenge for racial integration is to have the right people and consistence in terms of leading that process. People want to see not just what you think first but being demonstrated. Your actions speak louder than words. So, from the leadership the challenge is that there and they need to be the word. It is very difficult sometimes for convenience. I will give an example; I am involved with the data projector team. It's easy to say no I don't have time, this song is not translated, let's not try and get through all that kind, finding the right person to translate and really getting that. But we have to go through the motions and time. Sometimes it's not perfect but believe you me it's better than nothing. So, you hardly find a song at Eden which has not been translated with an English subtitle. That is going to be very important to have that consistence so that people realise that it's not just about (*vernacular*) but it's about everyone else as well. I think that's for now, two things that I can think of in terms of the challenges.

27 SM: Lastly, from your observations what social relations were there amongst members beyond the formal church relations?

28 Participant 2: It's very interesting those come out in terms of how we do things differently. So as white people they would have very small funerals and then they have very intimate people coming in. As black people we kind of want to invite everybody and part of that. For someone we know in church and has got death we want to come all of us as a church. You kind of try to manoeuvre and get to it. If you talk to a white person and say where it the prayer what's happening and so on? You get to kind of understand where they come from. I am not sure in terms of now how far because we are now predominantly a black community that kind of seem to be a complicated thing but back then there were complications around it. The other one I have been there for a long time so I kind of known for one person, for instance, John, I have been his friend for a long time. I have been to his house. We have been in a circle together. We chat so. So, there is that closeness in terms of the relations. I'm not sure what else he is doing. I don't think that he does much, outside his work and kids have kind of grown up. I consider him as someone close because we have gone out together for dinners and so on. I am not a person who kind of out there now and then it will happen, probably. But I don't have any doubt that wherever there were relationships could be formed or they were formed between a black and

white people those could have progressed. For instance, if I think of Sipho and James I think they became friends. They did more things outside the church. There were pockets of it. And again, it's not going to happen very... It's a process, it's taking time

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 3: Clergy

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: Casting your mind back at Eden what has been the attitude of what I call the founding members of Eden towards change in racial demographics?

02 Participant 3: By the time I got to Eden which was about 10 or 11 years after they did the walk of course from house to house, from the old church to the new church. There were only, I reckon, probably about ten white members left. Even from about 2009, maybe slightly more in terms of elderly folks, but white members I can count on my one hand. By then they had done a lot of kind of disappearing into the (inaudible). Once when I spoke with someone there ...some founding members, I don't what racial demographics might have been. The one comment I heard from someone when I asked was: I got tired of feeling guilty. That's the one comment I ever heard was I got tired of feeling guilty or of being made to feel guilty. I'm not sure what it was. Those that were there had a sense of the vision. Those that stayed had a sense of we want to be together, but a lot had gone by the time I got there.

03 SM: Was there ever an indication where this sense of being made to feel guilty was coming from?

04 Participant 3: I think it's the theology. James' teaching by that stage had been very challenging very uncomfortable probably around responsibilities for start. **superiority 05 SM:** Those who remained what was their reason?

06 Participant 3: Those who remained, I am thinking white faces, probably I can see two or three white faces that stayed. More traditionally of the "coloured" [to the inverted commas] thing, folks. Suzan stayed. Suzan was deeply passionate about social justice for the outsiders for those on the street. Deeply committed to the work, she held for so many years that inclusivity of the very outsiders having a place at Eden. Those who stayed were passionate about finding a way to do this together. The class in a way even more than racial demographics was holding together folks who were living with middle class people. **By the time I got there the people that remained this was their natural environment. White people were comfortable, but I think the founding members had long gone. A lot of them went to Grapevine Church, which was a nice white space.**

07 SM: In what way did Eden align to the Methodist commitment of a one and undivided church?

- 08 **Participant 3:** I think Eden was trying to do that. The vision at that stage, with hindsight I can't evaluate. At the time Eden was trying to hold together different races and languages in a worship space that was unified. **The language component was, we will sing in different languages, but liturgy was always English. I think Eden's model in my time we didn't challenge it when I was there. Afterwards they began to be that there was one way of doing church in which all were welcome.** It was liberal English version of church in which all were welcome. Particularly for me, for the languages but also that you could have someone who slept in the bush last night as well as someone who arrived in a luxurious car sitting in the same space was part of Eden's great gift then. I think worship was at heart. It was one of the best educated and theologically taught congregation. James' principles around teaching had meant that those in leadership had been well taught. They have a theology that was about finding the other and openness. **I have subsequent thinking that goes the different ways of doing church, so Eden did a liberal English way of doing church. Racially it was pretty much 97% black, but we did church in an English way. In the 3 years that I was there we never got challenge in that.**
- 09 **SM:** What initiatives did leadership undertake to realise racial integration?
- 10 **Participant 3:** In my time there, leadership was predominately black, I find it interesting that they still invited a white person by that stage. Why they didn't invite a black minister when I was invited. If that is something to do with holding model of church or some of the issues around honouring black leadership, I am not sure. The leadership kind of assumed racial integration. Honestly by that stage we didn't have...in three years probably one white person joined the church in new membership. By the time we got there the racial dialogue was not the issue. The issue was more of the class, the economic, and the income dialogue. White people had voted by their feet which they came to do.
- 11 **SM:** What do you mean by they voted by their feet?
- 12 **Participant 3:** I will never forget Paul Lorenz at one stage before the Eden days, **white people are not good at being a minority. My sense is whenever they get to a place of discomfort even living as community shift, we move away we go somewhere where we have a number dominance. Those shift as a congregation tips past we have got leadership, we are in control space, people move out they don't stay.** By the time we got there, even in our time one of early leadership couple that have been very much on board with the community, by the time I moved there, the husband had left, and the wife was leaving. They were not living in the area anymore they had moved out. The white people that stayed were in leadership strange enough. A couple of older folk who worshipped in the morning and weren't active. The new incoming leadership. In a way they were inexperienced in church. They weren't traditional township church people. In a way there were finding new ways of being church. They were finding their own way. They were not affected by that (*inaudible*) around different models or different ways of being together.
- 13 **SM:** In which way was racial integration expressed in the life of the Church?
- 14 **Participant 3:** They were not fellowship in place or class groups. I am trying to think Women of Joy was probably the one that had taken off that was not racially

diverse. The teams, perhaps the biggest place of working together in terms of racial integration would have been the teams that went out with Suzan, those were that worked in reaching out to others. Those probably were the most integrated, which may be an interesting thing that we best when we are working together. They had common vision for those who were living on the street for those in need. In those places people found a way of being together. My husband is sitting across the room and saying that worked in worship team too. There was a task to be completed together and people worked together that seemed to be the place that integration happened best.

Even as I am saying it that I found it quite a helpful thing to say because when there was something that we wanted to accomplish together the teams talked together. When it was perhaps social or fellowship thing, it's hard that you get people to, maybe because people want different things in those moments. The places of best integration and unity for me in the 3 years that we were there, were in places where people were working together on a goal with a vision.

- 15 **SM:** In your own reflection, generally even at Eden, what are the benefits of racial integration?
- 16 **Participant 3:** I am convinced it is the only expression of what God wants us to be. I think Eden for me started a process of learning that has played out into Knysna where I am now. I am doing Knysna far different than what I did at Eden. I want different things because of what I learnt at Eden. The benefits of racial integration are that you have a (*inaudible*). I don't think we have an option, it's what the gospel encourages, so we live out the gospel. There is also something about challenges and personal growth for people willing to take the risk. That goes both ways looking from Knysna's perspective. There are white people withdraw into their little own place. There are also black people who prefer things done the way they are used, and they don't want to look at any ways of being integration. When we do, there is something that is particularly life giving. When people catch that vision, there is hope. I learnt that in worship at Eden. Worship at Eden was a place of utmost growth and also challenge because we were in an English liberal way of doing church, which I do differently now. But there were ways of being together and touching different people holding different people in a space.
- 17 **SM:** What are the challenges of racial integration?
- 18 **Participant 3:** I speak as a white person. I know it now perhaps more in hindsight than I would have known at the time at Eden. I know it now more than I did it then. Firstly, there is a challenge with all our colonial stuff, with white privilege, white people want to be in charge. The assumption is our way of doing church is the right way or the only way. I think everyone makes that assumption actually. The first challenge for me coming through the past 10 years, probably about 8 or 9 and half years now is to find ways not only to integrate in the space but to integrate ways doing things together. People have different assumption about what church is about. White people move out when they feel uncomfortable. They want things to done their way, I am speaking on white people first. As white leader my assumptions are, I know what I am doing but actually, I don't have a clue so there is a challenge of having to listen. I think Eden since I have been there has done some more on that. Listening to different

expectations, different needs, and different wants from the church community and in organisation finding a place. Because there was still no organisation when I was there. They weren't part of Eden's life, the uniformed organizations. The challenge of getting white people to include themselves in a racially integrated space is huge. I think there is also a challenge in terms of black folks who resist the racially integrated space because the expectation or experience around how white people operate in those spaces. I have taken more so here because Eden was operating not linking in the traditional black Methodist church at all when I was there. **We were still an English church with black memberships. When you start to integrate ways of doing church, there resistance to white people moving into traditionally black spaces. The knowledge that white leadership that comes in makes certain assumptions that don't give people space.** I can only speak for myself and my experiences. There is resistance. One of the other challenges... I think there is a dynamic around decolonialism and what is at the centre of how you do it. Is my way right? Is there a right way of doing church? Is there another way? My challenge, coming from out Eden to Knysna where I am now is finding a Methodist way of being together that encompasses all the differences. What unites us in our differences, which is church culture more than racial in some ways. Let me add also when you start doing inter-racial church you also have a challenge of black people who chose to align with an English way of doing church and black people who chose to align with traditionally African or township way, I don't know what words to use, of doing church. Sometimes miscommunications in those places around the assumption who is right who is wrong. If there were such a thing; you are not black enough. It's some of the stuff that some of my members hear. In Knysna all of my young people are black. Some worship in English some worship in Xhosa. How do I get to them connect to each other? By creating space for them to engage with each other.

19 SM: How can we improve on racial integrating churches?

20 Participant 3: If I were writing now or speaking now, I would be saying help people to understand the different expectations of church that my way is not right. Begin with the conversation of why do you come to church? I have a sense that people come for different reasons across the racial history. What is it that are you coming to look for in worship? People expect different things, and they assume that people who are racially different from have the same expectations with them, yet they don't. I would want people to understand that I think the traditional vernacular worship services are community based. We pray together, we listen to our notices together, it's a together thing, whereas traditional English are far more elite in their expectations. I would want people look at different things, understanding that my way is not the only way. Then find the things that unites us. I am finding what I am doing in Knysna now is to say people okay: Why are you Methodist? They will say to me because we sing because of the music. And I say well 7:30 are Methodists as well by they don't sing the same way as the 11:00 so what unites and we linking in the Methodist way of life. If I were consulting around integration, the one thing is to find what unites us. I do think and it's pervasive in our community and I am working on it is the whole thing about colonialism/decoloniality. White people are not dealing with that. I think white ministers have to find a way to help to do that. I am not sure we know how. We are kind retreating far and far away from places of

integration. Summary is those are the words of Lynette. Tell stories about your experience of church. Do the narrative thing. Try and help people find way tell their stories. Find what it is that unites us because our expectations are so different. What does connect us? White people don't want uniformity, they don't want uniform, they don't want to talk about uniform, and they don't want uniformity. But maybe if we can get down to the rule of life; do not harm, do good, stay in love with God, we may find way to create space to do it differently but in a connected way. Don't expect uniformity. Find what unites us and then we get to find a way to help white people deal with the process of decolonialism. I may sound intelligent because it's one of the modules that I am studying at the moment. I have given up at Knysna of trying to organise fellowship functions that will unite black and white membership because they don't want the same thing.

- 21 **SM:** Please say more on the implications of decoloniality on the Church?
- 22 **Participant 3:** **The one point is that spirituality will be the pathway to decolonialisation in religion.** I love that statement because it's about experience. That for me, the experience of God is a process that which we move out of this colonial space. There is a lovely line by someone writing about education: **decolonialism is about being prepared understanding what is in the centre. I think we run a colonial church. In the centre is the old English European way of doing things.** At our structural level we assume that's the way it is. Certainly, at a congregational level in Eden then and in Knysna, we have to find ways to shift the centre for a moment to put the African way of doing things in the centre. It may not be coming. I may not be necessarily comfortable with it. But it's good, it's ok. **To do that process of living with the discomfort of not being the centre of the universe.** Which I think the colonial space has meant for white people that we don't even see that we are not centre of the universe. And how we do that is hard. I think people want a way. In a local congregation, it's those conversations that are becoming helpful. That my way is not always the only way. **I do wonder whether as a white leader one is able to lead that process or whether one has to step out of the way. I think you need to step out of the way and create space for others to lead and to model following black leadership.**
- 23 **SM:** What were you saying about the place of spirituality in this whole process of decolonialism?
- 24 **Participant 3:** Here is Maldonado Torres, one of his principles or the key issues around decoloniality is that it creates space for the spiritual. That spirituality is about experience and the whole coloniality process is about rationalism about either or, the dichotomies, black, white mind spirit. He says that when you create space for spiritual experience, it challenges the colonial framework of religion. Spirituality shifts us out of the easy category of head soul whatever. That when you look at people's spiritual experience it transforms colonial structure. Maldonado Torres links creativity, eroticism and spirituality. The experiential creative space has been essential in the decolonial process. For as a student of spirituality, spirituality often moves outside of religious framework and structure and is not particularly concerned with that.

I'm not sure if we are seeing it in our church but I think it might be a place of transformation. Although maybe we are seeing it, maybe the movement in the *Manyano* is something of spirituality that unsettled some of our more rigid western European structure stuff. I'm not sure, that's what I'm thinking about.

25 **SM:** What social relations amongst members did you observe beyond the formal church relations?

26 **Participant 3:** I think they were informal friendships that certainly played out into when fellowship started forming those were friendship inter racial spaces, given that there were not huge numbers of white but there were coloured folks. I think within worship groups there were friendships that involved going to people's homes. I think perhaps not into the completely spontaneous space, but into the semiformal space. That definitely happened, that people were choosing to be together. I am picturing faces in the worship team. I would say those groups were famous for that thing. The relationships endured for a few years after we left that were cross racial

At Knysna now, we are looking at being multicultural church. Our sense of ourselves is we are a multicultural church as opposed to multiracial church. Because there are different cultures of being church and it's not just a racial thing. It's church culture that's the issue. Some of my folks are black members worshipping in English but still are members of the *Manyano*. At one stage it was like if you want to be a member of the *Manyano* you must worship in Xhosa at 11:00. There is a multiculturalism of holding different needs, different ways of worship, different desires, together in one family. We had a big service on Sunday and there was an English song that the circuit wanted sung. The Xhosa worshippers were able to know and love melo to play. An Englishman he came to play spontaneously (*inaudible*). Our sense of what that might mean is significant for us now. That came out of my experience at Eden, challenging the liberal English model of church. When I was there it was a liberal English church, and it didn't hold other ways of being church. That is now part of our vision at Knysna. How do we care for black members who worship in English at 7:30 but when they do want people to come and do prayer meetings in the evenings in their home? Is it possible to that meet that pastoral need in a multicultural church? How do we make it happen? So, people find what they need in different spaces.

SM: R Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 4: Congregant

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: What are the marks of true racial unity in a congregation, if we say a congregation there is racial unity, what would be the marks for you?

02 Participant 4: For me personally in the church itself and at large, I don't really have a problem. I am very impressed with the change from 1994. Of course, for some of us, that affects any colour, nationally whatever it is. They are still reserved. I don't think they are reserved because they are not wanted. I think they are reserved, if I have address myself to you how would you react and it's *vice versa*. I think that's what really stops a lot of us from gathering together. Otherwise in general, for me personally I get on very well with anybody and everybody. At Eden itself I'm there for many years and I have made friends there and we do get along very well. There was at one stage lot of colour at Eden, but eventually people move out the area and they have moved out of the church. I don't know what could be the reason, but that how I look at it broadly and generally but otherwise it's generally nice place to be in.

03 SM: What did you enjoy about the church at that time?

04 Participant 4: I enjoyed every sermon. The reason why I enjoy every sermon is that I listen very carefully and take stock of my life, putting the sermon into my life and see where I am going wrong in life. If the cap is fitting me, I have to wear it and then I say right this is the direction of my life which I am not doing which I should do be doing. So, I correct my life according to the sermon.

I research on it, and I look on it and say yes, I am not living that life so therefore I have to make those changes and I have carried on making those changes. I must say I became very close to God. My prayer side of it, I pray the best way I can pray, and I always believe that God understands every language and he understands what you want and so forth and I am happy with that. I am impressed by my church. I am a person that I don't go around looking for the colour and status of people and who they are. I don't go looking around for that. I personally go to hear word of God and that is my priority. I go there and I enjoy everything that is taking place. There are very nice people caring and loving. As I said it's a two-way interaction. If I say hello, how are you, I get response out of that. If I don't, I am not saying they are not doing it. They are also wondering can I say Mr Govender, hello how are you. If we meet face to face or we are sitting together or clashing on the aisle way, we have a conversation.

05 SM: In what way has Eden demonstrated Racial Unity?

- 06 **Participant 4:** All of us got on very well. Everyone whether it's white, Indian, coloured or whatever it is. We all got on very well.
- 07 **SM:** What made that to happen?
- 08 **Participant 4:** As I said the less of the colour that is in the church. I am not saying they didn't like sermon, or they didn't like seeing the majority of one colour. I don't think that was the reason. If I did research, I would say rather than passing on negative them I would be positive and say okay, there are people moving out of the area and they have to move to the closest church.
- 09 **SM:** What are the benefits of racial integration of people of different races and colours coming together. What do you think is the good that comes out of that?
- 10 **Participant 4:** I must say from 1994 there have been very big changes. You walk in the streets no matter what colour you are it all depends on how you react, what you got to offer. If it costs you nothing to say hello my friend, how are you, you get that coming to you. I always find that happening and I am quite content with that.
- 11 **SM:** What did you appreciate about the coming together of different races?
- 12 **Participant 4:** I didn't have personal conversations with anyone of them, but I saw the tendency of everybody. And when I saw the tendency then I obviously formed a conclusion for myself. Well, they are enjoying the gathering, the service, the Word of God that gets preached from the pulpit. Therefore, everybody is there that's how I looked at it. As I saw it decreasing, then I started asking myself questions: Why are all these people? Are they people that is Church hopping trying to hop from church to church like people change their job from job to job? Are they doing that? At that time, I think I had a chat with a couple of people. Actually, the Indians and the whites that I had a conversation with. Some of them told me I am relocating to Durban or oh no I am going away because I am shifting from this area in Johannesburg to another area. For instance, the Indians are concerned. The whites most of them said they are leaving the church because they had to move to different areas.
- 13 **SM:** Were there any social relations members of the church beyond the formal church?
- 14 **Participant 4:** At that time, I was one of the people that used to go and assist a church in seeing to the foreigners that come into the country by misled information. And they are stranded, they come there and also the foreigners that comes to church. Now its mixed the locals also come there, but prior to that there was a lot of Foreigners that used to come. What we used to do is, we used to collect clothing from the church then had a cupboard that is called Elijah' cupboard where we used to collect groceries and so forth on weekly basis and store them. Once a week we meet these people. We interview them, talk to them, and find out how they ended up in that kind situation. Nine out of ten times there were misled by their family members when they came down to South Africa and so forth. Then we give them a food parcel and because they are unemployed, we used to give them clothing where they could take it and open a little business and sort of a thing. We used to feed all the people that comes to the church. It was twice a week on a Tuesday and Thursday. We used

to give them salad, bread, tea and coffee what have you. We also used to go and feed the underprivileged that sleep in bushes, under the trees and so forth. We had 3 or 4 staff that we used to make on those days but during afternoon after hours, soup and bread. We used to collect 2 litre bottles and we used to fill water with take and go. I don't know much of it that is still going on, but I think it is we used to do all that. So, there was gathering in church after church also there was meetings that we used to have.

15 SM: Are there any programmes that were done in a church and were they done by racially integrated groups, where groups of races worked together?

16 Participant 4: We had house calling meetings

17 SM: The what?

18 Participant 4: We had to meet in people's houses. We used to have anybody, white, coloureds, Indians. We used to have those things which I was part of that in the East Rand area and we got on very well. Everything went on very well at that time.

19 SM: Any encouragement from the leadership?

20 Participant 4: Oh yes. The ones that are one the board of Eden specifically very caring very loving even when you go to the door of the church, there is beautiful smiles and out of and so forth. The ministers are very caring and loving if we need to see them for any reason, they make sure that they take time to come and meet us at home if we want to. Generally, in that avenue, I personally get very good service from them.

21 SM: How can you improve on racial integration?

22 Participant 4: If I am to have one on one with any one of them, I will tell them this is the way I look at. I tell them listen we don't know why we have such small minority of one colour or two colours that we have in the church. I think we must focus more on them, make them feel more wanted. Not that you don't do that to everybody else but add a little to more to the ones that is so little. I think that word can get spread outside. And say hey, things are doing well there. It was not what it used to be whatever your reasons could be. Please change it. Let us get back there and make it happen. That's what I would advise if I was there.

The practical thing is to extend the warmth that you have to the minority and say wow I am so glad I could see you here. I am happy come through typical things like that. Smart things like that makes a big change. For myself at the moment, I am one of the guys that issue out Communion every month. I am on the top there and there and the congregation can see. I am there with a lovely smile. First impression last impression type of a thing. I make sure people are happy. When we go home, I shake hands with whoever I can clash up with, things like that. I am sure that will help. I don't know how much that will help I am not sure how much but from past experience, I am actually a chairperson for the East Rand older citizens club. I have got between 60 and 70 people that I meet every Sundays and I take care of them talk to them and we meet from 1:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon. We all sit down with them for a cup of tea and snack whatever. Then I arrange day trips for them. When I say day trips, like last month I took them to Walter Sisulu Botanical gardens. I had a bus and we

all paid for the bus and we took a bus. Bring and share kind of thing, we spend a day there. I take them to weekend trips leave on Friday and come back on Monday. We book out chalets, 7-sleeper chalets. Like now I booked seven chalet, I book 7-sleeper chalets. I am taking 46 people to Sabaan holiday resort Mpumalanga on the 18th we are leaving. What I do is I have got from 60 up to 85 age group people. I personally give my more of hugs love and kisses to the 80, 79, 78 people. I do that to everybody, but I spend a little bit and minute extra with older ones than a bit younger ones. I put that into practice for the whole of 2017 and I see it really works. I had my AGM last week. They just refused for me to step down. I wanted to decline when they voted for me, and I said no I am going to decline, and I can guide whoever you want to put on the board. Let's get somebody new and I will guide them. They said no we want you and we want you, nobody else and its okay let's put it on vote. I had 35 people voting for me than the others. The others had 5, 10 people and so forth people voting for them That shows me that I am doing something. My job has been done correct.

23 SM: The group that you lead are they different races?

24 Participant 4: There was but now eventually nobody else comes there.

25 SM: When you say nobody you mean?

26 Participant 4: When the club started it wasn't my time it was the other time whoever started the club, the Fountains of the club. They had black and white and Indians and so forth. I don't know what happened all the blacks dropped off, all the whites dropped off. At the moment it's sitting with Indians which I am trying hard to regroup it to where it was. I like that and the reason I like that is the older people we come from the whole school. Back then during Apartheid time. It was a fearful growth for the whole lot of people. So now I am trying to let them to know, put the past off to slip, it's water under the bridge. Let's go on because everything changed now. But in order for me to do that in need to open up the doors. The reasons why I could not open the bigger doors for me, at the moment the venue is too small I just use one classroom in a school. I am just praying and asking God to guide me so that I can get a bigger venue and get more people coming to it.

27 SM: I think this will be my last question. Why after so long are you still a member of Eden. What is it that you love it for?

28 Participant 4: As I said it earlier will say that again to you. I love Eden because I love the people around there. I love the ministers, I love the sermons. It's very loud very clear there is so many things, the music and to see the younger ones fitting into the choir of the church and doing so well. It makes me feel so nice, so comfortable. I congratulate them most of the times and say you guys are doing very well and keep that up. I also tell my minister whenever I am walking past. I tell him your sermon was great keep it up. Things like that. That what makes me feel to go there. I want to go there. I make sure that whatever it is I don't miss my service.

SM: R Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 5: Youth

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: The study is around racial integration, and I am trying to look at Eden as a case study as I said, and I just want to find from you as a member of Eden for almost eighteen years what for you is racial unity in a congregation. What do you understand by racial unity in a congregation?

