

**Liturgy, Faith and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: A Study of
Liturgical Reframing in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa**

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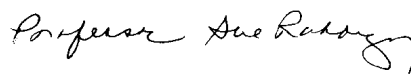
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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my late mother, Brigitte Hildegard (Janowski) Gennrich, who rejected the patriarchal church and struggled with her faith throughout her life, until right at the end when we prayed together to our Mama God and she smiled peacefully, finally ready to let go to her Maker.

And to all women and those of nonconforming sexualities who have struggled to reconcile their faith with the image of God presented in traditional liturgical worship and the kyriarchal structures of the church.

May this study be a stimulus for further work that will ultimately enable the church to feel more like home for all people, a foundation from which to go out and join God's work to create a more just world.

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Undertaking a task of this nature late in life has unique challenges, and there are many people whose support has enabled my crazy, challenging return journey into the world of academia.

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The Church of Sweden Scholarship Programme makes it more possible for older people with financial commitments to continue their learning journey, and is much appreciated.

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To adapt our shared African value: “My study is because you are”.

This is as much your work as mine.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ACSA – | Anglican Church of Southern Africa |
| APB – | <i>An Anglican Prayer Book</i> , 1989 |
| BCP – | Book of Common Prayer |
| CS – | <i>Celebrating Sunday: Under Southern Skies, in an African Voice</i> (ACSA Anglican Church Liturgical Resources – published in September 2016, Cape Town) |
| FGC – | Focus group conversation |
| GBV – | Gender Based Violence |
| HIV and AIDS – | Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| KZN – | Kwa-Zulu Natal |
| L. – | Line number |
| Loc. – | E-Book location on Kindle |
| SGBV – | Sexual and Gender Based Violence |
| SRHR – | Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights |

Abstract

Despite our excellent gender equality legislation, most women and gender nonconforming individuals in South Africa continue to suffer disproportionately from the effects of HIV, gender based violence and cultural and religious oppressions. Considering that in South Africa church membership exceeds eighty percent (the vast majority of whom are women), it is vital to better understand how churches influence some of the key drivers of these challenges, such as gender inequality and destructive perceptions about sexuality and women's bodies. As an Anglican lay minister and gender activist, I have situated my research in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa as a postcolonial church grappling to shake off vestiges of its patriarchal colonial legacy, while remaining rooted in its liturgical inheritance.

Apart from regulating worship, liturgy as a social act constructs theological concepts and relationships within dynamic social and institutional contexts that are deeply influenced by intersectional power dynamics. Employing a postcolonial African feminist theological lens, this study analyses some creative liturgical samples, inserted into the standardised *An Anglican Prayer Book*. It has sought to understand how liturgical language and discourse tools are employed to reconfigure social and religious assumptions about normal gender power relations, health and sexuality in ways that contribute to improved sexual and reproductive health. The findings describe how transformative liturgy employs liturgical, language and discourse tools intentionally in three strategic ways: creating a liminal space where human dignity, health and wellness can flourish, breaking the silence by addressing sexual and reproductive health rights directly in worship, and preparing worshippers to become a transformative presence in the world.

A discussion about barriers to liturgical creativity in a clergy focus group conversation held, highlighted that authentic transformative liturgical praxis requires a church culture that is open to learning from the periphery.

The research has identified some crucial theoretical gaps: liturgical studies are dominated by largely gender-blind, late-modernist approaches; while postcolonial and African feminist scholarship barely touches on liturgy, thus missing a crucial strategic

opportunity to achieve its transformative objective. Hence, the conclusion offers some preliminary proposals towards what might, through further research, potentially become a postcolonial African feminist liturgical theology.

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Chapter One: Introduction

“This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord.” (Appendix G, Toni, L.711-712)

1 Introduction

When I consider where my personal motivation to study liturgy and sexual and reproductive rights began, I wonder: Was it when, as a student, I first whispered “our Mother” in Grahamstown Cathedral with a mix of relief that I had come home and terror that I might be branded a heretic? Or when I was swept up in vibrant township worship services as an anti-apartheid activist? Or when I joined an ecumenical organisation with a tradition of applying liturgical worship to social issues? Or when as an Anglican lay minister I served under visionary clergy whose liturgies opened my imagination to the God of justice? Or perhaps it really began on Christmas Day, when as a little girl I was molested by a house guest, a musician whom I admired, after he had sung for us of the miracle of salvation in Jesus?

My journey in life and church is by no means unique. Feminist theologians roundly criticise the predominance of patriarchal discourses that underlie church teaching and public worship (liturgy), expressing their sense of alienation or even denigration in liturgical worship, and lamenting its failure to address their everyday experiences of oppression. However, as Kwok points out, feminist alternative liturgical practices are a neglected area of research (2010a:11).¹ Nevertheless, they do exist, and it is my contention that these transformative church practices have much to teach African feminist theologians as well as traditional liturgists.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore how creative liturgical practices recently developed in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights.

This introductory chapter provides an introduction and overview of my research intentions, methodology, limitations, trustworthiness and relevance, and situates it within

¹ These are mostly adherents of the Western women’s liturgical movement (eg. Walton, 2000, 2010; Berger, 1999, 2001, Procter-Smith, 1990, 1995, 2010), but those who mention liturgy in passing include Kwok, (2010a), Oduyoye (2004; 2010), Kanyoro (2005, 2010). I have only come across three African feminist scholars of liturgy to date, including Dube (2003), Govinden (2003), and Siwila (2015).

the relevant scholarly terrain. I then offer a summary overview of the five main chapters, and how these demarcate the most significant aspects of the research process.

2 Background, Motivation and Basic Concepts

Two key concepts that are core to the conceptualisation of my study are sexual and reproductive health rights, liturgy.

Although the term ‘sexual and reproductive health rights’ (SRHR) has emerged out of the global Western-driven human rights movement (Ramkissoon et al, 2010:34), African feminists also challenge religious and cultural norms and practices that undermine women’s sexual and reproductive health (Moyo, 2005:130-136), and it also has resonance in the biblical concept of human dignity (Knox-Seith and Daka, 2014:8-9). I have elected to retain the term SRHR, while consciously using it in ways that are consistent with both the biblical and African feminist interpretations, affirming the intrinsic value of all human beings, not only as individuals but as “person-in-communion” (Oduyoye, 2004: 88). ‘Health’ is understood in its widest sense of wellness. I understand SRHR to entail three dimensions: access to adequate health care, freedom of choice (implying fulfilment) and freedom from violence and coercion in every area of life, including reproduction, sexuality and sexual enjoyment (Knox-Seith and Daka, 2014:8-9; Dube, 2004:12). Contextually, SRHR is a matter of great urgency in this country, and in KwaZulu-Natal in particular. For instance, South Africa continues to have unacceptably high rates of HIV, maternal deaths and gender based violence, with some research indicating a strong link between cultural and religious beliefs, particularly those that undermine the dignity and rights of women (HSRC, 2014; Anderson, 2016:123-125). It is clear from my literature survey, that in general, churches do not have a positive track record in promoting SRHR, although there is evidence of some positive contributions, which points to the importance of this research.

Liturgy, defined simply as public worship (versus private prayer), is the chosen focus of study because of its influence on the lives of church members and its potential as an instrument of transformation in the hands of a transformative church. Liturgical worship expresses a faith community’s theology: its understanding of God, God’s people, and their calling in the world, as reflected in the language, metaphor, rituals and symbols

employed.² As such, liturgy can be said to be “theology in the making” (Edgardh Beckman, 2006: Note 26), or primary theology, because it is said to emerge from experiences of encounter with God rather than from theories about God (Lathrop, 1991). The Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) has historical roots in both the colonial, patriarchal and hierarchical missionary enterprise of the Church of England, and in recent resistance to apartheid and related social injustices. It is currently undergoing a liturgical review process under the theme: “*Celebrating Sunday: Under Southern Skies, in an African Voice*” (CS), which aims to update and revise *An Anglican Prayer Book* (APB) to take account of recent contextual changes, with a particular focus on gender inclusiveness (Hess-Biber, 2012:4). Moreover, ACSA has made public statements in support of SRHR advocacy in the area of HIV and gender based violence, and it has developed some liturgical material specifically for HIV and AIDS. In spite of considerable efforts to produce new liturgical resources, thus far none addresses gender based violence or other SRHR matters, in ways that challenge the underlying ideological and theological assumptions that continue to undermine full human dignity and prevent women and other marginalised people from effectively accessing their SRHR (Hill, 2001: 3700).

As an Anglican lay minister for twenty years, and a gender activist for over thirty, I understand liturgy as more than a formulary for worship or a means of theological education for congregants. But liturgy is not innocent, as discussed below. My approach is thus openly biased, and takes as its starting point those who are least likely to access their sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). It also assumes that liturgies are obliged to inspire and challenge churches and congregants to contribute towards a more just world.

In this light, the purpose of this research is to show how liturgical worship, standing as it does between a church’s theology and its mission in the world, might be used to promote health and wellness for SRHR in South Africa. It is hoped that further research in this area might lead to more strategic use of worship as a central church praxis to equip its

² My understanding of liturgy draws extensively on Senn, 2012; Suggit, 2009; Lathrop, 1991; 1993; and to a lesser extent, Loesel, 2005.

congregants to change how they live in their own relationships and how they become involved in broader SRHR issues.

My theoretical optic framework to SRHR and liturgy are all included in the composite concept ‘postcolonial African feminist theology’. My positioning as a longstanding gender activist leads me to approach any social phenomenon from a feminist perspective, and there is a great deal of research evidence that gender inequality is one of the key drivers of SRHR challenges. While there is no single ‘feminism’, all its manifestations are rooted in a vision of women’s full humanity with men, and more recently, the full dignity of people of all sexual identities and orientation. I have selected a postcolonial optic because of the positioning of ACSA, with its colonial roots and its vision to re-invent itself as a church fully rooted in its Southern African context. Postcolonialism applies a deconstructionist lens in resistance to colonial power and its legacies in previously colonised societies and institutions. African feminism applies this specifically to women’s experiences in postcolonial Africa, with a view to unmasking the multiple oppressions of women related to the domination of patriarchal, colonial and nationalist discourses in African postcolonial societies. All three are oriented towards a society free from intersectional oppressions.

How my choice of a postcolonial African feminist theological lens influences my research approach is explained in the Methodology section below, and is clarified in how I approach my three research sub-questions in Chapters four, five and six.

3 Research Question and Objectives

The question which has guided my research is:

How do selected creative liturgical practices recently developed in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights?

My intention was not only to explore what theological themes and justice issues are dealt with in the liturgical extracts, but also to understand what liturgical, language and discourse tools are employed, and how, to address these in ways that would promote health and wellbeing for SRHR. This becomes clear from the sub-questions that guided my research:

1. *What lessons can be learnt from the recent history of Anglican and wider liturgical practice and reform in South Africa during and after apartheid in relation to social change, with a focus on gender and SRHR in particular?*
- 2.1 *How do selected locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights?*
- 2.2 *How do the clergy who have reframed their liturgies theologically understand their reframing?*
3. *What are some practical and liturgical theological implications of the findings in the liturgical samples?*

The following were the main research objectives that have enabled me to answer the research questions.

1. *To undertake a historiography of the recent history of Anglican and wider liturgical practice and reform in South Africa during and after apartheid in relation to social change, and to extract key lessons related to liturgy, gender and sexual and reproductive health rights.*
- 2.1 *To investigate how selected locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights; and*
- 2.2 *To understand how the clergy who have reframed their liturgies theologically understand their reframing.*
3. *To interrogate some practical and liturgical theological implications of the findings in the liturgical samples.*

4 Methodological Considerations

The methodological framework is rooted in a qualitative feminist research paradigm rooted in poststructuralism.³ I have employed a combination of snowball and random sampling, to obtain appropriate liturgies for my study focus; while also accessing diverse clergy working in different contexts. The liturgical extracts include written prayers and sermons submitted by five clergy, as well as selected extracts from *Celebrating Sundays* (2016). Two analytical methods have been employed: thematic analysis to identify emerging themes, and an open critical discourse analysis process to interrogate underlying power relations operating in constructions of God, God's people and SRHR matters, using liturgical devices expressed through language and discourse choices⁴ (Tonkiss, 2001, Weedon, 1987).

A focus group conversation took place to triangulate the findings and, by means of thematic analysis, has obtained a thicker description of the ACSA context.

Ethical clearance was obtained fairly easily, as this is not a sensitive matter, but participant details have been withheld to protect their anonymity. The study is limited in that the liturgical sample is small and restricted to written liturgical material in English only, and it contains mostly short liturgical prayers inserted into the standard *An Anglican Prayer Book* [APB] (1989). Liturgy is much more than the written words, and a fuller liturgical study to answer similar questions in a wider variety of church contexts would be an interesting area of further research. But within a highly regulated liturgical context such as ACSA, the analysis nevertheless yielded rich data.

5 Outline of the Thesis

The literature review in Chapter two outlines the scholarly terrain in which this study is grounded. It undertakes some key conceptual clearing, and considers some of the major debates and contentions in the fields relevant to my study: postcolonial and African feminist theology, ecclesiology and liturgical studies, with a focus on health, wellness and SRHR

³ A poststructuralist approach to texts assumes that texts have no inherent meaning- that this is socially constructed and is influenced by power relations that determine whose interpretation holds sway in a specific context (Bowman, 2014).

⁴ See Appendix E for the schedules of questions used to guide analysis of the focus group conversation.

Chapter three presents the theoretical and methodological considerations underpinning the research. It combines aspects of a number of different but complementary theoretical lenses to create a suitable theoretical framework for a liturgical analysis in a Southern African postcolonial church in relation to SRHR. The methodology section explains the research paradigm, methods, sampling, analytical frameworks and instruments applied to both the liturgical analysis and the focus group conversation. In addition, it addresses matters of reflexivity, ethics, validity, rigour and trustworthiness as well as limitations of the study.

Chapter four undertakes liturgical historiographical research to achieve my first research sub-objective, which is to learn from the history of ACSA's and wider theological journeys with liturgy for social justice, with specific focus on health, wellness and SRHR. This has helped to contextualise the research in the context of ACSA's own liturgical journey, and to glean insights from relevant South African research.

Chapter five interrogates how liturgy can be utilised to advance the social transformation agenda of the church in relation to health and wellbeing for SRHR. It offers detailed liturgical analyses to explore the most important liturgical, linguistic and discourse devices employed. Relevant insights from the clergy focus group conversation are integrated into the liturgical analysis and two are surfaced specifically.

Chapter six explores some of the practical and theoretical implications of the findings of the analysis, in response to the third research sub-question. It explores, and presents diagrammatically, some of the main tensions that clergy experience in reframing liturgical prayer or sermons in a postcolonial, hierarchical and centralised church that is still struggling to shake off its Eurocentric patriarchal legacy. The final section offers some proposals towards a postcolonial African feminist liturgical theology, albeit tentatively, given the small sample size and limitations of the data as written liturgical extracts in English.

The thesis concludes with some proposals for further research, and argues that liturgical reframing requires a church culture that is open to learning from the periphery and changing its theological and ideological bias towards male clericalism.

6 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has provided some background to this liturgical research study, explaining my own location and personal and scholarly motivation for it, as well as contextualising it within ACSA. The main research question was provided, as well as the key sub-questions and the objectives, which outlined the major steps taken to effectively answer the research questions. It has introduced relevant core concepts and summarised the most important methodological considerations. Finally, I have provided an overview of the main chapters and explained the flow of the overall argument through them.

The next chapter sets the stage by providing an overview of the scholarly terrain in which this study has located itself.

Chapter Two: Literature Review: Church, Liturgy and Health from Postcolonial and Feminist Perspectives

“Only One is Holy, No one is Holy, Everyone is Holy.” (Carvalhaes, 2015)⁵

1 Introduction

Postcolonial liturgical theorist, Antonio Carvalhaes, has argued that “The formation and development of knowledge in our liturgies reveal how we want to hold life” (2015:3), while traditional western views present liturgy as a “holy waste of time” (Barnard et al, 2014:272-273. Can Christian liturgy in any way influence the way people live their lives? What, if anything, might this have to do with sexual and reproductive health rights?

This literature review locates my approach to liturgical analysis in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa (ACSA) within relevant scholarly discourses and debates. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first maps the epistemological terrain of postcolonial African feminist praxis. The second offers an overview of some of the key debates about the role of the church in promoting health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). The last section introduces various approaches to liturgical theology and liturgical praxis, ending with an overview of some postcolonial feminist debates around the body and liturgy.

2 Mapping the Epistemological Terrain: Postcolonial African Feminist Theological Praxis

This section addresses some of the debates in feminist and postcolonial criticism and theologies that are relevant to my liturgical study in ACSA as a postcolonial church.

2.1 Foundational Concepts

Although there has always been controversy about what feminism means in practice, all its manifestations are rooted in a vision of women’s full humanity with men, and more recently, a vision of the full dignity and equality of people of all sexual identities and

⁵ Borrowed from Claudio Carvalhaes’ (2015) critique of the core thesis of all three volumes of Gordon Lathrop’s trilogy (1993, 1999, 2003). In response to Lathrop’s insistence of the one Holy God, Carvalhaes, as a postcolonial theologian, proposes an approach to liturgy and worship that deconstructs the colonial imposition of a single valid faith and a unitary holy God, acknowledges and celebrates diversity of liturgical expressions in a multifarious God revealed in multiplicities of expressions of worship.

orientations. Moreover, Chopp (1996:117) and Althaus-Reid (2000:19) point out that all theologies have a gender dimension, and those that do not, consciously or unconsciously operate within dominant patriarchal norms. Feminist theology/ies range from radical feminists who reject the Christian concept of God altogether (Daly, 1973) to conformist approaches that normalise patriarchy with a ‘separate but equal’ argument (Piper and Grudem, 1991). My own approach concurs with the revisionist approach of the Circle of African Women Theologians, which is somewhere in between.⁶ It not only takes seriously the experiences and oppressions of women in Africa, but also includes in its purview the intersectionalities of race, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, religion and ability.

Postcolonialism applies a deconstructionist perspective that resists colonial and imperialist power, exposes its consequences and legacies in the lives of the colonised, and imagines a transformed society free from colonial oppression, where marginalised experiences and voices are privileged and diversity is embraced. Ashcroft et al (1995) point to the inherently contested nature of colonial societies, in that imperialist power is variously met by the colonised, ranging from compliance through covert and overt resistance. This contestation is reflected in the multifarious debates within postcolonial studies, some of which are directly relevant to the study of liturgy in the context of a historically colonial church such as ACSA, with its roots in the British Colonial Church of England, while expressing a Southern African manifestation of Anglicanism.

This study is rooted in a form of postcolonialist criticism which recognises that the histories of the colonised and coloniser are interconnected, and seeks to transcend inherited dichotomies and essentialisms (Sugirtharajah 2001:248-249).

2.2 Postcolonial, African and Feminist Theologies: Women Breaking the Silence

African postcolonial theology and related liberation hermeneutics counter the missionary imposition of the bible, which assumed Africans could only be redeemed through western Christianity. Antonio proposes reclaiming the otherness of African culture that colonial discourses attempted to erase, through inculturation (2006:1). Colonised groups have

⁶ The Circle of African Women Theologians was established by Mercy Oduyoye and others in 1989 to create safe spaces in different African countries for women to develop as theologians through reflecting on their own experiences, and jointly publishing their writings. Through this, women’s theological voices intend to move in from the margins and shift dominant theological discourses.

also reconfigured their socio-cultural identities by drawing on their own and the cultures of the colonised, a process called hybridity (Bhabha, 1995:32-34). While Spivak argues that hybridity has led to a sense of alienation in colonised individuals and communities and an inability to resist colonial articulations of their own identity(1995:26), Dube considers it a useful postcolonial feminist strategy (2002:117).

Despite its contested nature (West, 2009:257-259), many scholars agree that postcolonialism remains a useful critical stance, in that it consciously rejects colonial assumptions and mindsets to open up new ways of thinking driven by the possibility of imagining a different, more just, world (eg. Kwok, 2005; 2010; Antonio, 2006; Dube, 2002; Wafula, Mombo and Wandera, 2016). However, Dube argues that postcoloniality needs a feminist perspective to interrogate the construction of gender relations in postcolonial spaces, so as to devise “decolonising feminist strategies” in an African context (2002:103).

Oduyoye also proposes a women’s hermeneutic that is critical of both Western and nationalist ideologies (2010:91-92). While she is convinced that African cultures remain authoritative scripts in the lives of women, she proposes that women need to deconstruct and reinterpret them in ways that are liberatory and promote justice for all (2010:92). She calls for a women’s hermeneutic that resists the prevalent othering of women in traditional African church contexts, as well as adopting worship media that are more familiar to African women. (92). Kanyoro proposes that African and feminist theologies be used alongside each other, adding that seeking alternative perspectives on familiar biblical passages is vital for women, because issues of sexuality are implicated in many social and cultural practices, often with negative consequences on women’s health (2001:170). Dube (2002, 115) argues for a balance between African women reinterpreting oppressive African traditional practices, and refusing to accept the superiority of western education, culture, religions, and feminisms. Moreover, embracing diversity helps counter the metanarrative of Western patriarchal normativity, which has disempowered women in all spheres of life (2002:117).

African, postcolonial, and social constructionist feminist approaches reject modernist notions of knowledge and theology as objective and ahistorical as part of the patriarchal normalisation of male epistemologies (Chopp, 1996; Kwok, 2005). Instead, feminist

epistemologies deliberately affirm women's experiences as an authoritative source of knowledge and ongoing revelation (Radford Ruether, 1985: 114 from a western perspective; and from an African perspective- Kanyoro, 2004:x).⁷ Carvalhaes proposes constructing new ways of knowing to begin to imagine a new hospitable world through liturgies and rituals (2015:12).

However, Kanyoro (2010:27) concedes that breaking the silence is difficult for African women, because their educational and cultural restrictions make it difficult for women to do theology. She proposes an African women's "engendered communal theology" (2001:169) which needs to take place in safe spaces, such as the Circle for African Women Theologians.

2.3 Gender and Intersectional Approaches

These and other challenges to Western feminisms and liberation and postcolonial theologies,⁸ have broadened the understanding of the task of feminism to include a focus on the multiple webs of oppression affecting the lives not only of diverse women, but also oppressed men. This means recognising that gender is but one amongst a number of markers of difference and identity that have been linked to various forms of intersecting oppressions, in the context of ongoing power struggles. This was first articulated by Crenshaw as "intersectionality" (1991). In response to related critiques of the concept patriarchy, Schuessler-Fiorenza coined the term "kyriarchy" (1992:8) to theorise the intersecting structural dimensions of power and domination. I draw from these debates that my study of ACSA, which has deeply colonial roots and exists in post-apartheid South Africa, needs to bear in mind that gender is shaped by and in turn shapes several other axes of injustice, such as race, class and heteronormativity, while also acknowledging gender inequality as primary. Intersectional approaches help to understand why a person may be oppressed in some contexts but privileged in others, which is important when deconstructing church power dynamics that might influence clergy to engage in liturgical reframing.

⁷ While this has not been without controversy (Chopp and Davaney, 1997; Mohanty, 1998; Hills Collins, 2000; Oyewumi 2002, Bakare-Yusuf 2004), there seems ultimately to be agreement on the need to privilege the experiences of women and other oppressed groups as a strategy of resistance (Chopp, 1996; Beste, 2001; Oduyoye, 2004).

⁸ From womanist, Asian and African feminist scholars.

Intersectionality thus offers a more nuanced approach to the study of Anglican liturgies in South Africa in relation to the extent to which they promote health and wellbeing, particularly amongst women. Published documents on the ACSA website indicate that it is endeavouring to move beyond its colonial legacy. It is openly committed to anti-colonialism and pro-inculturation in its practices and is overtly pro-poor: "*Covenant is entirely ubuntu-shaped; we find our humanity through the humanity of others; we flourish through promoting the flourishing of others . . .*" Archbishop Thabo Makgoba.⁹ While ACSA has committed itself to "Women and Gender" as one of its missional priorities, progress since 2010 has been uneven.¹⁰

2.4 From Whose Perspective?

Given that ACSA's clergy, who thus preside over liturgical worship, continue to be largely men, it is worth exploring the question of involving men as the longstanding beneficiaries of structural gender inequality. Doyal (2001), and Chitando and Chirongoma (2012a) both argue that a focus on men takes into account the impact of patriarchal and wider kyriarchal social systems on the lives of men who do not fit hegemonic forms of masculinity (Connell, 2005), particularly in postcolonial societies. Kwok opts to retain the primary role of women in postcolonial feminist work, but she accepts that "profeminist men can indeed be allies" in the women's struggle (2005:127). This inclusive view is echoed by other African women, such as Fanusie (1992), and Kanyoro, who longs for a time when "the men in the churches of Africa will be prophetic about the things that adversely affect the lives of African women" (2010:33). Nico Koopman argues that the struggles of women and men are inextricably interconnected (2015:30). However, I take seriously that Shamim Meer advises vigilance in drawing in men, to avoid a subtle re-definition of the women's struggle in male terms (2010:30-31).

The next question is which women can do postcolonial and African theology? While acknowledging the complexity of the multiple subject positions that women occupy in

⁹ ACSA website, Home Page: <http://anglicanchurch.org.za.winhost.wa.co.za/> Date Accessed: 16.6.16.

¹⁰ Since 2010, 50% of the dioceses in the Province who responded to a Hope Africa questionnaire in 2015 have developed a number of gender related resolutions and 64% have gender programmes running. These have not as yet, however, yielded a Province-wide institutional gender policy, although a 3-year strategy for addressing gender has just been developed in 2016 (Hope Africa, 2015).

postcolonial societies, Dube (2010) argues that women from both (former) coloniser groups and those who were colonised can engage in postcolonial theology, if conscious of their different standpoints and possible blind spots. Surgirtharajah (2001:270-271) adds that both colonised and coloniser need to grapple with the issues, if the process is to achieve its goal of social transformation. Nevertheless, both promote the epistemological privilege of those most oppressed by the dominant social systems and ideologies (2010:97).

Questions of identity and authority in doing postcolonial and feminist theology are thorny in a social context such as ACSA in South Africa, where racial, ethnic and gender differences have been used to divide, oppress and exclude, and white male minority interests have dominated for generations. Rakoczy proposes that liturgy, as worship of the divine, is uniquely placed as a space for the integration of theology and activism, a space to explore the question basic to an authentic spirituality: “How can I live my faith and culture as the unique person I am?” (2004a:393-395).

2.5 Postcolonial Feminist and African Women’s Biblical Hermeneutics, Liturgy and Social Change

Feminist and postcolonial feminist approaches to biblical interpretation might offer a useful resource for liturgical theological inquiry, since they deconstruct how the bible functions to justify imperialism and colonialism by interrogating the representation of power relations, not only in terms of gender, but also other social factors such as race, class and ethnicity in the African context. Three have influenced my liturgical theology. Schuessler-Fiorenza (1985; 1992) proposes a four-step process, including hermeneutics of: suspicion, proclamation, remembrance and creative actualisation. Kinukawa’s approach (1994) traces the theological influence that key women have in Jesus’ evolving theology, which led to his direct opposition to patriarchal norms of his time. Althaus-Reid’s “indecent theology” employs sexuality as the primary lens for biblical analysis, arguing for a theology that problematises notions of decency and privileges “suppressed knowledge exile” (2000: 20).