02 Participant 5: I think ... racial unity in a congregation is where people can co-exist despite the very different backgrounds, ... you find that we are black. We therefore come from a particular background with Methodism. ... There are white people who come from a different background. So, when you meet ... you integrate finding common ground where that space enables everyone to be able to worship. So that the differences don't divide people. I always use music as an example that the mere fact that you have a song up there on a projector and it is in Xhosa and we want everyone to be part of the worship experience. I can't look at that song up there and not have translations of that song, because the moment I put translations I am saying you may not know this language, but I want you to be part of the ambience in this in this space so that you are included in it. Then you are moving towards the space of integrating. I found especially Eden we used to it was a when I cause I started off as a worship leader so it was rule that when you chose songs for Sunday you had to have a well English, a vernacular song ... Sotho you have to always have that mix as well, and a ruler's translations with all of them as well. So, if created that space as well even though people didn't understand languages they began to appreciate to a point where you found that even some of the white worship leaders would say "hey man there is that ... Zulu song "Gracious God." They may not know the ... Zulu for the song but when they look at the translations they began to connect as well you know with that space. So, ... that's my understanding of racial integration. It is that we find common ground we then journey together in that space.

03 SM: In there you've already made an example with worship, but what are the other ways in which Eden has demonstrated that racial unity if you look at its life inclusive of worship and other elements? Where have you, would you say ... Eden was able to display that racial unity?

- 04 Participant 5:** I think the other are where Eden has done that was within the leadership as well. I mean the leadership was deliberate in making sure there was a representation. They have the leadership team that is called the VLG (Visionary Leadership Group). I remember it was in 2007/8 there when we sat down in the Society Meeting. There was a criteria of what kind of people do we want. We had to agree on what kind of people we want in the in the leadership. You needed the youth to be represented. You needed women to be represented. You needed the demographics of the church to be represented in the form of making sure that there are black people there who are there. It was a space even though it was an uncomfortable space sometimes with people to say we need black people. A big number of black people in the leadership, we need, and James used to even speak about well even white people must be there as well you know. So, there was it was even it was uncomfortable space, but you want to make sure that everyone was represented in that leadership. So, they were very deliberate in that the fellowship space as well. We've moved. We don't do that anymore which was back then very was very good. It was service would end let's say service starts at 09:00 and ends at 10:00. The service would not naturally end at 10:00 because there was the second part of the service which was the coffee and the biscuit outside. They used to push people to say go have coffee and biscuits, cars must not leave immediately after the service. James used to push for that so there was that fellowship as well ...
- 05 SM:** Where people interacted?
- 06 Participant 5:** Yes, and it may look like something that was small, but it was so important because you got to know people through that kind of space you got to, to talk to people. Whereas some of these people are not even involved in some of the ministries they started becoming involved because from that space they got to interact with others who were involved, who were sharing in the lives of the church and people began to take interest in some of those things. The teachings the classes that we used to go on they were very good. I think that was another space where at Eden these things there was course like manna and mercy. I remember manna and mercy was very good and people used to come, and it was a fellowshiping space over and above the teachings. There used to be manna and mercy there was another one ... Yes, disciples all those things brought people together you know. People got to really integrate instead of tolerate each other. There was that space that was created that let's not make a space where we tolerate each other it was a space of making sure we come together.
- 07 SM:** What for you would be toleration as opposed to integration?
- 08 Participant 5:** The very thing, for example going back to the example of worship that let us have different languages and that we are tolerating each other. Let's make sure that we accommodate you. Maybe that's another word to use accommodate instead of tolerate. We accommodate you. Let's just have a song that's in Xhosa. Let's have a song in Afrikaans. Let's have a song in English. We are accommodating people but when we are not allowing you who is not familiar with a Sotho song for an example, the space to also connect with others such as making sure that there is translations for that song. Once we put translations, we are inviting you into that space where it's not a space where

we are saying okay now it's a turn for Zulus in this worship. We are saying even though there are people who are speaking Sotho and there is a Sotho song up there you as an English-speaking person can also be on that journey with people by making sure that there is translations. It's having deliberate act because once you put up saying let's accommodate people, you put up whatever you are putting up in in your congregation to accommodate people. Once you go a step further to say that how do we then make sure that even those who are outside and not accommodated here are part of this then you are creating that integration. So, it's thinking just beyond saying okay how do we make sure that these ones also have a space here but making sure that we are actively all doing what needs to be done. So, at this time it's worshipping, how do we make sure that all of us are active in worshipping and language does not become a barrier and race does not become a barrier and cultural practice in worship does not become a barrier. So, thinking outside of just saying make sure there is this for these people because blacks worship like this, whites worship like this. Tick a box to say well there is space for them. Once you think outside of that and look for even better means to make sure people come together, you move to now integration

- 09 SM:** The teachings that you were talking about, you have mentioned the classes, the manna and mercy, disciple, the content itself. Did it also besides the bringing together, the content, did it also talk to racial integration whether directly or indirectly?
- 10 Participant 5:** It did, it really did. One of the things I loved about the leadership that was touching these things which was under....., they were so deliberate in making sure we understand the realities of racial segregation of classes. They were so deliberate, I'll make an example. I always remember this, when he came up and said you know
- 11 SM:** Who is "he"?
- 12 Participant 5:** James to say you know I look at these cars outside and I look at our collection...He was talking about collection at the time and there were many things that we couldn't do because the collection was not doing well. He was like "you know, it's like we are not serious about helping out there and I think one Sunday I should just not preach because if I stand up here and I preach it means we are not living what I speak about.. You know and I did love that because it showed then that we go back to we must stick with the realities. One of the realities we were facing at Eden at the time was that you needed to create a space within Eden where blacks can come in and worship as well because white people were a lot. They just moved at the time, they just moved from cause they were in halfway house they just moved so there were a lot and lot of white people there and the reality is that now once you have started introducing black songs that over and above these they have to have these songs you'll have English and accommodate a line of Zulu in it.....
- 13 SM:** Medley, mix?
- 14 Participant 5:** Yes, putting a nice Zulu line there, we'd moved from there now all of a sudden there was the whole song that was in Xhosa and sometimes you could feel *ukuthi ai*, the congregation was beginning to say hey, what's going on here? But when you went to the classes that we were going to, they were

speaking to these issues to say; “Well, there is this issue, what do people think?” and we would have open discussions sometimes around that. So, even the classes what I’m getting to is that the classes were even though the objective may have been to grow us spiritually but they were dealing with the practical realities as well that we had in the society. ... some of the challenges we were facing in the society ... so it was that kind of space and I think ... that’s what allowed the transition to grow...and people to find ... to really open themselves up to saying okay teach me this Sotho song or teach me this Zulu song and yeah.

- 15 **SM:** And the pulpit? Anything that came from the pulpit? Was the pulpit in any way used?
- 16 **Participant 5:** It was. Yeah, he was a very sharp preacher uJames and uMxolisi joined just a few years. I think he arrived ...when was it? But he arrived not so probably when he arrived as well he got and I think with him being there now that we had white Minister and black Minister there as well ... it created that environment where one could see that we’ve got representation here as well. Strange in the house a lot of blacks started coming to Eden as well. ...
- 17 **SM:** When there was a black Minister?”
- 18 **Participant 5:** When there was a black Minister as well yeah. But James was very deliberate about it. I mean even in his he would preach a lot about the past. I think with his background his father because we learnt that from him standing in the pulpit about the things that his father was fighting for. He would preach a lot about how about this new South Africa and about how we all need to be working on this South Africa. He was not shy to speak about racial issues that we are facing in the country because it was a reality as well within the church that we had lot of white people from the beginning and now because it started then even this thing of white people leaving...
- 19 **SM:** Which is my next question because my next question is, what has been the response of members for the coming together of different races both black and white, maybe you can continue with the whites
- 20 **Participant 5:** I think even there were some who were comfortable, but you wonder why because many of them left. They started leaving and I would not even want to say when James left because James was still there when they left. They started leaving in fact the Minister who replaced James was still a white Minister. It was Sheila, yes when Sheila came many of them had left and many of them continued to leave even then and it was when they were leaving it was lot of more black people coming. It was as if some of them do not want to share that space with black people...
- 21 **SM:** Was it ever verbalised?
- 22 **Participant 5:** No, it was never verbalised to say this is why we are leaving...
- 23 **SM:** Any discussions in the leaders’ meeting or wherever?
- 24 **Participant 5:** Those discussions were always there but I remember in one of the meetings the VGT meetings we had and James spoke about it and his response to it was; “There is nothing wrong with a lot of black people coming

her. If black people come her and they make people uncomfortable and make people leave. We can't stop people from coming here if a lot of black people are finding this space being their space to worship ***integrate instead of tolerating***, they must come. I think it was a concern we always spoke about. I know there was a time even where Mxolisi was commissioned to just speak to some of them

25 **SM:** Some of the?

26 **Participant 5:** Some of those who have left...especially those who were in leadership positions who were in the worship teams, who were in the ushering teams and all that and the outcome was always; "Ah no I've moved..."

27 **SM:** *Was it a formal was there a report to that?*

28 **Participant 5:** I think there was... Yes, I think there was. uMxolisi might be able to give you something of that nature, but yah many of them left.

29 **SM:** *And the black people how did they feel about the coming together in this integration?"*

30 **Participant 5:** Many of the black people they...You see there was a different kind of... it was black people as well because it was the black people who loved that integrated space. It was not black people who wanted to come and take over that space and make it a black space because for the longest time there was no call for an example of having things like Manyanos at Eden. In fact, many of the people opposed to those things when we spoke about them in leadership were the black people themselves who would say; Hey, man there's always politics when you bring those." They always objected to those things. So, it was black people who loved that kind of space. So, it was not even black people who are coming... wanting to take over and say let's turn this place upside down and make it a black Methodist church and so forth. So, that was always the... I think, the tricky thing in that a lot of those who would then leave would always respond and say argh it's just a work thing because now all of a sudden if someone says to you well, I don't want to change this place, there is nothing I want to change, what would your reasons for leaving be? So, I always found that there was no truth in what we were being told sometimes by those who would leave who generally says it was just an issue of moving. It can't be that every white person was leaving East Rand all of a sudden but yeah that was the

31 **SM:** Do you know where they went to worship?

32 **Participant 5:** I bumped into so many of them I was so shocked. We were there for the youth seminar last year here in Benoni

33 **SM:** So, they have not left the residential area, they've just changed church?

34 **Participant 5:** They've just changed Church, because you'll find those that are here... Is it North...? North Riding? Yeah I think its North Riding yes. Many of them who went there were staying around the areas of Fourways, your Khayalami and still went to Eden in any case.

35 **SM:** What was your observation around Sunday school?

- 36 **Participant 5:** Sunday school was also something else, you know. I remember we used to have on Sundays, Sunday school was run a lot by these many white ladies who were running Sunday school and it was very active as well at the time. There were camps there were there was Sunday school was just always active including youth because there was a youth Pastor as well at the time when James was still there and Mxolisi had just arrived. Simon Koekemoer, yes Simon Koekemoer got there, and it was very active, it was very active....
- 37 **SM:** Was the children's ministry integrated?
- 38 **Participant 5:** Yes, yes it was it. It was, but that's why I'm saying we, especially with their you'd find that a lot of these kids were people we went to school together many of us so it was easier because ...
- 39 **SM:** Even in the youth?
- 40 **Participant 5:** Yes, even in the youth because Monday to Friday you saw that one and on Sunday, we see each other there so that one was much easier for us. It was normal but as when the parents leave obviously, they leave with their children and they no longer part of that Ministry, So, but when even the teachers who were running Sunday school left. I remember the one who was you could call her the superintendent now the Sunday superintendent her name was Dora. She was very active and there was support always from the church. Support towards her and she used to do a lot of things at church. When she left Sunday school went down even some of the projects around Sunday school because I remember at some point, they wanted to build actual classrooms outside and they'd started that project. The moment she left, everything started collapsing. She left with many of these white Sunday school teachers. There was actually two teachers who were black and they all left. One after the other, they all left and the ministry went down, you know.
- 41 **SM:** And the youth?
- 42 **Participant 5:** The same pertaining. When Simon left... in fact the worst thing with that one is that it literally collapsed after he left. All the guys who were part of the youth when he left and many of them were white, went to your X Christian Church and other churches around.
- 43 **SM:** And now is there is Sunday school and Youth?
- 44 **Participant 5:** It picked up strangely when a white person took over again. Minki came to Eden and started reviving the Sunday school ministry and it picked up very well. The youth started picking up but it never...the youth ministry was never quite strong. The only thing that kind of replaced it was the Wesley Guild. When it was eventually brought in then there was space for youth through the Wesley Guild.....
- 45 **SM:** It became predominantly black?
- 46 **Participant 5:** yes well, all black ...So, young people, white young people at the church at the moment...we don't find them. They aren't anymore. I'm trying to think, no there is none. Sunday school is also predominantly black. The white people you find there now ...the one who's been there since day one is still there, is the guy by the name of Robert. Robert has been in the worship team

since it was in Halfway House until it moved. He is still there till today. He still leads worship at the morning service. It is him and Rose. Rose is the organ player, she is still there as well and many of the people. So, a lot of people who stayed were the older folks. The older folks are still there...

47 **SM:** But in your opinion what is the reason for staying?

48 **Participant 5:** I think for older people change is more difficult so for them to go to another church and start all over. There is something about age that they prefer if this is what I've known this is what I've known. I'll see this through.

49 **SM:** What is in your estimates are the demographics at the moment in terms of percentages?

50 **Participant 5:** Very very low. I mean the white people I probably can count with my fingers at Eden. I can count with my fingers the white people there and it's been... There is the interesting though, however is that you find that even though the majority is black, remember earlier I was speaking of the fact that you had these black people who didn't want, who were protecting the integration, didn't want change in a sense of having Manyanos and now changing Eden too. Those blacks still remain with those views that that's how you keep Eden. In fact, when things started changing the first Manyano that was introduced was the Wesley Guild, then probably two years later they introduced the Women's Manyano. They introduced iYMG, then they introduced *Barwetsana* (Young Women) and now they even have *Abashumayeli* (Lay Preachers). Once that starts happening, those black people who protected the integration started leaving Eden ***the leadership was deliberate*** ...

51 **SM:** Oh! Mm,

52 **Participant 5:** Many of those black people have gone to the predominantly Charismatic Churches. They go to the likes of Grace even some to that X Christian Church, they now moved from that space because now it seem many of them were running away from the typical African Methodist Church. So, many of them left hence then when we then deliberated, we then said no what you need to do in that we need to have three different services, and make sure you accommodate people in those services. So, for an example the 07:30 service which is the traditional... service, you've got to put it plain "the white one." You've got your white hymns and the organ is playing there. Then you've got the 09:00 which is your... let's say charismatic. It's your contemporary service. You've got the band kind of worship and then you've got then the *Wesele* (Wesleyan) black "*Wesleyan*" which is your 11:00 service. Even in that space because now the church finds itself at the point where for example holy week, you only have one service a day for Holy Week. You are going to have the Good Friday service, one service which is meant to be the joint service. Sunday you are meant to have the joint service. So, there are many services which are supposed to be joint and the nature of Methodist churches is that now you find the 11:00 service that dominates the integrated service. I studied this because it's very interesting that the people who now come to 09:00 and 07:30 are not people don't attend these combined services. Yeah, they don't attend those services and because they know their space is going to be overtaken....

- 53 **SM:** When did the 11:00 service start?
- 53 **Participant 5:** 11:00 service it started about three years ago...
- 55 **SM:** Before then when there were joined services, would white people come?
- 56 **Participant 5:** They would come, they would come, and you found it was even the services were so structured that you knew that you have to have three songs that are vernacular, three that are English, two that are Sotho. You always, there was a particular structure and people were used to that....
- 57 **SM:** What stops that from happening now?
- 58 **Participant 5:** Because now you had Manyanos come in. So, obviously with the Manyanos coming in you needed a space for Manyanos to express themselves the way they do. Hence then it was the 11:00 service to make sure there is space for that but typical of us, the majority hymns are the ones that..., because sometimes you even feel when another word, even the combined service for an example you would sing a simple song that would accommodate that would speak to people who come from the 09:00 service. And the preacher maybe sing this song before the preacher preaches, because combined, he would sing "*Sedi laka*" (An African Hymn) because he would feel that the majority of the people have not connected yet, but the song to connect to or prepare ourselves to hear the sermon was the hymn song but now there is that kind of space, now all of a sudden the church would become so alive, it would literally. It's like someone has just hit us with a bomb in the service...
- 59 **SM:** What happened in the teachings, were they, first of all you said, let's make this point, you said even before James left, there were whites that were leaving, so when the black Minister took over and the Manyanos came in that increased?
- 60 **Participant 5:** It went even worse in terms of the people white people leaving, but I don't want to because I don't think I would link the white people into the Manyanos. I would link the black people in there on to the Manyanos, because white people started leaving the moment that a lot of black people were coming in. For me it had more to do with the fact that you have a lot of black people starting to dominate the space....
- 61 **SM:** What does that say about racial integration?
- 62 **Participant 5:** White people are uncomfortable in spaces where they are not the majority. They feel threatened when they don't have the majority say, where they own that space. In as much I think they want to accommodate black people to say well but when they accommodate us, they want to have control over what they accommodate us with and the fear is that once we get to a space we are going to want to, to take over and own that space ourselves and I think Eden is an interesting one because the black people who were coming to Eden did not want that. They didn't want to bring what was from their space where they were going out from their own lands, they wanted to integrate, they loved that integration space and testament to that is when the Manyanos were introduced, the people who were starting to leave now were the black people who originally came and took that integrated space and wanted to maintain that integrated space. So, in fact what white people feared and what they were protecting they

ended up leaving as a result of that. So, that's why it's very interesting with Eden, that white people felt very threatened by majority of black people coming. I don't, I think even the decision to once Mxolisi became the senior Minister, the last of them left even at the time already...

63 SM: Last of? white people?

64 Participant 5: The last of white people, most of them because the ones that are there it's very very few that are there and even as I said those that are there are elderly people. They themselves when and it's interesting with them as well that those who are left who are white would come to a service at Eden that speaks to their kind of worship. So, I gave the example of Robert who leads the worship at the 07:30 which is your traditional white Methodist service where the organ is playing one or two you sing one or two either Xhosa or Sotho hymn and then the rest would be your white hymns, but hey come to that kind of service but yet when there is a combined, they would not come.

65 SM: Are they the majority at the 07:30 service?

66 Participant 5: Not even they still have more black people there...

67 SM: Even if it's white oriented?

68 Participant 5: Yeah, you find them there even there, so, it's yeah...

69 SM: In your own observation again, what would you say are the benefits of racial integration?

70 Participant 5: It is, I think firstly for it moves us in into a space where because I think the danger is comfort, it moves us away from the space of comfort, to always be assessing ourselves as to what can we do to create a better space for someone else who is different from you first of all, by colour, by culture. So, it pushes you to a space to be constantly thinking about how we make sure that this space is good for everybody. That's the one benefit, it moves us from comfort. Secondly it allows us to deal with the racial challenges in the society, because church should be a space where we deal with practical issues of faith in relation to what is happening in the society. So, we cannot be oblivious to society. So, it kind of give us space here to say "Hey" outside there this is what is happening, when I go apply for a job, and you are white you apply for a job to a white man he is going to take you. What's happening in society, we are able to deal with that in the space, then the church now begins to look at influencing the society because now if we can coexist in the church and create the space we are able to influence the society and go outside and say, well it's happening within the church and the church finds itself in a better position to speak about non-racialism because we are practicing it. We are creating a space where we are coexisting, we are creating a space where we are accommodating each other but we are integrating as well over and above that. So, we influence the society at the same time. So, I think that's the other benefit of it. What would the other benefit be? Yeah, I think that my main one is the issue of comfort because being comfortable in church becomes a big problem which is what I'm seeing now at Eden as well. We are getting to a space where we are comfortable and now. we then begin as well to push away others.

71 SM: Who is we?

- 72 **Participant 5:** Us blacks, us blacks, because you find all of a sudden you have to deal with the dynamics of blacks. The assumption is that if you are a Methodist and you are black, your preferred worship way of worship is in *Siyakdumisa* (Te Deum) and singing all the hymnals that are in in our vernacular hymnal books. And but you find that all of a sudden, you've got a new generation of young people who prefer worshipping and they may be black but they don't prefer worshipping like that. They love hearing someone play the drums and the guitar...
- 73 **SM:** And what is the role of leadership in this context in terms of racial integration? You painted a picture of how the leader, what role the leadership played in the beginning, the teachings and all that? What do you think is the role of leadership in this instance where things seem to have the pendulum swing to the other side?
- 74 **Participant 5:** Although I haven't been in the Cell teaching for a while now but the biggest role they have played because we haven't had those dialogues if anything those dialogues have...died. I don't even hear us speak about it anymore at the society meeting. These are no longer highlighted as issues. It seems we are being comfortable in saying this is who we are. We are black people here, and you now begin to have a focus on maintaining things making sure that if this is meant to be here this must be here. What do we need to do to make sure it stays here and we are comfortable with that space to say whether if there are white people and we don't say this by speaking but by our actions that if there still white people within Eden, when there is a service that accommodates them. They can go to that service is 7:30. So, there is no deliberate effort to have that discussion to say but where are we? Why are we here now? What has happened? We have not reflected really in the last few years. In fact, our main mission has been maintenance, maintaining things, making sure that things runs smoothly.
- 75 **SM:** So, just recap for me, you did touch on these things, generally about integration, just recap, what are the challenges of racial integration?
- 76 **Participant 5:** The one, people want to own their space. People want to own their space. White people are intimidated by blacks coming into a particular space and them not being the majority. So, that speaks to the fact that one of the challenges of integration is the ownership of space that we are not willing to let go of the power. We want to hold on to power and we believe that majority gives you that power. So that the one issue of integration that it's a numbers game. The second challenge is the issue of change that with integration you have to open yourself to change and change sometimes says to you the way you've been thinking even if it may be fifty years, you need to let go of that. So, people don't succumb to change easily, they don't accept change. Once they have been following something as routine, they want to continue following it, hence the example I gave of some of the old people who go to the 07:30. It's been 07:30 for many years, so, for them going somewhere now would literally flit their lives upside down. People don't want change that is another issue of racial integration. Yeah, and the issue of comfort as well that sometimes we want to be comfortable and once you are comfortable, you are no longer able to think outside the box to see that there is something better you can do than what you are currently doing. Yeah, I think those.

- 77 **SM:** Are there any social relations that existed or are still existing beyond the former where people from Eden have relations beyond the church space?
- 78 **Participant 5:** No, I don't think so...Those who related, related, whether they are leaders just at that space and when they parted, they went their own ways. They went their own ways many of them, although I'm not sure how true that is. I was told that when James moved to Cape Town there were people who also moved to Cape Town as well...
- 79 **SM:** White people?
- 80 **Participant 5:** Black people strange enough but I suppose maybe it was government workers...
- 81 **SM:** yeah, if it was true, what would be the reason?
- 82 **Participant 5:** It's also that thing of ... it reflects back to us black people as well that we believe that when we when one of us owns something it is bound to collapse. So, the sad, reality that it's not only white people who would hold that view that when black people take over something they completely take over and they own it. We also have that own view of ourselves as well. So, it could have been that lot of black people hear that well if you have black man come in to run things here it would collapse. In fact, I don't not think it only scare white people that white people were leaving Eden. It scared black people as well, because they feared themselves that if we are the majority and many black people are coming in and we have a black Minister now and we have a black VGT, black Stewards, things are going to collapse
- 83 **SM:** If you were to be an advisor to the current leadership and you were asked to advise them around racial integration with what has happened, what would you say to them?
- 84 **Participant 5:** I think the first thing is we need to reflect on how did we get here. It's always interesting to speak to even those who are there whilst they are still there. For me for example there is an assumption that because they are old, they are still they don't want they only want things to be stabilised in their lives and so forth but still speak to those people to find out why are you still here? What about Eden has kept you here still and how do you because what is the benefit. Firstly, we need to identify what would the benefit be of integrating racially and having many people who are from different races and so forth at Eden. Looking at that benefit, how do you then begin to shape the life of Eden so that Eden becomes attractive to people who are not only black so that when people- someone walks into Eden is like; "Hey" even though I'm white here is the space that I feel I can be part of...Here is a congregation I can be part of. We need to have that reflection.

I'm tempted also because even though I don't know I'm tempted to think that as well the change in the demographics of East Rand has to do a lot with changes that happened at Eden as well. If you look at East Rand, it has changed as well. The demographics of East Rand that you heard there are a lot of black elite moving in, into East Rand to the town houses that have been built and a lot of white people were selling their plots to some of these developers selling their land because all those plots that these town houses are

being built in are owned by white people. So white people..., So, I'm tempted to also think that the change in demographics of East Rand had a lot to do with the change in the church as well, but still the church still needs to have that introspection to say how did we get to this point. If indeed the leadership can see that racial integration has lot of benefits for us, then they will begin to shape the life of the church in such a way that it would be attractive for people who are not black.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 6: Lay Leader

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: What is your view of a racially integrated congregation?