Postcolonial African feminist theological research and feminist spirituality embrace social justice as an essential orientation (Rakoczy, 2004a:379-380). Ackermann

articulates feminist theological praxis as foregrounding the importance of daily life in ways that counter dualistic binaries and bring coherence between individual faith and how one lives it out in community. She outlines five conditions of theological praxis (2004:225-227). Feminist theological praxis acknowledges the experiences of the oppressed as a valid theological starting point, and recognises the diversity of cultures within specific local contexts. It is developed in collaboration with, or builds on, knowledge produced by others, given the high value it places on mutual relationships; and it is committed to shared transformative action (2004:225-227). However, Nadar cautions against a naïve approach to this liberatory feminist intent, and proposes that scholars engaged with ordinary people need to adopt a nuanced and self-critical stance (2009:384, 399). I suggest the same would hold true of my own research, and also of ACSA clergy engaging in liturgical reframing together with their congregations.

I understand liturgy to be a key aspect of the church's praxis, given its etiological roots as a practical communal expression of a church's theological foundations and its rootedness in a local context. I address what this means in the context of SRHR in the next section.

3 The Church, Health, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

Edgardh Beckman views liturgies as “expressions of ecclesiology in operation” (2006:145), and thus a useful window into a church. After surveying some ecclesiological discussions about models of the church, this section reviews how some scholars interrogate the possible relationship between the church, its liturgy and sexual and reproductive health rights.

3.1 What is the Church?

Clifford¹¹ lists five models of church, which are all relevant for this study (2001:136). The church as an institution, with all its hierarchical trappings (kyriarchy) is that identified most closely with the colonial church. It is strongest in churches that ascribe to clericalism, or restricting leadership and decision making to ordained clergy. In direct contrast is the notion of the church as *ekklesia* – a fellowship of believers, which is more egalitarian and closer to the gatherings or assemblies of the early church. The church as

¹¹ She bases these on Dulles, Avery. 1974. *Models of the Church*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday

a sacramental mystery is how the Catholic and Anglican Churches have traditionally understood themselves. The model of the church as a prophetic voice assigns the church the task of social justice advocacy and work on behalf of the oppressed, which feminist and postcolonial liturgists advocate. Finally, the notion of church as an expression of spirituality, existing in the hearts of individual believers without specific need of a church structure.

There are various perspectives on what the above ecclesial models should and do mean in practice. Both Russell and Schneiders strongly critique the misuse of power in clerically-dominated churches, as undermining authentic spirituality (Russell, 1993:11-14; Schneiders, 1991:36). Lathrop critiques the assumptions of the inherent holiness of the sacramental church, arguing that “only One is Holy” (1993:ix). Postcolonial and feminist theologians critique the imperialist presumption that the western church is the “one holy, catholic and apostolic church” as a colonial construct that sets up the western interpretation of the Christ-event as the master narrative and negates the multiplicity of liturgical, theological and practical interpretations of the Christian story (Russell, 1993; Moyo, 2015; Carvalaes, 2015). Jones also warns that the normative power of the church to define the Christian account has been misused by patriarchal churches to regulate the lives and identities of its members in ways that diminish their dignity (2000:72-75).

Alternative views of the church imagine what it might become. Russell’s “church in the round” challenges the church to reflect a “welcome table spirituality” (1993:196), which promotes faith that is articulated in struggles for justice (199). Oduyoye also views justice as core to being church: to contribute to enhanced physical health and healing, particularly women’s health (2010:92). Lilian Siwila inculturates Russell’s metaphor in her postcolonial feminist reinterpretation of the Eucharist within the framework of meals in Tonga culture (2015:91). The vision of a prophetic church rooted in mutual respect and responsibility is encapsulated in Jones’ concept of “bounded openness” (2000:169).

Postcolonial and African feminist theologians challenge churches to become more conscious and inclusive in their praxis. One important way this can be achieved is through the creative use of liturgical worship. The church as a socially engaged community of believers finds resonance in Kanyoro’s call to women to prophetically raise their voices on anything that diminishes the dignity of women (2010:33). This has implications for the extent to which liturgy offers a space for women’s voices to be heard. Gibson (2012:

639-642) affirms the potential of new forms of liturgy to transform the theology of the church itself.

Chapter four explores the colonial, patriarchal and clerical legacy of ACSA, and its implications for how liturgy is understood and used, and Chapter five considers how creative new forms of liturgy might influence the church's ability to contribute positively to SRHR.

3.2 *The Church, SRHR and Liturgy*

Health is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as holistic wellness, or a state of not only physical, but also mental, emotional and social wellbeing (WHO,1946).¹² The South African Department of Health (2011:2) describes sexual and reproductive health as wellbeing in relation to sexuality and all aspects of reproductive processes. SRHR can be said to be in place when all people “have control over and can decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality” and their sexual and reproductive health (South African Department of Health, 2011:2; Knox-Seith and Daka, 2014:8-9). This requires access to adequate health care and freedom from coercion, violence and intimidation. South Africa has committed itself to achieving this in its Constitution, as well as being signatory to a number of international treaties.

In spite of the many efforts amongst multiple stakeholders in South Africa, HIV prevalence continues to rise amongst young women, gender based violence statistics are on the increase, and South Africa has unacceptably high rates of maternal deaths and teenage pregnancies.¹³ Nevertheless, Mattar (2008) and Ramkissoon et al (2010) have documented considerable progress internationally and in South Africa towards achieving women's sexual health rights over and above reproductive rights, although gender inequality continues to be the main obstacle. On the other hand, Rakoczy (2004a, and 2004b), Oduyoye, (2004); Moyo (2004, 2005) and Eriksson et al (2013) elucidate how both Christian and African traditional religions continue to present women as subordinate to men and limit their SRHR, often with dire consequences.

¹² Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948.

¹³ <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022015.pdf>. Accessed 12.11.2016, 1.45 pm.
<http://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/sub-saharan-africa/south-africa>. Accessed 12.11.2016, 1.50pm.

Judith Butler (1990) and other theorists have shifted feminist discourses on SRHR beyond men versus women, arguing that binary discourses on sexuality ignore sexual diversity, and that human sexuality is best understood as fluid and constructed through performance (becoming while doing) rather than fixed. Dube (2002:101-102) adds that both patriarchy and colonialism are built on binaries that assign differential value to them: male over female, white over black, Western over African, and I would add, hetero- over homosexual. Viewing gender as performative facilitates deconstruction and reconstruction of heteronormative gender power relations by un-doing gender performance.

Several scholars have found the church in Africa culpable in promoting values that undermine women's sexuality (Oduyoye, 2004:88; Moyo, 2005:130-137), and, through justifying male sexual domination, perpetuating the vulnerability of women and girls to a number of SRH risks. These include gender based violence [GBV] (Chitando, 2012; Phiri, 2001; Haddad, 2002; Rakoczy, 2004a; 2004b) and HIV (Gennrich, 2004; Haddad, 2011; Chitando and Chirongoma, 2012). The church's contribution as a key driver of the HIV and AIDS pandemic has also been well documented (UNAIDS and UNDP, 2001,¹⁴ Haddad, 2011).

Many church teachings, public statements, and taboos that link sexuality with sin (Frederiks, 2011: 114; Denis, 2016: 69-72) have, through stigmatisation and silence, effectively minimalised or undermined women's needs and minimised women's suffering (as described in various contexts by Oduyoye and Kanyoro 2006: 4; Fansie, 1992: 139-141; Frederiks, 2011; Paterson, 2011; Denis, 2016:69-70; Haddad, 2002; Rakoczy, 2004b). Mabizela challenges the church: "If we... are part of the problem, shouldn't we be in the forefront ... to achieve gender equality?" (2015:1).¹⁵

Fortunately, Denis (2016:69) and Olivier and Clifford (2011:378-379) show that there have also been positive church initiatives that offer care and support to people living with

¹⁴ UNAIDS and UNDP. 2001. "Fact Sheet: Global Crisis, Global Action." UNGASS, New York, 25-27 June

¹⁵ Address at a consultation to develop a framework for collaboration between UNAIDS and religious leaders.

HIV survivors of gender based violence, and some have promoted inclusivity with respect to sexual diversity. Despite the negative contributions made by religion, various sectors working in public have since the late nineteen nineties shown renewed interest in the role of the religious sector in public health (Cochrane, 2006: 61); Denis, 2016: 65). Frederiks shows that ecumenical organisations have influenced more positive church statements regarding gender based violence, HIV, and sexual diversity since the year two thousand (2011:123).¹⁶ How this translates at local church level is an area for further research. In a sense, the creative liturgies in the Anglican Church in this study exemplify a church praxis that promotes health and wellness for SRHR.

How, then have scholars theorised the relationship between a church's core practices of worship, discipleship and mission, and its work in the world? In relation to gender and SRHR, is there and should there be, any relationship between a local church's ministries, its liturgical worship and practices and health and SRHR?¹⁷ Both Denis (2016:76) and Anderson (2016: 124) argue for the church to take seriously whether it contributes positively or negatively to gender justice. Anderson theorises how patriarchal church norms contribute to the gender and other inequalities that drive the HIV epidemic (2016:123-124), as discussed further in Chapter 3.

Cochrane argues that there is a direct link between health as wellness and the biblical notion of "abundant life" (John 10:10, NRSV), which is central to the church's call to ministry in the world. He also points out that the ancient Greek term for salvation (*soteria*) incorporates notions of healing and wellness. Thus, churches have the potential and the duty to become "religious health assets" (2006:62-63). Elisabet Eriksson et al (2013) and Anderson (2016:123, 134) propose that the church should consciously create conditions for health through a concern for the connection between health, power and justice. Monica Eriksson and Lindstrom (2006) demonstrate that, through offering care and support, the church potentially creates conditions that promote coping skills and

¹⁶ Examples of such organisations include INERELA (International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Affected by HIV and AIDS), IAM (Inclusive and Affirming Ministries) and CABSA (Church AIDS Bureau of Southern Africa). Refer also to examples in the online database of the CHART programme: www.chart.ukzn.ac.za .

¹⁷ The question as to whether liturgy can be said to be functional at all, has been controversial, but this study is based on the premise that liturgy does indeed influence how church members understand their call into the world.

resilience for health. Cochrane et al (2006:64-66, 2011) would call this social capital, or “what people, communities and societies do to protect, increase and maintain health” in line with “deep religious impulses” (2006:62, 65). Barnard and Wepener (2012: 4), and Barnard et al (2014:272-3) develop this idea in relation to liturgical space, which is elaborated in Chapter Three.

Many scholars draw on incarnational theology to propose that the church should recognise all people’s God-given dignity and agency (Kwok, 2010a, Joh, 2010, Cochrane, 2006, Siwila, 2015; Moyo, 2015). Within a supportive faith community, even the most vulnerable are thus able to take actions to survive and indeed to thrive, even in the context of poverty (Cochrane, 2006:65). Gibson proposes that one way to achieve this is through a church ethic that opens spaces for transformative process she calls “narrative repair”, where marginalised people’s stories can be heard and responded to meaningfully (2012:641). Denis (2016:76) suggests that the only way to break stigma is for HIV positive people to speak from the pulpit. Liturgy potentially is able to offer such spaces.

Churches exert a powerful ideological influence on the “healthworlds” of their members (as variously described by Jones, 2001:16; Cochrane, 2006:67; Schmid, Cochrane and Olivier, 2010, Denis, 2016:69, 76). For this influence to be positive, Cochrane argues, requires a new health discourse (2006:66), which Denis says, can contribute to “therapeutic citizenship” (2016:68). This is most often articulated in a religious community’s language choices. De Klerk maintains that local churches potentially influence attitudes to HIV through their theological teachings as reflected in their liturgical worship (2012:135, 153). Mabizela (2015:3) proposes a strategic shift in activist language to engage churches in SRHR: to move from a human rights to a parallel biblically rooted human dignity discourse. Liturgy offers just this kind of opportunity.

Liturgy thus potentially offers a key transformative contribution to a church’s capacity to address SRHR, since it articulates not only what its members believe, but also what they should believe and how to act (Procter Smith (1995:430). However, very little work has been done to explore this more deeply, and the current study hopes to offer further insight into this.

4 Christian Liturgy: Praise, Faith Formation and Social Justice for Health

This section focuses on church liturgy as a central aspect of the work of the church and as preparation for its work in the world. Liturgy, defined simply as public worship (versus private prayer) is the chosen focus of study, because of its influence on the lives of church members and its potential influence on health, wellbeing and sexual and reproductive rights, as described in the previous section.

Kwok (2010a:11); Senn (2012:13); Geldhof (2015:1) and Lathrop (1991; 1993) all argue that there is a close relationship between liturgy and faith formation of church members, over and above its stated intention of glorifying God. Christian liturgical worship is rooted in Scripture and its interpretation in the sermon (Lathrop, 1991:6; Lösel, 2005; Cilliers, 2009; Edgardh Beckman 2006; Carvalhaes, 2015). Edgardh Beckman views liturgical worship as “theology in the making”, since it expresses a faith community’s theology through the ways language, metaphor, rituals and symbols are employed (2006: Note 26).

Lathrop regards liturgy as primary theology because it emerges from direct experiences of encounter with God rather than from theories about God (1991:8). Procter-Smith (1990, 2010) agrees, adding that this is the reason why women need to reclaim liturgy so that it speaks to their own experiences of God as much as it does to men. The purpose of feminist liturgical theology, she says, is not only to challenge the church’s understanding of its identity, but also its relationship to God and, I add, to the world (2010:277).

But liturgy is more than worship and theological education. In her foundational work on symbol and ritual, Douglas argues that rituals, like language, are transmitters of culture generated in social relations and exercising a constraining effect on behaviour (1970:22). Similarly, Lathrop names two purposes of Christian liturgy: to create a sacred space for an encounter with God, and to act as an agent of transformation in church and society (1991; 1993). Berger (1999), Walton (2000) and Carvalhaes (2015) all trace the notion that liturgy has no real purpose back to modernist patriarchal claims to the existence of neutrality in worship, and the claimed innocence of theological, anthropological or

cultural knowledge produced through it. They propose different ways that liturgical meanings might be deconstructed within a hermeneutic of suspicion.

Both Lathrop (1991, 1993) and Barnard et al (2014:131-168) explain how language plays a key role in developing an emerging symbol system in liturgical worship. In a religious setting, metaphors and symbols are used as instruments to draw participants to worship by “a Word that is much, much more than words” (Sokolove, 2010:189) . Anglican liturgy¹⁸ is rooted in the church’s understanding of God’s continued self-revelation through the symbols used to define God and God’s relationship with God’s people. However, Schneiders (1991:42-45) and Abbey (2001:153-154) both warn that overused metaphors limit people’s experience of the plural identity of God. Carvalhaes similarly critiques the unidimensional characterisation of ‘the one Holy God’ by the colonial church as undermining the diversity of religious experience of colonised people (2015:13-15).

Both Rosa (2015:107) and Barnard et al (2014:207) see the body as the primary liturgical symbol. This idea holds a potential key for interrogating the role of liturgy in promoting health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights. Some of the debates around this are discussed in Chapter 3 and the final section, below.

4.1 Contentions, Continuities and Change: A Brief Historiography of the Twentieth Century Liturgical Movements

In his brief historiography of liturgy, Geldhof (2015) argues that what has become known as the liturgical renewal movement is not a single movement, but comprises periodic moments in all denominations, during which their liturgical traditions have been called into question and variously changed. Carvalhaes (2015:6) adds that these changes have tended to respond to particular historical and cultural developments, mostly to improve the relevance of liturgy to contemporary life.

Two important tangential developments that have emerged from this largely Western-originated liturgical movement are the ‘feminist turn’ since the 1970s (Berger, 1999:109) and the ‘postcolonial liturgical turn’ since early this century (Carvalhaes, 2015:5).

¹⁸ <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/liturgy.aspx>. Accessed 9th May 2016, 9 p.m.

The women's worship movement, or feminist liturgical movement, grew in the 1970s and '80s out of North American feminist women's disillusionment with forms of worship in the Roman Catholic Church that failed to speak into women's experience. Their approach included reinterpreting the patriarchal faith discourse in ways that represent women's experiences, as well as opening spaces for imagining the kind of church where all people could grow in authentic faith. (Procter Smith, 1990, 2010; Berger, 1999, Walton, 2000).

What appeared to be becoming a global movement of women's worship, lost momentum around the turn of the century. The impulse to establish safe women's worship spaces outside of formal church structures was gradually replaced with a focus on how to influence mainstream church worship (Walton, 2000; Procter Smith, 2010; Sokolove, 2010). Walton (2000:81-93) and Sokolove (2010:84-86) offer some useful principles for incorporating women's worship into mainstream church services. Berger (1999:152-154) is troubled by questions about whether the discourse of women's worship does not perhaps further the patriarchal gender system that excludes sexual diversity and thus contradicts the core value of inclusivism. Hill, however, rejects notions of inclusivism as patronising and prone to superficial reformism, and prefers the concept of openness (2001:loc.3653).¹⁹

Carvalhaes talks of a new postcolonial 'liturgical turn' which, while building on previous revisions of liturgical tradition, entails a far more radical shift from the centralised structures of the historically colonial churches. Both he (2015:5) and Swain (2015:166) point to a clear move away from the unitary missionary approach, to embracing diversity and the inculturation of liturgy. As a consequence of the multiple shifts in liturgical practice from the colonial normative centre, there is increasing scholarly interest in a wide variety of liturgical forms seen as both forms of worship and human ritual acts (Carvalhaes, 2015:1-7; Barnard et al, 2014: 37). For example, Moyo offers a case study where ordinary people in local congregations have been bringing their traditional cultural rituals and symbols into dialogue with their Western church tradition, to produce deeper and more authentic forms of worship (2015:100-104) that also promote social justice.

¹⁹ loc. in E-book references refers to the Kindle location marker.

Ian Douglas (2001) addresses some of the questions that the Anglican Communion has had to face in recent history in response to decolonial challenges to the imposition of English rational norms in worship. In Southern Africa, an important and difficult ongoing dialogue has been taking place since the development of the Prayer Book of 1989 around how close to stay to the English tradition, with the current revision process more overtly declaring its commitment to local contextualisation, at least through its subtitle: *Under Southern Skies, in an African Voice* (ACSA, 2016).

Postcolonial and feminist scholars of liturgy have thus demonstrated that liturgical renewal has not been a neutral process, but has been deeply influenced by its patriarchal, colonial social, political and economic history. Carvalhaes terms liturgies as “privileged spaces” with a profound influence on social and religious organisation, in which power dynamics play a vital role (2015:3). Teresa Berger’s extensive liturgical historiography (1999) highlights the marginalisation of women’s contributions to liturgical practice and to shaping liturgical history, through the exclusion of women’s and lay voices in the liturgical movement. Carvalhaes does something similar in his critique of how “colonisers have exploited notions of worship and liturgical practices” to promote colonial interests (2015:2). It is hoped that the present study might add to this literature.

4.2 Liturgical Studies: Different Approaches

4.2.1 Ecumenical and Reformed Theorists

Different scholars have variously used the term “liturgical reform” (Lösel, 2005, Carvalhaes, 2015, Wepener, 2014), “liturgical renewal”(Cilliers, 2009, Edgardh Beckman, 2006) to refer to movements for liturgical changes in different times and contexts. I prefer to use a third concept, which Cilliers (2009:511-512) and Barnard et al (2014:113) term “liturgical reframing”,²⁰ which entails reconfiguring underlying theological, cultural and anthropological conceptual frameworks upon which liturgy is built.

This section introduces two recent contributions to liturgical theology that are relevant to the study of formal liturgy with western roots, such as that of the Anglican Church of

²⁰ Cilliers (2009:512) has borrowed this term from Donald Capps. (1990. *Reframing. A new method in Pastoral Care*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press).

Southern Africa, and then considers some associated feminist and postcolonial contributions to developing a postcolonial feminist liturgical theology.

Lathrop (1991,1993, 1999, 2003) is perhaps the most frequently quoted recent Western liturgical scholar. He has produced a convincing liturgical theological framework for analysis of formal liturgy to explain how meaning is made through the use of the juxtaposition of seemingly opposed symbols and metaphorical language in the sacramental order to create “broken symbols” that break open the imagination in such a way as to facilitate encounter with the divine (1991:36-38). Lathrop’s main thesis that “Only One is Holy”,²¹ has been roundly criticised for its apparent narrow insistence on what appears to be a universally-imposed view of the Christian God. Barnard et al (2014:37-38) view this as reproducing the centralised legacy of western globalised churches. However, Carvalhaes’ postcolonial response is more nuanced, claiming God to be large enough to incorporate multiple conceptions of God (2015:15). Lathrop promotes inclusivity as well as women’s liturgical leadership, and counters clericalism and authoritarianism in worship as contradictory to the ministry of Jesus. Postcolonial scholars would agree with this stance (Carvalhaes, 2015:13-15; Moyo, 2015:97), although he fails to analyse the normative anthropological and cultural power relations inherent in church as well as Scripture.

Barnard, Cilliers and Wepener (2014) offer a second liturgical theological framework relevant to my study.²² It explores the relationship between liturgy and social development in the post-apartheid context of South Africa. A number of useful concepts are introduced. Perhaps the most useful is that of the liminality of liturgy as a space that offers much potential for facilitating spiritual encounter as well as influencing how people understand their relationship with God and their calling into the world (2014:65-66; 91-114). Barnard et al contend that liturgy is a cultural and anthropological, as well as

²¹ He is referring to the God of Jesus Christ, who stands behind all the 3 sacred symbols around which he frames his theology (things, people, ground) and makes them holy.

²² This has grown out of ten years of study amongst a number of reformed liturgical theologians based in Stellenbosch and Pretoria, who locate themselves in a late modernist approach. This section refers primarily to a joint publication in 2014, where they have articulated their various theories and concepts within a single framework.

theological, phenomenon, and propose that the most appropriate way to study liturgy is as “liturgical ritual”²³ (2014: 37-48).

While both frameworks offer some useful tools for my liturgical analysis, their main limitations relate to their failure adequately to address power relations in church and worship. I address this critique in more depth in Chapter Three.

4.2.2 *Towards Postcolonial Liturgical Theologies*

Carvalhoes argues that the nature of liturgical renewal involves both building on tradition (as do Lathrop and Barnard et al) and “challenging its work and possibilities” (2015:8). He coins the term “postcolonial liturgical theologies” (2015:2) to describe the study of liturgy by interrogating the power dynamics and forces of domination reproduced in liturgies in often hidden ways, which undermine the dignity and autonomy of people’s lives and faith journeys. Postcolonial approaches to liturgy also develop positive, embracing alternative forms of worship. Like Dube (2010), he suggests this may mean taking a hybrid option: incorporating context-appropriate symbols or rituals from a variety of traditions, or simply making small changes to a standardised prayer book in ways that promote an authentic contextually grounded faith (2015:16). Carvalhoes’ volume of diverse postcolonial case studies showcases worship forms that are rooted in diverse cultural and religious traditions in ways that reinvent liturgical knowledge (2015).

Feminist liturgical theologians would concur with postcolonial critiques of western approaches to liturgy, but they would warn against gender analysis and reconstruction being subordinated to a postcolonial analysis, given the tendency for women’s priorities to be subsumed into postcolonial or Africanist struggles and theologies (Oduyoye, 2004:99; Kanyoro, 2005:39).

The most valuable contributions of both postcolonial and feminist liturgical scholars have been their commitment to facilitating the necessary shifts in liturgical theological

²³ I have opted not to use their term ‘liturgical ritual’ for the sake of brevity, but I do agree that liturgy functions both to frame socio-cultural and anthropological meaning and to create a space for encounter with the sacred, thus also framing theological meaning.

discourse for liturgy to be used as a liberatory praxis within the Christian framework. Some of these are mentioned below.

4.2.3 *Women's Ways of Worship and Feminist Liturgical Theology*

Feminist approaches to liturgy are themselves contested, reflected in debates about the terminology used to describe this work²⁴ (Edgardh Beckmann, 2006:146-147). But they certainly agree on what Janet Walton sums up as the three main goals of feminist liturgy (2000:48): inclusiveness, truth-telling, and connecting worship with justice.

The women's - or feminist - liturgical movement has made significant contributions to the wider liturgical movement, as discussed earlier. Feminist liturgical theology, although restricted largely to the west, has also made significant contributions to liturgical theory. However, this work seems to have remained marginal, and recent liturgical theology is either silent on feminist approaches, or, like Carvalhaes (2015:4), mentions them only in passing. Given their disruptive potential, this is not altogether surprising.

Feminist liturgical scholars have asked important questions about how a liturgy that ostensibly centres round an encounter between God and God's people can be true, when the language, symbols and (mostly word-based, rational) patterns of liturgy do not speak to their experience and ultimately exclude them from the centre (eg. Procter Smith, 1990, Berger, 1999, Walton, 2000). Schneiders (1991), Procter-Smith (1990), and Oduyoye (2010) reject male imagery as undermining women's authentic spirituality.

Stuart calls for feminists to reclaim the sacramental, thereby resisting the association of the divine with a particular dominant group (2010:198). The inclusive vision of the life of Christ, reinforced by the sacraments, particularly the baptismal theological notion that every Christian becomes part of the living Body of Christ, enables one to live in one's local cultural context in ways that transform it (198). This is a common starting point also for other feminist liturgical theologies (Walton, 2000, Procter-Smith, 1990, 2010). Building on Schuessler-Fiorenza's movements within a feminist hermeneutics of suspicion (1985:15-22), both Procter-Smith (1990; 2010) and Carvalhaes (2015:16) call

²⁴ While acknowledging that my study draws on the liturgical work of women in different localities who would not define themselves as feminist, I have used the umbrella term 'feminist liturgy', to encapsulate the political nature of this theological work.

for critical remembrance (reclaiming subjugated voices) and imagination to be utilised for the development of liberatory liturgies in a postcolonial context.

A limitation of the feminist liturgical movement was that, as largely white, middle class, educated, western women, they drew much criticism from women elsewhere (Procter-Smith, 2010:226). Unfortunately, very few of their detractors themselves engaged deeply with the possibilities of women's liturgies, at least in a formal way (Berger, 2001:23). Berger reported almost no documented women's liturgical activities in Africa in 2001, even though women in Africa did engage in unique liturgical activities, for instance in meetings of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (Berger, 2001:24-25). This might be an interesting area of future research.

I have found only two South African perspectives that addresses the relationship between liturgy and any aspects of SRHR. Whereas Govinden (2003) makes an important contribution with respect to HIV, de Klerk's work on liturgy and HIV and gender based violence is gender-blind and critical of feminist belief in the authority of women's voices to counter-balance the dominant masculine voice in the bible and in worship (2012:155-173).²⁵ His approach to HIV, while embracing compassion, risks promoting stigma by presenting people with HIV as other (2012:135, 153). His solutions offer superficial changes within a traditional Reformed church paradigm without offering a meaningful challenge to its patriarchal and colonial normativity (2012:157-172) .

While there may be few documented women's liturgies in Africa, I have found two recent papers that do engage critically with colonial Christian liturgies from an African feminist perspective. While both Oduyoye (2004:83-85), and Phiri (2005:34) mention liturgy and menstruation briefly, Kiarie and Owino (2014) explore the monthly exclusion and self-exclusion from the Eucharist among Anglican women due to cultural beliefs that menstruation makes them 'unclean'. In addition, while proposing a return to African cultural values to counter oppressive biblical representations, Siwila (2015:91) finds that the two ideological positions actually collude to reaffirm women's exclusion and inferiority (2015:89). This struggle to retrieve the value of African cultural practices to

²⁵ He singles out Procter-Smith's (1990), and Graham and Halsey's (1993) work.

facilitate a more authentic African spirituality is also reflected in other African feminist theological writing (eg. Kanyoro, 2010, Oduyoye, 2010).

A number of valuable proposals for postcolonial liturgical theology and feminist liturgical theology by various scholars resonate in a patriarchal postcolonial context such as South Africa. In Chapter Six, I integrate insights from my liturgical analysis with feminist and colonial liturgical theological scholarship to offer some tentative proposals towards a set of characteristics of a postcolonial African feminist liturgical theology. While I hope that the current research will contribute, there is clearly a need for more postcolonial feminist liturgical research in African and South African contexts.

To sum up, this section has demonstrated that liturgy is a vital praxis through which churches give expression to their theologies and anthropological and cultural understandings, while also offering a space where theological reframing may influence how they understand their mission in the world. Thus, it offers a key site of struggle, which should be better utilised by postcolonial and African feminist theologians to re-imagine local churches as spaces that promote equitable, life-affirming relationships that make it possible for all people to enjoy their sexual and reproductive health rights. The final section begins to address what this might mean for liturgical worship.

4.3 Liturgy as Praxis in the Context of the Struggle for Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in South Africa

Any discussion about the church and SRHR cannot avoid considering how churches make meaning of the body and human sexuality, and the extent to which their theologies influence SRHR. This chapter ends with a brief look at some of the literature on incarnational and body theology, particularly in relation to liturgy.

4.3.1 Liturgy as Embodiment in a Disembodied Church

Both postcolonial and feminist theologies and approaches to liturgy have challenged the notion of ‘proper liturgy’ that is rooted in western patriarchal theology, which separates spirit, mind and body (Graham, 2009:124). They propose that liturgy ought to reflect the lived experiences of ordinary women and men, and argue that it is not just the word but

the body that is the fundamental symbol in liturgy (Schneiders, 1991:47-48; Carvalhaes, 2015:7).

Senn (2012:190-191), Barnard et al (2014) and Rosa consider liturgy to comprise “rituals and symbols that build a language to facilitate contact with the sacred through the expansion of the senses” (Rosa, 2015:107). Both Graham (2009:123-125), and Barnard et al (2014:207), point to ambivalence in how the body is represented in liturgy, as both actor and acted-upon by others. This ambivalence or liminality of the body is symbolised in the Body of Christ metaphor – simultaneously the lifeless yet resurrected body of Jesus, the locus of individual suffering and the primary metaphor for the global faith community, through baptism (Barnard et al, 2014:207-208).

For Pineda-Madrid (2010:24), body theology is a political act. She calls for the creation of theological constructs in liturgy that take women out of the exclusively symbolic realm and make space for lament about the harsh realities experienced by women’s bodies in a violent society, which is echoed by Barnard et al (2014:114) and many feminist liturgists (Proctor-Smith, 2010:288). She proposes that a sensitive liturgical remembering of the myth of the Christ event can hold the tensions between the dignity of women’s bodies and their frequent violation at the hands of violent systems, communities and individuals (2010:208). Feminist theologians such as Kwok (2010b:8); Rakoczy (2004a:384); and Graham (2009:79) have rejected patriarchal predilections for the inherent sinfulness of the body, preferring a theology that views sexuality as the primary vehicle for self-expression and creativity (Moyo, 2005:136; Kwok, 2010b:7; Graham, 2009:73; Mabizela, 2015). Rakoczy agrees, contending that reframing Eucharistic and baptismal symbols in a more embodied way might enable women to find themselves anew in liturgical worship (2004a:384-5).

Incarnational theology thus offers a radical hope: the incarnate God is present in our daily lives, in our bodies and our suffering (Joh, 2010, Moyo, 2005; Mabizela, 2015). This renders them sacred, which encourages people to find affirming ways of being in relationship with each other (Graham, 2009:53). Auga and Schirr (2014:37; 49-51) interpret Paul’s call for perpetually transforming one’s view of one’s body in Romans 12:2) as echoing Butler’s notion of performativity. Similarly, Althaus-Reid’s (2000:41) and Isherwood and Althaus Reid’s (2005:3-6) proposal for a “sexual theology” acknowledges the inherent heteronormativity in all theologies and calls for indecent

theologies that speak about taboo subjects, such as homosexuality or heterosexual women's sexual desire (Althaus-Reid, 2000:46; Mapuranga, 2012:77). Kwok adds that sensuality and sexuality cannot be separated from spirituality, and thus incarnation should be seen, not just as a religious doctrine but a spiritual practice (2010b:6). She adds that liturgy should enable the human body to be a reflection of God's image "in its plurality and multiplicity" (2010b:9). Mabizela (2015) advises that integrating sexuality and spirituality will require churches to analyse their underlying beliefs that undermine women's access to their SRHR, and to find positive ways to talk about sex and sexuality.

In sum, the literature on body theology highlights Christ's incarnation as a human body as fundamental to the sacraments of both Eucharist and Baptism. The same human body that is the temple of the Holy Spirit of Christ (Romans 12:1-2)²⁶ is the locus of sexual expression and of human suffering through violence. It is in this liminal space between human and divine expressions of love and holiness, oppression and violence, that this study locates itself.

5 Conclusion

This chapter has offered a broad overview of some theoretical, theological and liturgical theological debates relevant to my study. It has identified a number of gaps in the literature, primarily related to postcolonial and African feminist studies of the role of liturgy in promoting health, wellness and SRHR. The current study intends to contribute to this conversation.

The next chapter applies some of the relevant insights arrived at so far, to further explore the main theoretical principles that guide my methodological approach, and to explain some methodological tools that offer a framework for an applied critical discourse analysis of the liturgies in my sample.

²⁶ All biblical references are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible. 1989. Iowa Falls, Iowa: Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

Chapter Three: Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

“We are thus called to translate into concrete acts that which we invoke in prayer and profess in faith.” (Pope Francis, September 2016)

1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to conceptualise an epistemological framework and describe the methodology and methods for my liturgical analysis. These are grounded in an understanding of the form and functions of liturgy in mission initiated churches such as ACSA, while also being consistent with a postcolonial and African feminist theological perspective that has transformative praxis as its purpose within the African and South African context.

Liturgy is the chosen focus of study because of its influence on the lives of church members and its potential as a transformative instrument in the hands of a transformative church. Christian liturgy functions at the interface between a church’s theological underpinnings and its work in the world (Edgardh Beckman, 2006). My work is based in both substantive and functional views of religion. But it also approaches the liturgies critically, within a social constructionist perspective on religion.

The theoretical framework underlying this study has two dimensions. My optic framework is grounded in postcolonial feminist and African women’s theology, and my operational framework for liturgical analysis applies a postcolonial feminist theological approach to the study of liturgy. I periodically draw on feminist and postcolonial feminist approaches to biblical interpretation for my liturgical theological inquiry.

Liturgical worship expresses a faith community’s theology: its understanding of God, God’s people, and their calling in the world, as reflected in the language, metaphor, rituals and symbols employed (Senn, 2012; Suggit, 2009; Lathrop, 1991; 1993; Lösel , 2005. Liturgy can be said to be primary theology (Edgardh Beckman, 2006: note 26), because it emerges from primary experiences of encounter with God rather than from theories about God (Lathrop, 1991). However, from a postcolonial feminist perspective, liturgy is not innocent. Language choices and symbol systems employed influence how worshippers make meaning of their experience of God and influence how they live their lives.

Two key assumptions underlie my approach to this liturgical study: I view liturgies as more than forms of worship; they also serve to shape theological and ideological constructs, thus profoundly influencing people's attitudes and beliefs. Further, I believe that liturgies are obliged to inspire and challenge participants to reflect on their responsibility to contribute towards a more just world. I understand ACSA's liturgy to occupy a liminal space, itself in a transformation process as the church grapples to shake off vestiges of its patriarchal colonial legacy while remaining rooted in its liturgical inheritance (Anglicans Act, 2012).²⁷ Recent attempts²⁸ to develop liturgies that employ more gender inclusive language are an indication of this (ACSA, 2016:4).

Unfortunately, none of the approaches to liturgy surveyed in Chapter 2 offer an appropriate analytical framework for analysing the relationship between liturgy, gender and SRHR in a postcolonial church. Lathrop (1993,1999) and Barnard et al (2014), fail to provide a framework for effectively analysing gender or power relations in liturgy. Although Carvalhaes' early proposals for a postcolonial liturgical theology do address power relations in liturgy, he is silent (or whispers) about gender. On the other hand, feminist liturgical approaches (Berger, 1999; Walton, 2001; Procter-Smith, 1999) are not easily applied in a postcolonial African context because of their Western cultural origins. So my analytical approach comprises the most relevant liturgical theological concepts amongst mainstream liturgists together with common features of postcolonial and feminist approaches to liturgy.

Foundational to my theoretical framework is the need to explore the question: *what would it take for churches to become religious health assets that promote health and wellbeing for SRHR?* To do this, I adapt Cheryl Anderson's explanation of church culpability with regard to HIV and James Cochrane's (2006, 2011) notion of churches as potential health assets through building life-giving "healthworlds" (2006:67).²⁹

²⁷ Anglicans Act. 2012. "Liturgical Renewal for Transformative Worship." accessed 8th May 2016. <http://www.anglicansact.org/new-page-1.aspx>.

²⁸ As explained in the foreword to its initial experimental publication, *Celebrating Sundays*, September 2016.

²⁹ Rooted in the phenomenological notion of "lifeworlds" (the world as experienced subjectively).

2 Postcolonial African Feminist Theologies and Praxis

As discussed in Chapter 2, both postcolonial and feminist theology are not unitary fields, but are highly contested. A postcolonial feminist theological praxis affirms daily life and human bodiliness in ways that counter dualistic notions of male and female, body and spirit, and bring coherence between faith and daily life. Below, I outline some common principles of the different manifestations of postcolonial feminist theology,³⁰ as they relate to praxis. Since liturgy is a form of church praxis, I apply these to identify critical questions to guide my liturgical analysis in the context of SRHR.

First, postcolonial feminist theologians reject the privileging of the dominant patriarchal epistemological claims to objectivity and universalism, and are committed to deconstructing systems of knowledge, research and theology. Authentic knowledge can only be built from the perspective of one's own ontological standpoint. This has two implications: reflexivity is vital to valid research; and the lived experiences of women and the marginalised offer a valid theological starting point for theology and liturgy.

Postcolonial feminist theologians thus deliberately privilege the experiences of women and oppressed and marginalised groups, in line with their understanding of God as on the side of the oppressed. My liturgical study explores how the reframed liturgical sections do this in the context of the obligatory Anglican Prayer Book. It also interrogates how the power dynamics within ACSA, as expressed in the wider institution and in local congregational dynamics, might influence the space clergy feel they have in which to adapt the Prayer Book. An important question I address is: Whose interests are reflected in the liturgical sample, and how are they represented?

The term 'patriarchy' is an important analytical concept. I use it in its broadest sense that is akin to Schuessler Fiorenza's concept of "kyriarchy" (1992:8). This is important when studying liturgy, because it offers a more nuanced lens on the complexity of power relations in both church and society, as based on the interplay between gender as well as other factors to produce multiple structures of domination in church and society.

³⁰ Some of the key scholars upon which this summary is based include: Schuessler Fiorenza, 1983; Russell, 1996; Ackermann, 2004; Rakoczy, 2004; Nadar, 2006; Oduyoye, 2005; Phiri, 2006; Smith, 2010; Dube, 2010; Gebara, 2010; Kanyoro, 2001; 2005, 2010;

Postcolonial feminist theologians strive for inclusiveness and resist judgemental theologies. A sense of belonging and being accepted has important implications for health and wellbeing (Cochrane, 2006; Eriksson et al, 2006), and thus it is important to examine the extent to which the liturgical samples promote inclusivity.

Inclusivity is vital for transformative ways of doing both church and theology. It implies recognising diversity and integrating multiple voices in the creation of theological discourses. Three important questions for my study in liturgy as praxis come to mind. Do the ACSA clergy undertake their liturgical reframing in dialogue with others? Do the liturgical extracts represent a single universalised position, or do they reflect the multiplicity of cultures, gender and other intersectional identities that are part of the lived experiences of the congregation and community? And, in relation to ACSA, whose agenda is represented in standardised liturgies, and to what extent is the church open to local liturgical expressions in the light of the centrality of prescribed liturgies such as APB?

Lastly, postcolonial feminist theological research adds a practical justice dimension to the academic pursuit of knowledge. It is directed towards achieving social change, through exposing discrimination and oppression and opening space for communal theological imagination leading to transformative action. However, as an activist, I have noted that there is still a gap between theologians on the one hand and activists and women on the other, which may be why many profound theological insights do not ultimately change the world as intended. Incorporating transformative symbols and metaphors and introducing creative approaches to traditional church liturgies have the potential to bridge this gap, but it requires that the liturgy express some sort of commitment to action after the service.

3 Theorising the Role of Church Worship in Promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: Liturgy that Promotes Life

Chapter two has reviewed some of the debates concerning the role of religion in promoting or hindering the achievement of SRHR. Oduyoye (2004:79-88) and Moyo (2005:130-136) consider challenging the religious and African cultural realities that undermine women's sexual and reproductive health, pleasure and freedom, as a vital strategy for achieving their vision for a new humanity, as well as women's liberation. I

have elected to use the term *rights*, despite its belonging to a human rights rather than religious or African cultural discourse, although I am cognisant that individual rights and communal needs are intricately related. I use this term in alignment with the biblical concept of human dignity, as the intrinsic value of all human beings created in God's image (Knox-Seith and Daka, 2014:8-9), and as "persons-in-communion" (Oduyoye, 2004:88).

What, then, is the relationship between a church's liturgical worship and SRHR? Health as holistic wellness (World Health Organisation, 1946) links directly to the biblical notion of "abundant life" (John 10:10, NRSV), which is central to the church's call to ministry in the world (Cochrane, 2006:60).

Biblical scholar Cheryl Anderson (2016: 123-125) draws on Josef Galtung (1969) and Farmer, Connors and Simmonds (2011) to postulate a theory of why HIV prevalence is greatest amongst members of marginalised groups. She proposes that HIV is a form of visible violence, which is directly linked to structural and cultural factors, which can be regarded as forms of invisible violence. Cultural violence includes harmful socio-cultural attitudes propagated through aspects of a society's art, language, ideology and religion (including liturgy). These attitudes and beliefs serve to legitimate structural violence related to the socio-economic inequalities that drive the HIV epidemic, such as gender inequality, homophobia and poverty. In other words, one cannot simply assume that HIV infection and other diseases are an individual's responsibility, since people make decisions within the context of cultural and structural constraints. The less social power a person has, the less free will be their decisions about their health.

Anderson argues that, through propagating the mythical norm of the superiority of the white male heterosexual, the church contributes significantly to the cultural violence that justifies forms of structural violence, which in turn, increase the vulnerability of those with low social power to HIV. On the other hand, the sense of superiority among those who meet the church's standard militates against a compassionate response to people with HIV (2016:123-124).

Her framework can be applied to a wide array of SRHR, such as attitudes that determine what is considered decent sexual expression, rights over reproductive decisions and

mothering, and men's authority over women and their bodies. All of these may serve to grant some level of impunity to men regarding how they express their dominance.

On the other hand, Cochrane proposes that churches should and can be harnessed as potential health assets, because of their influence on the "healthworlds" of their members. Healthworlds are socially constructed through a community's language and the ways their churches and cultures articulate matters of health. Liturgy potentially offers either an oppressive or a positive transformative contribution to the healthworlds of congregants, since it "not only expresses what we believe, but what we ought to believe, and how we should act" and is thus "a powerful shaper of human consciousness" (Procter-Smith, 1995:430).

But what enables liturgical worship to contribute to social capital rather than being a source of cultural violence? Haddad (2013)³¹ calls for further research to gain a better understanding of the influences of intangible assets of religion on HIV (and, I add, other SRHR matters) including faith expressions such as prayer, worship and related rituals. It is hoped that the current liturgical study is able to contribute something to answering this question.

It is my sense that whether a church's liturgy can be said to contribute towards health and wellbeing is influenced by the extent to which its worship consciously avoids any forms of cultural violence, speaks out against structural violence, and promotes life-affirming values such as dignity, agency, mutuality and respect in relationships, and hope. How this might be achieved is the subject of my analysis.

4 Towards a Liturgical Analytical Framework

Liturgical studies comprise three distinct but interrelated areas of liturgical study: liturgical historiography, liturgical theology, and pastoral liturgy (Geldhof, 2015). While I address all three in this study, in this section my focus is on liturgical theology. I explicate some key concepts and theories about liturgy offered by Western ecumenical,

³¹ Haddad, Beverley. 2013. "Religion and HIV and AIDS: Charting the Terrain." "Contending with HIV, Contending with the Church: Building a Redemptive Religious Community". Slide 12. A Consultation. 6-8 May 2013, Salt Rock Hotel, Durban.

postcolonial and feminist liturgical scholars, and relate these to my approach to this liturgical study.

4.1 Basic Concepts

The word ‘liturgy’ has its origins in the Greek *leitourgia*, generally associated with service and the work of God’s people (Suggit, 2009:vii; Senn 2012:4; Carvalhaes, 2015: 3), but also for God’s people (Grunenfelder, 2014:330). Christians believe that worship is initiated by God, who meets with God’s people through the liturgy of worship “as a means of grace” (Senn, 2012:5). Avis maintains that liturgy brings worshippers into authentic contact with the divine through stimulating the imagination, mediated by the linguistic tools of metaphor, symbol and myth (1999:vi). Most scholars agree that liturgy, as the combination of words, gesture, actions, images and objects accorded sacred value, produces theological meaning, a sense of encounter with the divine and also influences how worshippers live their lives (Suggit, 2009:13-21; Avis, 1999:vi).

At its most basic, liturgy is a medium through which public worship is enacted. It is a form of ritual, or repeated communal act with special symbolic significance, that involves relating to a higher purpose as well as others engaged in the ritual (Senn, 2012: 11). Communal worship is conducted through ritual primarily by means of symbols and metaphors, which together carry meaning beyond the literal, often related to myth. A myth is a sacred story that tends to be taken as true because it relates to some fundamental truth of the human condition (Rosa, 2015:112).³² The meaning of a ritual or symbol (sign with multiple possible mundane or sacred meanings) is often grounded in such a myth. Christian liturgy is primarily rooted in the mythology of the Bible and related texts, with the story of the life, death and resurrection of Christ being central to the Eucharist.

4.1.1 Liturgies as complex symbol systems

A specific kind of religious discourse is created by means of the juxtaposition of diverse and often seemingly contradictory symbols and ritual acts, in ways that facilitate spiritual experience (Lathrop, 1991:14, 36-37). Moreover, God is understood to intervene directly through the liturgy, particularly the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, which are seen

³² Rosa draws on Mircea Eliade, 1963. *Mito e Realidade*. Sao Paulo: Perspective:13.

to impart God's invisible grace through the performative speaking over visible symbols such as water, bread or wine (Senn, 2014:15; Macdonald, 2013:4). Liturgies are part of broader complex symbol systems that make up a religion (Senn, 2012:8). The multiple meanings that symbols and metaphors carry can change over time and in different contexts (Schneiders, 1991:44-46; Lathrop, 1991:37-38). In liturgical worship, symbols and metaphors are drawn from biblical and other sacred texts as well as daily life (Lathrop, 1991:22).

Language plays a key role in developing emerging symbol systems in liturgical worship, through the use of literary devices such as metaphor. Metaphorical language evokes spiritual experience by appealing not only to the mind, but also the emotions, senses and imagination (Schneiders, 1991:42-47; Avis, 1999:13-15). Language itself is metaphorical, since it can never fully represent the ideas it is attempting to represent (Schneiders, 1991:47). However, if a metaphor is over-used, its meaning becomes naturalised as fact, and becomes a "dead metaphor" (Schneiders, 1991:45). For instance, God as Father, or God as the only Holy One, have effectively obliterated the use of many other evocative images for God in most liturgical forms, thus undermining the diversity of people's religious experience (Schneiders, 1991:42-45; Carvalhaes, 2015:13-15). Abbey warns against making God, the Supreme Being "an idol created in the image of man" (2001:149).

4.1.2 *Structural Considerations*

Lathrop³³ describes a common structure that he argues underlies all Christian liturgies. As a proponent for ongoing ecumenical liturgical renewal, Lathrop tries to hold in tension a respect for tradition and the need for responsiveness to developments in different times and contexts.

³³ Lathrop's liturgical theology, developed over 15 years, is published in 3 volumes, which study three aspects of liturgical theology, clarified in their titles - *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*, *Holy People: A liturgical Ecclesiology*, *Holy Ground: A liturgical Cosmology*. It is grounded in an initial publication (1991) consisting of three essays that together provides an overview of the foundations for his liturgical theology. Although his works were developed over time, the essence of his framework has not changed. This section does not make reference to specific sections, except for quotations.

Lathrop examines the ways the underlying organisation, or the *ordo*³⁴, of worship is established through the juxtaposition of seemingly opposed elements: ordinary and biblical symbols and metaphors result in “broken” symbols. These create fresh perspectives on old truths in the light of everyday experiences, in ways that open participants to encounter with God (1991:21, 36-37). This takes place against the backdrop of Christianity’s root myth, the Christ-event, usually represented in the sacrament of Eucharist.

Sacred significance is achieved by the integration of two main parts of a Christian liturgical worship service: the Word and the Sacraments (Senn, 2012, Suggit, 2009, Lathrop, 1993). Biblical readings, interpreted by a preacher, are followed by prayerfully bringing all the concerns of the assembly to the table of the risen Jesus, who is believed to be present. In this way, Lathrop says, death and life are juxtaposed, in the midst of the now and the not-yet – to produce a new hope that participants are challenged to take out into the world to reveal God where God is hidden, through the way they live their daily lives (Lathrop, 1991:42-43). Edgardh Beckman adds that the Gathering and Sending define the level of inclusiveness of the gathering, as well as overtly sending out its members to carry out God’s mission in the world (2006:159).

But liturgy is more than words. Worship is experienced through the senses and performed by bodies – bodies that kneel, sing, raise their hands, eat bread and wine, and receive anointing with oil (Rosa, 2015:110-111). In a sense, the body can be said to be the primary liturgical symbol, which not only passively experiences worship through the senses, but actively shapes worship, as well as taking the liturgical experience out into the world (Suggit, 2009:13-21; Barnard et al, 2014:5; 207-240).

4.2 *The Functions of Liturgy*

Liturgy can be said to achieve four possible purposes. It can simply guide worship and create a space for the enjoyment of being in God’s presence. It can shape the theologies of worshipers, or teach them the basic doctrines of the church. Liturgy can also direct

³⁴ The *ordo*, used in the Catholic tradition, essentially refers to the internal shape of the liturgy, as well as the liturgical year, the appointed readings, prayers, vestments and other aspects of wider liturgy for different days of the year.

participants how to live their lives, and can prepare them to answer God's call to participate in God's wider mission for social justice in the world.

The most valuable concept developed by South African Reformed liturgists, Cilliers (2010:343) and Barnard et al (2014:4) is the "liminality of liturgy", which parallels both the liminal nature of modern society (Barnard et al, 2014:71) and the essentially liminal nature of God, as eternal yet incarnate. It offers a useful way to theorise how liturgy holds the tensions between the contradictory nature of life and faith and opens the space for juxtaposed symbols and metaphors to be interpreted meaningfully. Worship is a kind of marginal space, where socio-cultural norms do not need to hold, and people are able to relate in new ways, which potentially influence their relationships as they move back into their everyday lives. Liminal space thus has a great potential for engendering transformation (2014:69). I explore its implications for my liturgical study in Chapter 4.

But postcolonial and feminist approaches to liturgy demonstrate that neither liturgy, nor liturgical renewal movements, are neutral. Thus, it is important to go beyond reform to "liturgical reframing" (coined by Cilliers, 2010:343 and developed by Barnard et al, 2014:4). This implies reconfiguring the underlying theological, cultural and anthropological conceptions upon which a liturgy is built. It requires deliberate choices about metaphors, symbols and other linguistic devices as well as the structures and regulations associated with ritual acts, because they shape how participants understand the world, their identity and their status, roles and responsibilities within their world (Tonkiss, 1998:247). As Antonio Carvalhaes puts it: "The formation and development of knowledge in our liturgies reveal how we want to hold life" (2015:9).

4.3 Value and Limitations of Mainstream Liturgical Theologies

The traditional framework within which Lathrop (1991, 1993), Suggit (2009) and Senn (2012) work has been widely criticised. However, I find some aspects of their theories useful. Barnard et al (2014:2) criticise the idea of a common underlying structure of all of Christian liturgy, but it is appropriate for my research in the Anglican context, which relies on a strongly centralised liturgical Prayer Book that clergy are not at liberty to replace. My research sample primarily contains sections of liturgical prayers rather than whole alternative liturgies. This involves a combination of "carrying forth traditioning"

and creating “within the porous spaces unknown forms of life [and] thinking, other possibilities of the holy” (Carvalhaes, 2015:8,13). It is also consistent with Dube’s notion of strategic hybridity to affirm those aspects of tradition that are life-affirming for women (2002: 117).

Lathrop shows how the internal structure of liturgy and its use of juxtaposition hold the potential for its reformation (1991:40). Given the centralised nature of Anglican liturgical tradition, this opens opportunities to deconstruct aspects of liturgy that have ossified, through re-membering or reclaiming old symbols and rituals in ways that are life-giving and health-promoting (Procter-Smith, 1990:69, 288).

Many mainstream liturgical theorists promote inclusivity and counter clericalism and authoritarianism in worship,³⁵ which is also a hallmark of feminist liturgies. Moreover, they identify the local assembly as the proper place for liturgical activity and reform, rather than a centralised structure

However, mainstream liturgists are limited. They mostly fail to analyse the normative anthropological and cultural power relations inherent in church liturgy and patriarchal interpretations of Scripture. Although Lathrop asserts that liturgical language and symbols communicate Christ’s redemption in light of human need to bring about justice, he claims that somehow, this process takes place above human power struggles, “without recruiting us for any ideology” (1991:49-50).

Whereas Suggit (2009), Senn (2012), Barnard et al (2014), Cilliers (2010) and Lathrop (1991, 1993) are critical of the modernist assumptions in much of the liturgy of mission churches such as ACSA, their work remains rooted in a patriarchal epistemological framework. None of them is clear enough about their own positionality, which results in their analysis retaining a semblance of neutrality that fails to offer more than a superficial analysis of how power relations operate in liturgy. Moreover, while Barnard et al (2014) do try to root their theory in practical examples, their analysis remains aloof, fails to give voice to lived realities of the participants in the liturgical rituals that they observe, and is

³⁵ For instance, Lathrop (1991,1993; Barnard et al, 2014; Senn, 2012; Suggit, 2009). The most influential feminist liturgists include Berger, 1999, 2011, Walton, 2000, 2010 and Procter-Smith, 1990, 1995, 2010)

gender-blind. This offers a clear warning to me to adopt a conscious reflective approach in my current endeavour and to listen for the many voices at work.