02 Participant 6: Well, my personal view is I would think that's the way we should be. That we are a multi-racial country, and one would hope the congregations would kind of reflect the bounce of the demographics that we have at any given place. I think (*inaudible*) can be considered perhaps different because there are so many people who have come here for work. It's not the same rural situation which hardly has an influx of people from all over the place. But I would be pro racially integrated congregation and that's very much what we hoped Eden would be and have remained.

03 SM: What would be the manifestations of a racially integrated church?

04 Participant 6: For me the crucial indicator of any church, if I go into a church, I am feeling am I welcomed here, is it embracing it is open and people are reaching out are they warm and friendly. For me that's the first thing that I look for. To me that is the Jesus stuff, that people are in a warm and real relationship with God and with Jesus, and they are seeking to live that out. And warm, friendliness and lovingness to other people regardless of any differences that can be, background, colour, sexual orientation, socio economic, whatever.

05 SM: In what practical way was racial integration demonstrated

06 Participant 6: In the old church before we moved in 1998, to the Eden premises, Eden often tend to think of itself as 20 years which it isn't. The church goes back to roots in the 1950's. I can still remember Nomsa Lukhele, a Swaziland lady, coming to join the choir, and it was so lovely to have her. **It was people coming to church and feeling at home enough to stay there welcome. She became a good friend of mine, and I can remember going to her son's wedding in the township. I am not in touch with her anymore, but I kept in touch with her for a long time. It was just people being naturally and warmly together and interested in one other. Comforting and helping each other in times of sadness and difficulty, celebrating with each other in times of joy, learning to understand each other differences, realizing that there are differences and if we don't understand them, we can't respect them properly. That's what important.**

07 SM: Was intentional that the leadership did to say we are no more the same we are now integrated?

- 08 Participant 6:** The one course that was run in James Visagie, he left in 2008, was the anti-bias seminars. The anti-bias seminars were designed to help us to acknowledge that we all have biases and not to clean them up but to at least to become aware of how we felt about things. They were not racially directed but certainly it was hoped that we would help us to listen to one another. The same kind of opportunity for sharing and listening to one another was offered at the time. The homosexual debate was becoming so bitter in the church. We had the same series of 5, 6, 7, 8 meetings where people could hear other people's point of view and began understand and hopefully shift in one's attitude. So anti-bias was designed to do that. How successful it was, I don't think I went to two of them. Not many people went, and we were aiming for diversity in that group as we could possible get. I think that was one attempt. Leaders meetings started to become more spiritual in the sense that were devotion on them. They were developed from being dry, let's get the business done, and talk over the same things too many times not get it done. I know when James came, they were quite revolutionized and became places of sharing places and places growth. But the anti-bias was the conscious thing that I can think of. It was attempted to be done once a year probably over a period of period of 3 or 4 years.
- 09 SM:** And what else?
- 10 Participant 6:** The pilgrimage of pain and hope where there was of group of people that were taken and stayed in the township and worshipped in the township church as well as all the other things pilgrimage did all. That was another attempt of integration. It was a bit one sided and very few people did it. So let's say that ran over a period of 6 or 7 years and you might have a group of 10 to 12 doing it that was life changing for people, absolutely life changing. That would come into that category of an attempt to create an integration.
- 11 SM:** If we look at the pilgrimage of pain and hope, was it a racially mixed team that went out?
- 12 Participant 6:** I think most of the early people that did it would be white later on it became more mixed. But it didn't have that same appeal for many people who had come from township backgrounds to suddenly crossing the highway to go and see what it was like over there. It didn't quite gel. For white people who had been isolated because of the group areas and Apartheid it was revolutionary to actually conquer fear and go into townships and stay a night in a shack and learn to meet someone as just human being. I would have done it but didn't do it because I was too busy running (inaudible). I know from what I heard from Annie, she was another lay pastor for some years with James Visagie, it really was life changing for people.
- 13 SM:** In what ways was it life changing? Do you know just one or two things?
- 14 Participant 6:** Some of the people that did it just realised we all have children we are all just people. I think they probably had to learn of a new concept of dignity of other people even in poverty the pride, the dignity and just how tough was under those condition and maybe began to have some incline of what people had suffered. I think it takes a long time from me. I came from overseas. I had known nothing about apartheid when I came. I wasn't even aware of it. My first shock was finding in Hillbrow in my first year or two I was here 76, 77,

finding a man with his feet both on the road, lying on the street. I thinking everyone is just walking past and I'm being horrified trying to check was he alive or dead and pulling his feet off the road because he was liable to get them run over and bringing him to the nearest shop to get an ambulance because he was showing no response. And being asked do we need a European or non-European ambulance. I can still remember a bit way or another. I'm thinking what's got to do it, the man needs an ambulance to get to the hospital. I was so ignorant I didn't realise that everything was quite boxed in the early days was quite in early days. It's only in the last 5, 6, 7 years that I began to have an understanding of the depth of the colonialism the privilege that we kind of have, the arrogance that people have so struggled with on the part of white people.

15 SM: What else about leadership?

16 Participant 6: I think so. I think we were intentionally seeking to change to transform, to invite to welcome, to make it clear that this is not exclusive white dominated thing but that we now want it to be reflective of the new South Africa. I think we were encouraged to do that by the then leader James. Somehow, we must have done that very successfully. There would be a point when we were a lovely mixture.

17 SM: In leadership?

18 Participant 6: Yes, in leadership, but I think would be tended to be still White dominated. Effort needed to be made to make sure that it was represented the whole racial group in the church and women as well. If one look back at the leadership profiles over those year, you can see that it was gradually changing from white dominated to a more integrated. Probably not quickly enough for some of our African members. I wonder if the worship thing isn't a critical area to making it into that

19 SM: That would be my next one, but we can go to it

20 Participant 6: I think it was in relation to praise and worship that a very intentional effort was put into trying to make praise and worship representative of the different language groups who worshiped in the church. It was decided that the service would be dominantly English and preaching and praise mainly be in English but that the praise would be in English, and vernacular and the aim was to represent everybody's language if possible. People were invited intentionally if you are here in this Church and you have never heard your language spoken, please come and share your songs from you background with us and we will try to include them in worship. So, I think there was a very conscious awareness in the worship team leaders. Both in terms of the mix of the team in trying to reflect up at the front of the church that there was a mixture, this wasn't a white thing anymore and in the balance of the songs that were chosen each Sunday.

21 SM: How was it received?

22 Participant 6: I suppose it's hard for one person to say for everybody. For some it was well received for others they resented it. I don't understand these languages, I don't want to sing in these language, why have we got to have singing in that, where is our old hymns, why do we have these modern stuff.

So, it was not only the demographics and vernacular thing, it was also the modern and traditional. When we moved to Eden the choir that had been in existence which was a very small group in the old Church, we talked among ourselves, and we decided we would fold up that we would leave the place clean for a new expression of worship that was what was wanted it would seem that was what was wanted. So, in a night of all of that you had all the new a modern worship as well as traditional historical worship. In terms of the how much we talked at leaders meeting about racial and integration...

23 SM: Was there any awareness?

24 Participant 6: We were aware who was in leaders' meetings was it a balance, was it a balance of male and female Often lacking was a young person and that was another issue that was only addressed in the last few years. Effort was made to try and make it more representative. In the past, even in James time, people for stewards were usually approached by the minister and said I would like you to serve as steward. So, it often done one to one. Sheila Harrison came in she completely turned that on its head and there was an election. People came into stewards who didn't a have background in the congregation unless they had served in apprenticeship in a few instances. It was just interesting to see that. But it was a different way that stewards were elected not appointed by the spiritual habitat of the fellowship

25 SM: Any teachings from the pulpit?

26 Participant 6: In the period that you are looking the 20-year period of Eden in existence, from 98 until 2008 the church under the leadership of James Visagie. From 2008 until 2011/12, we had Sheila Harrison as a sort of interim and then Mxolisi. I can clearly say that in the 10 years of James's tenure there was a constant challenge in the pulpit in relation to social justice issues, in relation to integration, in relation to us embracing what was different and diversity and I think he had a very conscious strategy...

27 SM: Who was this?

28 Participant 6: James Visagie of working out that. So, you got it preached from the word that this was Jesus' stuff and if we were not doing that we were failing in some way. It was uncomfortable for many people, and it was certainly challenging. It didn't suit everybody. They would have been people who left because they would have disagreed with the liberalness of his approach, and he was liberal. Since then, not to the same extent. I haven't really felt it to the same extent. The whole ministry of *Lesedi la Nnete* that I was involved with for about 8 years which was the ministry of unemployed people in the area and a bunch of people in the bush, the bush ministry. People were challenged to come and take part of that as being part of their Christian responsibility of love. The emphasis and the disciple courses, you would ask small groups. Let me bring some of the education courses disciple 1 and 2, where the ministry of the least, last and the lost was a conscious teaching in that social justice coming into that. It wasn't okay to sit down and it was okay do that at Academic level and cosy small groups you needed to put feet on that and get involved. That would have triggered people to come out at least once or twice of the bush teachings and connect with people on the margins. That was a clear teaching over those 10 years.

29 SM: What else?

30 Participant 6: Manna and Mercy were another useful tool and instrument of getting people to see God's journey with people in a very different way. It was refreshing and exciting.

31 SM: Were the participants in these courses racially mixed?

32 Participant 6: They would have been. I have for example the foundation group it will show you just the change when it took place. That foundation group of 1998, I think there was about four African names in a group of 60. I remember Nomsa Khoza, telling us how she struggled to be accepted she felt she came to church time and time again people didn't welcome her, and she had to persevere, and we weren't more than friendly (inaudible). There is a foundations for discipleship list. That would have been the starting introductory course. I don't know if you are conversant with it. It was a course James Visagie developed.

It just continued and continued and continued. It got to the point, I can think from 2014, 15, 16, I can think of a number of people for example elderly white people who came to live in the area with children from coastal areas Port Shepstone or wherever. You would find that they come to church once and you wouldn't see them again. I know why because I was trying to make a specific point of welcoming them making them feel like we love to get to know them and hope to see them again that kind of thing. There are one or two that would, but at that point I think they felt overwhelmed that the church was not as they expected it to be.

33 SM: How would they have expected it to be?

34 Participant 6: I think they would have expected it to be more of a mixture when in fact by that stage it was 90% African in its attendance membership.

35 SM: What happened in Sunday school in terms of racial mix and integration?

36 Participant 6: Anne who headed it up was here a couple weeks ago. She would tell us. I think in the last years the only children who were not African were Pauline.

Earlier on it would have been mixed. It would reflect on the congregation, the gradual change of becoming more racially mixed and diverse. Somewhere along the line that started to shrink. I don't have numbers to back up.

37 SM: But is it the shrink in terms of

38 Participant 6: The white people leaving the church and going. It always happens with change of ministers some people tend to follow an individual rather than belong to the church. After James Visagie left, quite a few people went. I think the church was going dynamic and limbo then. I think the people left who really struggled to find a place to settle themselves after that. They couldn't find a comfortable place where they felt they had the same stimulation and challenge. It was different for them.

39 SM: And the picture you have was it of children playing together?

- 40 Participant 6:** I don't know to what extent, if that ever extended beyond Sunday morning at church. I would extend to, I don't know how many deep friendships have formed across racial boundaries in the congregation
- 41 SM:** Beyond church life
- 42 Participant 6:** Beyond what took place at the church premises or small group or teaching group or some education course of some kind. I can just think in the 15 years that I worked. I probably have only been for a meal, socially. I could count the times I went out. It's almost like we don't go beyond church premises. I have to say I have friends now. My other departed this week. I'm glad to say I had half of friends from Eden, mostly in the healing team, you would understand, where you have the bond of similar focus. I am still in touch with 7 or 8 of them, not on a regular basis but enough to say come and join me.
- 43 SM:** How was the reception of you as a white person?
- 44 Participant 6:** I suppose you need to ask them
- 45 SM:** How were you received?
- 46 Participant 6:** I felt comfortable. I think there was probably one member I might have had some antagonism from. I think that was the nature of her strident personality rather than anything racial. It could have been well perceived, and I might have been dealt with it and not realising.
- 47 SM:** How was the youth at that time in terms of racial integration and what they were doing?
- 48 Participant 6:** I could be criticised for not having clear accuracy on this. Simon Koekemoer didn't take youth really from within the congregation. So, he didn't stand up there and say to all the people worshipping, parents send your young people. He found a lot mostly the youth that were coming at the school and around and about. Simon was good at going in the neighbourhood and connecting on the street with young people and in the schools and finding even unchurched youth in the challenge of that. I think he was also in a mission capacity in and around with his youth movement. I think it was I wouldn't like to tell you what mix it was. It was probably quite mixed and through the end of his time more of an Africa group. Confirmation didn't happen much in James Visagie. He didn't believe pushing confirmation on a historical thing of you are 16 you are 17, it's time you are confirmed and your parent or grandparent giving you hefty shove. He was very adamant to let it be a move from young people themselves. When Sheila came and Mxolisi came that changed and we went back traditional method of encouraging people to come to confirmation groups.
- 49 SM:** In your reflection, what do you think are the benefits or were the benefits of racial integration?
- 50 Participant 6:** I think it was enriching. It enriched me. It enriched me greatly to get to know across different racial lines. It enriched me to just know what lovely people they are. And to beginning to understand their traditions that has been, that has been challenging now with, you are probably aware, Eden has brought in the traditional Methodist institutions in the last 3 years. Wesley Guild longer

than that, but Young Men's Guild and Women's Manyano more recently. That has brought a whole new challenge of integration with groups that were there before with those groups which are so dominant in the church and have such significance for people as a generational membership almost; my granny was, my great granny was, I need to be, otherwise I am not kosher, that's not quite the right word to use, but you know what I mean. That has brought a whole new challenge some divisive things. In terms of enrichment, it's just that if you are living in a society where the demographics, are whites 90 % or something of our society? If you are living in your small circle, you are much the poor. Your attitudes and understanding, getting to know people what makes them tick, understanding their customs, and how different they are, very different. A common thing from white perspective will be that African people are always going to funerals. Funeral seems to be the structure which one's social life nearly operates. I think it takes quite a bit of understanding to begin to realise how significant funerals are in an African society. It's also a place of meeting for people to connect socially and interact. It's much bigger than just a funeral. Whereas I know from an African perspective whites are almost lacking in respect of how they treat death and the mourning process. We are almost trying to get it tucked up and neatly put away as quickly as possible. For me it's been quite a journey to begin to respect and understand. I think I meet somewhere in the middle will perhaps be a good one. That would have been one example where I needed learn not to be critical but understand the depth that has for people. Lobola, all those things. Where originally one had and ignorant understanding of it, without realising it was a mechanism of knitting two families together. So that the couple who are then starting a home together have a support structure and also have elders to look to whenever trouble comes which inevitably does.

- 51 **SM:** When you looked at the church, did you see those benefits beyond for yourself when people came together?
- 52 **Participant 6:** I did. I can honestly say in small groups situation where you are in a small group of people whether it's a prayer group or whether it's a teaching thing, or whatever it is, just to hear people's different contributions regardless of their colour or whatever kind. It's just enriching, it expands your own horizon, and it opens your own mind. It might shock you at times, but you are not the same, it takes you out of your littleness and your own blinkered perception of things.
- 53 **SM:** What were the challenges of this racial integration? You raised the issue of change in the demography when there were black traditional organisations came in.
- 54 **Participant 6:** It's a highly sensitive issue. I should probably confess to having a limited understanding of it. But it has crossed a whole new set of circumstances I believe at Eden, where I think there is lack of integration on the basis of those who are in those organisations and those who are not in terms of respect. One group, traditional groups like Manyano which is usually the dominant one and not becoming dominant and lacking graciousness in respecting and giving space to other which are going to be numerically smaller. Not every person sees themselves as a Manyano person. It was very interesting watching that coming in. I think there was leakage of membership

because we didn't have it. People were going to churches that had the historical organizations because they missed and wanted them. I now understand the history that lies behind the traditions of families and spiritual nourishment in those groups in terms of people are encouraged preach and pray and do some excellent work. When I was hearing them talked about, I heard from people who weren't in them some of the pain and hurt that people had experienced through those organisations in terms of whether you had the right gear or the right collar or to have linen on your collar, or your stockings were the correct thing or whatever.

55 SM: The uniform?

56 Participant 6: Yes, the uniform. I heard so much that was negative, and I thought to myself, why are we having them? I really understand there was a huge groundswell of people really wanted it. I think in itself it creates an exclusion of those who ain't part of it. If I was heading the spiritual community, there is an area that needs integration. You no longer got the opportunity for racial integration other than yes you got people from outside South Africa who need to be respected and integrated from Zimbabwe, from Malawi, from Uganda, Zambian, Nigeria. You have got the other African people, but you don't have black situation anymore. There are less than 5 people that are left that are white for example. But I think there is a challenge in integration that has been created by the bringing of the organisations.

57 SM: The leakage as you called it or the withdrawal of membership before the Manyano, when James was there, was there any?

58 Participant 6: I don't know. I think there would have been those who would have come in and said are we going to have Manyano. Yes I'm sure people came in and wanted Manyano. I can still remember he wanted a women's organisation for example which was neither women's (inaudible), women's association or Manyano, which could draw women of racial groups together, that's relevant to study your study too. So, the Women of Hope organisation, you probably already heard was formed. I can remember, initially those who were going to be leaders in it were forming the same hierarchical structure that we have in Manyano with the president and the vice president and the secretary and the treasury and this that and that. I think the church itself is cursed with. It is very hierarchical.

59 SM: Was it called Women of Joy?

60 Participant 6: It was called Women of Joy and it is still in existence. It was never very big. It might have been 16, 20, 25, 30 women. Lot of young professional women in it. It would meet monthly. They had a social heritage site, but dominantly they were there to give spiritual nourishment and growth to the group. Lovely group of women, they celebrated their 10th anniversary last year, so they were running from 2007. He had quite a tussle, I remember the time they were formed 2007-2008 to get the governing structure out of the pattern of Manyano because people who had been in Manyano they wanted to produce the same thing. And he said no don't have a president don't have vice president have a coordinator for a year or 2 years and change. Don't have keep the same people in the same positions forever, be more democratic in your format. That was quite an achievement. Same time when the Wesley Guild was

brought in. I can't tell you which year Wesley Guild started. It was quite difficult for our young people in Eden Wesley Guild because again there was a wish that the Wesley Guild would reflect the should we call it the Eden values of inclusion and diversity. I think it would need one of the Wesley Guild people to express this to you better than I can. But if there was an attempt that it shouldn't just follow the traditional diversity pattern of Wesley Guild that it should have some different qualities of integration and of diverse acceptance of everybody. It followed the same Wesley Guild structure, rules and regulations and everything. Manyano, just as a personal thing, I was greatly troubled when our first groups were going through. There was one lady who eventually joined. She was 64 or 65 and her mother had been a Manyano and decided to join it. I knew her from a pastoral point of view, she was going through hell. She was having a very tough time with her responsibilities at home. She pitched up to a meeting had forgotten her belt. I was so upset she was sent home to get it which was quite some kilometres in rush hour traffic. She couldn't come to the meeting because she had forgotten her belt. That for me it's something of officiousness of that kind of thing. For me that's not on it's just a no "I. For me there is no compassionate or understanding and something like that. A leader in those circumstances could have taken off her belt and said borrow mine and let me take the wrap. That would be Jesus stuff to me. I would be considered ignorant to pronounce on those things. What I say shouldn't be given any credence because I don't think it would be by the people concerned. I would be considered to be ignorant and not understanding about those things

61 SM: What other challenges besides these with organisations

62 Participant 6: Healing team running a wellness day was one thing. Healing team had for some time had on their own backbone to run a wellness, which I think is the problem because I think it takes the focus of praying for healing. I think it has become a wellness thing. A lot of people are rallying the two horses. But the Manyano had also run a wellness day. I think Women of Hope had on their agenda too. Everybody was into wellness. I think we had 2 or 3 of these things, they usually happened in October. Healing team was given a mandate to run with it. I think they managed to do it with in conjunction with Women of Hope. We discovered that we needed money for that. The healing team never needed money before. Now everything is talking to money, money, money. Each organization must produce so many thousands as well as individual contribution. A lot of people are in multiple organisations. A big focus has now come into money. It was happening before I left and it's continuing, it's even more so. The healing team suddenly discovered that they needed a budget to run a wellness day. So, we had to ask other organisations could they help us please. Women of Hope, true to their name, gracious to the last in every generous way. Young Men's League fantastic. They put money in the kitty.

63 SM: Was there a Young Men's League and a Young Men's Guild

64 Participant 6: Yes, but Manyano didn't. That set a bad taste. That these other organisations were ready to come alongside and support. But for example, we had nothing from Manyano, I think for a year. It's a bit controversial. Those are the things that need to be healed. It's not a racial thing, it's an institutional thing in term of the historical societies as against the more modern type of groups that had already been formed.

- 65 **SM:** What can improve racial integration at Eden or in any church? What are the things that we should look for and do?
- 66 **Participant 6:** I don't think those things happen until people sit down and and listen to one another and share with one another. In a bigger way much as we are doing, you are obviously asking specific questions. I can just take it from a point of view, the debate in relation to homosexuality. The opportunity to sit in a forum with people from every perspective and for them to be free to share their heart and what matters to them. I think it needs to be preached from the pulpit out of the word of God as to: What is the Kingdom of God? What is it supposed to be like? Is God favouring one group over another? God loves all his children, and we are all God's children, and we are all belong to the same family. Yes, there are very clear differences but the critical elements for humanity and our love for God and God's love for us is one. I think one needs to preach from the point of view of God's Kingdom and God's love that there is no difference in any of us. It's for people to develop Holy Spirit to work in people. That every person you see regardless colour, orientation, socio economics, tidiness, grubbiness is somebody God loves. That's the bottom line. I think in creating focus, the anti-bias course can be looked at. I'm not sure how successful it was but I think it was a good attempt to do something. I used to like Trevor's ideas where he and Debbie did for example supper groups with young people. Once a fortnight they have six or eight couples around the table together. I think that's a tool or people to begin to appreciate one another and understand each other without any heavy agenda. Social mix in a Christian environment with prayer with grace. Round the table that's what Jesus did it, round the table. I go to a small group next door, and I associate with this urban life church that I am going to which is an independent church it 3 branches going about 20 years. The folks next door are elders. They have a small group, and they have a big house and have a beautiful big table. They put 14 or 16 of us round that table with a bring-and-share meal on a Monday. It's a privilege to get round that table with a whole diversity of interesting people. The group is dominantly white there is probably 3 or 4 African members. So that church is interesting. They have brought and African minister now, Jack somebody who has done a lot of TV evangelism. They are now trying to intentionally become more diverse, and I am quite intrigued seeing what is going to develop what is their goal. At the moment it's quite mixed maybe half-half in terms of white and African. Dominantly young, older people are few. I think small groups offers opportunities for people meet, where one develops some sort of guidelines program to follow in helping us to share where we come from, what makes us tick, what our challenges are, what our celebrations are, the same things our strength, our weakness. Where you feel secure enough to get on with life.
- 67 **SM:** When you look at the mixing that happened the integration that happened there, were there any social relations that went beyond church>
- 68 **Participant 6:** I don't know for other people. I can speak my own experience in the last 15 years working full time. If you look at that we were in the beginning to become mixed. From 1999, 2000 sort of onwards getting significantly mixed. (inaudible) people leaving. To what extent that reflects the demographics of the people living in a certain geographical area, I don't know. People are saying it's just reflective. I lived in Honey Valley for 20 years before Ray and I split up.

Honey valley was then dominantly white. If I go into Honey valley spar now, I might be one or two or three white people and it's dominantly Indian. The Acts Christian church on the Olifantsfontein Road with a huge auditorium 2000 people is dominantly Indian. The Anglican church is dominantly African. Christ church, Church of England in South Africa is still pretty white but a mix. St Mathew Presbyterian church in Doringfontein is still dominantly white but with a significant number of African people, but it also has got a lot of older people because of the area. To what extent around the area Eden, it's almost like the East Ran Hilbrow of 34, 35 years ago, starter home situation. To what extent, I would be very intrigued to know if I could get it from Statistics SA. What is the demographic? Is it reflective of the 9% white or not. Where are the white people gone to? They have gone they have gone to Bryanston, they have gone to Christ Church, they have gone to St Saviours Presbyterian mostly that. They haven't moved out of the areas. It's quite hard for Methodists coming in from elsewhere and going to their church and they feel the Church doesn't represent what they used to anymore. It's quite a shock for people. People come and your initial impression is that you are faced with a church which nobody else is quite like you in it. I think it would be very hard to reverse it. We did it before, maybe it can be done again but we need a lot of intentional.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 7: Congregant

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: What for you having worshipped at Eden are the marks of true racial unity in a congregation?