Nevertheless, I have gleaned some useful ideas from Lathrop for critical questions of any liturgical sample that resonate with my own inquiry: What does the [worship] assembly mean for our time? Does it hold and reorient our experience, proposing social as well as personal meaning? Does it give us bearings on our world? Can the recovery of strong communal symbols enable communal hope and communal action in our society? (1991:46-47)

4.4 Towards Postcolonial Feminist Liturgical Theologies

I have been unable to locate a liturgical analytical framework that is rooted in both postcolonial and feminist perspectives. Antonio Carvalhaes' collection is the only explicit attempt to develop a postcolonial approach to liturgical theology, and I have found no systematic (South) African women's liturgical theology, although worship has been addressed briefly by theologians such as Oduyoye (2004) Kanyoro (2001, 2010) and Dube (2010). Therefore, I draw on a combination of postcolonial and feminist approaches to liturgy, and set them alongside the postcolonial and African feminist theological perspectives outlined in the first part of this chapter.

It is my contention that the fundamental stratifying principle in mainstream church liturgies is undeniably gender, and that this has key significance for the church's potential contribution to SRHR. However, this has to be tempered with an intersectional approach for liturgy to become inclusive, emancipatory and transformative within the South African context. Thus, I am applying a form of 'strategic essentialism' (Jones, 2010:129).

4.4.1 Deconstructing Power Dynamics

Reinventing liturgical knowledge is the priority of both feminist liturgical theologians (Procter-Smith, 1990, 2010; Berger, 1999, 2011; Walton, 2000, 2010), and Carvalhaes (2015). Liturgical strategies include deconstructing power dynamics and oppressive forms of knowing and ways of being church, through "expansive juxtapositions" (Carvalhaes, 2015:9). This involves juxtaposing "our daily struggles, practices, theories, tradition and imagination" (Carvalhaes, 2015:2). Like Lathrop (1991, 1993) they further

argue that life-giving liturgical rituals must thus carry within them the seeds of transformative vision.

4.4.2 *Hybridising Liturgies*

In addition, both feminist and postcolonial approaches reject the rigid liturgical theological assumptions and traditions of Western patriarchal colonial churches, because it inevitably requires the subjugation of diversity. This means questioning assumed ways of thinking about liturgy and affirming the value of spontaneous worship that is responsive to context and people's everyday experiences. This demands a critical review of the Anglican Communion's concept of the universal truth being expressed in local "vernacular moments" (de Lima, 2001: loc.745): Does it promote hybrid worship that affirms life-giving aspects of received tradition while embracing new liturgical manifestations, or is it an invitation to mere mimicry and negative hybridity that signals loss of identity and sovereignty?

4.4.3 *Reframed Liturgy as Resistance*

Neither women nor colonised people have ever simply accepted colonial forms of worship but have found multifarious ways of resistance. In response to the imposition of tight liturgical formulas, women and colonised people have found ways to reinterpret these in creative ways that dialogue with their experiences. While Western feminists have developed separate worship spaces for women, others make small or larger changes within established spaces, recognising that they are not neutral. The transformative possibilities of liturgy lie in the multiple context-specific meanings carried by metaphors.

4.4.4 *Diversity in Unity*

While rejecting Lathrop's insistence that '*only One is Holy*', Carvalhaes also upholds its truth - as long as this truth belongs to all and is not monopolised by one religious tradition or colonial church. Thus, he views God's oneness as containing all religious conceptions of God, who is larger than all human religion. This would mean that all religions could own the One God, while also respecting that theirs is but one of many conceptions of the "plural One" (2015:15). This parallels the explorations of multiple feminine images of God in biblical and liturgical tradition.

In conclusion, liturgy is more than a formulary for public worship, and is not neutral. Like any discourse, it constructs meaning and thus influences both the theological understanding of worshippers and their perceptions of social constructs such as gender, health and other aspects of SRHR, which ultimately affect how they interpret who they are, and how they live their lives.

I have opted for postcolonial and African feminist approaches to liturgy in the South African context because of my own bias against all forms of oppression and violations of dignity and integrity, with a strong emphasis on gender. This requires interrogating any underlying patriarchal, androcentric, kyriarchal or Western colonial traditions and epistemologies, and examining whether and how the samples include a variety of context-appropriate religious and cultural symbols or rituals in reconstructing life-giving liturgies that indirectly or directly promote sexual and reproductive health rights.

5 Methodology

5.1 Research Context and Reflexivity

This study is located primarily in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, focusing on South Africa, with KwaZulu Natal Province (KZN) as focal point, although I have also included one other South African sample, from the Eastern Cape. All the liturgies have been written by Anglican clergy, but some have been used in ecumenical services, relying on Anglican formats.

My intersectional location as a white South African woman with a long history as a gender activist in the church and NGO sectors, as well as an Anglican lay minister, has influenced my choice of a postcolonial feminist framework. In the context of my research, this approach takes as its starting point those who are least likely to access their SRHR. My orientation is also grounded in my experience in writing liturgies myself, both as a lay minister since 1994 and as director of an ecumenical social justice NGO. This latter engagement in particular taught me the power of liturgy to inspire engagement in social justice issues.

I must however confess some discomfort with using a postcolonial paradigm, since it has quite rightly largely been the preserve of indigenous scholars. I take some comfort from Dube (2010). She argues that women from both (former) coloniser and former colonised

groups colonised can engage in postcolonial theology, if conscious of their different standpoints and possible blind spots, and willing to privilege the voices of those most oppressed by the dominant social systems and ideologies (2010:97), given the fact that Western (white) women have benefited from imperialist history. As a longstanding activist for social transformation in church and society in South Africa who has stood in solidarity with those oppressed by the legacy of apartheid and related systemic injustices, I remain convinced of the value of a postcolonial lens applied at local level. However, I take to heart Sugirtharajah's warning that postcolonial discourse should not be used lightly (2001:271). I consider my standpoint then, to be one of learner and listener, and enter into the postcolonial space with caution. I stand in a liminal space as a white South African woman with a calling to be an ally of those in struggle. In this sense, I take seriously two rules for those who see themselves as allies, proposed by Eusebius Mckaiser: "show humility when someone else is talking about their lived experiences; and... never ever think you've figured it all out about people who are fundamentally different to you".³⁶

Whereas some scholars, like Barnard et al (2014), claim South Africa is no longer in transition after over 20 years, I disagree. The rise of gender justice activism and the democratic government's adoption of a women's empowerment political agenda has destabilised gender identities in South Africa as never before. However, the patriarchal system and concomitant discourse fields that underlie all political, economic and religious systems has not shifted meaningfully, even though some of its symptoms such as gender based violence are increasingly the subject of public discussion. Unfortunately, this is not overtly addressed in Barnard et al's discussion of the cultural and anthropological nature of liminality, nor in their theological analysis. While they concede that feminism has resulted in relationships being in a liminal state, they fail to take into account the contestations around what this means for peace and stability and do not touch on it at all in relation to the church.

I concur with Betty Govinden's criticism of feminist and African women's and other progressive theologians such as Dube and Kanyoro for not recognising the transformative

³⁶ <http://www.702.co.za/articles/16188/you-don-t-know-everything-about-black-people-says-eusebius-to-caller>. Accessed 01.09.2016.

power of liturgy and worship as the site of struggle where their transformative theologies can find expression in the primary theology that is liturgy (2003:263). I hope that this study might inspire further work in the area.

5.2 Research Questions

Before I describe the methodology and methods I employ in this study, I reiterate my research question and critical sub-questions below:

How do selected creative liturgical practices recently developed in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights?

Critical Sub-questions:

1. What lessons can be learnt from the recent history of Anglican and wider liturgical practice and reform in South Africa during and after apartheid in relation to social change, with a focus on gender and SRHR in particular?

2. 1 How do selected locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights?

2.2 How do the clergy who have reframed their liturgies theologically understand their reframing?

3. What are some practical and liturgical theological implications of the findings in the liturgical samples?

5.3 Epistemological Framework and Methodology

As described above, my epistemological framework is situated in a postcolonial and African feminist paradigm. I take gender as the fundamental organising principle of postcolonial patriarchal institutions such as ACSA. This operates alongside multiple other intersectional social variables within the context of a postcolonial church that is itself on a transformative journey to integrate life-giving aspects of tradition with new perspectives that embrace diversity (ACSA, 2016:4). I also choose to focus on gender because research has shown that gender power relations are foundational to the extent to which women are able to access SRHR services, able to exercise choice with respect to the sexuality and

reproductive capacities, and live free from violence and coercion (Moyo, 2005:136-137; Knox-Keith, 2005:18).

My methodological approach is thus located in a qualitative feminist research paradigm, within a postcolonial framework that is rooted in poststructuralism. Working within a feminist paradigm allows me to ask new questions of liturgy, such as my central research question, with the intention of accessing subjugated knowledge that often remains invisible in the texts of patriarchal institutions (Hesse-Biber, 2012:17-18). I interrogate issues of power and authority as they are expressed through the language of liturgy. I address issues of feminist ethics, which assume as foundational the dignity of all human beings, and sexual and reproductive health as a fundamental right. It is significant that, to my knowledge, no systematic liturgical theology currently exists from a postcolonial and African feminist perspective, and my hope is that this study may contribute to knowledge-building in this area.

The origins of poststructuralist and postcolonial and feminist paradigms differ, but all three are grounded in some common principles (Bowman, 2014: paragraph 11).³⁷ First, knowledge is regarded as socially constructed through various norms and power relations, rather than fixed or natural. Feminists specifically focus on gender power relations, while a postcolonial lens focuses on colonial and imperialist legacies. Moreover, text is considered to have no inherent meaning. Its meaning is constructed through interaction between a reader (or listener) and the text, in light of their contextual location and the power relations influencing the reader and the producer of the text. All three paradigms critique the naturalisation of socially dominant meanings of texts, and the consequent reproduction of power relations, through language and other social strategies (Bowman, 2014).³⁸ Finally, all three paradigms motivate the deconstruction of these meanings and power relations, as well as reconstructing these to imagine alternative meanings.

³⁷ Bowman, Paul. 2014. "Poststructuralism, postcolonialism, postmodernism." Ranciere Blogspot, 23rd January 2014. <http://ranciere.blogspot.co.za/2014/01/poststructuralism-postcolonialism.html> . Date of access 23.10.2016.

³⁸ Bowman draws on Roland Barthes (1977). *Image, Music, Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath. London: Fontana. Jacques Derrida (1982). *Margins of Philosophy*. Brighton: Harvester. Date of Access 23.10.2016

For my purposes, then, I assume that the discursive meanings represented in traditional liturgical texts associated with God, God's relationship to humanity, health, healing and gender relationships have been constructed within a particular theological and historical context, even if they are presented as objective and universal (Weedon, 1987:104-105). This means that they can and do change - even if they have been used in a particular way for centuries. I also contend it is possible, at least in principle, radically to transform the ways that biblical and theological concepts are represented in liturgy. This can be achieved by employing language and discourse tools in creative ways within conventional liturgical tools, or by creating new ones. Finally, I suggest that, for liturgy to maintain vital significance in people's lives, it has to be able to respond to contemporary needs and contextual changes in different times and places (Kanyoro, 2010:33).

In sum, my analytical approach examines reframed sections of ACSA liturgies from a critical perspective, which focuses on how language is used to influence religious belief systems that directly or indirectly impact social and cultural norms and practices.

Reframing even small sections of the APB Eucharist, constitutes a form of resistance, in that it or interrupts the dominant patriarchal (post)colonial discourse reproduced through standardised liturgies such as APB. And any new competing discourses that emerge constitute a form of "reverse discourse" (Weedon, 1987:106). My analysis searches for signs of alternative discourses in the liturgical extracts.

The paradigm has also influenced how I facilitated the focus group, as a largely unstructured conversation, stimulated by an initial question, and two further questions to re-focus the conversation. This was appropriate, given that the participants were specialists in their field, as trained clergy, and it is consistent with the feminist understanding of the value of collaboration in knowledge production.

5.4 *Methods*

I have applied multiple qualitative methods in my data production and analysis and have two data sources (Hesse-Biber, 2010:3), as described below.

6 The Research Process

6.1 *Data Production: Sources, Sampling, Instruments and Methods*

Two types of data have been collected: liturgical texts and a focus group discussion.

6.1.1 *Primary data sources and research instruments*

Liturgical Extracts

Given the time limitations, the focus was on liturgical texts, including the Eucharistic prayer, other prayers, sermon texts and prayers for special religious festivals or global days of observance, such as World AIDS Day or the 16 Days Campaign on violence against women and children.

The original intention was to analyse the written liturgies of whole church services. Instead, the sample consists for the most part of sections of worship services, concentrating primarily on Eucharistic Prayers and sermons. The rubrics in *An Anglican Prayer Book* [APB] (1989),³⁹ which prescribe the basic framework of the standard Sunday Eucharist service, only permit alternative prayers at specific points. However, limited space is provided for inserting alternative forms, with the intention of connecting a congregation's worship with their local situation. It is creative insertions in these spaces that are the basis of the liturgical sample under study.

The data production has focused on meanings conveyed and discourse tools used rather than the technical structure of the liturgical forms and sermons. I read through the samples several times and colour-coded them according to emerging themes, which were then combined into three overriding thematic threads as a framework for discussion of the findings in Chapter 5.

Unstructured Focus Group Discussion: A Conversation Amongst Clergy

A single focus group conversation was held with eleven Anglican priests, five of whom had submitted liturgies for analysis, and six who had volunteered after expressing an

³⁹ APB was specifically titled AN Anglican Prayer Book rather than THE Anglican Prayer Book, as it was felt to be just one amongst many. The acronym APB thus stands for *An Anglican Prayer Book* and is treated as a proper noun.

interest. One submitted sermons after the focus group meeting, having been affirmed that his work is worth sharing. The time was limited to approximately 45 minutes as it was held during lunch at Diocesan Synod (5th October 2016). This was unavoidable, because the heavy schedules of the clergy and their widespread geographical locations made it extremely difficult to find a common time and place to meet. Nevertheless, an intense conversation yielded some highly informative insights, some of which are interwoven into my liturgical analysis and others form the basis of a discussion in Chapter Six on the practical implications of liturgical renewal in a large postcolonial patriarchal church such as ACSA.

Sampling

Stratified purposive sampling was used (Dawson, 2007:50), to achieve two purposes: to select clergy with an interest in liturgy and to select liturgical extracts from bodies of material submitted by the clergy. Snowballing was used, through referrals from clergy already participating and the ACSA Provincial Gender Desk. In addition, random sampling was employed, by means of a letter of invitation to participate to all clergy, sent out by the diocesan bishop's office. This combination of approaches enabled me to focus on liturgies which have already been reframed, as well as including further clergy in the focus group whom I may not have reached otherwise.

I have included some extracts from the experimental liturgical resources published by ACSA's Liturgical Committee newly-released in September 2016. This allows me to compare and contrast strategies employed by individual clergy in their local contexts with those employed as part of centrally developed liturgical resources intended for use across the Province of Southern Africa.

I had developed a schedule of questions to the liturgical excerpts to guide my analysis, but ultimately, I employed a more open discourse analysis approach, and recorded key themes related to theological perspectives on SRHR as they emerged, as well as identifying key discourse strategies employed in the texts.

6.1.2 *Secondary data sources and research instruments*

Secondary data sources include existing literature and other texts already written on the subject. The historiography in Chapter Four of liturgical practice and renewal in South Africa in relation to social justice and SRHR has been informed by two main types of sources: scholarly literature on liturgy, social justice and SRHR, and web pages and documents published by the Anglican Communion and ACSA regarding liturgical renewal processes. This has essentially comprised a small systematic literature study, based on both thematic and historical analysis.

I had prepared to obtain further information through posing additional questions to members of the ACSA Liturgical Committee, but ultimately had no need, as their published information over the past eight years is highly comprehensive.

Sampling

The main references were found in material on the historical context of, and related contestations within, the Anglican Communion and ACSA. Attempts to find liturgical material with a specific focus on social justice and SRHR largely failed, which led me to complement the liturgical literature with a more general survey of studies on liturgy and social justice, and postcolonial and African feminist writing on SRHR that had some relevance to liturgy.

6.2 *Data Analysis: Methods and Procedures*

6.2.1 *Liturgical Texts*

Thematic Analysis:

The main emerging themes were identified in relation to liturgy, gender, health, wellness and SRHR. Bearing in mind that the data was already pre-selected as per my research question, this has not been an entirely inductive process. However, what has emerged inductively is theological representations of the SRHR themes, and how these are represented through discourse and language use.

Discourse Analysis:

The main focus of my study is on language choices and symbolic juxtaposition. The liturgical analysis is premised on the belief that language is not simply a neutral tool for communicating ideas, but actively shapes how we understand the world, ourselves and society (Tonkiss, 1998:246). Thus it influences power relations and is an ideological tool of social control (Fairclough, 1989:2-3). This has influenced my choice of Critical Discourse Analysis as my primary analytical tool.

Hence, the research focus is less on the SRHR themes for their own sakes, and more on how meanings relevant to SRHR have been constructed through language use in the liturgies.

Voices and Discourses:

I have identified different voices within the liturgical samples studied, with a focus on reproduction of power relations, voice and agency, and how alternative voices interrupt traditional liturgical discourses (Tonkiss, 2001, Fairclough, 1990).

Linguistic and Discourse Tools:

Constructions of God, personal identity in God, interpersonal relationships, sexuality and gender were analysed in relation to SRHR (Tonkiss, 2001; PACSA, 2008).

Attention was paid to the following: Repetitions: words, synonyms, rephrasing, literary tools such as incremental repetition, variations, inconsistencies, possible silencing of alternative accounts, and gaps or silences. Depth was sought through analysing variations in emphasis, and underlying assumptions and statements that normalise concepts and rituals, or interrupt or destabilise them (Tonkiss, 2001; Talja, 1999).

Performative Speech Acts:

I have paid particular attention to Performative Speech Acts (Macdonald, 2013), in relation to the power of liturgical language to achieve in practice what is said in words. This contributes to the power of liturgy to do what it is saying, which adds to the transformative potential of liturgical worship. It is also worth considering the power relations inherent in the performatives: who is entitled to do what, to whom, and for whose benefit? Performatives influence constructions of God, how participants are constructed in relation to God and each other, and how they conceptualise their calling into the world.

6.2.2 *Focus Group*

The purpose of the focus group meeting was to obtain deeper information on the theological motivation of the clergy who have reframed liturgical sections, and to open up a conversation on different clergy perceptions about ACSA's liturgy and the possibility of reframing aspects of the APB.

Because of the time limitations, each participant completed a very brief questionnaire (Appendix E) containing their answers to nine preliminary questions before the meeting.

Thematic Analysis:

After careful transcription of the 42-minute conversation, emerging themes were identified. Due to time constraints, the conversation ultimately focused on three main themes to surface issues related to power and possibility for liturgical reframing in the ACSA context (Tampere, 1998): clergy perceptions as to the relationship between Anglican liturgy and SRHR, theological reasons for addressing SRHR through liturgy, and how much flexibility they had for liturgical reframing in their contexts.

The preliminary questionnaire included information pertaining to the participating clergy's leadership roles and the demographics of their congregations, their understanding of the purpose/s of liturgy, their previous involvement in liturgical reframing, and what they hoped to gain from participating in the study.

6.3 *Reflexive Discussion of Research Findings*

In order to address my final research question (*What are some practical and theoretical implications of the findings of the liturgical analysis?*) I have applied the key findings that emerged from the data to making some tentative proposals towards a transformative liturgical praxis in South African churches from postcolonial, African feminist perspectives.

7 **Ethical Considerations**

The University of Kwa-Zulu Natal's Ethics Committee gave swift ethical approval to this research. Although the project is related to SRHR, its approach does not directly challenge

difficult ethical issues, thus reducing the potential risk of inciting conflict, or causing embarrassment or trauma to participating clergy or ACSA as a whole.

Notwithstanding this, the anonymity of the participants and their congregations have been protected through the use of pseudonyms, and efforts have been made to protect their identity in the data descriptions.

8 Limitations, Validity, Reliability and Rigour

The scope of the study is limited by the fact that it is a masters thesis in two ways: Firstly, the sample size is small, as it was not feasible to do a larger sample while obtaining adequate depth in the analysis. Second, although there are strong arguments in recent South African liturgical theological literature that in-depth participatory action research over a period of time is the optimal methodology for liturgical research (Wepener, 2007; Barnard et al, 2014), this was impossible within the time constraints. Thus the data was restricted to written liturgical documents, complemented by one focus group conversation, to obtain a thicker description of the liturgical processes that are reflected in the written documents. Anglican liturgy is heavily weighted towards the written and spoken word, and thus the findings nevertheless yielded interesting insights.

I was unable to access liturgical extracts from clergy and congregations of all demographic backgrounds, because the Zulu speaking clergy approached indicated that they simply use APB as it stands, although they do integrate inculturated forms of worship in the music and implementation of some of the rituals. Moreover, the focus on liturgical texts meant I was unable to address other aspects of liturgy, such as the use of space, the body (eg. gesture, dance, symbols, images), and other semiotic aspects involved. This is certainly an area for future research.

To improve the validity of this study, I have wherever possible analysed different written documents associated with a worship service: liturgical prayers, sermon texts, and pew leaflets. The aim was to obtain a broader sense of the liturgical elements and how they interrelate. Unfortunately, the fact that much of what constitutes liturgical worship takes place spontaneously in worship spaces themselves, has limited my ability to draw conclusions as to issues of continuity and interrelationships between liturgical sections.

The focus group discussion produced a form of meta-data, a space for reflection on the process of reframing aspects of liturgy, and its contextual influences. This constituted a form of triangulation, through the analysis of the conversations between clergy, to obtain additional perspectives on my findings.

The sample of liturgies under study is very small, being restricted to those from six sources: five clergy and one published ACSA resource. Thus, I make no claims as to the generalisability of my findings. However, I hope that this small study contributes to filling some gaps in the literature, and might offer a basis for further research.

Every effort has been made to understand the context of liturgy as it applies in ACSA, to avoid imposing inappropriate assumptions on the data, through studying multiple official documents. I recognise that my gender activist orientation needs to be tempered with a good contextual understanding, over and above the intellectual rigour imposed by triangulation and the validation processes outlined.

In my letters to ACSA leadership, I have offered to share my thesis and to report on the main findings and recommendations, on request. The ACSA website invites liturgical contributions to assist it with its ongoing revision of the Prayer Book. This indicates the potential of my research to offer practical value to ACSA, over and above its potential academic contribution to liturgical theology.

9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the major influences on my theoretical and analytical frameworks, and has shown how this has influenced my methodological approach, data production process and analytical tools. It has concluded by addressing questions of ethics, limitations and related issues of validity and reliability.

Systematic liturgical studies within a postcolonial feminist paradigm that focus on gender and sexual and reproductive health in South Africa do not currently exist. Thus, I have had to draw on postcolonial, feminist and African feminist theological literature, as well as general liturgical studies on the relationship between the church, liturgy and social justice, to frame my own liturgical research from the perspective of postcolonial African feminist praxis in the context of ACSA.

In a sense, this study provides a springboard for further work. It would be interesting to expand this research methodologically, and to take the conversation further about the nature of liturgical reframing in the context of a postcolonial church such as ACSA.

Chapter Four: Liturgical Practice and Social Justice and the Anglican Church in South Africa: from Colonial to Postcolonial Church

“Worship releases into the world, with its need and its pain, its sorrow and its hope, an influence for healing and wholeness which we shall never fully comprehend.”

(An Anglican Prayer Book, 1989: 10).

1 Introduction:

The study of liturgy has not historically been a priority in South Africa,⁴⁰ but a new interest arose in 1995, particularly amongst Reformed theologians, around the role of liturgy in the anti-apartheid struggle and its possible role in contributing to building a new South Africa. This work encouraged liturgical renewal in the Dutch Reformed and some other churches during this time (Wepener, 2007:732). As previously mentioned, I have been unable to find any South African liturgical studies from postcolonial feminist perspectives.

This chapter reflects on the recent history of liturgical practice and reform in South Africa during and after apartheid, and draws from the literature some relevant lessons on liturgy and social change, focussing primarily on ACSA, with regard to gender, health, wellness and SRHR. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the patriarchal and colonial history of South African society, which has directly and indirectly shaped the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA). The second section offers a brief historical overview of ACSA’s journey from a colonial to a postcolonial church, and some implications for its liturgical history. Part three discusses some key themes addressed specifically by South African scholars on church and liturgical worship. The chapter closes with a summary of insights relevant to Anglican liturgical reframing in relation to my research question.

2 Understanding the Context

The history of the imposition of colonial capitalism and its peculiar brand of patriarchy on the indigenous people of South Africa is well known and is not discussed in detail here. What is important, however, is to understand the colonial missionary context which

⁴⁰ Liturgical studies in South Africa relies heavily on the work of the Buvton Liturgy Research Group at Stellenbosch University, established in 1995 (Wepener, 2014).

birthed the Anglican Communion and its manifestation in Southern Africa as the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (renamed the Anglican Church of Southern Africa ACSA in 2008).

Hadebe (2013) describes how the integrated African religious and cultural worldview, based on the belief in a supreme God, was lived out according to the principles of *ubuntu* (mutual communal respect and interdependence) under patriarchal headship of the homestead economy. This was profoundly disrupted by the colonial missionary enterprise (Hadebe, 2013:8-11; Dube, 2010:100-102). The homestead economy broke down in the interests of colonial labour demands and a monetary economy. Individualist approaches to evangelism disrupted the social fabric. Gender roles were redefined by the separation of homestead and social economies, which led to the denigration and loss of women's contributions to religious rites and the traditional economy. And finally, the traditional African understanding of humans as integrated physical, relational and spiritual beings (Rakoczy, 2004:48-54) gave way to the missionary teachings of the body and sexuality as inherently sinful. This has had implications for the denigration of women's sexuality, as well as non-heterosexual sexual identities and expressions. On the other hand, Christian patriarchal norms and use of the bible also reinforced key aspects of traditional African forms of patriarchy, such as headship (Oduyoye, 1995:169; Kanyoro, 2001:23).

Hamber (2013:33-35) and Hadebe (2013:11) show how resistance to apartheid in the 1990s was rooted in a militarised understanding of manhood, which is a likely factor in the rise of post-apartheid gender based violence. Although women participated in liberation movements and provided strong resistance, as demonstrated in their march to Parliament in 1956, the gender equality agenda was delayed until the new democratic dispensation was achieved. Constitutionally, the promise of a non-discriminatory order was realised by the Equality Clause in the Bill of Rights, but this has not materialised as hoped, as witnessed in the continued prevalence of injustice and violence. Perhaps in reaction to the many unfulfilled promises of freedom and prosperity, violence has become normalised, manifesting as increasing gender based violence, political and male violence (Hamber,2013:35, Hadebe, 2013:11). As shown in Chapter 2, there is little evidence of churches considering the causal links between their patriarchal theological and anthropological traditions and the prevalence of gender based violence, although public statements decrying GBV are made regularly.

The influence of this history on current liturgies of ACSA with respect to gender relations and SRHR is considerable. ACSA's origins were steeped in white patriarchal clericalism that submitted to English political and economic dominance, with its incumbent western epistemological frameworks expressed in forms of worship that minimised lay, women's and African leadership except in carefully proscribed contexts. Even though the legacy of apartheid and colonial dominance have been mitigated to some extent, deconstructing patriarchal clericalism in ACSA still requires considerable work.

With the collapse of ANC hegemony over the past six year under the Zuma presidency, some analysts refer to this as a period of unprecedented opportunity for the transformation of social and economic power relations based on race, gender and other apartheid legacies, such as endemic violence. However, unless we deconstruct the patriarchal norms that have undergirded South African society throughout its history and seriously address related SRHR, our progressive legal frameworks will continue to fail women, and particularly economically poor women's daily lives.

As discussed in earlier chapters, religion has a powerful influence on how people understand their own identity and their relationship to others. Agbiji and Swart cite a number of scholars who demonstrate that religion is central in how South Africans construct their reality (2015:2-5) . At this time in our history, therefore, ACSA faces the challenge to make use of the opportunity of revising the Anglican Prayer Book. It offers another timeous opportunity to consciously influence the mindsets and actions of believers and direct its power for good, as was the case in the revised *An Anglican Prayer Book* (Church of the Province of Southern Africa :1989).⁴¹

⁴¹ The Anglican Church standard acronym for *An Anglican Prayer Book* (1989) is APB (not the APB) throughout to reflect the belief that it is not the final word on Anglican liturgy.

3 “Beyond Colonial Anglicanism”⁴² in Southern Africa – Revised Patriarchy or Transformed Mission?

ACSA (then the Church of the Province of Southern Africa) was the first African Anglican church to be formally accepted as one of the now 38 provinces of the global Anglican Communion at the Lambeth (Primate’s) Conference in 1870, and is thus a product of the colonial era. This section contextualises the current identity of ACSA with a brief historiography of its origins, and ongoing renewal of liturgy in the Anglican Communion.

3.1 From English missionary church to worldwide Anglican Communion

The legacy of the Anglican Church’s complicity in British imperial expansion and ideological influence is reflected in the continuing juxtaposition of the Cross with the Crown in its logo (de Lima, 2001: loc.97) . Whereas during the Colonial era the churches were seen as outposts of the Church of England, this has gradually changed. The Lambeth Primates’ Conference in 1998 confirmed that the Anglican Church had become a multicultural global church, as 63% of its membership was in the south.⁴³ By that stage, all the Provinces (groups of dioceses in particular regions) were led by their own archbishops, and had developed independent structures (de Lima, 2001:loc.116).

However, contrary to other global churches, the defining feature of Anglicanism is not linked to centralised leadership or fundamental doctrines, but its shared liturgy, grounded in Cranmer’s 1662 Book of Common Prayer [BCP] (Hefling,2006:2-3) and centred around its theological understanding of the life, death, resurrection and promised return of Jesus Christ. Given the roots of the Anglican Church in the Reformation, the BCP became imposed less and less rigidly during the early twentieth century, and the inevitable development of locally rooted prayer books was acknowledged at Lambeth in 1958. This was accelerated by the political struggles for independence across the British Empire in the second half of the century. As a result, the universal Anglican gospel message has

⁴² This phrase is taken from the name of a collection of articles edited by Ian Douglas and Kwok Pui-Lan (2001), which they selected in favour of the commonly accepted ‘postcolonial’ to avoid some of the associated controversies, and to reflect their imaginative approach to the future of the Anglican Communion.

⁴³ This realised the vision of the 1963 Anglican Congress in Toronto⁴³ of a worldwide Communion of churches of “Mutual Interdependence and Responsibility in the Body of Christ” (Douglas, 2001: Loc.. 510).

been interpreted in multiple “vernacular moments” (Douglas, 2001:loc.274; 689) within the multifarious local contexts in which Anglican churches now exist across the globe. Thus, he maintains, local Anglican churches have become ongoing revelations of Jesus Christ in diverse expressions of Eucharist. But these changes have not taken place without struggle.

Inculturation of the English Prayer Book was initially unsuccessfully imposed from the English centre. Esther Mombo, for instance, reports that the first attempt at liturgical reform in East Africa, the *Liturgy for Africa* (1964) was hardly used. It was developed by English bishops stationed in Africa, and so was in English and did not adequately reflect the local context (2006:277) . Translation also is fraught, and does not necessary imply that it therefore speaks to ordinary people’s experiences, since different cultures have various preferred ways of approaching God in worship (Nuttall, 2006:318) .

Both Kwok (2001:loc.1010) and Renee Hill (2006:loc.3689) consider cultural (and ecclesial) hybridity to be a defining feature of Anglicanism, arguing that Anglican churches no longer simply mimic the English mother church as in the missionary era, but have developed more authentic forms of worship and liturgies that more closely reflect the life experiences of their communities. This has been facilitated by the notion of ‘comprehensiveness’ (Kwok, 2001: loc.1015): Anglicans understand truth not as definitive and eternal, but as progressively revealed. This implies that a single ‘truth’ cannot not be imposed unilaterally from a metropolitan centre. Douglas suggests that most Anglicans actually live in “multiple realities” (2001: loc.550). This is, of course, not unusual for women, blacks and homosexuals, who have always had to manage their own realities alongside those of dominant groups (Hill, 2001: loc.3689).

Kwok advances this idea by offering what she calls an “Anglican history from the periphery” (2001: loc.1089). Her postcolonial analysis critiques the episcopal, clerical exclusiveness and hierarchy of the Anglican church and its colonial progeny. She identifies the marginalisation of ordinary people, and particularly those of third world women, as a critical weakness, because the church has historically missed opportunities to respond timeously to some crucial SRHR issues, such as HIV and gender violence.

Nevertheless, Kwok points out that Anglican reality has never been static nor one-sided. She views the history of the Anglican Communion in the twentieth century as one of genuine interaction between the centre and the periphery, in which both have been destabilised (2001, loc.1100). This facilitates imagining a church that is able to reflect the stories of those traditionally marginalised from the centre alongside the grand narrative. As examples, she analyses the development of its racial politics and its much slower journey towards gender equality and the fluidity of sexuality (loc.1117). The story continues: recently the Anglican Communion has periodically been on the verge of collapse over the ongoing question of ordination of homosexuals.⁴⁴ How this progresses remains to be seen. Significantly, ACSA rejected a motion to extend pastoral care, and prayers of blessing, to homosexual couples in its September 2016 Synod, revealing similar fractures in the Southern African Province.

The ongoing debate on sexuality and sexual diversity is fraught with irony and political posturing. Kwok mentions existing evidence that homosexuality was accepted as part of life in most precolonial African societies, and contends that taboos surrounding it can be traced back to Christian missionary teaching. And yet, the whole notion is rejected now primarily by African churches as a Western imposition. This offers some insight into the push-pull of a church that is moving from a centralised colonial church to a fellowship of independent equal churches, grappling with the meaning of progressive revelation in light of cultural diversity, particularly in the African context. Kwok correctly asks how it might be possible to avoid reverting to assuming the cultural superiority of the West without falling into the trap of uncritically accepting all African cultural practices, even those that are not life-giving (2001: loc.1229). This is also a vital question for African women theologians such as Oduyoye (2010) and Kanyoro (2001) .

One important strength of Anglicanism is how it conceptualises truth and revelation. In discernment, Anglicans seek to strike a balance between a reverence for the bible, the need to critically respect tradition, the value of reason, and lived experience. This makes

⁴⁴ Gonger, George, 30 September 2014. "Lambeth Conference Cancelled." <http://www.anglican.ink/article/lambeth-conference-cancelled>. Archbishop of Virtue, David. 16th January 2016. "Canterbury Says Primatial Gathering was a Success Story" Accessed 10th August 2016; <http://anglicanmainstream.org/archbishop-of-canterbury-says-primatial-gathering-was-a-success-story/>. Accessed 10th August 2016.

dialogue possible, because it allows doctrines and practices inherited from the church's western traditional roots to be scrutinised in light of local cultural resources (Kwok,2001: loc.1266-1274). However, I would caution against ignoring the power dynamics inherent in the hierarchical church, particularly in South Africa, where race, gender, sexual identity and economic status are all highly contested, but institutional power continues to be vested in the largely male clergy and episcopate. Indeed, Mark et al have observed that the Anglican Church has been slow to liberate itself from the paternalistic attitudes that have been a hallmark of its colonial past (2012:172). It will require conscious, creative and visionary leadership that privileges the most marginal voices in its midst.

As I proceed to describe the liturgical history of ACSA in light of the above, I take heed of Esther Mombo's observation that there is a clear gap between theological debates about liturgical renewal and people's reality on the ground. People are finding their own ways to make sense of their lives through liturgy and making worship speak authentically in their own context. She cautions against centralised processes, citing an increasing need for participatory liturgical renewal processes if new liturgies are to meet the authentic needs of worshippers (2006:285) .

3.2 The Anglican Church of Southern Africa: A Historiography of Liturgical Renewal⁴⁵

Clergy of the Church of England first ministered in South Africa to British colonial or naval officers at the Cape between 1795 and 1803, and then the 1820 settlers in the Eastern Cape, followed closely by the first British missionaries who began to spread the gospel amongst African communities in the Cape and Zululand. The Church of the Province of South Africa was first recognised by the Lambeth Conference as an independent Province of the Anglican Communion in 1870, and broadened to include Southern Africa in 1882, as a result of British missionary expansion (Botha, 2006:195).

⁴⁵ References to ACSA, 2008 or ACSA 2014 in this section refer to the following webpages:
ACSA, Anglican Church of Southern Africa. 2008. "Liturgical Renewal for Transformative Worship.", accessed 04.06.2016. www.anglicansact.org/new-page-1.aspx
ACSA, Anglican Church of Southern Africa. 2014. "Anglican Church of Southern Africa Home Page." accessed 04.10.16. <http://anglicanchurch.org.za/winhost.wa.co.za/>

The Church of England's BCP remained the central resource for worship and evangelism until a Liturgical Committee was established in 1908. Through a gradual process of experimentation and consultation between 1911 and 1954 a first full revised *The Book of Common Prayer – Southern Africa* was published and translated into vernacular languages for use in urban and rural parishes across the Province (Botha, 2001:198). This first liturgical renewal process within ACSA was entirely undertaken by white Englishmen (198-199). While the African history of the church was recognised by a single Commemoration Collect for the early African martyrs, none were canonised, until 1989 (Botha, 2006:200; Nuttall, 2006:316).

Although some interim Alternative Services for the Eucharist, Baptism, weddings and other rites were developed, the next initiative to revise the full Prayer Book took place towards the end of the 1980s. Also produced through a lengthy deliberately consultative process *An Anglican Prayer Book, 1989* was published during the historic time of political transition in South Africa (Nuttall, 2006:315-6). Bishop Michael Nuttall, who was one of its primary authors, speaks of its power to challenge racism and offer a “strenuous challenge to work for radical socio-political change” (2006:316), that powerfully met the needs of its people at the time. It did so through its prayers of intercession and its careful balance between maintaining a strong core of the traditional phrasing and incorporating indigenous prayers and practices, for example, in its funeral rites (2006:318).

Through offering a variety of options with some theological explanations in the rubrics, APB reflects an attempt to hold in balance the great diversity of cultures, doctrinal variations and high- and low-church forms, while also being responsive to the wider global liturgical renewal movement (Nuttall:316-320).

Special attention was paid to the use of language. ACSA moved swiftly to translating it into first five, then all eleven, major Southern African languages within a year, using both literal and dynamic translation, paraphrasing concepts in ways that make sense within a local cultural context rather than imposing the source concepts ‘a-culturally’ (2006:318). Finally, it applies gender-inclusive terms for the people of God without creating other forms of exclusion such as phrasing that implies that only Christians may receive God's grace (2006:321-322). Nuttall regrets that it did not apply gender-inclusiveness to the psalms or address the need to include a wider variety of biblical metaphors for God

beyond the patriarchal ‘father’, and he recommends that this be priority in future revisions (2006:322).

ACSA’s postcolonial journey is reflected in changes in its senior leadership during and after apartheid. Archbishop Desmond Tutu began a strong tradition of prophetic leadership in his vocal critique of apartheid and his active support of resistance movements. Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane carried this mantle forward . He undertook a mapping of poverty amongst ordinary South Africans, and established a Provincial HIV programme. Current Archbishop Thabo Makgoba launched an NGO arm of ACSA, HOPE Africa in 2008 to take forward multiple development, health and gender programmes on its behalf. Archbishop Makgoba frequently speaks publicly against gender based violence and HIV related stigma associated. He has ordained the first two women bishops, and while standing by ACSA’s official position, has declared his openness to continue the conversation about sexual diversity based in his belief in progressive revelation.⁴⁶ His actions stem from his belief in the dignity of all human beings and the integrity of creation (ACSA, 2014).

ACSA re-launched its Gender Desk within HOPE Africa at the first Provincial gender conference in September 2015. Through wide consultation, it has developed a new strategic plan for gender work within the Province (Hope Africa, 2015; Vertue, 2016).

In May 2008, the ongoing liturgical renewal process was given a new impetus when a liturgical resource manual was released, containing alternative liturgies for clergy use for specific purposes. Amongst the Province’s eight missional priorities, three are directly relevant to this study: liturgical renewal for transformative worship, women and gender, and health (ACSA, 2014).

The Provincial Synod in 2013 mandated the standing Provincial Liturgical Committee to embark on a process of revising APB. A systematic process of experimentation and consultation, was first proposed in 2008. Meanwhile, APB remains the current standard. Its goal is to develop new liturgical resources that assist the worship of all Anglican

⁴⁶ Times Live Digital, 1st October, 2016.

churches to be “vibrant, inclusive, contextual, and life-changing, while remaining in touch with our liturgical inheritance” (ACSA, 2008).

The renewal process is to remain rooted in the Anglican understanding of the three main purposes of liturgy: to guide orderly public worship, contribute to faith formation of worshipers, be “an influence for healing and wholeness which we shall never fully comprehend.” (APB, 1989:9-10). The Committee has set itself the task of addressing the following social justice issues in particular: youth, people living with HIV and AIDS and the marginalised generally, gender equality and poverty, while also facilitating bridge-building between the diverse members of the church in relation to age, culture and race (ACSA, 2008).

The Provincial Liturgical Committee launched *Celebrating Sunday* at Provincial Synod in September 2016, and some sections of this material have been included as data in the current study. While there is much potential in this new initiative, it is notable that the Liturgical Committee of approximately ten members has only two women and no youth representatives. However, their invitation for critical feedback and contributions may influence its finalisation over the next few years.

3.2.1 *Lessons from ACSA’s Journey Thus Far*

1. Perhaps the most formative lesson for any future liturgical renewal endeavours relates to the long, brutal silencing of colonised black people, and black women in particular, throughout South Africa’s colonial and apartheid history. This has impoverished the whole nation, as well as its churches, apart from causing untold damage to countless human beings created in God’s image.
2. This raises the question of how to deal with the tension between the centre and the periphery – between the institutional church and its expression in “vernacular moments” (Douglas, 2001: loc.658). How does ACSA open the space for the subaltern to speak, in Spivak’s terms (1995), without losing the coherence between the local church and its Anglican identity? Of course, these local expressions are nothing new, as exemplified by the liturgical samples in this very study. But the question, at least for the ACSA Liturgical Committee, is how to construct a liturgical prayer book that is able to creatively hold this tension,

without succumbing to what Renee Hill calls “maintaining control and hegemony” (2001: loc.3176).

3. The writers of APB already recognised in 1989 the power of liturgy to influence social transformation, in that they consciously represented what was then a new vision of racial inclusiveness, resisting apartheid and all it represented, and longing for healing from apartheid oppression.
4. ACSA’s leadership has made gender transformation one of its strategic priorities, alongside racial, economic and other injustices, thus recognising that it is at the heart of what it means to live as a mutually respectful, life-giving community. How this is articulated in its early liturgical reframing work is to be assessed in this study.

The manner in which liturgies make meaning of God has a profound influence on how the people of God understand their identities and order their relationships. Therefore, consciously using transformative language, symbols and metaphors for God is not a cosmetic matter or about political correctness in an era of gender equality, but lies at the heart of faith (Ruether, 1985).

4 Liturgy and Social Justice Research in South Africa

ACSA is not the only church in South Africa that has revisited liturgical worship in response to South Africa’s transition to a democratic era. The efforts of South African churches to respond to this legacy through their liturgical practice are varied and contested. The issues covered include reconciliation, multiculturalism, social justice, poverty, and social reconstruction.

My review of South African scholarly literature on liturgy have revealed the same gaps as my global literature review in Chapter two: liturgical research ignores gender, health and SRHR, and postcolonial, African feminist scholars largely ignore liturgy. However,

during and after apartheid, ecumenical activist organisations have developed creative liturgical material to advocate for social change in relation to SRHR.⁴⁷

While I have learnt some useful lessons from the South African scholarly work on liturgy and social change, I approach it with caution. Emerging from the Reformed tradition, it is largely limited to aligning the church to Government development policy, and fails to transcend the State's liberal patriarchal capitalist enterprise. Philosophically, Barnard et al (2014) position themselves as late-modernist, and several other studies reveal an underlying positivist epistemological bias (eg. de Klerk, 2012) or offer spiritualised individualised proposals with little transformative power (eg. Kruger and de Wet, 2015).

The remainder of this section outlines some key insights from the South African literature that have influenced my liturgical research. Since little is written on liturgy and SRHR, I include some works that indirectly address the role of worship.

4.1 Liminality and Lament

Central to conceptualising how liturgy can contribute to social transformation is the concept of 'liminality' (Barnard et al, 2014:71), or its ability to hold the tensions between the contradictory nature of life and faith. At its most basic, liturgical ritual is liminal in that participants are led out of everyday life into worship as an in-between space and time, similar to the anthropological notion of a rite of passage. It is a marginal space, where socio-cultural norms do not need to hold, and people are able to relate in new ways and perhaps take these new ways back into the world from which they came. Liminality implies a continuum between extremes held in tension through the use of symbol and ritual that arouse the senses, open human imagination and facilitate mystical experience (Avis, 1999). It is in these liminal spaces that structural relations and norms may be challenged and transformation becomes possible. However, liminal spaces are temporary, and human relations can soon either revert to the *status quo*. Alternatively, through

⁴⁷ Examples include the Christian Institute, ecumenical liturgies developed by Diakonia Council of Churches in Durban and PACSA in Pietermaritzburg for the annual World AIDS Day and 16 Days Campaigns, and Diakonia's continued Good Friday liturgies to address key social justice issues. (See also PACSA, 2009:22-25 Gouws, A. 2012. Social Welfare and Religion in Paarl through the Lens of a Feminist Ethic of Care. In: Swart, I. G., Amanda; Pettersson, Per; Erasmus, Johannes; Bosman, Frouwien (ed.) *Welfare, Religion and Gender in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Constructing a South-North Dialogue*, 269-284. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University Press.)

repetition they can become normalised and change perceptions of what is acceptable. Over time, this gives liturgy the power to re-frame participants' perception of reality and opens the imagination to new possibilities.

Barnard et al list four practical implications of a liminal perspective on liturgy.

First, the biblical word is only brought to life by the way it is appropriated in the life of a believer through its metaphorical language, to facilitate encounter with God as the living Word, (2014:132). This echoes Oduyoye and Kanyoro: "biblical history continues in the lives of God's people" (2006:5).

Second, liminal liturgy embraces lament, as it cannot avoid facing the suffering of the oppressed under unjust systems. It is inherently eschatological: bringing the intolerable, indescribable pain of those who suffer before God in the faith that healing and redemption are possible in the midst of the pain (Hill, 2001: loc3716). Ackermann views lament as a form of resistance (2001: loc. 2105), and proposes that lament include the voices of both oppressed and oppressor (2000: 240). This would offer spaces for the "narrative repair" proposed by Gibson (2012: 641). West concurs, adding that lament can enable agency if it gives space imagining the possibility that the situation could be different (2011: 144). Lament holds within it the same polarities contained in the symbol of the cross: a liminal perspective on worship would hold together suffering and (not just the promise but the beginnings of) healing, through the multiple meanings hidden in the metaphor (Barnard et al, 2014: 110).

Third, to integrate the realities of the suffering world in liminal liturgy requires using subversive language about God. This means destabilising the fixed sets of codes and practices that have dominated liturgy in the established churches, and creating liturgies that open up new possibilities of "liberating images of God" (Barnard et al, 2014:112), to "restructure mental images" (113) and "embody... the subversive nature of biblical texts" (112). This is also a consistent theme in feminist and African women's theology (Radford-Ruether,1985; Rakoczy, 2004a; Abbey, 2001) and feminist liturgical theology (Walton, 2000; Berger, 1999, 2001).

Finally, Barnard et al address what is required of the leader in liminal liturgy:⁴⁸ to eschew the norm of authority figure, risk vulnerability and challenge destructive norms and expose human frailty and the abuse of power. They argue that this can expose the consequences of the *status quo* for ordinary people, thereby destabilising normative concepts and reconstructing new images and discourses.

I have applied these features of liminal liturgy to my own analysis by exploring how the Bible is used, whether lament is used to surface issues of gender, health and wellness and SRHR, whether the language used for God facilitates a life-giving anthropology, and how the juxtaposition of metaphorical language in prayers and sermons succeeds in destabilising norms and opening new possibilities.

4.1.1 *Church, Liturgy, SRHR and Social Change: Liturgy, Language and Culture*

Section 6.2.1 in Chapter 3 outlined the centrality of language as a communicative as well as ideological tool. Language choices in liturgy offer windows into the theological and ideological foundations of a church, and thus form a central part of liturgical analysis. Wepener (2014:4-5) demonstrates that liturgical language in South Africa in the past twenty to thirty years has shifted noticeably towards addressing social justice as well as questions of multiculturalism and inculturation⁴⁹ in response to the need for racial and social healing.

The relationship of culture to liturgy is complex. Wepener (2007) argues that every worship context constitutes an interplay between three cultural frames (or sets of social assumptions): the culture in which a biblical story was set, the cultural tradition of the church, and the social culture/s of its members (Wepener, 2007:736-7). The fluid relationship between culture and liturgy is reflected in four features of inculturated worship. It is rooted in local cultural norms and practices. It is transcultural, or beyond culture as it points to transcendence. It is counter-cultural, in that it resists death-dealing

⁴⁸ This is similar to Lathrop's notion of the responsibilities of the liturgy leader as servant of the assembly.

⁴⁹ Greville (2002) and van der Merwe et al (2013) define multicultural liturgy as liturgy that incorporates diverse languages and cultures. Wepener describes an inculturated liturgy as one that integrates cultural as well as religious dimensions in a reciprocal process (2014: 6). Wepener recommends the use of intercultural, or deliberate multicultural liturgical ritual encounters (2007: 737-8) to facilitate social healing in South Africa.

aspects of culture. And finally, it is cross-cultural as it celebrates the global body of Christ beyond time and space.⁵⁰ Questions of culture add to the complexity of liturgical symbol systems, and are likely to influence the social construction of people's relationships with God and with each other. Thus, choices of language, symbol, metaphor and ritual need to be employed in liturgy in a deliberate manner, conscious that they can either contribute to the ongoing web of intersectional oppression or open up worshippers' imagination to transcend their worldly perceptions of God, each other and the wider world.

4.1.2 *Language, Social Justice, and Care*

de Klerk (2013) calls for liturgy to promote the rights of all individuals to live in dignity and to fulfil their potential, so that they in turn, can contribute to a just social order. Although he fails to generalise this to gender, he requires liturgy to contain prophetic elements, and in particular, prophetic sermons that challenge worshippers to act justly in their own lives (de Klerk, 2013:6; Resner, 2003:xxi).

Gouws (2012:271) critiques social justice approaches as abstract and decontextualised, and argues for social justice advocacy to be complemented by a feminist ethic of care, based on a needs-based, contextual ethic that is rooted in relationship that promotes mutual respect and dignity. She further criticises churches' outreach or care programmes as reinforcing inequalities, promoting a discourse of charity and stereotyping the poor (including women) as helpless or lazy, (2012:272-4). Moyo (2015) makes a similar point in a Zimbabwean church context.

My liturgical analysis seeks to reveal the ethic of justice and care underlying liturgical extracts, in order to assess their contribution to the promotion of health, wellbeing, and SRHR.

4.1.3 *Liturgy, Social Capital and Health and Wellness for SRHR*

Carefully constructed liturgy can contribute to social capital: building congregational trust, a sense of belonging, and openness to diversity together contribute to building resilience and wellbeing (van der Merwe, Pieterse and Wepener, 2013:231). Wepener

⁵⁰ Wepener draws these from two documents on culture published at two Lutheran World Fellowships, in Nairobi (1996) and Chicago (1998).

and Cilliers (2010) and Barnard et al (2014) argue that social capital can build resilience in the face of suffering.

Wepener and Cilliers recognise that unequal power relations are inherently at play in congregations. In response, they propose the opening of spaces in churches, such as carefully constructed worship spaces, where authentic, transformative dialogue can take place (2010:419). Thus, the assumed dominance of one group can be challenged and a new ethic can emerge that confronts and transforms power relations in the interests of justice and equity (Wepener and Cilliers, 2010:419). This idea is pursued below in relation to gender, SRHR and healing. It is noteworthy that ACSA's Archbishop Thabo Makgoba has expressed the desire that his church becomes a place where diverse voices of the oppressed are heard (2016:12).

4.1.4 *Liturgy as a Healing Praxis*

Several Reformed scholars have grappled with liturgy and healing, but in the sense of reconciliation rather than being related to gender and / or sexual and reproductive health [SRH] (eg. van de Merwe et al, 2013; Masango and Pieterse, 2008, de Klerk, 2012; Greville, 2002).

I find African and postcolonial feminist approaches to questions of development, healing and transformation more helpful, as they take into account the underlying legacy of power inequalities and multiplicities of oppressions entrenched by generations of colonial rule within patriarchal society. Unfortunately, I have found very little postcolonial feminist liturgical scholarship related to gender, healing or SRHR in South Africa, although some who address theological praxis do mention worship (eg. Ackermann, 2001).

Ackermann's call for a feminist theology of healing praxis bemoans the commonly formulaic and rushed use of the Confession, and emphasises the need for genuine, passionate lament (2001: loc.1884). This gives voice to the long-silenced as discussed earlier, but also opens opportunities to repent from complicity with structural oppression. It builds bridges and prepares our hearts to engage with real change. Moreover, a healing liturgical praxis entails listening to each other's stories, (Ackermann, 2001: loc.1890); 2004:231). Phiri (2006:115) and Wafula (2016:99) affirm the value of storytelling for

inner healing, an increased sense of agency, and a counterpoint for critical reflection on Scripture. This not only increases the validity of people's own stories as reflecting God's continued revelation in history, but also contributes to deconstructing the generalisations common in the liturgy of mission-initiated churches like ACSA.

Ackermann emphasises that healing is not an individualised process, as each person's search for healing and wholeness is bound up with the healing of our society, of humanity in general (2001: loc.1995). Hence, storytelling offers a platform for solidarity in healing (Saayman, 2011), for "narrative repair" (Gibson, 2012:641) to take place. However, these spaces need to be carefully constructed, to take into account the power relations inherent in the multiple webs of oppression at play in South Africa (Masango, 2008; Wepener and Cilliers, 2010).