02 Participant 7: At the moment we are predominantly black which we used to be quite the opposite before. When I came there it was completely the opposite. You see I was never a Methodist before. I am from Durban, so I was in another Church. I was looking for a church similar to where I came from. So, when I came to Methodist, I found that they were like that, the doctrine everything and so on. It is getting more like that now. Whereas when they do something it's all traditional wise, like these uniforms now this whole lot of groups and all that kind of stuff, which is nice. They give you choices where you want to be. There is no force. I don't have to be forced to be in a Women's Manyano if I don't feel comfortable. But we interact with each other all the times. It's not like you are on one side and I am one side. It's okay. What I personally feel is, I will make an example. One of the kids passed away he was 8 years old. So, of course there is a funeral. They had the house evening services. They do everything in African language, and I must ask somebody what did they just say now. When it's in church we sing different languages and they put the English on the board, which is very nice and helpful because you know what you are singing, and you can sing along. Some of the languages are easy to pronounce I feel sometimes the people who is there if you don't understand...I must be honest my heart is there and everything but if I have a choice. I rather stay at home because I will do other things I have to do. Because if I don't know what I am doing there it doesn't make sense. Like say somebody passes away, like one of my confirmands, her dad passed away. I won't have gone if it wasn't for her because the whole service is in a language, and I don't understand what they say must ask somebody what did they just say. Because I love her some much and I respect them, I went to show my respect. That's the reason I went that's I went that's honest.

03 SM: During that time when you were mixed what was it like?

04 Participant 7: It catered for everybody for both for all languages. Like I said our songs and everything is in English. I love to sing the mixed languages. I would love to be able to speak a language to be honest. But it's my fault, it's not nobody's fault. But when James was there it was predominantly English but they did not exclude the other languages. Now it's more the other way.

05 SM: How was Sunday school?

- 06 Participant 7:** Sunday school was basically what it is now. But we are now extremely busy we have got far more kids now, because our congregation has grown. There are so many people and there is of course lot of kids as well. We have lapas, our classrooms are lapas. We are still using the same lapas. It's more or less the same set up where we have teachers and children doing different grades. It was very nice. On a Friday afternoon, I used to have junior children games from 4 to 7. That was very nice on a Friday. We don't have that anymore. Simon used to have youth on a Friday for the youth 13 years and up. We also don't have that anymore. So, the gap was huge there. It was a big hole for long time. So, I try to fill the gaps, but I could be everywhere. Then my job changed, and I couldn't do the Friday thing anymore and there was nobody else to take that space over. So that also fell away. The youth colonel and Iris eventually, it's also a couple who tried to. They did a very good job for a few years hut they had very little youth on a Friday. It's not like when Paul was there the was a whole lot. It's just that they had a handful. They did a very good job for a few years but also moved on because they relocated. They bought a house in Pretoria and it's far to travel. That part also fell away there was no one for that age. But on a Sunday, it's very busy.
- 07 SM:** At that time when James was still here the Sunday school was it mixed?
- 08 Participant 7:** Always mixed. Sunday school was always mixed and there were more mixed. Now I can tell you we may have 30 blacks and then we maybe have 2 coloureds and maybe 1 white. That's the ratio now most of the time and some classes don't just have one.
- 09 SM:** When it was more mixed how did the kids get along?
- 10 Participant 7:** Nice, the kids I think is okay. Kids were never the problem. Not that we had problems but if changes came it was not because of the kids. You know kids here, even my children when we came from Durban, everything was different for them, but they fitted in. They were so happy here. For them this is life. They don't see a colour or who you are and what you are. We had lots of fun together.
- 11 SM:** What about leadership at Eden?
- 12 Participant 7:** They got along okay. You know people stay on. People leave for whatever reasons. I was never a society steward, but I was very closely involved with them. I was in all those things, teaching and so. I suppose they had their domestic problems, but I wouldn't know exactly what it was.
- 13 SM:** What was the other people's response generally towards a racially I integrated church?
- 14 Participant 7:** They love it. The people find it so nice. For me it was such a beautiful thing. Where we lived in Durban it was not like that. Here people are all on their own. It was different it was like a challenge, and it was lovely. I thoroughly enjoyed it and I am still like that. I made lots of new friends and I love it. You know coming to youth now they have the Wesley Guild. A lot of young people don't want to get involved in that they don't want to wear uniforms. You know when young people are at that age, they are now busy studying, they

are doing things, they don't want to be involved. They find it intimidation. So, a lot of them don't want to get involved.

15 SM: What are the benefits of a church that is racially mixed?

16 Participant 7: You get to know other people. We go to each other's spaces. We learn to understand each other. We grow together because you can always learn from others and others can learn from you. I think it's very nice.

17 SM: Let's go back to the programmes you said you were involved in.

18 Participant 7: When I just came there, I immediately did the Foundation's Course It's a 13-week course you do: What the church is all about? Who Jesus is? All those kinds of things, very nice. That's the best way to get introduced to the side where you belong. I did disciple 1, 2, 3. I did anti-bias. I did a whole lot of things.

19 SM: What is it about anti-bias?

20 Participant 7: Very nice. It's to do with like...to make u really understand. We don't know how biased we can sometimes be. You think you are right but then journey on a weekend doing these things. It was a whole weekend thing. You interact with different people, and we have different topics and different things and exercises and then we work in groups and then we must answer. It's amazing how biased you can be without knowing. You get to know how you talk people and how you interact and how you can stereotype people and put people in a box without even knowing it. Like we had one exercise where we were stranded on an island. They give different people like there is a doctor there is this, there is a that. The way you answer if you talk about the doctor, you say he. And then James said why did you say he. And you say well it's a doctor. But a doctor is not always a man. So that's how we think. You don't think a doctor can be a woman also. So that's how we about in life if you stereotype people, you put people in a box or judge people for whatever reasons and stuff. That was very interesting. Both my daughters did it and they simply loved it

21 SM: Were there any challenges that you observed?

22 Participant 7: When anything is new, you first have to find a way. But it wasn't a long thing. Some people left. A lot of people left especially the white people a lot of them left. It was not always about the race. It's because people move to other areas. You know when those kind of things like you get married or you sell this house you move there. At one stage we had a special meeting with the VLG leaders and society steward leaders, and they invited people who left before, why did they leave. They all gave different reasons. It's not just white people who left it there were other races who left. They just felt that you know the church has become predominately, like the olden type of the Methodist.

23 SM: Traditional?

24 Participant 7: Yes, the traditional it was not like that it was more of a general thing. People who didn't feel comfortable they would leave. People are very much committed to time. You say the service is from 9 to 11 and here by 12:00 the service is still on. People leave and a lot of people did that. Eventually they went where they felt is more organised. They say there is no... there don't stick

to limit. Like this one lady I spoke to, her husband doesn't not come to church. He doesn't mind her going. He knows she is going from 9 to 11. If she comes home a 2.00 then they argue, where were you? You know those kinds of things. That's one of the reasons she decided she goes to a church where her husband can go with her, and they are comfortable. You know those kinds of things. There was also time when children were very unruly in the service. This are just examples so that you get what I am trying to say. Like this one couple they say when they came to church like say it's not Sunday school time say it's evening service or special service. He will sit with his kids, and he must sit respectable because you are God's house it's not long. Other kids will run up and down and their parents don't care. They say you must just get used to these kids around because you are always around. And he said kids will always be around but if you don't discipline your kids what kind of future people are they going to be. Are they going to be just undisciplined? There are certain times when the kids must know when to behave and how. That was the main reason. He said the kids have no discipline and so he just kind of (inaudible) with that. It was different things that people had in different minds.

- 25 SM:** Which service do you attend, there are three services? Which one do you attend?
- 26 Participant 7:** I always attend the 7:30 service so that I can have my feeding. Because 9 and 11 its Sunday school. I get things ready and organised for the teachers. Like yesterday we had an issue. At 11:00 where there were supposed to be 10 teachers there was only one teacher and we had all ages. I don't really stay for 11:00. I just set them up and show them everything and I go home. I stayed to take half of them, and the other teacher took another. So, we balance.
- 27 SM:** In your observation are there people who have made friendships that have started at church and continued outside the church?
- 28 Participant 7:** Definitely, a lot of people because some people come there. There look for something of course. Some people come there very lonely. They come alone. We hear people talk lots of times, they will tell you how they come, and they feel welcome. That has happened to me. To me everything was strange, but I felt like I want to come back here again. My kids they love the youth they love the Sunday school, and they say mom the church is almost like where we come from. For us it's a sense of belonging and a lot of people feel like that. You do very welcome when you come.
- 29 SM:** This will be helpful thank you very much
- 30 Participant 7:** Is that all? Sunday school is extremely still busy now. Good Friday that is our worst nightmare. It's the best time of our religion of our faith. We had over 300 kids. The services were from 8 until 2. I have 28 teachers I work with. Only 4 came, so we had to monitor over 300 kids, but we worked out a structure and we tried our best. When the 2:00 came, we are saying thank you lord that was very hectic. We are already brainstorm. I told them please guys brainstorm now ready for next year so that we can be better planned.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 8: Lay Leader

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: Thank very much you for honouring this conversation. What is your view about a racially integrated church?

02 Participant 8: In my view, a racially integrated church would mean a church that goes beyond the colour bodies particularly where we are a church that would have these various services and you would have one service stipulated, even if it's not said, but for a particular colour, mainly your early morning services and then your later on services are the separated for the blacks more than anything. But and an integrated church is a church that embraces each other, embraces diversity and embraces various cultures that are there. Not one that when change wants to come about within that society you find a particular race mainly the white race exiting church because it goes against their tradition and culture of what they are used to do. To me, it's the church that works together regardless of race and colour where you are not focusing on because you now bringing what we call your black Methodist organisational culture into a church like Eden you are now at risk of losing white people because they don't feel comfortable, until we can close that gap we still have problems.

03 SM: In what practical ways has Eden demonstrated racial integration?

04 Participant 8: In a sense that Eden continues to try and embrace everyone but also it saw that in its growth. It had to accommodate black people with *Siyakudumisa [Te Deum]* services which was a mission and half in getting it because there were threats of people walking away and in fact they did walk away. But regardless of that Eden did not lose its essence of trying to embracing everyone from keeping the old traditions services of 7:30 and 9:00 services and even though bring also 11:00 which does not affect the 7:30 and 9:00. But also trying to keep balance the church leadership of having varying races within and serving.

And of course, it's a matter of a person availing themselves if they don't avail themselves, you can't force them to. But I think it continues to go the extra mile of embracing even the 11:00 is open for all races even if we sing our different songs but prayers and sermons are done in English where everyone feels comfortable to attend. In my opinion Eden continues to go an extra length of embracing and having a church that is racially integrated. However, it goes to a stage where at times we must avoid falling into a trap of wanting to bring diversity or racial integration at the expense of exploiting the same people that

you are trying to bring up. In that sense they do not say we are bringing racial integration at expense of continuously suppressing black people still and always championing the interests of white people.

05 SM: And when you look at Eden just elaborate on the leadership you did raise it before you said there is an attempt to include all races

06 Participant 8: The history of Eden is that the majority of people in leadership back then used to be White people and slowly there was of mixture of Black people coming in. When Eden started transforming and changing we lost a lot White people. You can literally count, if there are not two or three that are here. You still have the Indians and coloureds that attend the 7:30 service and you still see white people now and the coming to attend their services. Then you have a problem in still wanting to balance the colour ratio because you have white people that come to church but don't want to participate in any form of leadership, don't attend the SM. They are not really there. There are just there in a sense of attending church compared to what they were before. You can literally count on or two three white people who are still involved, but who have been on the worship team and still remain in the worship team. But your former old *tannies* and *oumas* who used to be church leaders have either left church or some that are old we will say it's our church, but we will not mix with this leadership. The current leadership is mainly all black people.

07 SM: What reasons are being offered for not wanting to participate like before?

08 Participant 8: They will never come out and be direct but in the sense, they say they are either too old or too busy the businesses require, and they need them and their families. But there was a huge dissatisfaction when the black traditional organisations came in. The first one was Wesley Guild they felt very uncomfortable, but they saw was the youngsters at ease and then aboMama launched and that was a big *hooaha* even the *Amadodana* came and that just steeled them off. Even though these organisations do not interfere with any of their services because they still keep the 7.30 which a very quiet service and they still keep the 9.00 service which is a very much more *siyajukusa* youngsters, drums and your hilltop songs *I'm gonna lift you to the moon high*. Then you have the 11 o'clock services which is the *Siyakudumisa*. In all that coming, they just saw turning, in fact their remarks of saying that we are turning this church into a location church we are turning this church into a black church. But not just from white people but even black people who had have been in the church for a long time who adhered to the culture of 7:30 and 9:00 service which we wondered how because you are still black, I guess people see themselves in a different way .

It really required the leadership at times to be strong. I personally felt that the whole transformation came, Reverend Mxolisi was actually found to be by himself in terms of the previous leadership because he went on but also with the support of the large congregation. If you look at the percentages of the church, there was huge cry by black people and there were even threats that if you open the 11.00 service it won't even last for 2 months and the first trial run by the church of having that 11:00 service for about a month was amazing because the numbers even still today now are more compared to 9:00 and 7:30 services.

- 09 **SM:** In terms of worship how has racial integration been demonstrated?
- 10 **Participant 8:** Worship teams have always been divided you would have 7.30 worship team which still has your Coloured, Indians and Whites. You would have the 9.00 worship which is mainly youngsters.
- 11 **SM:** What is the racial mix?
- 12 **Participant 8:** The racial mix is just blacks and coloured and you have the worship team at 11 o'clock services which is purely blacks. Over the then joint services for example Palm Sunday we have a joint service and Good Friday we have a joint service so that forced the worship team to start working and singing together. But like I'm saying the three white people that are still there in the worship team of the 7.30 because of the passion that had they have embraced very easily. They were four but I think the other organ lady was a real Afrikaans *tannie* could not stand it. She left the church. They come together and work together. But it was mainly the 9: 00 and the 11: 00. The 7:30 come Good Friday and join the team. They still want their 7.30 services so that they don't come into the 9.00 services. On Easter Sunday its always 9.00 because who would have a joined service with the Anglican as is the culture of the Eden and the Lutheran church next door where we come together from 5:30 and on Ascension Day they come here. Indians and coloureds they do attend it's just the whites in times of numbers that are dropping but the three are there the only time that I see then is when we have the joint services on Good Friday.
- 13 **SM:** So, you said the joint services are Good Friday and Palm Sunday.
- 14 **Participant 8:** Easter is when we meet with the Anglicans in the morning from 5:00 to 8:00 and then 9.00 is when we have the joint service everyone. They don't really come to that one. They would in fact go to the Anglican Church.
- 15 **SM:** Is the Anglican Church mixed?
- 16 **Participant 8:** It used to be until the change of the first black minister
- 17 **SM:** And what happened there?
- 18 **Participant 8:** They lost all white people there and they were left with a white priest who left in December. They used to host and were hands-on and when the white minister left they all left. Actually here we have 3 but Anglican on no white person at all.
- 19 **SM:** What was the situation with the previous minister here at Eden in terms of racial integration when it was a white minister in charge?
- 20 **Participant 8:** When it was Reverend James, he tried to bring but it was black people who spoke English the way white people want. If you tried to challenge the *status quo* would be seen as a rebel in church. The leadership was dominated by white people and the tradition was done by white people totally. We would only sing the 1 or 2 black songs that would be it. It was the song that they wanted. Remember that I used to make a joke that white people the only sing that they know is *Jabulani Africa* and *Siyakudumisa*, the chorus/ Just that chorus.

Other than that, I just feel that even the minister comfortable with what was happening. The number of white people were a lot even so black people. We

then feel that they would be a balance but, I would strongly feel the then leadership embraced the culture of white people more than black people. Black people had to fight for themselves to be recognised within Eden at large. It is the same black people in leadership with James that we lost black people as well that this people have turned into a black organisation by bringing these organisations and it will fall because it is the white people holding this church financially. But this proved them wrong. In fact the church finance have almost doubled than what used to be when white people were still here.

- 21 **SM:** What is your interpretation of people who would complain and leave when the church is changing?
- 22 **Participant 8:** I have categorised them as people who have been captured mentally. They are been brought into a space of if black Methodist comes into Eden, Eden would have these taxis coming and we will start having all this conventions and you would change the tradition of the church . And it was really black people who have never given themselves the opportunity to understand and learn how the black Methodist work and if it's in any violation or conflict to what they are used to. Majority were not born Methodist but came across a church spoke to them as a living a white life more than black life. It was really upsetting and disheartening to hear them say that. It was not white people, white people would speak about it in gossips, but they spoke about it vocally in meetings and what not. Most of them have left and state that Eden is not the way it used to be because it has become too black.
- 23 **SM:** What has been the role of leadership in facilitating racial integration?
- 24 **Participant 8:** Servant Leadership Tear [SLT] has taken a strong stand because even the whole matter of bringing the 11:00 service was literally discussed for a year with all various stakeholders in the sense of white, Indians and coloureds and bring to ease that it does not change anything. It does not mean that the 11:00 service will over-shadow the other services or you will lose your culture. Things that you used to be done will still be done and we must also give it a trial run of about a month or two and then see if it works and see how people feel. The black people who were saying this is becoming a black church said the service will never work. SLT stance was but we can't assume until we tried it out. There was a huge cry in the suggestion box of people wanting the service, of people who are saying they form part of the organisations want to also launch it here. A lot of people travelling to Pretoria Central Mission to go worship there or they are travelling to Johannesburg Central Mission to go worship there and they want it to have it here at home in Eden as well. When they saw that the service is becoming packed and the numbers and the collection it was an issue of saying but it is now causing traffic with cars coming in and coming out. The yard can't take all these cars, because of congestion there will accidents happening. It was then said after every service there must be 15 minutes break before the other one starts so that it give people time to leave. I think they ran out of options and if a person has told himself, it's not going to happen regardless of how much you try accommodate them, their minds are like that. I'm glad after one year that whole experience was given to try engage everyone and to try and address problems. But you are trying to address a problem another problem would appear, until the church at large then SM took at decision after a year that the 11:00 service must come

because we tested it for more than 2 months in fact a year and its working and the congestion is manageable and of course we still need to have these joint services so that there are no divisions because can't be teach about racial matters out yet inside we are divided ourselves. That was the end of white people.

25 SM: In other teaching opportunities say Sunday school, how was it then and how is it now?

26 Participant 8: Sunday school was there in the sense that there were limited kids. Parents did not feel comfortable with the Sunday school teachers because the Sunday school teachers were as if they owned by certain individuals, I mean White people. It was there but not there compared to now where you need Sunday school teachers in all three services but more so in the 11:00 service. They do come out and volunteer and become Sunday school teachers. Sunday school coming out as its ministry itself having its own activities and having its own camps which before never used to happen. Of courses Sunday school is dominated by back children because of no white parents being here anymore. The ones that are here are now old, so the children don't come here but they are still here because they just feel that they started the church, and the church belongs to them.

27 SM: And the youth?

28 Participant 8: The youth have grown; the youth have in fact almost tripled. There are talks currently of having a youth service. There was a certain number that was put to say if we can meet this number then we can have the youth service at 6.00. The 9.00 service is more of a youth service it's all the Hippy and Hype but beyond that the youth feel that because of the number of young people coming and volunteering and becoming part of the church, 6:00 service will also do justice because there is in fact more youth because Eden is made of young people than old people. 7:30 should be quiet; 9:00 used to be silent a bit but was controlled as well. You couldn't just play drums and get too excited and White people did not want that as much still. Even though they wanted a quiet service they wanted the 9:00 to be noisy but not too noisy where now it's free, there is a lot of worship and a lot of drums and guitars and young people coming in and just bringing in instruments. The worship team of 9:00 and 11.00 comprise of youth people. You get a mixture of old people, but the majority are the youth. Even the church itself, the majority of the church is actually the youth.

29 SM: You said the racial complexion of the youth was there was a moment when it was integrated

30 Participant 8: No, no

31 SM: Where are the white young people?

32 Participant 8: The white young people were there but were never really involved. They would come and sit in church and go.

33 SM: When there was a youth pastor?

34 Participant 8: Yes, they would be there to participate and form part. But I still feel that their involvement compared to the youth that is here today there is a

difference because that one there welcomed and embraced people from within, they have known.

I found it difficult to form part of the church before I feel I could really say I am welcomed because there is this thing of saying with who are you, this is our church, and where now there is much more of an embracing feeling to everyone who comes and its open to all particularly by young people. Back then Guilders were not even launched, and you would have the youth service happening and the youth pastor being there but not really active as how the youth is active currently.

- 35 SM:** What do you think were and are the benefits of racial integration?
- 36 Participant 8:** I think the benefit of racial integration would be that the church would be at a point of embracing each other and but will also be at a point of being much stronger than what it is today. Because if White people were still be there and took time to understand and Black people as well took time to still be given space and try to work together. The church would indeed be much stronger. The growth is there but it would have doubled much more if there were such and people not just leaving but embracing each other and work together for the betterment of the kingdom of God
- 37 SM:** What do you think are the benefits if racial integration beyond the congregation
- 38 Participant 8:** I think beyond because it goes out of the church it would teach people to live together in harmony but also people to be able to understand each and respect each other and be judged more on the character and more on their abilities than just on a racial matter. Because it would be the workmate of a white person who is a CEO of somewhere and another black person who is a CEO of somewhere where they would see their abilities. Where they are strong and where they are weak within the church leadership that even outside the mentality that a white person has, or black person has giving each other time and space to learn within the church should they face encounter outside. The whole racial matter that is continuously out there you are able to teach the other person you are able to say it's not just on the basis of trying to bringing black people for the sake of bringing them but because I work with black people they people who have they have the capabilities and abilities to do the work as well. And also learn each other's culture without jumping into conclusion that it will infringe in your peace and in your culture, and for people to grow and create a nation where even and the kids understand that it's not just a matter of race it's not a matter of assuming and judging a person before they come and do the work but it's a matter of giving each and every person a chance and judging them on the character and the conduct of their work.
- 39 SM:** What are the challenges of racial integration?
- 40 Participant 8:** I think the challenges of racial integration is entitlement, in particularly, when you come to a town Methodist church. White people feel that this is my church, and I am entitled to it therefore even if what you are saying is a good idea it will bring diversity, but it is going against what we started the church for saw and forecasted. We never planned to have black organisations we never planned to have black service that is taking place. And automatically

with that mind-set it even gets passed to the younger generations because if their thinking and talking is aligned to elders, that continuously causes divisions which is what the problem is and what we are currently focusing even on society today. You would hear you people at Varsity saying these black people or these people my father is correct my father said always say these people. You would t hear the young white people referring to the guildler that you must be careful of these people because they take over and destroy everything. It's a culture that has been created mainly because of power entitlement and ownership and then should have a glimpse of diversity want to come in they will try to defend it with all they have and should that not work they would pack and leave.

41 SM: What do they mean by term takeover?

42 Participant 8: They felt that everything will be changed in a sense of services you would now start having people coming over having these services at Eden rotating. People from locations, township coming here to use our facilities which is always been a problem with all these white Methodist churches who always feel that if you open just black people you will be well opening the whole township to come in. There will be a takeover the sense of you will be more number of black people coming in which will then be the majority against and minority. To me it was more along those lines. Even though if you say to them nothing changes, you still receive your services the way you want. But one said we will be preached even so by a black person because even James went and Sheila came the thought of a black minister tells a challenge itself, took time for them to embrace it and really welcomed her.

43 SM: What do you think needs to be improved with all the analysis you have given

44 Participant 8: I think to me what needed to be improved then for it to work was to instil a culture that the church belongs to all. The church belongs to every colour and therefore as a church we need to be non-apologetic in saying we want to go in a direction of embracing. We as a priest as James cannot be comfortable by just having a balance of the two races. In fact black people were more than white people but white people still dominated various things were you would go intentional in saying I want to ensure that within the leadership I want 50/50 balance not just two people who black people who are liked by White people to come into leadership. So that when the 11:00 service come in the would they will be long be prepared to understand that we all share the same space, and we all have the same vision of developing God's Kingdom without trying suppress or interfering with other services. So that everyone has the ability and knowledge of learning each other's services and each other's culture and praising the Lord, and not being inferior and blocking the one side and just keep going with the current status quo is of the church. I think that would have paved the way to know that if it's ten of us or just eight and they just have two black people but the balance of the race within the church. The talks then start there as the world and country continues to change we must focus and put all measures in place that do not supress the people we are wanting to bring which are the blacks for them to also have space of worship but we all embrace each other and work together

I think they have the luxury of being allowed to have the final say

- 45 **SM:** Who is they?
- 46 **Participant 8:** The white people. I think even if James spoke about diversity but speaking goes beyond words there need to be actions. Until then you found your black ministers who came through and started launching all these organizations and saying we can't be talking about diversity when you don't practice it. If there was a more detailed analysis of implementation from diversity talk from all the way leadership, all the way moving to what is current status quo of the SLT? It would be making things easier because they will tell you that they felt bombarded in a sense that they just felt sudden change, all these organisations have been launched so that it can deal with them, majority and over power them which was never the case because in their mind set they were always relaxed in the leadership and they were the majority and black people did not really have a voice *per se*.
- 47 **SM:** Looking back at that time even now, where there any relations that went beyond church?
- 48 **Participant 8:** There were relationships that went beyond church, but it goes back to what would normally always happen. If a white person likes you they like you if they don't they don't. If you don't speak their language or speak in the direction, they want even if you are in church it ends in church. You feel the pressure in the church and outside there is nothing. But if you are a person who speak their language and whom they don't feel challenge upon then definitely they will be a relationship outside. The people who remained in leadership would continuously say the church is collapsing because the white people have as so on and so forth. And it is black people who always and only taught and told that by the then colleagues of that time whom those of that time those who have left about three of them joined these white people in fact they have left the Methodist church and gone to The Lake Church. They have relationship of those people even in terms of business as well. We bump into people sitting in coffee shop and they ask you are still in Eden. Either it's going very well.
- 49 **SM:** Those relationship are there relationships of white who left together black people who were happy with the White culture and White service.
- 50 **Participant 8:** Who felt that they had to go even to a point of telling us in SLT meetings that if you do this you are in danger of losing white people. If white people go, the church can forget and shut down because church is balancing on White people's funds. They would have correctly think that because black people have never been given a chance to lead and a chance to contribute into the church.
- 51 **SM:** Any other thing that you we would to reflect on
- 52 **Participant 8:** What goes beyond racial now is then the black against black
- 53 **SM:** Meaning?
- 54 **Participant 8:** Tribal matter becomes an issue which we need to deal with and nip in the bud so that there is a balance. Currently the leadership is balanced properly we are currently eight stewards, and we need two more to add and have ten, but they are balanced. We've got Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana within that, there was a coloured was supposed to come in, but there was a

coloured that is leading, a steward of the youth but we wanted two but they refused and have since left the church. But that needs to be sorted. I think the church as well mainly our ministers would try and overuse the other for example if you are a Xhosa minister you would want to push more Tswana and Sotho but you are doing that at times and expense of killing the one. If you are a Sotho or Tswana local preacher given the platform to lead the service, you find them just doing it all in Xhosa

- 55 SM:** Are people trying to prove a point?
- 56 Participant 8:** It goes beyond to a point where you are promoting diversity and culture and various tribes at the expense of killing your own and suppressing it. Literally it happened you have the Xhosa or Zulu preaching, but the hymns are all in Sotho or Tswana and vice versa.
- 57 SM:** Has it been raised with leadership?
- 58 Participant 8:** It has been raised but they always say I feel comfortable in singing the other hymns I am not seen as being tribal. We say yes, it is very correct, but you are missing the point. At times too much of something is not good for it. The church must fix. You also have a situation where you have lost Xhosas and Sothos because of too much of this. The fight is mainly always between the Xhosas and Sothos not too much of Zulus and Tswanas because they are the minority. You find the (vernacular) because they both wanting to prove themselves that I am not tribal because all my songs are all in Xhosa or Sotho. You end up saying how, because you are killing the one or either. Or a leadership that is too much of Sotho or is too much of Xhosa or too much of this and that. It's not why white people were leaving per se, because all had been done but they just told themselves. If this thing is not fixed properly, it will have a very bad effect on the church
- 59 SM:** How are the Indians and coloured blending?
- 60 Participant 8:** Indians and coloureds are blending but the old ones that are always have been here. You rarely see the young ones. They do come but on certain Sundays, not really involved. The old ones are still here, they participate. They lead healing teams. They are always on the fore front. They will when *Amadodana* are hosting an event, where can we help, we will take care of breakfast, we will do this, they are fully there.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 9: Lay Leader

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Telephonic Conversation

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

- 01 SM:** Casting your mind then, what was the attitude of those that we may call the founding members of Eden towards the change in the congregation's racial demographics?
- 02 Participant 9:** When I arrived, the process had already begun. My sense was the vast majority of people were on board for the process and were busy with the process and encouraged by that process. I am presuming, certainly some people alluded to was that some of the people who were against it had already left.
- 03 SM:** When you arrived, those who were there, how did they get on with it, the members of that time?
- 04 Participant 9:** The key element was the Servant Leaders Meeting. Once a month all leaders who were chosen or elected to do that were part of that team including people who went into informal worshipping were part of a vision casting generation values embodiment values discussion. That meeting, people had the opportunity get hold of the dream of a multiracial community, diverse and worship *et cetera*, to discuss it, to reflect on the theological and to grow into it. That was the key area. The other area was the new members' course. The new members course certainly embodied that. People when they arrived at the church knew what they were signing up for and knew that it was a multiracial community. That was part of the agenda and if they wanted to be part of it quite clearly spread to their touch.
- 05 SM:** Reflecting on it in what way did Eden align to the Methodist commitment of one and undivided church?
- 06 Participant 9:** In what way did it align?
- 07 SM:** What was the theological interpretation or outlook?
- 08 Participant 9:** Even when you arrive, the actual architecture of the buildings was seen as allowing integration. They used windows to avoid people feeling marginalised. The writing on the very floor as you entered the church (*inaudible*) that scripture. All those dynamics, even the shape of the building holding it together. The very architectural embodied that. The structuring of leadership, the intentional diversity in the worship style. All those kinds of things were intentional aspects of seeking to align people with that dynamic of a church one and undivided. There was a strong intentionality in that it wasn't just on the wall, it was embodied in the building, it was embodied leadership structures, it was

embodied in the hiring, it was embodied in the way salaries were paid. There were many different aspects that embodied that.

- 09 SM:** You alluded to the notion of servanthood. People have mentioned the servant leadership so many times, for you what was this notion of servant leadership?
- 10 Participant 9:** The visionary leadership was a real sense in that the way leadership was embodied to service to others. That means sometimes sacrificing. Certainly, for the incumbents there was sacrificial element of saying I am willing to give something up to make space for somebody else. That strong dynamic as if it were. Certainly, servant leaders led by example. They led people of any race or class that dynamic. Serving by their own behaviour. It was not a top-down kind of we are telling you to behave but the servant leaders modelled what worship looked like and what community looked like.
- 11 SM:** And worship?
- 12 Participant 9:** Worship was intentional use of different use of languages. People were encouraged to pray in their mother tongue, people were encouraged to sing in their mother tongue. All those very intentional use around that. We offered translation for sermons. When I was there no one took it up, but it was offered regularly. The worship style was quite diverse, multilingual, multiple style from old traditional Methodist to modern day songs *et cetera* were all intentionally used. People were greeted in their own language. People were encouraged to speak and if they want translation, they were allowed that space
- 13 SM:** There is much said about your role in terms of youth leadership, may you please comment on that
- 14 Participant 9:** The key thing for us was obviously trying and engage with East Rand, which is a diverse community. Our youth was very diverse. We never had a single couple date the same race, in the 5 years I was there. That was very interesting that every single couple was multiracial. The youth were multiracial in terms of their engaging with each other. The biggest gap I felt and I experienced was private school kids struggled. In particular, white private school kids. In the surrounding schools, the previously advantaged schools, the private ones were still 50% or more whites. The kids coming in, the youth were probably 80% black when I was there. The White kids coming from affluent communities not used to being a minority struggled. The kids at the local government school grab hold of it no problem. I remember we did discuss race and all those things. I remember them saying how they are connecting and one of their comments was we are together, but our parents don't necessarily have somebody of another race coming for dinner or meeting connection like that. Because of their schooling together deeply embodied in that. For them Eden just felt like normal. I didn't have to do much work with racial work the youth just felt as a normal place. One of the humorous moments was we went to the youth performance of a Christian band. There was a large church there on the 3. My youth when they arrived there and one of the white kids said to me, I feel nervous, I have never seen so many white people together. Some of the other kids also commented on that, the black and the Indians kids - jeez this is very white. It was interesting from that perspective that they struggled to engage to other local churches and larger churches in Gauteng that were suburban

churches because they felt there wasn't connected. The group was structured around being kind of being evangelical. Most of the kids were new to church, unchurched, that dynamic. The work was quite easy to do in that sense because the kids were very (inaudible) at school

- 15 **SM:** Were you ever part of the anti-bias programme?
- 16 **Participant 9:** Yes, I was part of the anti-bias programme. I led it at the church and also with some of the probation ministers (inaudible) *et cetera*.
- 17 **SM:** Say more about it, its focus and how it assisted in racial integration in particular.
- 18 **Participant 9:** The very key work of the anti-bias in particular was the creating of a fair space for people to voice their concerns their confusion their questions, express who they were and be welcomed into that space. People had the opportunity to be quite honest because there was a safe space created through the anti-bias programme, where there was a trust of each other and that we all want to do this work and we want to grow and we want to understand. What an easy work through very difficult way, but it gave quite a depth to the work and people could be honest. It is through honesty that people learnt, and people moved. The huge thing is that people moved to the process. They came in with a certain perception or certain bias and they were able to be honest about that bias. Then have that bias confronted with another person who kind of exemplified their perceived prejudices. That person didn't match up to their prejudice. Suddenly they had to say my prejudices is wrong or this person is wrong. Normally it was difficult to say prejudice is right when the person is performing. The work of encounter and naming of prejudice and then encountering in conversation was very significant. I can remember people saying to each other you are like this you are like that. Then somebody saying you are talking about me when you say that. You are saying I am like that when you say this about black people or this about white. That called a real transformative aspect. Because people were meeting in training groups, the disciple groups, the diverse groups that was happening in the small groups of training, they were engaging in this conversation. They were learning and getting to know each other. The anti-bias was very significant in creating space of people one on one, two and three, before the smaller groups, to be honest, to learn to grow and have their bias perception changed.
- 19 **SM:** And the pilgrimage of pain and hope?
- 20 **Participant 9:** It was the same thing, in a different format. People have perceptions of what it is like to live in a suburb what it is like to live in a township. People have perceptions around fear and prejudices. The same dynamics when people were actually confronted with real person before them who kind of exemplified the person, they had bias against. Suddenly they have to reconcile with the reality of this person they lived the experience, confront their own struggle their own joy. The big thing on pilgrimage of pain and hope was to reflect on their own life. People travel to each other's house. One week you are looking at somebody's life. The next week you are looking at how that person looked at your life. It was that first and second part together that led people real shift. When I was for example into the township and I stayed with somebody and I bring that person into my own home and I realise that I am

almost embarrassed by my extravagance or the way I live, then I need to reconcile on that. I think the worshipping together in multilingual, I think the anti-bias, I think the pilgrimage of pain and hope, I think the leadership team, I think the training of the disciples groups and companions and cross groups were all diverse enabled people in various formats to cooperate individuals in small group to get to know somebody of another race and defend that person and hear their story and understand their story and then have that story framed theologically through the reflections of the preaching and teaching, the material that we were using. It wasn't just meeting; it was also theological reflection on the meeting. It was determined by larger preaching and teaching embodied in all sorts of ways in the community

- 21 **SM:** Now that you mention preaching. In what way was the pulpit used to foster that?
- 22 **Participant 9:** The consistence coming from the pulpit was around the vision of Kingdom living that was embracing diversity celebrating each person's uniqueness and then honouring that we can still be together. The pulpit enabled people to deconstruct their own experience, reconstruct the new experience in a new view that works. They were helped to think theologically all the time through the preaching and teaching (*inaudible*). Asking them the question if you get to see (*inaudible*) and outcomes that comes from following Jesus.
- 23 **SM:** In the work that you have done generally and looking back at that time. What do you think are the benefits of racial integration?
- 24 **Participant 9:** I always joke with people, the training for heaven, I will only get there half baked. For people, a massive shift was shifting fear. Many people lived in this fear based that every introduction is grounded in fear, I don't trust: I am not sure I can: Am I vulnerable? What is going on here? Suddenly there as this getting to know people and generosity. I think there was a huge impact for people there. The other thing was the prophetic witness. When people say you can't be together, they could say I go to church, and we are together, and I have friends and I have connections. People were able to engage in political discussions and social discussions and had a concrete experience that take a great effort. It wasn't the theoretical part that we are doing this, we are on this journey. People were honest. It wasn't easy people it was difficult and hard sometimes, but people could reflect on that. Renegotiating for vision of their lives for South Africa. That was a huge impact. People were suddenly caught up that my life choices I might make it differently in light of my life experiences. Certainly, seeing the young people there was no issues around dating across racial lines. They were colour blind. The parents were engaging with that as well because they had to reflect on that on that. I did a wedding of one those couple last year. The way they were being able together, both families were from Eden. Both of their theology had been framed through Eden. The wedding had an amazing sense of freedom to be with each other, to be humorous with each other, real generosity. I think it impacted people socially, it impacted people's decisions around the way forward.
- 25 **SM:** My next question you started touching on it. You used the word it is difficult. What are the challenges around racial integration?

- 26 Participant 9:** A lot of the challenges comes from misunderstanding. I was consistently learning things about what is like to be a black person in South Africa. What it is like to engage that I just didn't know. Sometimes you just didn't know, so that was a struggle of just having to listen and learn and learning to listen in new ways. For some people coming in it was it hard to begin to listen to each other. There were standards that people were comfortable with. Any point you would be deconstructing a paradigm and having to construct a new one vulnerable people feel unsafe. I think for example the worship thing. I don't think anyone was absolutely comfortable in the new worship style that was multilingual, multilanguage, those dynamics. It was a new wine skin. People were used to either in the traditional township music or charismatic modern music or traditional English Methodist hymns or Afrikaans. Suddenly they are getting snippets of that. It was hard for people sometimes to even sing another language or learn another way of being in worship. Those are some of the difficulties. The difficulties are the differences, as simple as that, of what I am used to.
- 27 SM:** If you were invited as a consultant and you asked to advice on racial integration, what are the things that should be considered or what are things that should be avoided?
- 28 Participant 9:** In my experience post Eden, I think the biggest gift of Eden was that there was significant work done on helping a key group of leaders, influence makers. They weren't just leaders in formal leadership, they were influencers. That group of people were helped to think theologically and oriented towards the vision of racial inclusion. Without that group, I don't know how you do the work. I will be honest with you. My advice to any person is you have to begin a gentle but intentional and consented effort to begin to engage the influence makers of the community and help them to think theologically and reframe a vision of racial inclusion. Knowing that for them it may mean loss of identity, loss of the usual way of doing things, loss of the norms of this is how I do church and negotiating into that and getting into and letting go those things. That is the biggest advice I will give to people. To work with that group. Your leadership whoever they may be, have to be on that journey. It doesn't help to have one or two or three people to drive that journey. You have to have a consented group of people engaging. The other thing is that it has to be intentional it doesn't happen by accidentally people think it will, but it doesn't. You have got to create a multiple approach of interfaces where people can begin to be exposed. You got to help people learn new languages. You got to help people confront their bias and own it. You got to help people to think theologically about their perceptions and bias. All those things you got to be very intentional around it. There has got to be that strategy, a very real strategy that includes all those aspects. I think the anti-bias, the preaching and teaching all of those got to be framed, the vision statement. It's intentional, it's not accidental.
- 29 SM:** What is it that you would not repeat, or you would do differently?
- 30 Participant 9:** I can't think anything massively off hand. The one area that we struggled with, was small group kind of fellowship group aspect. I think we found spaces where people would come and do training but getting people to be in Bible fellowship which was a little bit less guided or directed. I think that was a

struggle. I am not sure if that is a function of East Rand being quite a driven academically community, people who are all working to grow into their careers. That was something a bit missing and certainly in the larger church. Small groups and engaging in there.

- 31 SM:** You have already answered extensively my last question. My last question was going to be whether you are aware of any relationships that transcended the church boundaries
- 32 Participant 9:** Yes (*inaudible*) married each other. It was amazing to go to that wedding last year. All of those youths are still friends and were at the wedding. That was quite an amazing experience. Ten years later, to walk into a wedding and they are a multiracial group of friends, still friends with each other, still connecting and work with each other. That was very interesting for me,
- 33 SM:** Thank you

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 10: Clergy

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: Let us reflect on the racial integration at Eden. In your observation what has been the attitude of the founding members of Eden towards the changing racial demographics?

02 Participant 10: I guess at first it was with excitement, perhaps not realizing what was coming their way. The whole rainbow nation concept was exciting at first from what I'm hearing because that journey began a few years before I joined the community. When I arrived there were beginning to be more blacks coming into the community, and which then resulted in some of the founding members getting a bit unsettled. They started leaving and they and those who had not left started moving from the later service to the earlier service. So, you almost had the 08:00 then as the one for the founding members and the 09:00 sorry the 10:00 the service for those who are coming into the community which again left them feeling a little bit confined and they started leaving in numbers. Some were complaining about their children not being able to play the games they used to because now the games that the new members of the community were playing, they were claiming, to be different. The language as well was an issue in terms of ... even though it is still English but the pronunciation was confusing to their children. So, it was a huge challenge towards the end they then ended up leaving.

03 SM: The founding members in terms of race, you mean

04 Participant 10: The Whites. So, over the years the numbers dwindled to the extent that we now have about five families that are white and those who had left actually were those who were in the leadership and some of them still continue to serve in various areas in the life of the church and one would wonder what will happen once they stop serving, whether will they not also leave. the community still diverse though with less whites and there are coloureds, there are Indians and there are non-South Africans. So, I guess it has been a difficult journey for those who founded the community to see the demographics change. So, it has not been an easy journey for them. They are still interested in what is happening. They would ask when I bump into them whether things are still going well at Eden. So, to that extent yes, there is one or two who still continue to give to Eden. They are happy to do that. When we tell them of the work that is happening, they continue to give to the life of the community. So, yeah, it has not been an easy journey

- 05 SM:** In your in your view, what is it that made them leave when there was excitement you said they didn't think about what was coming their way, what is it that made them leave?
- 06 Participant 10:** I think it was the intolerance to share the space with another race so subtle racism. Things like the toilets were no longer clean, and the toilets were cleaned as they use to be cleaned in the past. So, you could... I could sense that one there is subtle racism here, two, I could sense that there's intolerance, even in terms of learning other languages. In the main I think it was just subtle racism.
- 07 SM:** When you look at the history and especially the role of the leadership around here, in what way has Eden then and even now through the Ministry here align to the Methodist commitment of one and undivided church?
- 08 Participant 10:** We've tried in the past to include as many people as there would be in this community, in terms of race, in terms of age, in terms of gender, which we were hoping then that this would be the kind of the flagship of that unity. This church started as one and undivided but it soon proved to be a futile exercise where then those that were being accommodated and were celebrated as the founders of the community decided to abandon that vision and leave, which left us then with no option but to ...for the people who were left in the community, continue to celebrate them that we have different people of different races, different nationalities who serve in various ministries in various capacities. I guess though we still have a long way to go in being intentional about drawing in more of the other races because of the system that we are using perhaps of appointing for instance such as stewards, that we leave it to the congregation to appoint and by virtue of the numbers we tend to get more blacks into leadership. We have managed to balance the gender, but I guess we still have a long way to go in terms of the race whether others don't necessarily feel that. They can contribute to that level. It is something that we still need to explore and work towards.
- 09 SM:** When you say race, you mean?
- 10 Participant 10:** I mean Indians and coloureds in particular.
- 11 SM:** So, you still have a long way to go?
- 12 Participant 10:** We still have a long way to go.
- 13 SM:** What do you think would practically have to happen? What role would the leadership have to do practically?
- 14 Participant 10:** I think we would need to put some quotas and actually say there is a maximum of black people we can have in the leadership, and we open up other spaces for coloureds and Indians. I think that's what we'll have to do. Just as we were intentional about bringing blacks into the leadership, I think we would have to go that journey as well and in terms of bringing other races as well.
- 15 SM:** Then, tell me about this vision of one and undivided church...how was it sustained for instance in the leadership, let's say pulpit for instance?

- 16 Participant 10:** We...the community was intentional for instance about having Ministers of different races. Black and white, which we continued to do that. We had three Ministers for instance in the recent five years or so one was white and with two blacks, one being male. So, two females and one male but one female has been white. Not that that has assisted us in drawing any of the whites who have left or earning new whites. They still do come; you would see from time-to-time families popping in, but they don't last. They come once and they leave, then you never get to see them again and you take their numbers you take contact details and stuff. When you call them, they would tell you that "we've moved to another church" which had got more White people and I guess the discomfort to see so many black people make them unsettled and so they don't make the commitment. So, we haven't been able to attract any more white people into the community not that the space hasn't been made for them. To this day we still continue to sing in English, we continue to sing in Afrikaans in fact us preaching in English purely because we have got people of different nationalities here. So, it becomes easier then to preach in English than to have interpreters which one would have hoped that the whites would feel welcomed and accommodated but unfortunately that's not how they seem to view what we are doing here. They just look at the faces I think, and then they leave, we had some who would leave in the middle of the service for instance and when our hospitality asks them why are they leaving they'd say, "no, this is not what they were hoping for."
- 17 SM:** And you say worship is integrated?
- 18 Participant 10:** Worship is to a larger degree integrated in the sense that the languages are different. We sing in different languages, not limited to the eleven official languages. We sing in Swahili, we sing in Nigerian, we sing in any other language that we feel there are people who are from those nations.
- 19 SM:** Sunday School. Any racial integration there that happened at an early stage? Was there any and what was the dynamics?
- 20 Participant 10:** Sunday school has always been integrated with various people in fact that's where most integration takes place because we have teachers of different races, different nationalities, different genders and it has always been like that. We've always accommodated children from different backgrounds but like I said I don't think it's more about the children but it is about the parents who then feel uncomfortable and therefore decide for their children where they should be going and yet for those parents who have kept their children here amazing stories that we hear of embracing and just growth out of one's comfort zone and also one's known world to the world that they didn't know before e and there've been strong bonds that have been created. I have officiated at marriages of different races purely because these children have been in Sunday school together here and they look at each other as human beings other than as different races.
- 21 SM:** And in terms of youth, what has been the situation?
- 22 Participant 10:** Well, youth has been strong in the past, where we had the Friday youth coming together. We started noticing a change even then even in that area and my take is that when you have young families, you have toddlers by nature and so by older families leaving the community, and being left with

younger families, you are bound to lose that band of age, and that is what had happened. Hence, we are very strong on the children's church and gradually we see numbers in the confirmation growing again because then children graduate from the children's church into the youth church and then that's where we capture them, and it's been an amazing journey there. Just few weeks ago we had one of our confirmands organizing a young women empowerment session that was met with great excitement and support. So, that is the quality of the work that is happening in that space, and we are hoping to see it grow in the coming years as well as the younger children get older.

23 SM: There is a time where there was a youth Pastor,

24 **Participant 10:** Yes

25 **SM:** How was the youth in terms of racial integration and participation?

26 **Participant 10:** Even with that we started seeing more black children or young people, having a white youth Pastor didn't make a difference. In as much as having a white Minister we've had in fact three white Ministers in the past 14 years that I've been here and even with that, that has not helped because once I think there's a perception and that perception almost becomes a reality. It's perceived as a black church. So, you have a white Minister it's still perceived as a black church because the number suggests that it is a black church. So, that's what we saw even in the youth with the white youth Pastor. We saw that is still getting black more than anything else. We've had for instance a white lay Pastor here Suzan Jones and it didn't change anything. We still minister to black people and it's just a perception, we have been perceived as a black church.

27 **SM:** When racial integration happens, the time it happens or at the time in the manner that it should happen, what are the benefits of racial integration?

28 **Participant 10:** The benefits would be learning various ways of doing church. The benefits would be wanted to be the hope for the rest of the community that this is possible. The benefit would be to see how others have been taught and how to embrace the church life. For instance, one of the greatest benefits for this community has been the free spirit, free generosity which has sustained this community, and the sense of ownership for the church has been yet another benefit, but beyond that I don't know.

29 **SM:** And the challenges, some of them you have mentioned but generally if you look at the time when you arrived here and there was the previous Minister throughout your time, what have been the challenges?

30 **Participant 10:** The biggest challenge, especially for this community everything has been seen with the spectacles of the founders, and the so church can't be done in any other way except that which was first taught, and that has been a huge challenge. The other challenge has been therefore there is no better way of doing church except that one, that which we know, which has been very limiting to church life. One has had to deal to deal with that, and the other challenge that one is still dealing with is the whole notion that as long as we give money somebody else has to do it. One is still trying to break that mode of doing church to the extent that we would have more money here than we have

the hands, because the mentality is that you can employ, we'll give it money then employ. We saw the side effects of that during the recession. So, when there was not enough money, people still expected things to be done and so even that recession has been to some degree a blessing to this community because we needed therefore to realise that church life doesn't revolve around money. There is more to church life than just having the money when we have then that should not replace people as they were retiring or resigning because we wanted to save money from that. So, it's been a huge learning curve for this community to learn to do things rather than learning having to pay for things and the ship has started to turn. It is turning in the right direction and more hands are on deck now.