4.1.5 *Liturgy, Stigma and SRHR: Women's Sexuality, HIV and Gender Based Violence*

The church globally and in Africa has a long history of stigmatising women's sexuality (Siwila, 2015: 90; Oduyoye, 2005: 154). A number of African theologians have addressed the complex ways that patriarchal religious and cultural assumptions reinforce women's systemic subordination through their stigmatisation. This is often most visible in the way churches apply exclusionary rules to control women's access to the life and ministries of the church (Oduyoye, 2001: 175; Rakoczy, 2004: 205-206; Siwila, 2015: 89-90).

Kiarie and Owino (2014) write of the exclusion and self-exclusion from the Eucharist among Anglican women in Kenya during menstruation and immediately after childbirth, due to the cultural belief that menstruation makes them 'unclean' (128-137). Oduyoye speaks of the ways that African cultural views of barrenness lead to church stigmatisation of women without children, and critiques the church's restricted views of women's sexuality as purely functional, linked to child-bearing (1999: 9). Mapuranga critiques the high price older women in many African churches have to pay for the 'privilege' of being free to receive Communion, since they no longer menstruate. It really means that society no longer regards them as sexual beings, thus denying them sexual satisfaction and their full humanity (2012:75). Siwila points to other aspects of

women's bodily and sexual identities that have been culturally and theologically constructed to make women unworthy to partake of the liturgy of the Eucharist. These include widows in mourning, women during pregnancy and shortly after childbirth, and even unmarried women in some cultures (Siwila, 2015, 89). Rakoczy cites a number of feminist theologians who have critiqued the patriarchal appropriation of Mary and Jesus' nativity to propagate a hierarchical dichotomy between male and female that has persistently justified the oppression of women (2004:340-344).

According to Tororeiy, the exclusion of women from the heart of church life is reflected also in other church practices, such as divided seating arrangements and that women may only receive communion after all the men have come forward (Tororeiy, 2005: 165). This second-class status appears to be accepted by both women and men, as they comply with these regulations without complaint (165-166)

A wide variety of African women theologians have made proposals for the church to "break the hermeneutic immobility of the churches" (Nadar, 2005:21) by bringing women's experiences into the centre of the church's ministry as integral members of the Body of Christ. Phiri draws lessons from the story of a woman minister who modelled the equal call of women into ministry in the face of much criticism, by simply continuing to minister during times of menstruation, pregnancy and shortly after childbirth, (2005: 38-39). Tororeiy (2005:167-168) and Rakoczy (2004:42-44) propose reclaiming the many stories of women in the bible, who "knew that together with men, they had a role to play" (Tororeiy, 2005:168). Rakoczy offers alternative interpretations of Mary as a real human person, who nonetheless was able to speak truth to power, as exemplified in the Magnificat, thus becoming a source of power for suffering women across the world (2004:346-350). Bigelow Reynolds (2016) has written a liturgical meditation on the empty tomb to break the silence around miscarriage and stillbirth (2016: 58). Kiarie and Owino propose that churches have direct conversations about the meaning of the Eucharist as the church's supreme symbol of God's unconditional love and grace, and demystifying menstruation and childbirth. They propose specifically addressing women's self-stigmatisation by creating spaces for them to develop new, authentic ways of understanding their personhood in Christ (2014:136).

However, this is not straightforward. Siwila (2015) expresses an inner conflict that is also reflected in other African feminist theological writing (eg. Kanyoro, 2001:167-168; Oduyoye, 2001:27-29). She explores African cultural practices such as communal meals as a possible way to reclaim the Eucharistic table as a restorative healing space for women and tries to reclaim positive African cultural values in the light of western domination of liturgical theology. And yet, she explains that rules surrounding meals in her Tonga culture in Zambia are defined by highly patriarchal hierarchical stratifications. Thus, instead of offering a liberatory perspective on the western liturgical theology, she finds the two ideological positions actually collude to reaffirm women's exclusion and inferiority (89-91). Along with Moyo (2005:134-135) and many other African women theologians, she proposes a theology of partnership and hospitality as central to reclaiming the liturgical space for women (2015: 92). Mapuranga turns to body theology as a tool to help women to challenge stigmatisation by bridging the divide between the profane and the sacred, honouring the body and thereby reclaiming the beauty of their sexuality (Mapuranga, 2012: 74). Oduyoye goes so far as to challenge male church leaders to "mix with crowds that may have bleeding women among them" (2005: 154).

De Gruchy mentions some other important themes in the literature on the role of the church in promoting stigma related to HIV and gender based violence. These include the call to the church to move from judgement to welcome and accompaniment of people living with HIV within itself as the body of Christ, and reflecting on what is needed for churches to become places of safety and hope for people living with HIV (2011:182-3). This discussion finds resonance in much of the scholarly work on gender based violence and the church. For instance, Moyo(2005:131-132), Rakoczy (2004b:33) and Nadar (2006:80) all warn that literal biblical readings on headship and submission continue to reproduce discourses that justify abuse and rape, and perpetuate impunity. Of further relevance to my liturgical study are theological questions around constructions of God, notions of the sacred and profane in relation to spirituality and sexuality, and the vulnerability of women as a result of theologies that promote unequal gender power relations (de Gruchy, 2011:185).

Haddad (2003:158-159) argues that both GBV and HIV share the same underlying factors: harmful attitudes and practices regarding human sexuality and unequal power

relations. She emphasises that the church has no moral credibility to speak out against GBV or HIV unless it begins to dismantle its patriarchal power relations, which are closely guarded by the largely male leadership. She acknowledges the difficulties of women breaking the silence in a repressive church context and identifies women's more covert ways of resistance within their women's organisations.

Her recommendations have important implications for liturgies to articulate life-affirming theological perspectives in relation to sexuality and power relationships. She proposes that churches adopt an engendered prophetic theology that is prepared to critique patriarchal theologies, take seriously women's voices and develop new theological approaches to address the crisis of GBV in South Africa, but does not apply this to liturgy. Rakoczy proposes speaking out directly, using alternative images for God, inclusive language and body of Christ imagery, drawing on Jesus' love-rooted ministry (2004b:34). I contend that liturgical worship, taking place as it does in liminal spaces, offers multiple opportunities to put these ideas into action.

West identifies both retributive and redemptive theological strands in Scripture, and points to this as the core site of struggle towards a redemptive HIV hermeneutic (2011:159). Further, de Gruchy (2011:181) and Haddad (2003:160-162) argue for a liberatory justice-seeking hermeneutic, building on God's preferential option for the marginalised, in recognition that HIV is not an isolated disease, but is driven by a web of intersectional oppressions. In his overview of the scholarly literature on theological themes raised by the HIV epidemic, de Gruchy (2011:170-174) identifies four key themes in recent literature: stigma and exclusion, disease and healing, sexuality and the need for a new sexual ethic, and key drivers of HIV such as harmful cultural practices, violence and gender inequality (Rakoczy, 2004b:33). He also notes that there is a need to begin to imagine new theologies of hope found in solidarity with the suffering, and a quest for a new life-affirming theology (2011:175-182).

My analysis seeks to understand how these life-giving strands might be emphasised liturgically.

HIV has also surfaced questions about the role of the church in response to both HIV and gender based violence. de Gruchy mentions some important themes in the literature, including the call to the church to move from judgement to welcome and accompaniment

of people living with HIV within itself as the body of Christ, and reflecting on what is needed for churches to become places of safety and hope for people living with HIV (2011:182-3). This discussion finds resonance in much of the scholarly work on gender based violence and the church. For instance, Moyo, 2005:131-132; Rakoczy (2004b:33) and Nadar (2006:80) warn that literal biblical readings on headship and submission continue to reproduce discourses that justify abuse and rape, and perpetuate impunity. Of further relevance to my liturgical study are theological questions around constructions of God, notions of the sacred and profane in relation to spirituality and sexuality, and the vulnerability of women as a result of theologies that promote unequal gender power relations (de Gruchy, 2011:185).

Olivier and Clifford (2011) cite a number of studies that exemplify Cochrane's notion of churches as potential health assets, offering compassion and hope through the intangible resources they offer. Although they may not have resolved the many theological questions raised by HIV, their ministries have positively influenced the lives of people living with HIV in their midst, through prayer and encouragement as well as Eucharistic loving accompaniment.

However, both West (2013)⁵¹ and Denis (2016:66-68) attest to the continuing scourge of stigma, which both blame on judgemental church teachings relating HIV to sexuality, and sexuality to sinfulness. Sometimes the best of intentions can manifest themselves negatively. Ben de Klerk's proposed HIV liturgy (2012:140-149) offers an example of the prevalence of patronising compassion which entrenches stigma by representing people living with HIV as passive victims or requiring forgiveness (Paterson, 2011:361). Further, de Klerk rejects feminist liturgical proposals to deconstruct language about God as well as lament that raises the voices of survivors of violence in protest, as contradicting biblical injunctions to accept suffering together with the suffering of Christ. His solution of prayers for deliverance, comfort and healing for victims closes the space for survivors to reclaim agency (2012:140-149).

⁵¹ In a presentation at "Contending with HIV, Contending with the Church: Building a Redemptive Religious Community" A Consultation. 6-8 May 2013, Salt Rock Hotel, Durban.

It appears that the basic structure of good liturgy does offer liturgical opportunities that can offer practical theological tools to facilitate holding open a hermeneutic space at the interface between the realities of HIV and theological uncertainties it raises. I propose extending West's question whether replacing a retributive biblical theology with one that emphasises God's redemptive mercy might destabilise the continuing stranglehold of HIV stigma (2013) to GBV and sexuality in general.

Given my assumption that liturgy reflects a church's biblical theology and translates it into public worship, it is worth exploring the theological underpinnings of the liturgical extracts in my sample, and how these address stigma in relation to HIV, GBV and sexuality.

Ackermann proposes a responsive feminist ethic in the face of ongoing HIV stigma (2006:230-239), which can also be applied to sexuality and gender based violence. I apply her suggestions directly to liturgy here, although she does not mention it overtly. She proposes a gendered analysis of how the church stigmatises people living with HIV or gender based violence survivors. Liturgy that promotes health, wellness and SRHR resists gender stereotyping.⁵² In response to the multiple ways that church tradition has often colluded with gender unjust cultural norms and exacerbated HIV and GBV related suffering, she proposes employing liturgical tools that counter stigmatisation, affirm and hold suffering respectfully, and make way for new hope. Ackermann goes on to describe how life-giving liturgy celebrates the interdependence of all of humanity, together with nature, and promotes mutual respect and responsibility (2006:235-239). Scripture offers multiple images for church as the body of Christ, and this is exemplified most powerfully in the Eucharist, if it is rooted in incarnation theology (235-239).

Govinden (2003) gives expression to this incarnational Eucharistic theology in her liturgical resources for HIV. She argues strongly for the value of liturgy to translate liberatory theologies into activist transformative practice, maintaining that the metaphorical nature of liturgy makes it possible to capture the multiple social tensions and internal struggles surrounding HIV. Eucharistic liturgy that celebrates Jesus' incarnation in disease and suffering promotes inclusion and refutes prejudice and

⁵² Which Ackermann defines as "ascribing limited cultural identities to men and women that stigmatise their abilities and roles in society" (2006:232).

judgementalism. It breaks the silence and counters the shame associated with HIV. It also opens up restorative spaces for reconciliation between people living with HIV and those close to them. Something similar is achieved by the use of baptismal and Body of Christ images, which affirm that, if one member suffers, the whole body suffers: “The body of Christ has AIDS” (2003:261-264).

In practice, Govinden juxtaposes feminine and masculine images of God, lament and thanksgiving, and avoids binary gender language. This enables the nurturing, welcoming and safe spaces in which people’s suffering is embraced and validated. Through this, worshippers are able to make meaning of their lives and discover hope. Further, Govinden demonstrates how liturgy is able to give expression to the ways that HIV exposes multiple social injustices such as gender inequality and poverty, and can facilitate social healing through encouraging deeper reflection (2003:261-264).

Several ecumenical liturgies have been created annually over the past twenty years to respond to HIV and AIDS, and to some extent, gender based violence, particularly during World AIDS Day. Examples include WCC’s *AfricaPraying* (2003) and ACSA’s liturgy on HIV (2008).⁵³ In her editorial introduction to *AfricaPraying* (v-viii), Dube explains that its intention is to equip churches to mainstream HIV in their worship as well as other ministries, to break the stigma and call on their members to engage in practical HIV ministries, in ways that address some of its key drivers, such as poverty and gender inequality (ix).

4.1.5.1 Liturgy and Sexual Rights:

Fulata Moyo (2004:77) argues that religion has to become much more conscious of how it socialises women and men into their sexual and gendered identities. Given the now well-established link between HIV vulnerability and low social and gendered status, she recommends that churches urgently engage in religious and cultural “re-socialisation” towards gender equality and sexual mutuality (2004:77). However, she shows that the churches’ current patriarchal teachings generally achieve the opposite. For example, teachings about women’s lack of independent sexual desire other than to please their

⁵³ See also footnote 8.

partners cause many women to be unable to express or experience their sexuality fully. This teaching is rooted in the dominant discourses of male superiority linked to man as the original image of God, and woman as the image of man (though inherently sinful). This has dire consequences for women's understanding of their own sexuality. Instead, churches need to promote mutual care, respect and companionship, reflected in mutually satisfying sexual relationships (Moyo, 2005:133-136), regardless of HIV status of sexual orientation. Without this, church claims to bring health and wellbeing to the world will be forever doomed to fail (Moyo, 2004:78; 2005: 137).

In place of the prevalent silence surrounding gender based violence and HIV in churches (Haddad, 2002; Rakoczy, 2004a, 2004b), the liturgy can be used to re-socialise church members into healthy gender relations, through its power to construct God, sexuality and human relationships. Rakoczy also points out that gender-blind universal morality ignores the fact that women's life-experiences differ significantly from those of men, and argues that sermons, a core feature of liturgy, need to take on a much nuanced approach to morality, sexuality and HIV and AIDS (2004a:261-262).

Several scholars point to the Eucharist, with its strong emphasis on fellowship in the presence of God incarnate in Jesus, as a potential safe space for the reconstruction of new gendered identities and relationships. Cilliers calls for a reframing of liturgy towards a "theology of affirmation" (2009:516): we are already redeemed in Christ, notwithstanding the destructive powers of our sinfulness. This implies radical inclusion at the Eucharistic table, where all encounter God as equals. But it also implies that liturgy takes place in full cognisance of worshippers' everyday reality, thus removing the division between the sacred and profane (2009:516-519). The perspective of affirmation theology expressed in Eucharistic liturgy in this way has enormous implications for reframing the meaning of the body, suffering, and life itself, as inherently redeemed. This encourages self-acceptance as well as mutual respect, which allows no room for prejudice or stigma on any grounds.

Siwila demonstrates how the religio-cultural stigmatisation and exclusion of women from the Eucharist because of their bodilyness and sexuality (menstruation, pregnancy or giving birth) contradicts the core meaning of worship (2015:89-91). As an antidote, she proposes a similar affirmation theology to Cilliers, by remembering that the same Christ who

invites us to his table, is the one who touched and healed a woman with a menstrual disorder (2015:91). Ackermann warns that ignoring the radical inclusivity of the Eucharist as a celebration of the incarnate Christ in whom we are all fully reconciled through stigma and judgement undermines the whole body of Christ (2006:236-7). Recognising the potential of the Eucharist in a liberatory approach to liturgy has led me to include reframed Eucharistic prayers in my data sample.

I have not found any scholarly literature on the use of liturgy to encourage the church to include and embrace people of diverse sexualities. However, *Inclusive and Affirming Ministries* (Kotze and Schoonraad, 2009) has developed a handbook for exploring spirituality and sexuality that follows an informal structure that echoes the liturgies in *AfricaPraying* (Dube, 2003).

4.2 Lessons Learnt

Although little liturgical research has been undertaken in South Africa that relates directly to health, wellness and SRHR, I have identified some key emerging themes from general liturgical research as well as biblical and ecclesial studies for my liturgical study.

First, a liminal understanding of the experience of worship opens up the possibility of using liturgy as a transformative space. Second, health, wellness and SRH are all inextricably bound with gender and are socially and culturally constructed. They are also interrelated in intersectional webs of oppression, including poverty, ethnicity, culture and disability. Third, the way these notions are constructed through Eucharistic liturgies may serve to reinforce or challenge oppressive norms. Fourth, the liturgical use of metaphorical language that juxtaposes images (such as suffering and hope, disease and healing, sin and redemption) can open the imagination to making new meanings of one's experience, through bringing one's laments before God and beginning to experience glimpses of hope embedded in the very experiences that appear hopeless. Fifth, language choices for God and God's people are critical in this process, as an affirmative anthropology based on mutual respect and responsibility becomes possible in the light of an incarnational theology that recognises the presence of God in all people and all things. And finally, the familiar structural framework of liturgy can offer a safe space for people

to develop an integrated spirituality in light of a variety of SRHR issues, such as HIV, gender based violence and sexual diversity.

5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored some key themes emerging from the history of ACSA and its liturgical journey and from the recent history of liturgical practice and research in South Africa, to identify some relevant insights on liturgy and social change with regard to gender and its implications in the context of health, wellness and SRHR.

The main finding which emerges is that liturgy is a neglected field of study, which means that a powerful church site of struggle has remained largely untapped. I find this surprising, given that a hallmark of postcolonial feminist and African women's theological studies is a commitment to social transformation (Nadar, 2015:384). Particularly given the centrality and unifying influence of liturgy, and particularly the Eucharistic meal, in the Anglican church, the potential of liturgy to influence church theologies and contribute to social transformation, is limitless.

This liturgical study thus promises to make a small contribution to filling a vital gap that will hopefully deepen theological conversations around transformative liturgical praxis in the interests of promoting SRHR as a basic human right and fundamental to the dignity and wellbeing of every person as created in God's image.

In the next chapter, I demonstrate how some creative reframing even of small sections of liturgy (such as Eucharistic prayers, litanies, prayers of confession and sermons) offer opportunities for the church to promote holistic health and wellbeing for SRHR in a society with some of the highest rates of maternal deaths, HIV and gender based violence in the world.

Chapter Five: Creative Liturgical Reframing for Health, Wellness and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

“Honouring what is liberative anywhere, dismantling systems of oppression, arrogance, domination, and exclusivism.” (Carvalhaes, 2015:9)

1 Introduction

This chapter explores how locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). It does so through detailed analysis of liturgical extracts in the sample (Appendix F and Appendix G), to which I add relevant insights from the clergy focus group conversation (FGC, Appendix H).

Liturgy potentially offers either an oppressive or a positive transformative contribution, depending on how competing religious discourses about health, wellness, sexuality and human relationships are expressed through language. In Chapter two, I cited research showing that patriarchal discourses about power, gender, sexuality, reproduction and health have had negative impacts on women’s experiences of their bodies, their health and their sexuality. Chapter three suggested that liturgy does not need to address SRHR matters directly, but it can make a meaningful contribution by creating an environment that promotes human dignity and upholds the five leading causes of life. I argued also that any study of SRHR cannot avoid the direct and reciprocal relationship between gender power relations and sexual and reproductive health.

Chapter four traced some examples of how the patriarchal colonial Anglican legacy continues to reflect in its standardised liturgical practices. Despite its stated efforts to become more gender inclusive, the APB, by its authors’ own admission, still falls short of this (Nuttall, 2006:320-321). A significant consequence of this is the continued universalising of human experience in western patriarchal and heteronormative ways that invalidates diversity (Oduyoye, 2010:86). The Anglican Communion, and indeed ACSA, has consciously attempted to find ways to value local expressions of the centralised tradition. However, this has failed to open spaces for diverse experiences to be given voice through liturgical worship, except where bishops have specifically given permission.

The purpose of this chapter is to learn from creative local liturgies that have consciously attempted to use the liminal space offered by liturgy to reconfigure social and religious assumptions about normal gender power relations, health and sexuality in ways that contribute to greater sexual and reproductive health, particularly amongst women. These are written records of worship that has taken place in different church contexts. I have also included ACSA's new liturgical resource book, *Celebrating Sunday* (CS), because of its potentially much wider influence on ACSA as a whole.

Before embarking on the analysis, I venture to answer why the APB needs revision in the first place. This is followed by a brief review (from a postcolonial feminist theological perspective) of ACSA's *Celebrating Sundays* (CS), published in September 2016 as a creative liturgical experiment (Makgoba, 2016:3). However, I have not applied CS in actual worship, and so my analysis relies on the written word alone. The review concludes that, while CS does offer some important amendments, its potential impacts on health, wellness and SRHR are limited, because it fails to adequately address gender and other power relations in church and society in South Africa. Nevertheless, I have incorporated some interesting extracts in the research sample.

The liturgical analysis has surfaced three major themes related to health, wellbeing and SRHR. Given space constraints, the discussion has had to be severely selective. I have considered how each theme is presented through both discourse analysis and theological lenses, in light of the contestations and power dynamics often associated with the issues at stake and the Anglican Church context in which they have been produced. I explore how each extract opens up the space for participants to engage in transformative ways with SRHR issues in their lives, and implications for the local church.

In sum, I apply to liturgy Dube's biblical hermeneutical question: (how) do the liturgies in this sample promote "justice-seeking ways" of praying "that affirm life?" (Dube 2004:13).

2 Preliminary Note: Language, Liturgy and Interrupting Dominant Discourses

I have argued in Chapter three that language, as the primary liturgical tool under study, can be used for oppressive purposes or to challenge power relations. Liturgical language has particular ideological power as it is imbued with association with the word of God.

One important source of the ideological power of the church is the frequent recurrence of exposure to its dominant discourses within the liminal liturgical space. This is particularly true in the case of repeated ritualised performative speech acts, or actions automatically achieved by words (Macdonald, 2013:3-4), eg. *“May the light of Christ be our light, that we will take into the world”* (Appendix F, L.887-888).⁵⁴ These increase in power with each repetition of the Eucharist, for instance, as the ritualised symbols and actions become habituated. Macdonald explains: “The combined assertions of all those present for each enactment coupled with weekly, monthly, or yearly repetitions confirm the utterance’s performative power” (2013:3).

The ideological power of this repetition emerges in the FGC:

“It’s an attitude that shapes us n in in the liturgy, and even when I have said OOH I am so sinful I’m so horrible! I’m going to come back next week and say those same same terrible words...” (Judith, FGC: L.131-133) [-until ultimately one truly believes that] *“I’m just a miserable offender.”* (Appendix H, FGC: L.131-133)

In contrast, there is ample evidence of metaphorical language and other discourse tools within the sample liturgies that disrupt traditional constructions, to open the possibility for the transformation of gender relations – an essential component of enabling women to make free choices about their SRHR. For example, Eucharistic language that embraces diversity and celebrates equality, mutuality and dignity has the potential to embody alternative, life-giving theologies that resist patriarchal theologies which privilege white male heterosexism and open the imagination to alternative notions of God.

Procter-Smith (1999:63) identifies three uses of language to achieve gender equity, which I seek to identify in the liturgies under study. Non-sexist language aims to avoid derogatory gender normative terms, but does not question stereotypes. Generic masculine terms for humanity are circumvented by using inclusive language, although this can universalise humanity and further silence the voices of women and gender

⁵⁴ All references to liturgical extracts in this chapter refer to the collection of prayer samples, found in Appendix F, attached. Sermon extracts can be found in Appendix G, and the Focus Group Transcription is found in Appendix H.

nonconforming individuals within a dominant patriarchal heteronormative paradigm. Emancipatory language challenges gender stereotypes and frees women and men from normalised roles, by replacing negative or idealised stereotypes with respectful references to women's bodies (1999:63). Renee Hill is highly critical of the language of inclusivity, as it still implies an 'in-group' to which outsiders are invited. Emancipatory language, with its roots in the Western Women's Rights movement, potentially limits the focus to individual human rights. Instead, Hill proposes the use of transformational language, which challenges exclusionary binaries, transcends individualised ideas of freedom and opens the imagination by using surprising articulations in fresh ways (2001: loc.3650).

3 Why is There a Need to Reframe *An Anglican Prayer Book* (APB, 1989)?

The liturgical samples constitute reframings of small sections of the APB, and thus need to be contextualised as part of it. A large body of postcolonial feminist and African women's theological literature⁵⁵ points to the androcentric and patriarchal nature of the Judeo-Christian sacred texts, including the bible and liturgical texts. There is evidence of overt attempts in the research sample to move away from this.

Beth mentioned in the focus group conversation that liturgy "*has history and a future*" (FGC L.507-515), and that its theology should be responsive to context. Although APB does attempt to address social justice issues such as poverty and prejudice in places, it is generally silent about issues related to SRHR. Furthermore, while it has replaced generic male language with nouns like 'people' and 'men and women', or the pronoun 'we', its non-sexist benefit has the side-effect of largely universalising the human condition. This obfuscates significant differences in the experiences of women and men in a country, with arguably the highest HIV infection and rape statistics globally in a society that denigrates women and has normalised male power (Rakoczy, 2004:50).

A related matter of relevance to SRHR is how Anglican liturgy has traditionally represented the body, sin and Christ's atonement. The APB frequently refers to the inherent sinfulness of humanity almost as a cause of Christ's death. The Eucharistic prayers frequently express a longing for worthiness, release from the darkness of sin and

⁵⁵ For instance, Sugirtharajah, 2001, Nadar (2006: 78) Moyo, 2005: Dube, 2001: 89-91, Ackermann (2004: 31-32); de Lima, 2001: loc.121); Dube and Kanyoro (2004).

death, and begging for mercy. The Prayer of Humble Access (APB, 1989:127-128) perhaps best sums up this overriding theology of the APB, rooted as it is in the colonial missionary heritage of “*Lord have mercy on us, miserable offenders*” (FGC, Judith, L.128), described in Chapter 4. Thando, a Canon in ACSA, confessed in the FGC to having largely abandoned the use of this prayer because of its slavish connotations: “*I just have difficulty with the crumbs under the table!*” (FGC, L.453-455).

4 ACSA’s Official Liturgical Experiment: Celebrating Sunday

Celebrating Sunday: Under Southern Skies, in an African Voice (CS) is the result of a resolution of Synod of Bishops in 2012 for revision of the APB to “deal with the masculine and patriarchal nature of the text” (2016:4). This remit was extended to a full revision of APB to improve its relevance to a Southern African context, with the intention of continuing the work of creating an African liturgy begun by the writers of APB.

4.1 How Does CS Promote Health and Wellbeing for SRHR?

CS’s main stated purpose is to promote inclusive language, principally by replacing masculine pronouns and other masculine references to God and God’s people. It falls short of this. It remains locked into almost consistent use of the dead metaphor of God the Father, although it does try to include some gender-neutral ways of representing God. This is discussed further in the analysis below. The only gender- or SRHR- related theme is that of pregnancy, mostly limited to applying Mary’s humility in accepting divine pregnancy. This same metaphor is employed by Francis (See 5.2.2 below), but there it is incorporated as part of a holistic representation of women’s sexuality (L.482-485; and 517-521).

Its second major purpose is inculturation and Africanisation. There is little evidence of this, but the writers clarify that this is still in process and they are grappling with a methodology that preserves the Anglican worship tradition while infusing it with African cultural symbols and other elements (2016:112-113). I will not address this issue, but simply note it.