- 31 SM:** If you were to be brought in and you are asked on improving racial integration and you are asked to give ...those challenges and you are asked to turn things around what do you think would need to be done?
- 32 Participant 10:** I think we need conversations to be given. I don't think we have conversed well enough to deal with some of the stereotypes and I think we would that's the first thing that we would need to do. It would have to be a journey than just to have an idea. I think for me more conversations as we win people over into racial integration then the better. I made an interesting observation for many reasons most of the people who left this community said they were relocating and I would bump into them at the shopping centres. I'll be surprised that this person still lives here. In some restaurants that's where you'd find them and it's shocking to see how many Whites are still in this community. And I think to have such conversations that then take away the stereotypes that also forge better relationships. We can share life issues from the place of humanity than from places of race. There are still very clear divides between the blacks and the whites which is a monster we haven't been able to confront. I think because racism has not been or has been de-legislated in this country, we have felt that perhaps we have overcome the monster, raising facts it still lies within the individuals and if we were then to have those conversations, perhaps we would have better individuals
- 33 SM:** And what else practically do you think can be done in terms of the life of the church?
- 34 Participant 10:** Well in terms of the life of the church, we have two options. We either have to say well we are going to do everything together which in my opinion would help, because for instance what we have done here for now even though we are not black and white integrated, but we we've realised that age wise we've got to cater for people who are elderly who would like a certain type of worship. So, we've made space for them at the 07:30 and the young people who aren'tthey have their own space and those who feel that they would still want the traditional style of worship in the black sense have their own space as well. That seems to have worked for this community and has sustained it. There was a time when I worried that we have to close doors or have one service, but as soon as we embarked on that journey of offering people different worship style, that seems to have sustained the community and in fact it has been growing since then. So, my view would be let it be about the worship style because these worship styles they transcend. I do think that that's where our

hope it's focusing on the worshiping style and giving people what they think feeds their souls.

- 35 **SM:** The people that you meet in who have left and you meet them in town or what reasons do they advance for having that?
- 36 **Participant 10:** Well, I took a bold step. I think it was bold, and I then invited the people who had left the community for a conversation. I wanted to hear what is it that made them leave. One of the reasons advanced was we had a Ministry here and that was big at the time, it was called "*Lesedi la Nnete*." It was the ministry to the poor and they didn't like it because it was bringing in people who were poor, who were dirty and so they just felt uncomfortable, and they left. So, there was a high rate of theft and so they decided to leave. Their children not being able to play well with the black children, so they decided to leave. Singing in the language that they don't understand they then decided to leave. And so, it's all these reasons that make me feel that it was based on what would make them comfortable and anything that threatened their sense of comfort then would push them away from the community.
- 37 **SM:** During the time of the when there was racial integration in terms of leadership in the life of the church in general, what social relations existed amongst members beyond church life?
- 38 **Participant 10:** There were a few engagements outside of the church life. People having coffee together. We had covenant groups where people would gather, have conversations people would gather to have tea parties and stuff like that, which was encouraging life beyond the church. That didn't seem to pay off well. We then had picnics in the church, and we would after the service invite families to come and mingle and have a big picnic here. Again, we saw black people embracing the opportunity and the white just decided not to come. So, whatever we did to try and make the whites feel that we want to be one community, just didn't work and mind you even this thing of picnics and stuff is a white culture. So, blacks really tried in this community to try and accommodate and embrace the culture that they were not used to, but that didn't work. So, I think there was an attempt to have engagements just beyond the church life as it were, but that didn't pay off.
- 40 **SM:** The opening up of the 11:00 service, what dynamics did it bring in the life of the church?
- 41 **Participant 10:** It revitalised the energy within the church. It brought new emphasis on the that had been almost watered down by the integration process. It brought back a whole sense of presence by the members of the community. For instance, if today we were to have an event, I know it for a fact that one would made a call that we going to have an event here and the Women's Manyano, the Young Men's Guild, the Wesley Guild, the Women of Joy, the healing team and all the other ministries then rally around and make sure that it happens and that's the advantage that we have had in having that service. We are in the process now of re-establishing the Class Meetings which we call Fellowship Groups and again we are seeing a huge hunger for that. There's a big bite for it, in fact we have more people who want to be part of the classes now than have class leaders which is another headache that now we are sitting with.

- 42 **SM:** And the impact of all these on racial integration, what was it?
- 43 **Participant 10:** The impact on racial integration has been more of giving people what they feel nourishes their soul and those who are in the 09:00 for instance. They are not bothered by the change of the worship style, and you see that in fact when we have combined services where you have more of the 11:00 people would be coming to the combined services and you would have the other two because what we do in those services. We take a little bit of that a little bit of that in each service and we bring them together but there has been huge dissatisfaction from the other services that no we are happy to sing traditional English Methodist hymns. We don't like these guitars and stuff. We don't even like that *Siyakudumisa* [Te Deum] because it's too long and others are saying what no these hymns are boring. We want our guitars and there's been much openness from the 11:00 even in singing across and one wonders actually whether the hope and the future isn't it in the people who are more open than those who are rigid and so that another topic for another day, I guess.
- 44 **SM:** The people who left, were they all white or there were other races that left?
- 45 **Participant 10:** No there are other races that left but in the main they were White. The black who left are those who then felt that there was just too much change from what they were used to. Those who had left earlier on feeling that we are taking too long to have transformation has since come back. They are saying this is what we were waiting for, you can do what you want to do with your 09:00 and 07:30 we don't care this is what we were waiting for. That has seen a huge jump in numbers, in fact the two services that are very stable in this community is the 07:30 and the 11:00, numbers don't change the giving doesn't change in fact if anything the giving is growing in the 11:00 and 09:00 is a very fragile community.
- 46 **SM:** What type of service is 09:00?
- 47 **Participant 10:** 09:00 is the contemporary service to use the loose language. It is the more charismatic service
- 48 **SM:** And in terms of racial profile?
- 50 **49 Participant 10:** Racial profile it is very mixed.
- 51 **SM:** And you are saying there's stability in the 07:00 the earlier service?
- 52 **Participant 10:** Yes
- 53 **SM:** Which is predominantly white?
- 54 **Participant 10:** No, it's no longer predominantly white. It is predominantly black but uses your traditional white Methodist culture. It is stable, my senses are because we are a Methodist Church of Southern Africa, we have managed to keep people called Methodist whether it is with traditional white Methodist lifestyle or it is with the black Methodist, problem is in this the contemporary service"
- 55 **SM:** What kind of blacks are drawn to the first service?
- 56 **Participant 10:** Oldish...

- 57 **SM:** Old black?
- 58 **Participant 10:** Professionals
- 59 **SM:** What attracts them there?
- 60 **Participant 10:** It's the early service, they are able to go and play golf if they want to. They are able to go visit families because they are the elderly for instance will tell you that we were burying my brother yesterday and if I wanted to go back and be with the family and do the other ceremonies, it's short. There is communion every Sunday and so you find that those who have come from the Anglican or the Roman Catholic background they enjoy that because it's almost similar to what they are used to but for the young folk, guitars that the best for them and that service, the 09:00 service attracts people who are not necessarily the Methodists.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 11: Lay Leader

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

- 01 SM:** What in your view are the marks of a truly racially integrated church? What is racial unity?
- 02 Participant 11:** Everybody is worshipping with a common purpose and all the groups are multi-racial.
- 03 SM:** How was that demonstrated or applied at Eden?
- 04 Participant 11:** It changed a lot. From 1990 it was a small church it was on the other side of town. The minister was John Barnes and his wife. The secretary there was Desiree Jacobs. Those were important people who kept it all running smoothly. Desiree was someone who would put a whole heart into raising money and looking after everything in the church. She was really commended. It was very White. It was more the structure where they have the WBA. We would have the mothers meeting, mothers and kids which will be on a weekday and there was excessive time of worship as well. I think there were a lot the youth. It followed if I could say in the white set up but I think it was very different in Soweto. Later on, we had people in our discussion groups who explained what the churches in Katlehong or Tembisa were like. I realised from that it was very different because there your set up is with the *Manyano* [organisations] and the Guilds and all of that sort of thing. Very regimented with uniform and all of that sort of thing. Whereas from the one that I was there very much more freedom choice of what we were wearing what we were doing (*inaudible*) get together in the group. From 1992 until James arrived, James Visagie. He arrived with a new outlook a whole lot of enthusiasm to get the church moved across to the present location which was very much bigger dream of what it could be until it could reach and heart could grow. That is when it expanded into more of an integrated society. There was so much activity going on and people were drawn in. There just seem to be some sort of interest, something to draw people in that interested them and just inspired them to give a whole lot. If you would like a few examples I was thinking through it. The kind of thing that you pick up it was a nursery school in the informal settlement that they started. They had workshops, somebody went out to Ebony Park and started a workshop that would help children with Maths and Science. That was somebody called Cassey who did that and that is still going strong, just growing and growing. They had Mana and Mercy, Mandla, there is a lot of the talks on that. That was another whole section with Khulani. They did employment opportunities. All this was drawing people in a community to assist. People who were psychologist or into education would help with the CVs. Someone with transport would help people to get IDs. Suzan Jones, she is one who did that

work and a lot of that. They would have second hand clothing that would be sorted and perhaps handed down to people who are unemployed so that they could go and create their own industry and income. We had people doing meals and then there was a group that could take meals to the homeless. All of these things were integrated. They had Potter's House that was for people who were mentally and physically challenged. Paul Harrison, he led people and that occurred second Tuesday of every month and in the evening. He would visit to this Potters' House. They take a small message, song, just a short time of interacting with them. That group was very mixed as well. James and (*inaudible*) they started a newspaper. There was someone who was able to do that. Everybody was contributing articles to that, and it kept them very busy. There were people who were good in photography, once a year they did a photo of all the congregation on a Sunday morning.

05 SM: That big last photo

06 Participant 11: They did Kairos with the prison mission. There was a church that needed roofing and that was quite a distance from Joburg, and they attended to that. There was Alice who used to be at the church, working with James. Ruth did gifts for kid that was called love is and they also put in message. They sold that at Christmas time and all the funds went into the church. Everybody who missed James' sermon on a Sunday would want a copy of them. That started quite a big group having to record, having to take the grace's money on that as well. Someone had to record all of the cassettes and distribute them. That was another way of involving people. That is just a number of things that I could think of that really assisted the whole creation of the integrated society. Everybody was drawn in because they wanted to be. That is another mark that I had to commend on with James is that he gave so much and he organised it. People were just so inspired and so happy to put a whole lot of effort and spend a whole lot of time because it seemed worthwhile. When he first arrived, they had a Tenor's concert for New Year. They got the Free Tenors to come and sing, it was out on the slope where the cross is at Eden. It was a wonderful occasion to let everybody in the community to know that the church was now there. It drew a lot of people to that concert and that was shortly after we had moved to the present location.

07 SM: In what way were all these activities facilitating people coming together and integrating?

08 Participant 11: Nothing like getting to know someone. When you are working on one project together, it's so good to break down any barriers, it's casual. You end up finding out about the person, finding out about their home, and their family, and their problems, in the whole course of the projects you come across the door.

09 SM: What has been the response of members for this coming together of races in the life of Eden?

10 Participant 11: It has been able to build up a very strong community where people are all caring and not worrying about skin colour, racial issue. When it was very mixed, this is talking a few years back because now it has changed to completely the opposite to what it was when I started. Very few white people now, which you might have noticed.

- 11 **SM:** What is your take on that? What are the reasons that have led to that?
- 12 **Participant 11:** I think it's on leadership. It's different leadership different form. They did have Elizabeth. She was a white minister. She led the youth very effectively and that I think continued to this racially integrated stance. People were more dedicated to do the work of the church, following Christ's example than worrying about racial issues. She has now left, and it was said at her farewell there will never be another white lady, another nice white minister. It was out of line if you are wanting racial integration. A few white people that were there felt quite uncomfortable. Also, one has to consider the black Methodist Church or something like that term. To me the Methodists are from John Wesley. I don't think John Wesley ever brought racialism and racial issues. Those items are a problem when it comes to racial integration, because you are identifying the different race groups. That is wrong to my mind. The other reason, because of different leadership there is the *Manyanos* and the Guilds. That has excluded the white people. In a way they have brought up racial issues and destroyed integration to a large extent. On a personal level I find amazing thing and even now I enjoy going there. The remaining people are very friendly. To me it doesn't matter whether black or white. I feel comfortable with them. There is still racial integration to a certain extent it's just there not enough white people to appreciate it.
- 13 **SM:** What have been the benefits of racial integration?
- 14 **Participant 11:** It is interesting to be with people of other cultures. All races bring something different. We did see it from the music point of view. We would have teams that could sing in English and vernacular and Afrikaans. Sometimes they would even put up the words and say English and Zulu or Xhosa then the music was the same and they could finish in any language they wanted to. They would also bring traditional clothing and that sort of thing. It's nice to worship with people of other races.
- 15 **SM:** Let's go back to that comment you made about yourself, why are you still there?
- 16 **Participant 11:** To me the 7.30 is an elating service. Isn't that what church is? to be elating. If you find your worship is meaningful then you would continue with it.
- 17 **SM:** From your observation, what have been the challenges of racial integration at Eden?
- 18 **Participant 11:** I think more recently is has been slanted in one direction, it has become that. It went from being very white to being integrated and now to black. That's the problem. How we change it has to be a mind-set, maybe mixing leadership. We saw how it works in a racially integrated space. It's all those activities that everybody can be participating in. That will be racial integration to me. Where everybody maybe opportunities and inspiration to everybody to be involved and welcome to everybody.
- 19 **SM:** If you were asked to advice on facilitating racial integration what kind of recommendation would you make?

- 20 Participant 11:** One needs to take up workshops and groups that appeal to everybody. That would draw on everybody's talent and that would inspire everybody to give their best. What you do need is very strong leadership, creating a situation that is going draw people in. Someone with a vision of where you want it to be and mentorships workshops on how you can do it.
- 21 SM:** Are there social relations that existed beyond formal church setting?
- 22 Participant 11:** Yes, there were. The prayer groups, the smaller thing like the Potter's House that one goes to. It's a smaller group and from that you form stronger friendships. One would then perhaps for a meal away from church. So yes, you can create friendship, so yes you can create friendship groups.
- 23 SM:** Any other observation beyond what I have I asked that you what to comment on?
- 24 Participant 11:** One should say that it could be difficult if you are in an area that is specifically concentrated with one group. One of the notices on there was start worship to attract different people, like the youth group at 9:00 the 11:00 is their traditional service, the black community. One feels that always through this worship we will all become meaningful witnesses to Jesus. In whatever way, in whatever group appeals to one, it must be able to provide meaningful worship that is going to increase and strengthen the witness for Jesus.
- 25 SM:** What is your take on the existence three different services?
- 26 Participant 11:** I think that works well, because it is offering three different sorts of worship that people can choose. People are different. I think one has to appreciate the difference of what appeals to certain people at different ages in their lives, the different racial thing and generally different interest in music might appeal to one at 7:30 might not appeal to the one with a lot of the hymn and chorus or it's the music where there is only acapella in 11:00 service that others might be enjoy. If one can allow people to worship as they want to or in way that is more meaningful more. That is surely the way the church is going to grow from it more or benefit from it most.
- 27 SM:** How have the joint services gone?
- 28 Participant 11:** Over Easter we did that. There were a few services. We just had the 9:00 service. I find that during the Easter week, the Holy Week, in the evening there were hardly any White people but for the services they were mixed, and I think people were fine with that. We had to see different music groups leading or sharing. So, we try to accommodate everybody. I think those services worked well. I don't if it would be an ongoing basis. If they did that on every Sunday if there was only a 9:00 service, it wouldn't give enough opportunity for people to integrate. I think it works well normally having the three.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 12: Lay Leader

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: In your view what is racial integration in a congregation or local church?

02 Participant 12: It will have, I suppose a few levels but the first is in terms of demographics, getting a mix of people who live within the community who choose to worship together. So racially, integration that means especially for the context within I come from, a deliberate effort to make sure that you match and integrate different traditions in humble worship, how you interact and all of those things.

03 SM: Is it something that you have seen work out somewhere even before we came to Eden itself?

04 Participant 12: No. Eden was the first at least for me, experience where I saw it done deliberately, so in other places where I have been it had been almost by coincidence you have when there is desegregation of communities. In Springs where I have been, I lived in Springs, I worshipped at Boksburg and that was it, there wasn't any from what I could see deliberate strategy to say we are going to ensure that everybody feels like they belong in this particular community.

05 SM: So, saying that Eden in your own view is one of the first churches and the intentionality or deliberateness. Are you able to share the practical ways in which Eden demonstrated this racial integration?

06 Participant 12: One of the first thing was the way in which the congregation was encouraged to relate so not merely as people who go to the same church but people who can also visit each other at each other's houses have meals together and learn to know a little bit more about each other in other ways relate at more than just as church goers. So that was deliberate. That will be done through fellowship groups. We had a programme that we would do in winter that we called Warm Winter Worship and that meant when there was quiet in terms of courses that we were doing, and we would then go into the houses so people would be put together and it would be quite deliberate on how you have the demographic mix of the people. So that was one. The next one was to take a conscious decision about how we wanted to do worship in different services. For example, many churches would have what you would traditionally call a 11 O'clock service so even in urban areas and that was whether by design, but it was really intended at preserving what you would call the traditional African service. At Eden a deliberate effort was made to avoid that so that you

encourage people to get together to the same service. Now your obvious challenge is you now have to make sure that everybody feels like this is the service that I can come to. So that evolved in terms of how you do the service. So, you would have the songs that you sang would obviously have to be diverse to make sure that everybody could participate. The songs that you sung would have to be translated so that when somebody doesn't know the language for example they can at least follow. People would be specifically encouraged, because it was a journey, to celebrate the fact that even though you don't understand the language, you may not have a clue about what people are singing about, people feel warm when they sing, celebrate the fact that other people are enjoying it because you also do the same when people sing the song that you want. So that together with prayers so the community certain members of the community would be selected to do prayers and it would be deliberate on (1) when people are in a gathering there is something about identifying with the person that you see. So, we had to make sure that we had different genders, we had a racial mix and you wanted to ensure that people speak different languages. So, in a prayer if I were doing a prayer, I would get into pretty much a number of languages so that people could pick that up and echo for everybody else. So those were some of the deliberate strategies that we employed to ensure that people get a sense of belonging. So, one of the things were intentional about and largely I think it was because of the minister at the time that we never spoke at Eden about membership we spoke about belonging, like when you are here you got to feel like you belong. Let me stop there for now

- 07 SM:** Talking about the minister who was there at that time and the lay leadership, what kind of things did they do beyond worship in encouraging racial integration?
- 08 Participant 12:** One of the things that at Eden we were very strong on is teaching. We did the diversity, we called it Anti-Bias, the diversity course and how that helped was to assist people to begin to see their capability in any form of discrimination whether be gender or albinism or ageism or racism, classism. So that course what quite key in ensuring that you get people to understand why we are trying to live the way we are and also to begin to share some of those racial stereotypes and bias that people have in a formal setting, I alluded earlier to the fact that we encouraged visits to each other's houses, so that was quite important to Eden. The other was to relate to the community in Mandela Settlement in the manner in which we related obviously where possible we had a deliberate programme. We helped in the Habitat Programme where you build houses.
- 09 SM:** Habitat for Humanity?
- 10 Participant 12:** Yes, Habitat for Humanity. We participated in that we provided seed funding for that and encouraged people to go to Mandela Settlement and we built quite a number of houses there and that exposed people to conditions of living that other people lived under who were just across the streets basically but it was quite possible that you would keep the communities apart. The third thing that we did is we had a programme that was called the Pain and Hope?
- 11 SM:** Pilgrimage of pain and Hope?

- 12 **Participant 12:** Yes, that is correct. The Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope.
- 13 **SM:** Let's go back to the Habitat, was it mixed teams that went?
- 14 **Participant 12:** Yes, it was and that was quite deliberate, and people were encouraged and then Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope and that involved really interfacing with the people across the road at Mandela Settlement where we went on weekend's journey and not only with them. So, we would start the programme on Thursday we would go to Central Johannesburg where we joined with the Central Methodist Church in their homeless ministry another way of exposing the communities to the other side if you like. We would end the weekend by a sleep over at Mandela Settlement which was quite interesting especially white people and middle-class black people living in East Rand where you have a three bedroomed house to yourself and now suddenly you have to share in a shack and that journey was quite important in helping people assimilate and understand the conditions of East Rand but also South Africa and also to understand the ... of oppression versus the... of privilege. We would do that for a weekend and end up on a Sunday and those bonds of friendship in some instances deepened and went beyond. A few weeks or months or so they would reciprocate so they would come across and we would all try and digest what it means to be there and to be here and how we can bring the two together. There was also a deliberate effort to ensure that the people who shared the pulpit would be people who came from different communities. You yourself was one of those people, so that you can see different people and people begin to share different perspectives that assist the community in understanding the broad purpose of the church and worshipping together.
- 15 **SM:** The leadership structure?
- 16 **Participant 12:** It was largely the SLT
- 17 **SM:** How, its formation, how was it structured in race terms and the content, the agenda was this matter of racial always put on the agenda?
- 18 **Participant 12:** The composition primarily came as you would understand you had a journey where were you were coming from a largely white community and as we were going through the transition there was a deliberate effort of inclusion in the leadership. So, you had to move from your normal. This is how you nominate to actually making sure that in your nomination you became deliberate about including people who would otherwise not be... persuasion. If I think of myself, I thought I am not ready. I was persuaded to come to leadership. And so were others and eventually you had a racial mix. The most important thing I think for me was that because of the theology that was being preached because of the practice and culture that was being infused in the community. Once you were in leadership it wasn't difficult because it really set you on a path that was one purpose to all of us knew this is where we are driving to and this is the community are trying to create. In terms of the agenda, it would not be specifically this is what we are trying to do other than that it would manifest in the work the whole of the work that we were doing was geared towards inclusion all the time. We had a number of pillars but one of those pillars was we want to make sure that the people who do not have the opportunity for education get exposed so for example we built a school in Ramaphosaville. Those ministries then would be established and monitored on

the basis of are there in line with what we are trying to do in East Rand and as I say beyond and basically that was how we would become Christ followers faithful to Christ. One of the things that used to be said is in heaven you will not have the 11 O'clock and 8 O'clock services. You probably will have one big choir singing in different languages praising God and therefore we had to start debunking the myth about this is our tradition, does it speak true of what we are trying to do, to be faithful followers of Christ. And the agenda then in how the leadership was composed was always geared at we want to be inclusive as Christ would be. Hence embracing the Cross because basically we see that as reflecting the core value of Christianity as embodied and epitomised by Christ.

- 19 **SM:** Is there any way that the pulpit itself would have contributed?
- 20 **Participant 12:** Yes, you are right, both nuances and direct. There were instances where the sermons will be addressing practical issues that challenge the *status quo* in government, in politics and takes on directly. Most of the banned of the sermons will really be towards a just society preaching about do justice and how do we ourselves become enablers of justice as a congregation but how do challenge the forces of injustice as especially they affect the most vulnerable.
- 21 **SM:** Sunday School, any manifestation of racial integration?
- 22 **Participant 12:** Yes, it was quite strong. As the community integrated, they bring children and the deliberate thing there was to ensure that you had teachers who could become sensitive to the dynamics in terms of the demographics but as you know Sunday School teachers are really volunteers so it would be a mix of encouraging others, but some were people who were quite passionate about Sunday School. The important thing I think the test even though it may have been informal was to ensure that the teacher or teachers were steeped in the theology that we were trying to teach that they don't teach something else there. As a result, the format was that whatever was being preached from the liturgy will be in the Sunday School. So, generally most teachers would come to the first service, because the Sunday School is in the second service, come to the first service listen and that would either enhance their preparations
- 23 **SM:** And they would re-appropriate that message to the children?
- 24 **Participant 12:** Yes, I say that because I once helped there
- 25 **SM:** And the youth, there used to be a youth pastor?
- 26 **Participant 12:** There used to be a youth pastor without appropriating this and giving Eden credit for it. I think it was a year or two ago that two kids got married one Indian one white. I always look at that as a testimony to what Eden was really about that you bring people together in the same space and they relate beyond their racial definition. You know as happens that people fall in love and eventually many years later get married and those two were in our youths and many kids and I also think part of the gift was that the youth pastor was very good and switched on in terms of what Eden was trying to do. So, it wasn't the most difficult thing. So passionate was he that every Friday he would we bring them together and do different things and you could see bonds of friendship

worshiping together. And of course, the gift was that because we lived in East Rand and some of them went to the same school, they would also congregate together at the church and therefore those bonds and the breaking of this view of the other began to break down and people and stopped othering in others and seeing everyone as a friend, as fellow congregant, as a fellow student, as one of us.

- 27 **SM:** I am getting two for the price of one my last question at the end was whether there were any relations beyond church, and you are already alluding to that?
- 28 **Participant 12:** Absolutely, there were, I specifically retained a number of those relationships. I think we have moved but I have got very special friendships with people. Clarence lives in Zimbali. I can get into my car and say Clarence I am coming, and I can stay as much as I want. Selina who used to be one of the lay pastors lives out in Brooklyn. I am free to visit any time. I have a very good relationship with James. I spent most of my time in Durban and I just live in his flat and for others as well there were really meaningful friendships that developed out of that experiment.
- 29 **SM:** What in your observations have been the challenges of racial integration?
- 30 **Participant 12:** Sometimes it is difficult to bring those together. Those who benefit from the *status quo* most of the time what retain those benefits. We can talk about being Christians but largely we will like to look out for changes that are now beginning to break the system as we know it because some of us benefited from the system. So, that would be the first challenge. On the other and you probably realised this. There is a very strong relation between the way people worship and how they identify themselves, so you will have movement. People who would come to Eden into East Rand which largely would have been young black middle class, they would find it difficult to relate to that style of worship. Because we want *Siyakudumisa* [Te Deum] *Ndiyakholwa* [Apostles' Creed] and the way then you feel you have worshipped. When you get to the new community and it's not there, sometimes it takes time for one to get to the new way.

On the other hand, when you have a critical mass of black people as it turned out in South Africa largely whether it's a school or a suburb or a neighbourhood or a church. When a critical mass of black people to builds up the tendency is for white people for whatever reasons to then move away. So, you had this migration of white people who felt like the black people are in the neighbourhood who would then go to Northfield and other areas where they have 11 o'clock for black people so we had our thing in the morning. The challenge is black people struggled to fit in because they were married to a particular way and the whites struggled to adapt to the new way which was trying to be inclusive and diverse

The second challenge is that, so I will put it in quotes, "the experiment of integration and inclusion" was largely driven by the minister. So, when you have a new minister who comes in, they may not necessarily one feel that passionately or they may have different gift that are not necessarily geared at that or they may have other preferences. So, when you have an experiment that is largely revolving around the figure of the minister who comes in and

leave after 5 years or 10 years or so then it will always be a challenge then in terms of how you do, we move forward. The people that we still had, there was people who felt that this is our home but struggled to relate to the post James era because it was still there but it was taking a different turn so those people would find alternative ways or would stay at home or they would play golf as I do.

- 31 **SM:** What is your view on the creation of number the services now as opposed to what you articulated that you were deliberate to have one service?
- 32 **Participant 12:** It is quite interesting because I have been part of both eras what you found then was you were bringing people and teaching them a different way. It was not easy and those who could not adapt just left. But the format now tries to cater for all “markets” and I put that in quotes respectively. That obviously has its gifts, and the obvious gift is that I prefer a quieter service and I don’t want it long so I go to the 7.30 service, and we are done by quarter to 9 and I can leave. But there are other people who prefer other services, and you find that what has been created is a structure where we are really are bringing pandering to different market segments in the church. The downside if I compare it to what we were trying to do back then is the foregrounding is this is who we are trying to follow and if look at how Christ relates. He relates to people irrespective of where they are and who are they with and all this is done all together. When he is sitting the with Pharisees and he is having dinner with what they call sinners, and they start to question that he doesn’t say ok then let’s have a session for Pharisees he addresses the issue and tells them stories to understand while we are all here eating dinner. So, there is de-emphasise on that perhaps it’s to some extent is a problem the gift is that them there are more people who feel like they belong. I don’t know that at a theological even psychological level challenges people in terms of what we were trying to do.
- 33 **SM:** So, people live in their own community?
- 24 **Participant 12:** Correct, so what you are doing is that you have a diverse. So, we are together but live separate lives to quote Phil Collins. So, I just go where I am comfortable. There should be space to make people uncomfortable because if I am just comfortable then I have to start wondering am I worshipping myself am I worshipping my traditions because if I am trying to follow Christ or God or be faithful, they will always be a stretch and one of those is it invites men to live and integrate and eat with people that I would otherwise if I had a choice I wouldn’t and what we have done is to provide the choice not necessarily bad but it has got that downside.
- 35 **SM:** Let me ask this question about the people who have left Eden who are they in your view and what were the reasons provided for leaving?
- 36 **Participant 12:** In the first instance when the church moved across from the other side to where it is now the church would have been exclusively white with a smattering of black faces maybe. The location of the church to where it is and at the time when it happened coincided with the special redefinition of East Rand and you had more black middle-class people moving in who could identify with a church where people spoke English and worshipped in English. So, you had this movement now of people beginning to worship here. Then you had people who would feel like we would prefer to have a Whites only church to an

extent that it was possible at that time. Those would be the first people to move at time. Largely the older generation and they would have moved either relocated because East Rand was becoming mixed, or they would have just changed their church to a church that reflected their values and goals and philosophy in life. Then you had people who began to adapt and largely were challenged and when it got too much like now, we starting to sing in isiXhosa and Sesotho, and they were like maybe it's not for us even though a deliberate effort at teaching was done but you still had people who felt like this is not for us so those people would have moved.

And then you had people who bought into the dream and who wanted to contribute towards making the dream a reality. Those people would have stayed they would have been in leadership, they would be involved in different ministries they would have been to Ramaphosaville and one of them became the one who rent our preschool programme. They started computer exposure school which still today stands. Those people would have stayed but as I said largely that ethos was inculcated from the pulpit through the preaching of James from the courses that we did. So, when James left you had quite an exodus of people and it is largely because you don't find many people who have those gifts. James, as you know is a very good administrator very good theologian, he is a good preacher and visionary. So, James brought something that was quite unique to Eden, and it was good at the time. Unfortunately, when you have somebody who is that good you can't help comparing when the person has left so you had now a new exodus that came out of the fact that I can't relate to how things are done to I can't to relate how the teaching happens even though there were attempts to keep some of those values but it's difficult when you now have a different minister. We kept saying from leadership Sheila is not James. James had his gifts and largely you had people who tried to support Sheila. The gift was that Sheila was white you had white people still there and I think relationship was never growing from both sides. The expectation gap was too much and the delivery gap also. Eventually the great thing was Sheila herself was like this is not working out for me I can find a community out there and I can go work with them, the expectation gap here is too much. You will always when you are at Eden including now live with the spectra of James how good James was. The danger almost falls to the point of idolising a person and that is one of the things that caused the second wave of movement. But I must say that movement was not only by the white people that were there but also by the black people who bought into the dream but felt like the dream was dying. If you go to Bryanston and at random say how many people come from Eden, you would find quite a significant number and across those Charismatic churches that in East Rand would have attracted a quite number of people that would have come from Eden.

- 37 **SM:** Are you saying the black people who left they left because felt like the dream is being lost?
- 38 **Participant 12:** Yes, largely. The people bought into the dream and some of those people who idolised James and felt like it is no longer the same.
- 39 **SM:** Is there anything we can learn about that if racial integration is a project in terms of when a clergy champion leaves that we could who replaces is that a factor?

40 Participant 12: I think so. It was supposed to be factor except I don't think the process of recruitment necessarily factors that so let me give an example of people that we thought could fit the culture and could then take the dream on. Rev Pearl Mabaso that we had approached was quite enthusiastic about coming but our timing was out of sync. So, part of the problem is that sometimes you have someone, but their term comes either earlier or later. At some point we spoke to Brian Fisher. Brian Fisher had quite enthusiastic felt like Eden is the community, but Brian Fisher had easy life at his church because he was really not into administration, and he did say look I am not into administration all I do is preach and teach and you want me to bury people and see sick people. If you keep in office, I can do a lot of counselling and I can do a lot of teaching but even he felt that if had to go out his Church, Eden would be the destination that would be ideal for him.

We had spoken to reverend Dlamini we were also out of sync with his international posting. Eventually you end up with who you end up with. Whatever happens in a particular community, and I don't know how you balance this out the leadership, the community have to be the custodian of whatever dream and then you need to have clergy to come and not be threatened by that because you also have to balance that. You have to give space for someone to bring their gifts and from the vantage point of clergy be able to drive in terms of what they are gifted in, but knowing that clergy come in and out you would also want clergy who says ok I am here for 5 years or whatever number of years I am here for. These are the things that I am bringing and what do have and then have that balance and discussion. What are the things that these communities are about that I need to fit into? It's not easy getting that balance because clergy being human, they may feel like the guy or girl who was here before me is just human like me than why his ministry more important than mine. But I agree that you need to find custodianship, the values in the community especially entrusted to the leadership.

41 SM: If you were asked to be an adviser and there is an attempt to strengthen racial integration at this time, in what way were we to improve, what things that would be done if that dream was to be resuscitated.

42 Participant 12: Broadly or Eden?

43 SM: Eden. Hoping the same principles operate broadly

44 Participant 12: Some of the tenants of that dream remain. They remain because Mxolisi was there when James was there and so he understands, and I think would buy into some of those values and dreams and visions. So, the inclusion, the diversity, so you have a number of people at Eden. We have a mixed still largely blacks, probably 99% but you now have the dynamic of people who come from other parts of Africa. So, one of the things that we have retained is we continue to conduct our services in a language that everyone can understand which happens to be English. The invitation would have to be very be deliberate this is what we had so you would get people who would drive the dream would ensure that you don't compromise it. You know it's funny I was saying this two weeks ago. I was saying it's absolutely great because people stick in Methodism, they can start a song they don't need to look at the hymn book they don't need the words and all of us can sing joyously and heartily and

enjoy this moment, but you forget that one person who has never heard this. They don't know what you are singing all they see is the Guild is singing and beating their beat and this is absolutely wonderful and joyous. There is a need at Eden at every platform I happen to be at I try to mention this thing. The other day and then we had the order of service and to us it has one English song at the beginning, and it had all songs that are done African obviously different at the languages, and I said to them look project is to make sure that nobody comes to any church and feels like I don't want to go back there. So, for example I said to this gentleman of the *Amadodona*, it's very nice to do your *Amadodana* thing but try at least to have the last hymn or closing song become a song that everybody can participate. Because sometimes it's all you remember what lingers in your mind. So now if you feel excluded even from that part then you go back and think how that experience was for me if you are a visitor you ain't going back there. If you have been there last week maybe, you experience it differently. One of the things that have to be done is to continue to make sure that you don't lose the essence of inclusion that people always feel like I can go there. It is not a comfortable space in that everything is done the way I know it but this a space that I can belong to. It is the intentionality, and you have to continue to speak about it because if you don't generations come and go. There are people who may feel 11 o'clock service we do this thing. So, when you do bring those people together, it's how people reflect. If I am on duty for example and I am marshalling people to do the offertory I will make sure that if there is an Indian person in the committee I will ask that person specifically, I will ask a white person, I will ask a woman, I will ask a man so that when you see the people doing the offertory you can see that's a fellow Indian oh this is home. The same with people who assist with Communion. So, there is that identification.

45 SM: And visibility

46 Participant 12: It can be done in any other way it must be deliberate. It must be intentional it's not just going to happen. People get very comfortable in spaces they are and the temptation to go there is like... That has happened in Eden. At least two friends of mine who have moved to Central there is an irony in that. They come from Mafikeng and now we are trying this other experiment of getting traditional, but they feel like there are no Setswana or Sesotho songs sung here because the majority of the people are Xhosa. The people who are in the worship team are Xhosa, the people who pick the songs are Xhosa, the Mfundisi is Xhosa. You may not necessarily be switched on to wait a minute there is something amiss. When a person who has been part of Eden for so many years experiences that immediately says I feel excluded now.

47 SM: They have been at Eden for a long time?

48 Participant 12: They have been at Eden for a long time, they feel all we do is sing Xhosa. So, it means even at that level you exclude people. The dream as we said lives on but as more and more people leave if don't talk about if you don't continue to do our anti-bias thing, people do what they are used to hence *Siyakudumisa* in *isiXhosa*.

49 SM: Two last questions just to wrap up. The anti-bias what did it entail?

- 50 Participant 12:** We now call it diversity programme. What it entailed was or let me not say was because I still conduct course so does James, it's really to try and assist people to come to the realisation that (1) we live in a society that encourages us to exclude and to assist people to realise that I am as much as I say I am switched on and I conduct the course have got biases. I shouldn't look at other people and say that's where the problem lies when actually I either, in complicity or as active perpetrator in sexism or classism, I exclude other people on the bases of my strength. And then to assist people see to other people as irrespective of perceived differences. Basically, we are all human we have the same needs, we have the same aspirations. We have the same concerns. I will give you an example, one of the experiments that we do is role playing. Typically, what is to say to group of people ok, you for the purposes of this are Nigerian. How do you experience this community and the natural stereotypes will come up? People will come and they say this who we are. What we would like people not see us as is this. What we would like to happen is this. We are Nigerians we don't want people to see us as drug dealers. So that assist people to know how it feels like to be in someone else's shoes and then begin to do things differently. So, it deals with our stereotypes and biases, and it helps us understand the ways in which we are self-complicity, the ways in which we were excluded, the ways in which you have to see the pain of the people who are excluded and how we can be different. We do this in a work environment but in a church environment it is even more powerful. The invitation is when you do that you are trying to be faithful to the call which is everyone is included.
- 51 SM:** The last question that I would like to ask is that throughout your input the word deliberate, intentional can you say as you wrap up around intentionality as in racial integration.
- 52 Participant 12:** You see it now in the Vicky Momberg Visagie and the Pennys and all of those. When in 1996/7 one of the things that we bemoaned at Eden largely led by James is that we were not having enough of these conversations. There was this air of Mandela and Tutu of the rainbow nation which was largely build upon a reconciliation project and it was great. Then you had the African Nations Cup, we had the Rugby World Cup. All of these things almost helped us mingle at the stadium it was great. It was like bravo, wonderful but the truth about is that when we retreated to our own laagers either felt the pain of discrimination or we went back to our world of privilege. There was no conversation and at Eden one of the things that kept saying everybody must come to this if don't have these conversations and these things will remain and they will come up and they do and they have and they did. Even at Eden where people started feeling there are too many black people I am leaving, or you just do things the white way I am leaving. Unless you become intentional and intentional in your teaching, it must be embedded in the teaching, in church, it must be something that we are deliberate about in our Sunday School. We must make sure that our kids understand we are not just a group of black people living in an isolated world or white people, we are living together up. There is space for example perhaps going back to the question that you asked about at Eden how can we revive the dream.

There is space to take a community like Eden and get on with a white community across and do the Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope with the specific

intention of; "I am bringing these two groups of people so that they get know each other at a deeper level." It invites both the community and the clergy not just be comfortable about where they are. While a question we constantly ask is; "Who is not here?" Here we are, nice Eden beautiful, who is not here? Then we realise there is no disabled person in this community. Alright, why would a disabled person not come to our community? Then look at the environment again. We don't need a step here at the door. Then we broke it down so that if you are in your wheelchair you don't have to be pushed by anybody. Then were specific, we delineated space for disabled parking because that is consciousness. And I think that's the question we've got to continue to ask. It's very easy I have seen it in our district. It very easy for communities to retreat, it easy to get back into our tradition. Because that is done in the name of worshipping God, so we hardly question it. We've got to constantly to question it and deliberate on are we really just a bunch of church goers or are we faithful Christ followers.

53 SM: Is tradition a gift or a challenge?

54 Participant 12: I think it's both, but I think part of the problem with tradition is that there are certain things that of over time become obsolete and context is very important. When the context changes, you have got to adjust. I will give you an example one of my pedigrees is with the Guild. I say that more than 30 years ago when I was a Guilder in Eastern Cape one of the things that people used to argue about was how long the skirt has to be. I can't believe that 30 years later in East Rand the youth is occupied with policing uniform. I mean it's the most nonsensical thing I have ever seen because the context has so changed. We have the gift at Eden of a youth that is largely working. That can make huge differences in the community within which we live. They gather every Friday and look at how long your skirt is are you wearing the right colour pantyhose. So, tradition is fine, but it's got to be refined you have got to be comfortable with telling the stuff that has become obsolete. So, it is a gift but it's gift especially tradition in the church it's got to be held against the question; "Is this helping us to be more faithful or not?" Otherwise, it becomes an idol especially, I'm afraid to say this, our black churches have idolised tradition. This is how we do things; this is how we do things. The question is hardly about whether when we do things this way are we becoming more Christ like or not. People go to church because they do things the way I'm used to. I have seen people who say *Siyakudumisa* [Te Deum] is the thing. That's absolutely great and I love *Siyakudumisa*, but I shouldn't be going to church just for *Siyakudumisa*.

55 SM: Any reason why you did not leave Eden when others were leaving?

56 Participant 12: I have never left but I did. I never had an association out of Eden. I lost my enthusiasm and passion, so I became a church goer and I worshiped at the golf course on Sundays.

57 SM: Was there a reason related to what you were talking about

58 Participant 12: Yes, one of the problems was being in the leadership. I was feeling like there wasn't space to continue doing some of the things that we had dreamed up and feeling that space was being closed. That would have been my reason for saying the clergy should become comfortable with the fact that

the custodians of the identity of the context of the community and the vision should really be with your congregation and your lay leaders because when you now leave, we are going to be schizophrenic over time because we change as the colour changes. We will not have that thing that identifies us as this particular community that visualises that dream. Largely the dream should be common, but it would have depended on where you are. Part of my leaving was I was feeling that space being closed.

59 SM: Was it more of a withdrawal?

60 Participant 12: It was withdrawal, like I said I never have an affiliation outside. I no longer had that thing that woke me up on Sunday. Or something that made me look forward to. It was really that withdrawal.

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 13: Congregant

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: In your assessment, what are the marks of a truly racially integrated church? What are the signs that we should look for to say this church as an institution is integrated?

02 Participant 13: I think the first thing should be what you see, blacks and whites. That is what maybe you see with your eyes. But again, when you interact with people or when you...it should be people working together and trying to understand each other all the time. Giving each other space to talk and to listen to each other. We have different ways of doing things but if we are integrated then it means understanding that we are different and embracing the differences.

03 SM: If you look at Eden itself as an institution since you have been there. In what way has Eden not just now but from the beginning, I know it has gone through phases, demonstrated that racial unity?

04 Participant 13: When I came here some 12 years ago, there were people from different groups, whites and blacks. Maybe your 70 to 30, if I just estimate. Even when you went into sessions for example, the first sessions which you attend before you become a full member.

05 SM: Confirmation?

06 Participant 13: Not confirmation, the other one.

07 SM: Foundation course?

08 Participant 13: Foundation course. I remember the one I went to it was mixed group. The reverend who was the leader at the time was also challenging people to try and engage each other across the races. He made it clear engage with somebody who is different from you. He would sometimes even say where are the people who left something like that. He would say something like: when others come the other groups leave. Where are they, let's go out and find people who have left. As time went and leadership changed. There was also...I think some people would then move with who is there or who is not there. When somebody I identify with leaves then others leave. There was also...I think it is when the numbers started going down. The present reverend who has been there since the other one left, I think has also his way of embracing different people. For example, at the moment we have three services per day. The first one is your piano one. The second one is guitars and youngish people. The

third one is your traditional Methodist. One of the things that the reverend did when he came is to start Manyano which was not there before. I think he was also trying to make space for everybody. If you look at it, the whites who were there would most of the time prefer the first service.

09 SM: The 7:30?

10 Participant 13: There isn't a lot of singing from the hymn books and it was not like the traditional Methodist one where you sing *Siyakudumisa*, they are not in that one. It has its own way of making others feel comfortable in their own of doing things. For me the disadvantage is, then we don't make an effort to understand each other. I am okay where I am my Methodist, my whatever and that one is okay with his own way of doing things, the piano. There is very little left of the white people.

11 SM: Which one do you attend?

12 Participant 13: I like the 9:00 one and one of the reasons is, originally, I am from the Anglican Church. When I came it here it suited me, it wasn't traditional Methodist. When the Methodist one comes, I do attend that one sometimes, I am still struggling to fit in. I still prefer the 9:00 one. But again, one of the reasons is there is a service coming after it so we won't waste time.

13 SM: So basically, it's because it was easy to get into being an Anglican. It didn't have your traditional Methodist. So you didn't struggle?

14 Participant 13: I didn't struggle and the foundation class I felt like maybe made it also easier for me because there was a time when we were told how the Methodists came out of the Anglican. Then it wasn't traditional. Later when this one started, for me I still struggle.

15 SM: Have you observed anything in terms of leadership in terms of racial complexion or integration unity. The leadership of the church.

16 Participant 13: For some time, it was integrated. I'm not sure right now but some time ago it was integrated. I remember there were whites and blacks, there were coloureds, I remember. I remember a specific person who left after the present reverend came and he wasn't happy with the way he does things. Suzan was there but left because she retired. I'm not sure why she doesn't come to the church anymore. There is also this Robert who has always been one of the 7 leaders. I know even now he is still in the leadership but now I think it's you know when someone (*vernacular*) permanent leadership. He is one of those.

17 SM: The worship, the diversity in the 9:00 service can you say anything about that?

18 Participant 13: 9:00 is mostly black, mostly young people.

19 SM: I mean the worship there, the singing?

20 Participant 13: The singing is...somewhere I feel they are taking the signing from hill song that type of signing, of the guitar. There is also little bit of that piano thing and a little bit of hymns. It's called the contemporary service. That one was referred to as the traditional one.

- 21 **SM:** The what?
- 22 **Participant 13:** The traditional white, the first one, the morning one.
- 23 **SM:** You referred to white people leaving. Did you ever pick up the reasons were for people to leave?
- 24 **Participant 13:** I don't know.
- 25 **SM:** Besides the foundation course, what other parts of the church programme were you involved in?
- 26 **Participant 13:** There was a forgiveness course at some time, and it was led by Suzan. I am one of the founders of the counselling ministry and Suzan was also one of us. When we started, we also had somebody else who was white, but he left.
- 27 **SM:** So, you worked in the counselling ministry, and it was a mixed group?
- 28 **Participant 13:** It's mostly black. When we started in 2014, I'm sure there were two white people and two coloureds but now I think it's just one coloured person.
- 29 **SM:** At that time when it was mixed what was the ministry about and how did the racial thing work with the team?
- 30 **Participant 13:** We had just established it, so there was training. There were people like Lynette who would sometimes do some sessions with us. Suzan was a member and there was one other white woman and there were two other coloured ones. They were also just members. The ministry was about training people on how to listen to others and journey with them.
- 31 **SM:** In your own observation, how did the people respond to racial unity of Eden? The fact that you were mixed what was the kind of response that was there to that fact?
- 32 **Participant 13:** As I said when I started that at some time, I felt the reverend was encouraging was challenging people to seek and understand each other. That's when you would see even other people in other ministries. But then lately when services...in the past we had two services, the 7:30 and the 9:00 one. Now we have the third one. As I said earlier, people are just comfortable in their own spaces and the otherwise leave. The leaving in some cases could be because the community around here is a community that is not coming to settle. They are coming for work and at some point, they leave.
- 33 **SM:** So, they are highly mobile
- 34 **Participant 13:** It's a highly mobile community
- 35 **SM:** In your observation, what are the benefits for racial integration compared to where people are just one race?
- 36 **Participant 13:** If it comes naturally, I think it needs to be embraced. As long as people understand we are human beings in God's image. I'm sure it doesn't...It shouldn't be an effort to leave together but because we get raised differently then we should try and understand each other.

- 37 **SM:** For yourself personally were gains that you found at that time when there were those signs of racial integration. Any growth?
- 38 **Participant 13:** I think...
- 39 **SM:** It's going to be anonymous
- 40 **Participant 13:** You know this thing of.... differently goes a long way. I think when I came here, the type of priest was on another level. I'm sure you would agree with me James was...he was on another level, he was somehow weird so, but he would challenge you. Somebody who would have people of the same sex will be invited to church and those years when people were a bit...He was about diversity and he had made it his duty, well there have democracy, we haven't lived together, let's try to make this work. With this one, sometimes as a non-Xhosa I feel ... The benefits of an integrated I'm sure they also learn things from us but there are also a number of things you would learn from people who did things differently from you.
- 41 **SM:** What are the challenges in your observation of this project of trying to bring unity amongst races?
- 42 **Participant 13:** The challenge is we live too much... Some of us were hit by apartheid. It's easy to snap out of trying to embrace others. It's quick. When something goes wrong you quickly say it's because I'm black or they are black whatever.
- 43 **SM:** Any social relations that you saw that outlived church premises where people got along together beyond just the services or did you just see the people just relating inside the church or were there any friendships made beyond the church premises.
- 44 **Participant 13:** I'm not sure about the one made outside; I was just aware of the ones. One of the persons who used to reach out a lot was Suzan. She is one person who used to follow up especially when people were not well whether it was death or sickness or what. She would always be there. Either invite you when there is a death or if you have lost someone she would reach out. That's one person who extended her embracing or where integration extends even out of church.
- 45 **SM:** Do you see any future of racial integration at Eden at the moment where things are at?
- 46 **Participant 13:** I don't ...If things change around East Rand community because East Rand community is also maybe 80 or 90 % black. I think it won't

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Participant 14: Congregant

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

01 SM: What are the marks of true racial unity or racial integration in a congregation?

02 Participant 14: I would assume that will be from where I am sitting. I think the basic foundation would be love. You see now I am not properly having the slogans of Eden but it goes as far as God's embracing house (*vernacular*) outside and make them to feel them at home no matter who they are, no matter where they come from, no matter what age, no matter what nationality. I basically believe the foundation *ke lerato* [love] and opening your arms to be welcoming in as far as Eden is concerned. When I came, I came around when there was that particular transformation.