One positive underlying shift in CS, which is not always overt, is a stronger emphasis on God’s love and mercy over judgement. For example, in contrast to APB’s approach to

Lent as described above, CS contains references to God's welcoming, "*lavish grace*" (Appendix F, CS, L.8), in the light of which we can affirm God's unconditional love by praying as a refrain: "*Take us as we are*" (CS, L.23-79). This has potential to help counter stigma and judgementalism.

CS revitalises an old tradition, the "Prayers over the People" (not to be confused with the Prayers of the People). These are intended to prepare the people to re-enter the world from the liminal space of worship. The sample prayers offered tend to focus on living rightly, but they are phrased too generally, with limited transformative power. (eg. "Grant, Almighty God, that your people may recognize their weakness and put their whole trust in your strength..." (CS, 2016:83). I suggest that, if used flexibly and in direct response to specific issues and experiences of congregants mentioned in the prayers of the people, these could overtly 'send out' congregants to live out their relationships in more life-affirming ways.

A thought piece⁵⁶ on lament invites congregations to make space for this ancient prayer tradition to enable worship to be authentic by acknowledging people's lived realities, and that God's promise of answered prayer is often not experienced. Obfuscating this reality renders worship hollow and un-transformative. CS encourages local worship leaders to make deliberate spaces for lament using the Psalms (2016:123-124). While there is evidence of lament in the collection, its use of generalised prayers ('all people' or 'your family') tends to reproduce the invisibility of women's lives and struggles. In the few places where it does attempt to voice women's experiences, women are still represented as passive objects of the actions of others, rather than actors in their own right (eg. L.178: "*O God, we wait... with...pregnant women everywhere, especially those who have not chosen their state and wonder how they will cope*" (L.178).

CS encourages participation through integrating spaces for congregational testimonies or sharing. It takes Anglicans into its confidence through the *Thought Pieces*, and invites creative suggestions. It is hoped that the current research might contribute to the creative purposes of *Celebrating Sunday*, while also opening up further conversations on liturgy

⁵⁶ Thought pieces in CS raise some issues considered in this renewal project.

and worship as sites of struggle where churches and their members can contribute to gender transformation, holistic health and wider access to SRHR.

5 Analysis of Creative Liturgical Practices to Promote Health and Wellbeing for SRHR

5.1 Background

As explained in Chapter 3, the primary data consists of extracts of liturgical prayers and some sermons. Secondary data has been obtained through a focus group conversation amongst eleven clergy working within diverse congregations, mostly in urban and peri-urban congregations. Five had also submitted samples to the study. Most of the samples represent sections inserted into the set liturgy in *the APB*, because Anglican clergy may not replace entire liturgies, but only selected sections as outlined in the rubrics.

I have identified three major strategies in the liturgical extracts, and demonstrate how language choices and discursive practices are used to promote the health and wellbeing of all, whether or not they directly address sexual and reproductive health issues:

- Creating a liminal space where human dignity, health and wellness can flourish
- Breaking the silence: Addressing SRHR in worship
- Preparing worshippers to become a transformative presence in the world

5.2 Creating a Liminal Liturgical Space to Promote SRHR

As discussed in Chapter 3, the liminal space created by liturgical worship opens the possibility for transformation as social and cultural norms are temporarily held in abeyance (Barnard et al, 2014:71). Structural relations and norms may be confronted against the backdrop of the foundational Christian myth or sacred story (Rosa, 2015:112). Celebrating as it does the quintessential liminal space between life and death, good and evil, spirit and body, the Eucharist is able to hold and transform the contradictions of life. The Eucharist potentially speaks into the realities of people's lives as bodily and sexual beings through the juxtaposition of bodily and spiritual metaphorical language (Lathrop, 1991:36-37; Barnard et al:72). Jesus' unjust suffering can be expressed as a reminder of all the multiple violations of human bodies through disease, injustice and violence, and as a call to worshippers to stand in solidarity with those who are suffering, without judgement or selectivity (Ackermann, 2006:235-239).

Liturgy that consistently employs universals however, remains vague and irrelevant (Suggit, 2009:4). Like Diann Neu (2010:193), this is what Judith cites as her motivation for beginning to write reframed liturgical sections where possible:

“... so much of our liturgy is alienating for women. And so, with the best will in the world, here we are trying to make a place that promotes health, and spiritual connection and physical connection, and just for healing, and mental healing... but the alienating language, the language of separation between the divine and the human, the separation between church and the world.... are so embedded in so much of our liturgy, not all, but a lot of it.”
(FGC: L.47-53)

As Mary Hunt points out: “you can’t just add women and stir” (2010:171).

Thus, although the Eucharist is acknowledged as a sacred space that represents Jesus’ call to unite humanity, it is also, as Siwila points out, a deeply contested space, where gender and other power dynamics are at play (2015:90-92). A transformative approach to liturgy needs to consciously use language that challenges dominant discourses of patriarchal and other privilege and exclusion inherited from the colonial church in the postcolonial South African context.

How, then, do the liturgies in this sample take steps to reframe aspects of traditional Anglican liturgy to shift the dominant discourse in ways that enable local churches to potentially contribute to equipping the church to make a meaningful contribution to SRHR? The rest of this chapter responds to this question.⁵⁷

5.2.1 *Setting the Scene: Welcoming Statements of Inclusivity*

One strategy used by two of the clergy takes place before the service even begins, in the pew leaflet, traditionally handed to all who come into the church for worship. Both contain an unusual ‘Welcome’ paragraph, which welcomes and embraces diversity that exceeds the ‘acceptable’ welcome that ACSA normally extends:

⁵⁷ All line references in the extracts below refer to Appendix F, which contains all the liturgical prayer extracts in numbered order.

[Citing Galatians 3:38-29], “... we rejoice in being a diverse community from many different backgrounds and cultures (Judith, L.194). As St Benedict counselled the members of his community, we undertake to welcome each one as if they were Christ amongst us (Judith, L.200-201).”

“We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, gay, filthy rich and dirt poor....to those who are crying new-borns ... if you just woke up or just got out of prison ... if you are in recovery or still addicted. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down your throat as a kid, or got lost and wound up here by mistake.... and YOU!” (Toni, L.48-63)

However, simple inclusiveness is not enough, as Renee Hill points out (2001: loc.3660):

“Reformist moves that do not invite critical questions about structures, governance, theologies and liturgical practices are not likely to invite or welcome the potentially transformative presence of marginalised people” (loc.3663).

Judith’s welcome statement takes it further, by calling on congregants to consider what inclusiveness means in practice:

“We recognise that with diversity comes the possibility of misunderstanding and the potential for hurt. Therefore, we pledge ourselves to using care and discretion in the way we speak and act. In particular, we undertake not to use offensive language in respect of race, sex, gender ethnic or social origin, nationality, sexual orientation, culture or physical or mental disability, and not to behave in any way that might lead another member of the body of Christ to feel unwelcome or less valuable than any other.” (L.195-200)

These are bold statements, which reflect a commitment to feminist intersectional praxis, and set the context for the kind of faith community they understand themselves to be. I pay particular attention in my analysis to the extent to which each of these two priests’ liturgical reframing is consistent with their statements of intent, and what their implications might be for the churches’ impact on SRHR amongst their members and broader society.

5.2.2 *Re-imagining God and God's Relationship with Humanity*

There are many alternative images for God in the liturgical samples, although few are overtly feminine. Given the power of language to shape thought, feelings and actions, the words used to describe God play a critical role in shaping how people understand the very essence of their being (Clifford, 2001:124; Rakoczy, 2004:42, 71), as well as how they relate to others (Abbey, 2001:155). This is particularly true in Africa, where religion and culture are deeply intertwined and God is viewed as infused in all of life (Phiri,2005:33).

Feminist theology has a long tradition of questioning patriarchal constructions of God (Daly, 1973; Rakoczy, 2004:61-97; Schneiders, 1995:45). Phiri argues that exclusively male imagery for God not only renders women's experiences invisible, but also elevates male experience and leads to the denigration of women's bodies (2005:33). Language that includes both masculine and feminine images of God, she adds, model mutuality in gender relations (33). Feminist theologians have privileged women's experiences of God as a credible source of theological insight (Johnson, 1992:61-75), have searched the bible for feminine images (Rakoczy, 2004:71-76;) and have returned to their cultural traditions (Abbey, 2001:144) to source fresh images of God.

The data somewhat surprisingly reveals only one instance of replacing father images with those of God as mother (Beth, L.960-996). Rakoczy maintains that mother imagery can be a powerful source of affirmation for women (2004:78), and Abbey considers theology to remain unbalanced "until the Motherhood and the Fatherhood of God can be expressed freely" (2001:153). Schneiders, on the other hand, warns that simply adding 'mother' is not a solution, given the dangers of idolatry when drawing parallels between God and any human being (1991:45-46).

An example of an alternative feminine symbol expressed through simile is:

*"We believe in God
the Father who always welcomes us with lavish grace
and longs to be close to us
as a hen gathers her brood under her wings". (CS: L.7-10)*

Similes are weak, since they are merely comparisons, whereas metaphors are stronger and more likely to be interpreted literally. Johnson criticises the use of metaphors for God that do not challenge the binary stereotyping of women versus men, and remain within an androcentric paradigm (1992:47-54). Both of these are exemplified here: Line 8 presents God as ‘the father’,⁵⁸ albeit tempered by the ‘feminine’ attributes of passion and grace. The simile in line 10, juxtaposed with the metaphor of God the ‘Father’, simply offers another dimension of the male ‘father’, and does not transcend the androcentric traditional discourse.

Only two of the clergy have consistently avoided the use of the overused metaphor ‘father’, even though this remains the dominant metaphor in APB, into which their extracts are inserted. A useful mechanism is to address God directly rather than talking about God, which also promotes intimacy with God. This is frequently illustrated in the liturgical extracts, including *Celebrating Sundays*.

Francis avoids using ‘father’ by using a non-sexist concept that is gender-neutral:

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the ever loving parent (Francis:L.510-511)

Underlying meanings associated with words influence how they are received within particular social contexts, and so inclusive terms cannot always be assumed to contribute to affirming women’s full humanity. In the South African context, ‘parent’ is not usually a way of addressing one’s mother or father. It brings to mind its use in official forms rather than personal relationship. While it is an interesting attempt to create a more inclusive discourse, it may not succeed in welcoming worshippers into God’s loving presence, although the adjective ‘ever loving’ does soften it somewhat.

In contrast, consider the following example of transformative language:

Loving God, of infinite tenderness, source of our being. (Judith, National Women’s Day L.405)

This image juxtaposes a number of metaphors from women’s experience in a way that transcends an androcentric perspective. It evokes the deeply intimate relationship

⁵⁸ Compare ‘God the Father’ with ‘God as a father’.

between a mother or loving parent, and a child, through very personal adjectives which become almost cosmological in the reference to the one who gave us birth. This represents what Johnson terms “equivalent imaging” of God (1992:54-56): the images represent the fullness of God in feminine terms, rather than the above examples, in which the feminine simply offer a complementary aspect of God.

Moreover, this example illustrates a fairly common strategy to replace nouns for God with adjectives or adverbs that emphasise certain attributes or habitual actions of God (eg. merciful, gentle). Anne Clifford refers to such symbols as “functional designations for God” although she concedes that there is some controversy over their effectiveness (2001:102). In the context of a small section of the Eucharistic Prayer in APB, with its predominance of ‘father’ images of God, such alternative images may be overwhelmed and their impact minimised. Nevertheless, in a whole reframed service, this imagery may not only invite worshippers to become more open to being surprised by the multidimensionality of God, but it also reinterprets the traditional notions of the relationship between God and God’s people. Other examples in the sample include:

“Oh God unknown” (L.576)

“Gentle God” (L.600)

“God your Maker” (L.735)

In her sermon on the Trinity (in Appendix G, L.508-617), Judith invites worshippers to explore names for God with her, and shows them that the Trinity represents God’s plurality, without limiting the feminine to the Holy Spirit as a complementary feminine to the Father and the Son. Judith avoids a didactic approach. Instead, showing how a scientific explanation of a shared experience of a recent lunar eclipse cannot really explain its transcendent power, she opens the mind to mystery. This enables her to use the liminal liturgical space to question modernist rational thinking about the nature of God. Once this imaginative space is opened, she can problematise traditional patriarchal constructions of God (L.529; 537-539). She invites her congregation to imagine God in creative ways that make sense in their lives, citing ideas amongst a group of her students (L.527). She proceeds to remember (or reclaim) biblical history, explaining that Jesus was crucified because of a monotheist theology that considered the claims that he was God’s son as heresy (L.553-558). Finally, by affirming her congregation’s own outreach work as an example of community, the image of God in practice, she returns to the day’s Scripture

to open the possibility that God is not singular, explaining the Trinity as God as community. This pluriform image of God has profound implications for their understanding, not only of God, but of their connectedness to others and their responsibilities for each other's wellbeing (Abbey, 2001:154).

This sermon can be said to be rooted in postcolonial and African feminist theology in multiple ways. It validates experience as a credible starting point for theologising and also reflects on (affirms and encourages) actual parish experiences of living out their faith in practice. It deconstructs taken-for-granted symbols and metaphors through the use of metaphorical language that opens the imagination. It "re-members" biblical history (Schuessler-Fiorenza, 1983:15-22; Procter-Smith, 1999:69) to justify reconstructing God as Trinity, representing God's multiple identities in a way that embraces diversity in unity and deliberately counters individualism (Carvalhoes, 2015:13-15). Only in her conclusion does Judith return to the New Testament reading of the day, which those present are now able to make meaning of in their lives.

This sermon is entirely consistent with the Welcome call expressed in the pew leaflet used in this congregation (L.191-201) discussed above. It offers an example of effective liturgical praxis, which integrates theory and practice in a coherent theological praxis.⁵⁹

5.2.3 *Imagining Alternative Anthropologies – Power and Gendered Human relationships:*

Crucial to liturgical representations of the nature of humanity is the language used to describe human beings, in relation to God and to each other. In contrast to the androcentric anthropologies underlying the standard Anglican liturgies discussed above, Rakoczy cites a number of scholars who have proposed different forms of inclusive, relational anthropologies, which recognise diversity and refute hierarchy. (2004:51-54).

The Welcoming Statement in Toni's pew leaflet ends with the following:

"ALL are welcome!

We hope that we can be a place where all are welcome at our table...

Where no one feels unworthy to stand in the presence of God and neighbour...

⁵⁹ Further research is needed to ascertain the extent to which this consistent praxis influences other aspects of this faith community's praxis, and how this impacts on its ministry in relation to SRHR in its wider context.

Where no one goes away empty and afraid... ” (L.566-569)

This is an invitation and a commitment to welcome all without discrimination. It affirms the Anglican Eucharistic and Baptismal promises that Christ is present in the elements at the Eucharistic table and that all those who are baptised are invited, based on the baptismal promise of the Christian faith (APB, 1989:374, para 23). This expressly counters stigma by affirming the worthiness of all and the availability of God’s grace to all (Hill, loc.567-568).

The following Eucharistic Prayer is quoted in full, though in sections for commentary, because it demonstrates multiple theological strands that come together to articulate a radically transformative anthropological perspective rooted in postcolonial, African feminist theologies.

Eucharistic Prayer for the feast of Mary Magdalene (Judith, L.270-313)

*“We praise you our God
who has created us women and men together
to bear your image to all creation.” (L.71-73)*

‘God’ addressed with the possessive “our God” (L.71) expresses intimacy with God, as opposed to fear of God inherent in hierarchical images of God. Reference to the simultaneous creation of men and women in God’s image (Gen 1:27-28), promotes mutuality and equal dignity in gender relations and challenges traditional patriarchal hierarchical dualism. The use of the active voice: “created women and men... to bear your image to all creation” versus the common passive reference to Genesis 1:28, “created in God’s image”, reinforces women’s equal agency with men. A world governed by an anthropology of gender mutuality offers hope for various intractable SRHR challenges, given that gender inequality⁶⁰ is now recognized as the biggest obstacle to ending the HIV pandemic and the major driver of all forms of gender based violence (Moyo, 2005:135).

⁶⁰ This term is used with caution, however, recognising that gender (in)equality has different connotations in different intersectional contexts, and women’s experiences cannot be essentialised.

*“We give you thanks that you reveal yourself in surprising and unexpected places:
in people who are poor and outcast and rejected by society,
in the gentleness of a small child,
in the brilliant clarity of star-filled winter nights
and in the smile of a stranger.” (L.74-78)*

The incarnate God is celebrated in all things, which builds on the notion of Trinity in Judith’s earlier sermon, celebrating what Carvalhaes calls the “pluriform embodiment of the holy manifested in a variety of ways” (2015:15). This directly destabilises normalised power relations and assumptions about what constitutes theological knowledge and celebrates diversity. God’s presence at “the periphery of the world” (Carvalhaes, 2015:15) opens the imagination to a non-hierarchical church where the dignity of all people is honoured – whether or not they are stigmatized by society because of their sexuality or HIV status, or their bodies have been shamed by sexual violence.

*“We rejoice with Mary Magdalene
to whom you first revealed the good news of the resurrection of Jesus
and with all who have since come to trust
that you do indeed overcome death and hatred and division
and bring about new hope and joy.
And so with the saints and ancestors
and all who know the life-giving power of your love we praise you saying:
Holy, holy...” [as per APB] (L.79-86)*

Identification with Mary Magdalene, often called the first apostle, challenges the patriarchal discourse that assumes women’s inferiority and male domination in the church and justifies male control over women’s sex lives (Moyo, 2005:135). Moreover, ordinary people can participate together with Mary, reputed sinner, and all the saints throughout history. Moreover, the Christ event has not only overcome death but his love has overcome the death-dealing aspects of life such as judgementalism. This brings hope and resilience to women and all those oppressed by hatred and division.

In the postcolonial context of ACSA, the parallel positioning of ancestors with saints as part of the broader ‘communion of saints’ integrates African and Western cosmologies, thus challenging colonial demonisation of African religions. Moreover, there is a suggestion that Mary may also count as an ancestor, and she is the only one named. This challenges most traditions - women ancestors would have a lower status, and women are

rarely named in the bible. Many African women theologians challenge exclusivity in both the colonial church and African religions, since: “neither Christianity nor African culture are devoid of the oppression of women” (Oduyoye, 2010:90).

*“We give you thanks and praise for Jesus, beloved friend of Mary.
We give thanks for Jesus who in Mary saw love and devotion
where others saw sin and pronounced condemnation
and so teaches us to love one another.” (L.88-91)*

Judith builds on the example of Mary, reputed prostitute,⁶¹ now going so far as to highlight her intimate friendship with Jesus. Thus, Jesus becomes a role model for non-judgementalism that challenges exclusion on the basis of ‘unacceptable’ sexual (hetero- or homosexual) practices.

*“We give thanks for Jesus who breaks through the tears of sorrow
and gives new hope and a new vision of that which might be.
We give thanks for Jesus, who in the midst of his own suffering
gave us a way to remember him and to become part of one another.
On the night before he died, he shared a meal with his friends.
He took bread,” [as per APB] (L.92-97)*

The Eucharistic story is remembered in a way that transcends individual salvation and includes a communal dimension, consistent with African cultural understanding of salvation (Oduyoye, 2005:149). Jesus did not just give us “*a way to remember him*”, but also a way to “*become part of one another*” (L.94-95).

In sum, this entire Eucharistic Prayer offers a radical anthropological vision from a postcolonial African feminist perspective. It includes relationships of mutuality, based on recognition of God’s image in all people and in all of creation. It celebrates women’s status as leaders and pillars of the faith community. It is rooted in community, the Body of Christ, which affirms the goodness in others and so is able to offer hope and a new vision of a new world that also embraces African cosmologies. Metaphors and juxtapositions are used in surprising ways - thus doing exactly what Line 274 suggests – it surprises us with God’s incarnate and sanctifying presence in all things, and presents Jesus in loving relationship with his friends, who include women and those of ill-repute.

⁶¹ This is, however, highly contested amongst historical theologians.

This counters the dominant orientation in APB to human sinfulness, the need to be “made worthy”, the Western dualism between sacred and profane, individualised, privatised religion.

The possible effect of repeated exposure to non-judgemental, relational and communal anthropology in liturgical worship may ultimately (and perhaps unconsciously) liberate women (and men) from feelings of shame and guilt so they can interact more assertively and compassionately in their relationships. Together with more direct ways of approaching questions of the body and sexuality, this may be one way, in Siwila’s words, “to radically transform and heal the damaging, misogynist aspects of the Christian tradition that deal with the body” (2015:91).

5.2.3.1 De-stigmatising Woman and Encouraging Women’s Agency

An integrated human anthropology and the integrity of creation: The Eucharistic Prayer for Women’s Day

Loving God, of infinite tenderness, source of our being, we rejoice that you give birth to the whole creation – stars and rain, oceans and sky, birds and buffalo, and women and men together in your image. We thank you that when your creation suffers you bring forth hope of a new creation. (Judith, L.405-408)

Over and above the loving nature of God discussed earlier, God’s deep engagement in creation is expressed in ways that interrupt the traditional patriarchal discourse of God ‘in heaven’. The creation is birthed by God, rather than simply spoken into being (John 1:1-4). The whole of creation is made in God’s image (in mutual relationship, expressed in the parallel pairs), and the pain of childbirth is connected spiritually to the profound act of God’s redemptive action in creation. This resonates with eco-feminist theologies as well as African women’s theologies: God’s work in the world is described in terms that women can relate to, which serves to sacralise women’s sexual and reproductive capacity –correcting thousands of years of their denigration (Rakoczy, 2004:30-36). It has immense implications for women’s sense of their own bodies, the power of their sexuality, and their calling to co-create life with God in childbirth, as well as providing

strong justification for the equality of men and women, and respect for creation.⁶² It lays a strong foundation for the next part of this Women's Day Eucharistic Prayer.

Women as Pillars of the Church: (Judith, L.409-432)

This prayer, not quoted in full due to space limitations, continues the above verses by focusing entirely on women. It offers examples of women leaders in the church history (L.408-412). It includes women with whom Jesus related as intimate friends and equals, not fearing to touch their bodies, recognising their gifts and acknowledging their theological intelligence (L.425-432). It shows Jesus resisting prevalent cultural beliefs surrounding the uncleanness of women's bodies, their exclusion from education and leadership, and their use as commodities, which are still prevalent in many societies, including in Africa (Fanusie, 1992:142).

This prayer does not idealise women or turn them into a concept, as often occurs in traditional references to women biblical figures and saints. It recognises their experiences of suffering at the hands of patriarchal beliefs and practices, and celebrates their capacity to resist oppression, even to this day. Naming women biblical characters in liturgy, which is a common feminist biblical hermeneutic strategy, potentially reverses the prevalent silence of women and their invisibility in biblical and church history. It re-members biblical and church history, bringing into the Sunday Eucharist memories of women's contributions and resistances. Integrating this approach into the worship space demonstrates this powerful way of re-membering the bible in a Sunday liturgy that speaks meaningfully to women, to counter the dominant patriarchal discourses that invalidate women's experience.

I suggest that more of this kind of liturgical theology is sorely needed to contribute to the fulfilment of a key stated aim of postcolonial and African feminist theologians – to tap into the liberatory aspects of Scripture to bring about social transformation for a just world.

⁶² However, it does not challenge prevalent assumptions that women's sexuality is limited to their reproductive capacity, which has severely limited their freedom to enjoy sexual pleasure (Oduyoye, 2004: 87-88).

5.3 *Breaking the Silence: Addressing SRHR in Worship*

5.3.1 *Sexuality, sexual desire and intimacy*

According to Moyo, if churches re-socialised people to view sexual relationships as mutually satisfying, rooted in mutual love and respect, this would contribute to faithfulness, greater use of safe sex and freedom from the threat of violence. This could be achieved through re-reading biblical texts that speak of God's relationship with humanity in terms like 'lover' and 'beloved' (2005:135-136).

I have found only one such example in the liturgies, which expresses Jesus' desire to be in intimate relationship with us, and echoes his use of touch in healing those who came to him:

*"We lay our hands upon one another
In the name of Jesus Christ,
Healer and lover of the world"* (Toni, L.698).

5.3.2 *Sexuality, Motherhood and Incarnational Theology*

There is evidence of other creative ways to address the denigration of women's sexuality. The Eucharistic Prayer below directly emphasises Jesus' total identification with women's bodies and their sexual expression, which were considered a source of pollution in his time and still are in many cultures today (Rakoczy, 2004:32; Oduyoye, 2004:88, Fanusie, 2006:139-141). Isherwood and Althaus-Reid propose that churches adopt a "sexual theology" which radically revises incarnational theology by viewing God as integrally embodied in human sexuality (2005:7). Although this liturgy does not go beyond heterosexuality, raising sexuality at all in the context of liturgy is radical, and is a good example of reframed theology in the interests of promoting SRHR.

*"You our Creator assumed the human body to walk with Mary Magdalene,
the unnamed woman and allowed the despised woman to touch and kiss you.
You did not reject our mortal bodies but accepted to be one of us. You
embraced us as your own and one with you as you scandalously chose to be
born of an unmarried woman. You have redeemed us who were far off and
marginalised.*

*Our Creator, in Christ you shared our life and gave us your own.
The Christ opened the way of salvation and hope for all the lowly and
marginalised."* (Francis, L.517-524)

This theme is reinforced in Francis' brief homily (L.455-505). It introduces the (rather indecent) meditative Advent exercise of men and women imagining their own pregnancy with Christ, and what it would mean to be channels of Jesus's birth. Other liturgical extracts similarly ask God, as "*source of all life*" to "*conceive in us the same willing spirit that Mary exuded*" (Celebrating Sunday, L.95), and for grace, like Mary, to "*carry the Christ*" (Judith, L.323). This constitutes a direct affront to hegemonic views of masculinity as active and penetrative. It highlights what is actually a very active role of women in pregnancy, while also challenging men to become more deeply engaged in the pregnancies of their wives.⁶³

More radically, it accords pregnancy a whole new status, by affirming the link between sexuality and spirituality (Oduyoye, 2004:86-87), although does not go as far as Judith (Section 5.2.3.1), who connects women's procreative and God's creative power. The deliberate choice of adjectives like 'unnamed' and 'despised', and the adverb 'scandalously' highlight Jesus' shocking prophetic actions. This example of "indecent theology" (Althaus-Reid, 2000) concurs with many feminist theologians' rejection of religious obsession with the sinfulness of women's bodies (eg. Graham, 2009:124; Rakoczy, 2004:36), their acknowledgement of sexuality as a key source of expression and creativity (Kwok, 2010b:7), and African women's call for women to reclaim value of their sexuality by re-membering related African traditions (Nasimiyu-Wasike, 2006:42).

5.3.2.1 Sex and Power: Sermon on the Woman Caught in Adultery

(Appendix G: Judith L.434-506)

In Chapter 2, I referred to Pinedra-Madrid's view that body theology is a political act (2010:24). This is evident in Judith's fresh perspective on how Jesus manages the challenge presented to him by religious leaders when they bring him the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). Judith analyses the story from the perspective of power relations, which goes to the nub from a postcolonial feminist perspective: it is not about sexual sin, but spiritual arrogance. At the same time, by wondering what she must have been thinking, Judith brings the woman into the centre, according her the status of a real

⁶³ An interesting linguistic strategy here is that, as an African man, he breaks into isiZulu, perhaps to clarify that he is not just imposing a western idea of masculinity, thus rejecting a possible alternative discourse that would turn his theological message into a cultural debate?

person. The woman becomes a symbol of the good news in this story: that Jesus does not condemn us, but frees us to become better people. Judith poses a direct challenge to what Joh calls “church supremacy” (2010:58). She also counters the dehumanisation of people inherent in stigmatisation, which is consistent with the parish Welcome statement.