03 SM: How did Eden handle the transformation?

04 Participant 14: This is how it was first of all. I happen to be in the worship team. When I came ordinarily the dominant style of worship was your English traditional hymns, here and there your hill song type of style or type of vibe. In the existence of the worship team there was a dominating number of white people at the time, such that even the people that held mics at the time were white people. Whether they came for rehearsal or not it will be another story for another day. Yet the handling of it as the years went by was that there was a slow peeling of the people of the colour that I mentioned, the white people. Slowly, slowly, slowly but surely, they started peeling off. Until now I think now, we kind of stand on one if not half a person in terms of other races that is from 2000. It was about 75% white people in the church and the rest were between Indians, coloureds and blacks. The handling I'm not sure if it would be a racial issue or it would be the people deciding to go for churches of their own choice. Yet people of European descent have tended to off ramp and hence we are left with a high number of black people in the church.

05 SM: At that time when you arrived were there any intentional programmes of facilitating racial integration?

06 Participant 14: Of course, there was a gentleman a Reverend by the name of James Visagie, who indicated that before he came to Eden he was based in the Northern Cape. He kind of liked very much the style of worship in the black churches such that I believe that he had interactions with a lot of black churches that side. Such that it was through him that songs like *Mmele Pelo le Moya* were sung at Eden and other songs such that within the worship team we started cueing in even contributing also from where we were from. At the time, I was fresh from *koMangwebi* and other people were fresh from the Eastern Cape

njalo nalo. We came with little contributions not a lot. You get that in a Sunday there would be two, three, four vernacular songs to try and squeeze it in and make people that of colour to be comfortable. Which were welcomed slowly nicely because some of the songs were nice and groovy, and people would just jump around and dance around as we sung *vuma vuma*. They were songs talking to most people of European descent if I may say for White people. The reception was fine and in the manner in which at the time facilitated by the then pastor it kind of gelled nicely. I suspect then until after they was that change of a pastor, where it was a black head pastor when Mxolisi came in and James Visagie had to leave for Durban. Slowly but surely things started to happen. There was activity and movement as far as the congregation was concerned.

- 07 **SM:** Let's stick with James were any teachings or preaching or guidance that he intentionally set around racial integration or programmes that he ran?
- 08 **Participant 14:** Whatever that he did he ensured that there was inclusivity in each and everything that was happening such that he led worship at the time. He was playing guitar and he led worship. He felt for people to feel at home they need to be included in each and every aspect of the church. There were the likes of Siphon Manhattan, a gentleman who is still with the church currently, who at the time also participated in the prayers. There were talks that you can't stand at the pulpit if you do not have a certain qualification. Yet at the time there would be that thing that somebody you will be randomly picked you are going to say our counsel prayer for instance. You can pray in your own language, or you can in the prayer include your own language so that we can have even the people talking your mother language can understand even if they will battle in terms of following a preaching because English was a standard. So, programmes; yes, the inclusivity in activities within the church; yes, there were introduced and facilitated such that we had what we call the Foundation Course and even the extended courses that is beyond that foundation course for people that would want to even study the Bible further. At the foundation he actually emphasised the issue of integration more such that he actually indicated that we are at that transformation and it's something that we need to happen within the church. That is were basically it started or was triggered.
- 09 **SM:** And then within leadership structure
- 10 **Participant 14:** Within leadership structures at the time well there were people involved in leadership of the church. It's just that I wasn't that much kind of having a focus as to what kind of transpired within those formations. Yet I do know that there are gentlemen that we also were with at our worship team they would go and be representing us at Manhattan whatever leadership meeting or leadership conferences. It still also went to that level that what they want to implement at the bottom was also implemented or done at the top.
- 11 **SM:** What about the youth before the Wesley guild and subsequently?
- 12 **Participant 14:** In respect to Wesley guild, the Wesley Guild came in very late. It came in literally during the era of Mxolisi. East Rand is an attraction of a whole lot of people from within the country that is workwise, students also, such that when it is somebody that is going to a Methodist church can they find a Methodist church around. They would among other things ask why are we not having structures such as guilds, *amadodana* and *abarwetsana* [Men and

Young Women] and stuff like that. Such that there was a need at some stage that it be facilitated. Yet it came only during the era of Mxolisi. During the era of James there was no initiative towards that because the numbers at the time still favoured the whites and they were not involved in such *per se*. It only happened at a later stage.

- 13 **SM:** Before the Wesley guild when there was the youth pastor how was the youth in terms of racial integration?
- 14 **Participant 14:** I came as an adult already (inaudible). The operations of the youth *per se* will be observed from the distance. Yet yes there was a youth pastor by the name of Simon. I don't remember quite the surname, yet his name was Paul.
- 15 **SM:** Simon Koekemoer?
- 16 **Participant 14:** Koekemoer it could be, who at the time ...you see in respect of youth at Eden, the youth model yaSunday school, in that your grade 1, your grade 2s and stuff like. At a certain age, especially the first school ones they are the ones more involved youth activities such as going camping team building and stuff like that. We could observe such happening and there was a whole lot of activities and with also the help of the youth church facilitators. Those Sunday school teachers who were there at the time it did seem to us was formidable and it showed that there were a whole lot of transformation as far as that is concerned. One observation would be that it is because most of these kids go to the same school. Of course, in terms of relate how they would be adapting to what they had been doing all along at their schools. It did seem easy and no contentions at all. In as far as that is concerned, I believe the youth church at that time how they modelled was perfect or did seem perfect, from the angle we were sitting at.
- 17 **SM:** What in your observation has been the response of Eden's members to the coming together of different races?
- 18 **Participant 14:** I will be honest to say there was a time where there also would be that uncomfortability by certain races. I would say your whites, coloureds and maybe also blacks about some activities that would be going on at church. There were at times when ministries such as the one that was ran by Suzan Jones which opened gates for the homeless to can come through a church to can come and worship with us. Mostly it would be black people coming in. You find that as they came in numbers, at the time there were also (inaudible) after church there would be cakes and bread and tea. Mostly it would be for food among other things. So, sitting with them in church you would have that thing that you are sitting people some of whom did not take a bath in the morning or taken a bath for days and they are in church sitting next to you and you are worshipping with them. That uncomfortability kicked in with certain individuals of course. Perhaps which may also have contributed to certain individuals drifting away from the church given that they had kind having that thing what is happening here. In their comfortable zones now, they are feeling crowded by these people that are supposed to be perhaps at their own world. I'm not sure. Yet what you would see it as a sense will be people were now starting to feel uncomfortable. After the church they would go out instead of going back to have tea and socialising. They would just walk to their cars knowing that those ones

were going to rush to the plates and cakes and teas and stuff like that. I believe that sense of uncomfortability. Yet going forward perhaps the numbers of black leadership that kind of escalated may have also contributed to certain races peeling off. I think these are the two aspects.

- 19 **SM:** If you look at racial integration what are the benefits of racial integration and how have they been for yourself or even at Eden?
- 20 **Participant 14:** For myself I would say, I didn't have a problem learning other people's cultures and how they were raised or how they would behave around me. It's just that we are talking transformation at church coupled with the transformation around the country. A transformation of a people that have been raised to kind of not trust each other to a certain extent. You would at times do feel that you are dealing with somebody treating you this particular way because we are at these yards or these grounds called the church. Thirty minutes late you meet at the mall they don't even recognise you or look at you when you try to wave at them. As a person I would understand it that we still have issues as a people that is now as a country. We still do not have that thing that we trust each other that much that we will be comfortable around each other. I am talking about little things like handshakes and hugs. You can meet person at a restaurant where it is somebody that you go to the church with. After church they would hug you, yet at that restaurants when they meet you and they are with their white friends at the corner, they may not even greet you at all because of how loyalties lie when they are with certain group of people around them. I would be understanding not knowing as to how other people would take that issue, yet we still have had a longer road to travel to basically understand each other which was unfortunately cut short by the exodus that occurred through the years. That is basically what I can say. However, if you can have a follow up I'm not sure if I pulled it properly yet that's how you would see it as it is.
- 21 **SM:** What in your view are the challenges of racial integration?
- 22 **Participant 14:** We still have the number 1 superiority /inferiority complex. Superiority that is on the part of the white who felt they are still superior and they would just make you feel that. Inferiority complex on the part of blacks such that maybe when they are around white you see that they behave differently than when they are with one of their kind. Number 2, whatever I mentioned on number 1 would contribute to egotism, being egotistic. They would be that competition of egos whether in leadership, whether at meetings whether at worship. For instance, I will make an example that at the worship team we had certain individuals were only pointed that were the ones designated to have the mics no matter how not so good they are in terms of singing. Given that they are that particular colour they made it standard that at the time these are the people who would be leading until such time where there was an increase in the microphones and there was a wider participation in terms of singing. At the end of the day it kind of contributed to the failing. That will be number 2, a year ago. Number 3 perhaps even how the leadership was at the time. I had actually indicated that we had a pastor that kind of had relations with black people previously. Yet now we still had that thing he still felt that I am of this race. I'm not sure if it was me now looking at it (*vernacular*) but they would be that thing. The white reverend at that time also maybe 5 to 10% may have contributed to

a lot of white people within the church feeling superior in the matter in which tasks were done things were done. With him being the one that rubber stamped, such that when you come with a different view you will be reminded by other ones of the same colour that hey this was endorsed by James don't forget, such things. I think those could have been the three fundamental ones as far as I am concerned.

23 SM: If you were asked to be an advisor on what has to be improved on racial integration, what recommendation would you make?

24 Participant 14: Firstly, the style of preaching would need to be removing a blanket on this racial thing that we are trying to hide. At the time when it was still tense, you know when there is cold war, you are kind in love but you (inaudible) each other. If they would be teachings *per se* that specifically deals with issues of race and with issues that address the fact that we are all of the same God, we are all made from the same image, we are all living with the same spirit within. That maybe being adopted as the doctrine going forward such that even the kids out there when they are doing their Sunday school thing, they perhaps have something that is also assisting on their part as they grow up within the church, to know that the format of how things are supposed to be done is that we need to be embracing to whoever no matter what colour. That hasn't been done. I think it was just a general teaching, the exclusion of specifically tackling issues that have actually made it difficult for white people to open up and be trusting of black people and for black people to open up and be trusting of white people. It went opposite ways as a ping pong. These ones didn't trust these ones and these ones didn't trust these ones and once you go round the corner then this group of people are going to start *skinnering* [gossiping] about the other ones. Such thing need to be raised at the pulpit such that you need that type of teaching that will shock the congregation rather than to want to sugar coat. Most of the sugar coating did not assist in having both races stick around within the church. To the extent that even blacks felt a need to go. There were not even comfortable around certain people that were intruding their space. Unfortunately, after Suzan had left that kind of thing that occurred at the time is no longer said to being done. Such that at least a lot of your upper or middle class people are coming to church yet it is the blacks as a majority. We needed those teachings at the time that would shock *abazalwana* to ensure that they know that whatever they would be having secretly inside their hearts or in their minds is wrong and they need to rid of. Such teachings were being done yet apologetically you know when you say something, yet you are kind of talking in in parable those who understand you will understand you and those who chose to brush it off will brush it off. My stand is it never been done those uncomfortable teachings, it was not seen to be done. That's what I am trying to say.

25 SM: Lastly what social relations amongst members did you see go beyond? Any friendships that went beyond church?

26 Participant 14: Of course when I joined the church, I was staying at my uncle's house. It was my aunt the wife, who actually recruited me to Methodist to Eden, who said they will have a church meeting here you can come through. That's how I was able to come through to Eden. That is how I was able to come through Eden. What I observed would be your home cells outside church which

would extend to at times people popping in even a my uncle's house to come and see my aunt. It would be people of different race, maybe coloured, Indian from church. They would be coming to see her or to say hi to her. It kind of occurred to a great extent beyond that. It also would be because of things like your kairos which I am a member of right now. I am part of the Christian ministry which has actually gotten a lot of us to go there with those other white counterparts who were participants also. We carried forward the friendships and we would have meals together, we would be spreading the word together, doing business. Things would happen that is beyond the grounds of Eden. It would be within the same races it would happen to an extent that lunches maybe hosted somewhere and then a braai. We go to somebody's house and braai or be invited to lunch if somebody is celebrating. Things like those would happen. Such that even now it is still actually happening, yet you know it would be among the blacks, but we would still have your social meetings where I would host lunch at my house, braai or go to Pick 'n Pay buy those four chickens and rolls and just come and chill. That is something is still happening. We would after church go across there is a garage where they sell *amagwinya* [fat cakes] after that buy a whole lot of *magwinya* and sit at a shade there and talk about what was going on at church. Such is happening. You get a lot of Guilders may do a lot like that they party together, they chill together, they go to conventions together. A whole lot is happening. Even at each other's events just like a week ago we had a wedding of a Guilder there which was supported by most people from church. There is still that thing where we would still sit together and socially relate.

Participant 15: Congregant ;

SM: Sidwell Mokgothu

Date of Interview: 18 January 2018

Location: Johannesburg

Topic: A Study of Social Cohesion Exploring the Process of Racial Integration in a Methodist Congregation

NB! The names of the people and places have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

- 01 SM:** What in your view are the marks of a truly racially united congregation? If we want to say this congregation there is true racial unity what are the kind of things that we look for?
- 02 Participant 15:** Tolerance for each other's different ways of worshiping and understanding that we don't hold the views in the same way. Accommodating and openness to the way people do things even if it's not the same. Particularly East Rand is very Cosmopolitan it not just a question of blacks and whites. There are blacks, whites and there are Indians, there are coloureds and there are Zimbabweans. We need to tolerate and understand each other and understand that we all do things in a different way and accommodate all of them.
- 03 SM:** In terms of leadership, are there things that we should look for?
- 04 Participant 15:** I think the church leadership it's very important for them to understand the diversity of the community. It's not always the case, but it's very important. That's why things fall apart because each one is looking at things their own way. The more people of other races leave we are remaining with one race. Then that way the more we stick to the way we black people do things and the more people leave. People do not even want to come back because it's now a black church.
- 05 SM:** If somebody says, from long time ago, not just now, over a period of time, in what way has Eden demonstrated racial unity what would you say?
- 06 Participant 15:** Long time ago not now, it was just church. Everybody came worshipped did their bit. We were more of a community church at least from the time that I have been here. It was very community we were all together as community. Compared to now, what is happening we have all these *Manyanos*. My personal opinion it looks like there is a lot of different church inside of one church. We are no longer be able to do things as a community. Never mind that they are on the calendar, we plan them and we decide them. When the date comes, everyone has got other things that they have to do. The community is no longer the way it used to be.
- 07 SM:** In the past what kind of mission projects and activities did the community do?
- 08 Participant 15:** We had feeding schemes on Thursday evenings, where we would have somebody who would come and make soup. In the evenings people would go out and feed people who are living on the street of which there were

plenty then. When we were still building East Rand a lot of people who work for construction companies choose not to rent because it's expensive, they live in the veldt. So we had that. We had soup kitchen here also once a week where people used to come. There was another soup kitchen at East Rand that we also used to contribute towards. Those are the three that I remember. Then there is Kairos.

- 09 SM:** What is Kairos?
- 10 Participant 15:** Prison ministry. Eden is very much involved in it.
- 11 SM:** You used to do these as a racially united community?
- 12 Participant 15:** As a community
- 13 SM:** In the life of the church how was the worship groups?
- 14 Participant 15:** They were mixed. The issue was time because we had one worship team for all the services on that day. We had two only services, but then you would find that people who were in the worship group had to attend all the two services and it was becoming a problem. Otherwise, the worship groups were mixed. Right now, for instance, the 7:30 service which is the one a few white people that we have attend, that worship group is mixed.
- 15 SM:** Things like Sunday school what do you remember of it?
- 16 Participant 15:** It was also mixed. We had quite a few teachers of other races
- 17 SM:** And the children were also mixed?
- 18 Participant 15:** The children were also mixed. Things started to change I have never been there, but I think there is a church across the road with an exciting Sunday school. You would find that parents would go and drop their children there and come here. Eventually the parents would say it's too cumbersome I will just go with kid. So, we had less and less of white children.
- 19 SM:** In your memory when did things start changing here at Eden?
- 20 Participant 15:** That's a big one. It has been very gradual.
- 21 SM:** What is the racial mix at the moment in your own observation?
- 22 Participant 15:** There are very few White people left. I don't think they are even ten.
- 23 SM:** What were the reasons for those who used to be here?
- 24 Participant 15:** I really don't know. I know there was a plan to find why people are leaving. I know those who have children, I have spoken to two and it was the reason like I am telling you that the children are happier there because their Sunday school is more exciting. Those are the two I personally spoke to and that was their reason. The others I really cannot say.
- 25 SM:** At that time what was the attitude of people toward a racially mixed community? What was their response to the fact that Eden is not like any other church, it is mixed?

- 26 **Participant 15:** I did not feel any resistance towards it. I felt people were happy about it. I can say so because I attend the 7:30 the one that is full of white people. I can say it's just service like any other. There has never been any...
- 27 **SM:** What in your own view are the benefits of a church that is racially mixed?
- 28 **Participant 15:** I think we benefit a lot. It's on the way to having South Africa to being mixed. If we can start it at church, it easier to spread it out. If we cannot to pray together, how can we leave together? I think it's very important that we are able to pray together.
- 29 **SM:** And the current situation how would you describe it?
- 30 **Participant 15:** The current situation is that we are really a black church
- 31 **SM:** What was the cause of that?
- 32 **Participant 15:** People are leaving, things are changing. I think another thing, with all the *Manyano* that we have, people are coming forcefully with their traditional way of doing church. If it's not done this way, it's not the kind of church I want to go to. Some people don't like it and therefore they leave. Then when we have combined service, the 7:30 you don't really feel it because it's a completely different service. It's more resembling of the 11:00. The 7:30 people are like okay I went to church but I didn't quite feel like it was a church. Our services are very different.
- 33 **SM:** So, you said joint services...
- 34 **Participant 15:** Joint services are a problem, especially for the 7:30 people
- 35 **SM:** Because they take the form of the 11:00 services, is that what you are saying?
- 36 **Participant 15:** Yes, there is no accommodation for the 7:30 service
- 37 **SM:** If you were asked to advice the leadership here at Eden on how best to make this church, for instance the combined service, to be a reflection of true unity, what would you say?
- 38 **Participant 15:** I think we have discussed that so many times
- 39 **SM:** What are the ideas that came out of the discussions?
- 40 **Participant 15:** The one discussion I remember that even ended up very hot, the one Good Friday service. Some of the preachers were preaching in Vernacular and it was quite a hot issue. Interestingly it was raised by a Motswana that if the sermon is preached in Xhosa how are we supposed to understand? It could have been raised by one of the Indian people we have. It could have been raised by one of the White people we have. If it's raised by black people amongst ourselves and its uncomfortable, how much more of a larger community.
- 41 **SM:** What was the proposal?
- 42 **Participant 15:** The rules in Eden are the service is in English, we sing in other languages but we everything else is in English. If the preacher comes and

preaches in their own language (inaudible) is done, the service is over, but apparently, it's still happening.

- 43 **SM:** What is the reason for it to happen?
- 44 **Participant 15:** I don't know. Maybe the preacher comes a preaches in his own mother tongues,
- 45 **SM:** Any other proposals that came out of the meetings about how to make the place more integrated?
- 46 **Participant 15:** My personal feeling particularly Good Friday, it's our service we are going to do it our way, take it or leave it. No one said so but it's the feeling I got.
- 47 **SM:** What do you think are the consequences of that?
- 48 **Participant 15:** The consequences are that people are leaving and going to other churches. We must understand that not everybody is here because we are Methodist. People are here because it's a church and I enjoy it and I love it. If they become things that if I don't enjoy it, I will move to another church and find something that I enjoy very much.
- 49 **SM:** Let's talk about the youth what happened with youth when there was a white youth pastor here?
- 50 **Participant 15:** The youth were very active. I know they had activities on a Friday night. I don't know exactly what they did, I was still very new here. But they used to be youth evening on Friday and the place will be full of youth, mixed.
- 51 **SM:** And again there, what happened with the youth?
- 52 **Participant 15:** I think our youth pastor left and we haven't had a youth pastor since.
- 53 **SM:** And then it changed?
- 54 **Participant 15:** Yes. We had a couple that used to deal with youth, and they also left because they moved, and they said Eden was now becoming too far.
- 55 **SM:** In your memory of the place, were there any relationships that people had amongst themselves that went outside the church?
- 56 **Participant 15:** Oh yes plenty. In East Rand most of the people just live here they don't come from anywhere near. People are from other provinces. I just live in East Rand because I am working somewhere. If I meet people in church those are the people that become the friends and the family.
- 57 **SM:** I am trying to get this thing about when the church did sit down and talk about building the community, what is the main challenge in your view?
- 58 **Participant 15:** I wish I knew the answer to that. I'm thinking 7:30, it's less than 10. When I say less than 10, I am talking Whites and Coloureds. Not 10 families, ten people. We have some Indians that come. That is the number I am seeing that is increasing. We are having a lot of Indians that are converting to Christianity. I remember even saying to somebody: Someone must have said

to the Indians in Durban, when you come to Gauteng you must become a Christian. They come here and they want to convert to Christianity.

- 59 **SM:** The 9:00 that is said to be very contemporary service
- 60 **Participant 15:** Very youth oriented
- 61 **SM:** What is its status? What is happening there?
- 62 **Participant 15:** It's full of youth. It's full of noise for me. It's a vibe service that the youth enjoy.
- 63 **SM:** Does it attract numbers?
- 64 **Participant 15:** It does attract numbers
- 65 **SM:** Mixed?
- 66 **Participant 15:** No, black
- 67 **SM:** What languages do they sing in?
- 68 **Participant 15:** All languages
- 69 **SM:** If it's singing in all languages and the youth full of vibe congregation, what makes the other racial groups not to come?
- 70 **Participant 15:** I think when the service changed from two the three, already by then there were no whites coming to those services. The whites were only coming to the 7:30.
- 71 **SM:** The 9.00 is still as original it was?
- 72 **Participant 15:** Well, to some extent. It's more vibe now. The 11:00 is more your traditional Methodist service.
- 73 **SM:** Traditional black?
- 74 **Participant 15:** Even that is in English, but we sing in other languages.
- 75 **SM:** The 7:30 is still as original it was?
- 76 **Participant 15:** Is still as original was. It hasn't changed.
- 77 **SM:** And it used to have numbers that are more than it is now?
- 78 **Participant 15:** Yes
- 79 **SM:** Again, if is still the original as it was, why do you think the numbers have dropped to about ten?
- 80 **Participant 15:** I have no idea. We have a lot of people who have decided they like the 9:00. People who used to go the 7:30 are now going to the 9:00. And there those who left the 7.30 to join the 11:00. But it can't be very big numbers.
- 81 **SM:** Are there any other churches around East Rand that you can say they are the examples of a racially integrated church?
- 82 **Participant 15:** St Peters Congregational Church. The reason I am saying that I have a friend who worships there and on two occasions I went with her. I saw

White people used to worship here there. I saw White people used to worship at St Francis Anglican there. There is something that they are doing there that is attracting a lot of white people.

83 SM: Do you know what is it?

84 Participant 15: I have no idea what it is.

85 SM: There was a time when there was a black and a white minister and the previous minister left for Durban.

86 Participant 15: I started after James left. Sheila was here.

87 SM: During Sheila's time, she was the senior minister, how was the church here?

88 Participant 15: People were leaving people they haven't left. They were starting in small numbers.

89 SM: Even that you are not sure why they were leaving?

90 Participant 15: I could be, I am guessing, I am not saying that's the case. It could be people follow a minister and not the church. We want James now James is not there so I am leaving. Things are not done James' way so we are leaving.