5.3.3 *Sexually Transmitted Diseases, HIV and Stigma*

Women continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV due to cultural and physical factors and church teachings that denigrate women’s bodies and sexuality and promote male headship that make it difficult for women to negotiate safe sex (Moyo, 2005: 135). In my analysis below, I have read the liturgies through a lens of the underlying ethics of de-stigmatisation and justice (Kanyoro, 2004: viii-ix; Gouws, 2012:272).

Stigma, Statistic and Restoration: Eucharistic Prayer- Focus on HIV/AIDS

(Appendix G, Judith, L 362-402)

*O holy Wisdom of our God
compassionate to those who suffer and are in pain
we praise you and give you thanks because you emptied yourself of power
and entered our struggle,
taking upon you our unprotected flesh.
You opened wide your arms for us on the cross
becoming scandal for our sake,
that you might sanctify even the grave to be a bed of hope for your people.*

*Therefore, with those who live with life-threatening disease,
those abandoned or betrayed by friends
those whose bodies are violated or in pain,*

.....

we praise you saying:

Holy, holy.... [as per APB]

*Blessed is our brother Jesus, bone of our bone & flesh of our flesh,
from whom the cup of suffering did not pass;
who on the night that he was betrayed,
took bread, gave thanks [as per APB] (Judith, L.362-390)*

*Therefore, as we eat this bread and drink this cup
we are proclaiming Christ's death until he comes.
In the body broken and blood poured out we restore to memory and hope
the broken and unremembered bodies of those who have died.
And we long for the bread of tomorrow and the wine of the age to come.*

*Come then, life-giving Spirit of God, brood over these bodily things
and make us one body with Christ
that we who are baptised into his death may walk in newness of life;
that what is sown is dishonour, may be raised in glory..... (Judith, L.392-402)*

Judith's Eucharistic Prayer reframes the core Eucharistic symbol of the cross by applying incarnational theology to counteract the negative effects of atonement theology to all those suffering from disease, without specifically addressing HIV (Govinden, 2006: 261). This challenges HIV-related stigma. Moreover, the liturgical parallelism drawn between Christ's crucifixion and the rejection of those with stigmatized diseases confronts the dominant religious discourse that brands people living with HIV as sinners. If God's own Son gives up his power to identify with and sanctify the vulnerable bodies of his people, then the church rejects him when it stigmatises them. Line 381: "bone of my bone..." echoes the unity of the first humans, created from the same flesh (APB, 1981:461). This is juxtaposed with the bread and wine as symbols of Jesus' body united with the bodies of the sick. Jesus was betrayed, despised and suffered on the cross (L.382-3), and those who are suffering today can experience his accompaniment.

This liturgy makes use of strong statements of faith, which in the context of Eucharist hold performative power, thus offering direct ministry and hope to those who need it most. The final paragraph takes the Eucharistic theme of remembering Christ further. Lines 394-395 call to memory, alongside Jesus' broken body, the individual lives of those who have become statistics, thus critiquing the way HIV has been handled in society. The final four lines (398-402) restore all those stigmatized by disease into the Body of Christ, by virtue of their baptism, which reinforces and strengthens an inclusive Eucharistic theological discourse.

HIV and Social Justice: Good Friday Reproaches

(Beth, L.901-958)

Beth contextualises HIV within South Africa's history of struggle for justice and freedom from violence, stigma and exclusion. HIV is presented as one of many sources of intersectional oppression, and addresses each in turn: racism and xenophobia (L.914-916), violence against women and children (L. 919-925), poverty, hunger and corruption (L.927-930), and HIV and AIDS:

“I see faces upon faces hollowed out by HIV/AIDS. I see the fear and secrecy, the prejudice, discrimination and isolation that add to the burden of disease.

Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.” (L.932-934)

This removes HIV from the traditional dominant religious discourse associating HIV with individual sexual choices and guilt and reinforces an alternative discourse of social justice. Haddad recognizes that many scholars now “presuppose the HIV epidemic to be a justice issue that is deeply political” (2011:4). Some churches have moved from connecting it to individual sexual choices to a realization that HIV influences, and is influenced by, multiple social factors and can thus be said to be the product of intersectional oppression (Dube, 2004:12-13). However, even in 2016, as Denis points out, stigma has not significantly decreased in the church (70).

“Mother forgive them”: Using Imagination to Grow in Compassion

(Beth, L.960-996)

In this Lenten prayer of confession and lament, Beth shows how liturgy can become activist theology, applied to motivate worshippers to change their attitudes and engage in transforming society (Govinden, 2003:261-264). This litany is a profound lament and political act. It reframes Jesus’ words on the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke, 23:34) as “*Mother forgive them, for they know not what they do*” (L. 960).

A shocking and moving picture of life as a woman living with HIV emerges through the brief versicles and responses,⁶⁴ giving voice to those usually silenced and rendered invisible in traditional liturgy. It forms “reverse discourse”, which occurs when the stigmatised begin to articulate a new discourse that reconstructs them on their own terms (Weedon, 1987:106). This challenges congregants with or without HIV to “live in the wounds”, and opens a space for “narrative repair” to take place, as the silenced are able to challenge those who stigmatise them (Gibson, 2012:641).⁶⁵

⁶⁴ This is a dialogic set of statements. Where the leader speaks and the congregation responds in unison.

⁶⁵ The complex question of how women’s experiences are presented in liturgy is addressed in Chapter 6.

The deliberate choice to replace ‘father’ with ‘mother’, together with giving voice to those normally silenced in liturgy, carries enormous transformative power. To borrow from another of Judith’s sermons, it invites those present to reflect on what a woman’s experience of HIV would be like in a specific time (2003) and place as a springboard to gain a:

“glimpse of a different world”,

and to build on that in order to

“imagine a new word into being” (L.140-141).

5.3.3.1 Solidarity in suffering and sickness:

(Toni, L.683-739)

Of course, there is still an important role for prayers of compassion and solidarity, as this has been shown to greatly improve resilience amongst people living with HIV (Denis, 2016:72-75). Although this healing service never directly addresses the differing experiences of women and men, it emphasises compassion for one another as united in the Body of Christ (Toni, L. 685-693). This healing liturgy becomes a bodily communal enactment as it invites congregants to pray for each other in pairs. It offers an example of Russell’s ‘church in the round’ (1993). This may promote social capital (Barnard et al, 2014) and build resilience through building trust relationships and solidarity (Moyo, 2004:78) and enacting Jesus’ concrete involvement in bringing healing at the point of need (Rakoczy, 2004: 121, 123; Mombo and Joziassse, 2016:169).

The service culminates in the radical inclusion of all in the Body of Christ symbolised by the Eucharist, which also affirms the African value of *ubuntu*. The reframed invitation to communion gives voice to the whole faith community to express mutual solidarity:

*“Take this cup as a sign
Of our community with you.
Your tears are our tears;
Your hope is our hope;
Your prayer is our prayer;
You are not alone...” (Toni, L.726-731)*

As a liturgical praxis, this operationalises engendered communal theology (Kanyoro, 2001:169): “If theological values have any substance, they will exist in primary form as bodily practices... and only derivatively as doctrines and concepts” (Graham, 2009:88).

5.3.4 *Gender Based Violence*

A Man Calls for Women to be Taken Seriously

There is a wide diversity of responses to GBV in the data sample. The first is Alan's sermon (Appendix G, L. 583-751), which addresses the issue from a man's perspective, albeit in a somewhat didactic manner, in which women remain the object of the discourse. While calling on the church to recognise women's contributions in church and society, it calls on parishioners to speak out against violence and offer shelter. It concludes with Alan's vision for the kind of church his congregation could become.

This sermon is an example of a simple intervention that can be made by clergy, even if they do not feel equipped to write reframed liturgical prayers. While it does not speak from a postcolonial feminist perspective, the power of a male priest raising GBV issues and challenging the church to become more like Jesus in its gender relationships, is not to be under-estimated. This is confirmed by Thembi, one of the women in the focus group (Appendix H, L. 535-548):

“Um I think that it would be such a brilliant thing ... if they [men] start a new narrative about the issue of sexual and reproductive health into our liturgy, it will be shifting, because if I come in or you come in (looking at another woman priest), we will be told I would not want to talk”

Joseph

The same idea is echoed in Judith's advent sermon on Joseph. She explains that in his cultural context, not divorcing pregnant Mary (which was his legal right) meant a loss of his own reputation as a man. If he had claimed his honour, it would have exposed Mary to the violent consequences of the law – being cast out from her community. This makes him a role model for men, but also for anyone who is privileged, to use their power to protect those who are vulnerable in the face of unjust laws and social norms, without counting the cost. Judith concludes that:

“Joseph's 'yes' to God is every bit as important as Mary's 'yes' to the angel.”
(Appendix G, L.299-300)

Three other extracts are discussed below; each deals with GBV in a different way.

Lenten Litany and Lament⁶⁶ (Appendix G, Judith: L.205-268)

After invoking the Trinity: the “Maker... Servant of the Poor... Breath of life”, this Holy Week litany focuses on the political and intersectional nature of GBV. It laments different forms of violence done to people and the environment, followed by repetition of its impact on Jesus incarnate in human suffering:

“When children are beaten and abused
Lord Jesus your body is broken

When women are raped
Lord Jesus your body is broken

When people are hungry
Lord Jesus your body is broken

When people suffer and are in pain
Lord Jesus your body is broken

.....
When lonely people cry
Lord Jesus you weep too

.....
When animals are mistreated and killed
Lord Jesus you weep

When our hardness of heart keeps us from caring
Lord Jesus you are crucified

When our fear keeps us from speaking against injustice
Lord Jesus are crucified

When our greed keeps others poor
Lord Jesus you hang naked on a cross”

This repeated juxtaposition of acts of violence and their impact on Jesus emphasises Jesus’ bodily and emotional identification with those upon whose bodies violence is enacted. The repetition of short, sharp phrases throughout almost alliterates the acts of violence mentioned, and is deeply emotive. The final three dialogic pairs turn the focus

⁶⁶ A litany is a prayer with alternating voices between people and priest, usually with repeated responses.

on bystander guilt, emphasising the brutality being done to God by people's inaction in the face of violence, injustice and systemic poverty.

Instead of absolution, the litany ends with a prayer to face our culpability, alongside a prayer for the grace to forgive those who have injured us.

Lord Jesus, we learn that what we do to our brothers and sisters we do to you.

Forgive us (L.260-262).

Give us courage to face the destruction we have wrought;

Remind us that we too are crucifiers.

When we have been injured and crucified

Give us grace to forgive.

Amen

(The service ends in silence. People are invited to remain in silent prayer)

Both this and the Eucharist for HIV echo Matthew 25 (34-46), where Jesus expressly identifies with the struggles of the poor, imprisoned, marginalised and vulnerable. This is what feminist theologians such as Denise Ackermann yearn for in the church (2001: loc.1884): spaces for authentic lament and confession that avoid cheap forgiveness, and minimise the impact of personal and structural violence and injustice – these are not just an affront to humanity but an attack on God incarnate.

The lament is accompanied by a ritual, which symbolically demonstrates the destruction of life associated with violence: “*(As each prayer is said, a flower or leaf is pulled from the cross and thrown to the floor by members of the congregation)*” (L.221-222).

This action adds to the pathos of the moment, being reminiscent of the funeral rite of dropping rose petals into a grave before a coffin is covered with soil.

This litany could have the effect of ending the sense of isolation of women or children who have been raped or abused. They might recognise the fault is not with them (contrary to popular myths about abuse), and be enabled to speak out and seek help.

The service ends in silence, without the expected liturgical resolution of forgiveness, thus challenging the cheap forgiveness society often requires from victims of abuse. This Holy Week prayer challenges parishioners to journey courageously and honestly towards Easter. It is unlikely to leave parishioners unmoved. It dares to speak about sexual and other forms of violence in church, a form of indecent theology, without invoking pity for

survivors, and it forces church members to consider their own culpability, even if they are not perpetrators.

Voicing the violence: resistance and healing

(Nadine, L.745-764)

The following introduction to an ecumenical service that ends a workshop on domestic violence opens simply with a series of exclamations, between repetitions of “*Voices that challenge*”, and ending with the following verse:

“Voices that challenge:

The ones who seek peace by their witness and courage!

The women who suffer the pain of injustice!

The people with HIV and those plagued with addiction!

The prophets and heroes who call us to question!

The healers who teach us forgiveness and mercy!

The victims of violent abuse and aggression!

The Christ who gave his life that we might live!”

The multiplicity of voices exclaiming in resistance to manifold forms of violence demonstrate that the webs of violence and oppression are complex and nuanced. Line 748, “*We are the voice of God*”, locates God within those who suffer as well as those who break the silence and bring healing, demonstrating that pain and hopelessness are punctuated with glimpses of light and hope, because Jesus is in all. Njoroge celebrates the importance of naming the injustices and suffering in one’s life, because it brings hope (2006:59) and opens the possibility for healing. This is an example of what Barnard et al (2014) refer to as the healing power of the “liminality of the cross” – its ability to hold in tension death and resurrection, suffering and healing, violence and peace-making.

Both of the above liturgical prayers counter prevalent religious discourses that the suffering of women and other oppressed people is God’s will, which constitutes religious abuse (Phiri, 2000, Rakoczy, 2004a:31).

Responding to the Voices

(Nadine, L.862-884)

The last extract on GBV opens the space for narrative repair (Gibson, 2012) by offering a direct response to the cries of the voices above. It focuses on those who are both actively

and passively culpable: perpetrators, bystanders, and the church. Preceding these two extracts (L.767-861) are a psalm of lament, a confession focusing on the church's guilt, and an expression of longing "*to control our violence*" (L.826) and "*to find a peace built on justice for all*" (L.831). The section ends with words of assurance, which, (as performative speech acts) assure of God's forgiveness while acknowledging that "we bear the consequences of what we do, but we are not condemned". It thus avoids cheap forgiveness, which Marie Fortune argues undermines justice and leads to impunity (2010:144-147) .

This concluding prayer was created by participants in groups at the end of a participatory workshop, and thus demonstrates Kanyoro's (2001, 2010) engendered communal (liturgical) theology in practice. In line with feminist arguments for recognition of the power dynamics inherent in GBV (Fortune, 2010:145, 148), it follows a comprehensive movement that brings into the light of Christ the needs of victims, perpetrators who need to be brought to justice, and the church's complicity in silence and exclusion, thus calling for response from those with social power. In each case, a different attribute of God is called upon, for people to draw the qualities they need (compassion, mercy and transformation) to bring redemption into the situation.

Corporate Systemic Guilt

Finally, Toni's Good Friday excerpt expresses a similar sense of culpability as bystanders, but it also emphasises the complex causal and consequential dynamics of systemic matrices of oppression, collusion, silence and privilege that underlie much violence:

"We lay open to you: the victims of violence whose only memorial is our anger; those whose suffering was sustained on our behalf; those whose continued oppression provides the ground we stand on..." (Toni, L.656-658)

5.4 Preparing to Become a Transformative Presence in the World

Edgardh Beckmann emphasises the importance of the Gathering or Welcome and the Sending in shaping the wider impact of the liturgical space. The Gathering constructs who the church is- who is in and who is out, and the Sending or Commission is a question of how the church sees its mission (2006:156-160). Postcolonial and African perspectives, which transcend the distinction between sacred and profane, would interpret the Sending

as a transition from meeting God in worship to participating in God's mission already taking place in the world (Haddad, 276; Moyo, 2015:103). I focus on a single example, below.

The *Commission and Blessing* that end the liturgy on domestic violence constitutes a direct call to the people, using the performative phrase "*bids us to follow*" (L.885).

*"Christ bids us to follow him to be his Church.
To carry the light of his love out into the world.
To turn things upside down and inside out.
to go where the hurting is
and, in the power of the Spirit.
to change who we are into the Kingdom of God*

*May God go with you
in all that is gentle:
Christ go with you
in all that is brave
and the Spirit go with you
in all that is free
Amen."* (L.885-898)

It is a call, not to appropriate God's cause for ourselves, but to recognise that we can only be a small part of God's work in the world. We are called to "*go where the hurting is*" (L.888), and bring transformation, but also in the process "*change who we are into the Kingdom of God*" (L.890). This recognises, unlike the colonial church supremacy (Joh, 2010:58) that justified missionaries imposing its ways (Moyo, 2015:98), that what will change the world is the continuous conversion of each person who participates in God's transformative ministry.

5.5 Gaps

At first glance, there appears to be little attempt at liturgical inculturation, apart from one reference to the intergenerational sense of the body of Christ, including saints and ancestors (L.284) and Francis' use of isiZulu to address Zulu men directly (L.494).⁶⁷ However, many extracts do reflect communal African cultural values at a very deep level, in particular solidarity and *ubuntu* (eg. L.726-731). This constitutes a specific

⁶⁷ Line 113-4 addresses God as "Chief of Chiefs", which actually reinforces the masculinity of God.

interpretation of the Body of Christ metaphor - that we are “persons-in-communion” (Oduyoye, 2004:88), which is reflected in almost all the liturgical extracts studied. According to Oduyoye (2010) and Rakoczy (2004:351), inculturation is a return to the values underlying cultural expressions rather than just cultural expressions, since in Africa, the Gospel is “lived, not just preached or theologised” (Oduyoye, 2010:80).

Focus Group Analysis

5.6 Purpose

The secondary data collected in the focus group conversation (FGC) was intended first to offer insight into the theological, ecclesiological and ideological positioning of the clergy in relation to liturgy; and second, to understand the ecclesial dimensions within ACSA that might impact on liturgical renewal and reframing in the church, from the perspectives of clergy.

5.7 Emerging Themes

The FGC yielded a very rich conversation, primarily about what reframing means in practice in ACSA today. The next chapter addresses this issue in some depth, in relation to what is possible to achieve through liturgy as a site of struggle. Some insights relevant to the specific samples are integrated into the liturgical analysis above, and two others are mentioned below.

5.7.1 The Purposes of Liturgy

Most of the clergy viewed the main purpose of liturgy as preparation for participation in God’s social transformation work and the least important was theological and doctrinal education. The results are unexpected. They contradict the view of most liturgical scholars that one’s theology informs whether and how one engages in the world (Suggit, 2009; Lathrop, 1991; Barnard, 2014). Similarly, postcolonial feminist theology presupposes that theological re-education can lead people to become more engaged in social and gender transformation. Further research is needed to ascertain whether other (Anglican) clergy share the same belief and why, how this might influence their approach to theology, liturgy and social transformation, and what this might mean for church mission and activism. Nevertheless, four of the five priests who submitted liturgical extracts prioritise both purposes equally.

5.7.2 *Liturgy and SRHR*

A brief discussion on the links between liturgy and SRHR yielded general agreement with the academy (Chapter 3, Section 3), that health is about wellness, which is priority for the church. One argued that the liturgy cannot be silent about SRHR when most of his congregation are women and youth, who are most directly affected. Two others added that healing is an inherent aspect of the APB Eucharist and simply needs further expounding, but they did not critically address the political nature of gender struggles as vital to achieving SRHR.

6 Summary: Liturgical and Discourse Tools for Reframing Liturgy to Address Health and Wellness for SRHR

In summary, the main liturgical and discourse tools employed in the liturgical extracts that enable liturgy to promote health and wellbeing for SRHR include the following.

Symbols and Metaphors: Juxtaposing Old and New

First, perhaps the most common strategy has been replacing traditional masculine metaphors and symbols, or introducing alternative discourses by using them in unexpected ways through unusual juxtapositions to open the imagination. However, non-sexist and inclusive formulations can risk essentialising women's experiences, especially in the ACSA context, where small alternative sections are inserted into APB, with its prevalence of traditional masculine metaphors. Nevertheless, the liturgical extracts often juxtapose traditional liturgical language with new concepts, which have most transformative power if they step out of stereotypical gender concepts and arouse new perspectives completely (Sokolove, 2010:88). This is consistent with Dube's argument for postcolonial feminist use of hybridity (2002:117). However, it is not without risk, particularly when using similes alongside an overused and thus naturalised metaphor like father, which may diminish the power of any alternative symbols.

Linguistic and Literary Strategies

Careful use of linguistic and literary strategies has proven effective. Examples include: repetition and incremental repetition of patterns or words, especially with sudden replacement of habitual responses, and using repetition in versicles and responses in

dialogue between the leader and worshippers. Alliteration adds to the emotive power of liturgy. Using active or passive tense, when the opposite is expected, can highlight agency or lack of it. Finally, different kinds of speech acts, such as exclamations and invitations in place of statements, are more likely to provoke deep engagement and openness to new perspectives rather than simply giving information. Finally, the recurrent use of performative verbs and phrases have also been used to great effect.

Speaking out

Simply speaking out is extremely powerful and can be a transformative strategy, given that dominant liturgical discourses often “set themselves up by muting what they deny” (Carvalhaes, 2015:13). It can be achieved in at least three ways.

First, one can speak out through re-remembering or reclaiming either a biblical story or historical account that offers an alternative perspective to deconstruct or re-frame a dominant discourse. It celebrates the long-silenced lives of women, and enables them to imagine taking their rightful place in church and society. Repeated use of these strategies to reinterpret traditional meanings can gradually build up a reverse discourse promoting mutuality and justice.

A second form of speaking out is through lament. Traditional silences about the experiences of women, other marginalised groups, and taboo health and sexuality issues are broken through juxtaposing seemingly indecent articulations of the hard realities of life with images of God’s holiness and healing. This is strengthened by daring to express Jesus’ own incarnation within the bodies and suffering of the oppressed.

Finally, storytelling can evoke empathy for those whose voices are usually silent or silenced. Juxtaposing these everyday stories with a bible reading accords them a spiritual value- thus modelling an integrated faith and breaking down the traditional church tendencies to separate the sacred and the profane.

Active Bodily Participation

Use of bodies in liturgy through active participation or visualisation have been used in these samples to good effect. This links to the next point.⁶⁸

Connecting to Lived Experience

Sermons or prayers that relate directly to examples of a faith community's own outreach work or other shared experiences helps to ground abstract theological concepts, which would enable people to affirm the value of their experiences and integrate their faith and their lives.

In Sum:

This chapter has demonstrated that liturgical worship can be used in ways that enable them to that become community health assets by addressing SRHR in transformative ways. This is achieved by moving towards greater inclusiveness, consciously employing liturgical language and discourse that embraces diversity and resist violence through stereotyping and stigma, speaks out against personal and structural oppression and violence, and whether it promotes abundant life.

In the focus group discussion, Francis coined the concept "intentional liturgy" (FGC, L.97), which I believe effectively sums up all the abovementioned strategies into a single phrase.

7 Conclusion: The Value of Intentional Liturgy

This chapter has explored how liturgy can be used to promote health and wellbeing for SRHR. It has described some of the most salient themes that have emerged from the liturgical data and the clergy focus group discussion, and provided some detailed analyses of how these themes have been articulated, and to what effect.

I conclude that, for liturgy to be transformative, it needs to be intentional. Its objectives must be clear to its writer/s as well as the leader/s of the liturgical worship in process, because liturgy is a key site of power struggle in the church. The assumed universal truths

⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the focus of this study on the written word has limited data about this to instructions provided in the written liturgies.

of dominant colonial and patriarchal discourses that continue to permeate ACSA's structures, theology and worship, need to be deliberately and visibly deconstructed, and reconstructed in ways that imagine a more just world.

ACSA's liturgical committee intends its liturgical renewal process to "help our worship to be vibrant, inclusive, contextual and life-changing, while remaining in touch with our liturgical inheritance" (Anglicans Act, 2012). For liturgy to be truly transformative and life-giving for all, reform is not enough, but it must result in a "renewing of the mind" (Romans 12:2). Carvalhaes contends that "we must reinvent knowledge itself" (2015:9). Postcolonial and African feminist theologies have provided the church with fresh conceptual frameworks. But these need to move out of academia and become part of the church's liturgical discourse, if it is to meaningfully participate in God's mission to bring abundant life to all in a context in which sexual and reproductive health continues to be a luxury rather than a universal right.

The next chapter explores the limitations and possibilities of developing a postcolonial African feminist liturgical theology to contribute to building church praxis that moves beyond a reformist approach, to becoming a "living Body of Christ... that is in constant transformation in response to the suffering of the world" (Hill, 2001:3660).

Chapter Six: Practical and Liturgical Implications for a Transformative Liturgical Praxis

“Maybe what you are looking at is intentional liturgy, because you are not just trying to pray, ... liturgy is... making people aware of their worth and their rights in the here and now.” (FGC, Francis, L.97-99)

1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to grapple with the third research question: *What are some practical and liturgical theological implications of the findings in the liturgical samples?*

This chapter reflects on the main findings from the liturgical analysis in Chapter five, and presents some tentative proposals for what might characterise a postcolonial and African feminist liturgical theological framework. But first, I briefly reflect on the practical and ideological challenges of liturgical reframing as a key transformative praxis in the Anglican church. I ask what is possible, given the tensions between priests’ own sense of their calling, the conflicting and often deeply conservative attitudes amongst their congregations, and the regulations and requirements in the liturgical rubrics that are guarded by the centralised church hierarchy? Although the research is rooted in ACSA, I hope that the findings might be helpful also for other faith communities.

2 Limits and Possibilities of Liturgical Reframing in a Centralised Hierarchical Church

According to APB (1989:571-572; 587-593), priests are ordained to three main functions in the church, to be exercised in obedience to God and the church in local faith communities: pastoral care, service and apostolic oversight (evangelism, discipleship and biblical and doctrinal teaching, correcting and forgiving sin, and administering the sacraments). No mention is made of a prophetic ministry.

During the focus group conversation (FGC),⁶⁹ there was a palpable sense that the participating clergy have struggled deeply with questions of worship and liturgy in interpreting God’s call to the church in the context of a broken world. This section

⁶⁹ All line references to the Focus Group Conversation transcript may be found in Appendix H.

interrogates some of the emergent tensions, in the light of my study on the relationship between liturgy, faith and SRHR. It concludes with a brief discussion on the possibilities that are paradoxically held within the tensions, if viewed in a different perspective.

2.1 Tensions and Limitations

2.1.1 Cage or Framework?

The first tension that emerged relates to the relationship between the centre and the periphery, and how this influences perceptions of the standard formal liturgy (APB). It is best summed up by two apparently conflicting comments by Judith:

“One of the downsides of our Prayer Book is that it’s liturgy by committee and so it’s the lowest common denominator. It’s not - it doesn’t really resonate, because it’s not really... a voice.” (Appendix H, Judith, L.141-143)

“I think that’s the genius of being Anglican, if you start with the Prayer Book then you’ve got a framework.” (Judith, L.385-387))

Oduyoye regards the use of generalities so common in standard prayer books as suppressing the full humanity of people and a way to conceal fundamental inequalities (2004:99). While the intention of APB to use universal terminology is to include all of humanity in liturgy, Ackermann correctly advises that acknowledging our common humanity should not erase our differences (2001: loc.1995). What is required is flexibility and creativity to reflect both our common humanity and our diversity in liturgy. The liturgical extracts interrupt generalised discourse that does not readily apply to women and others on the margins, but at the same time, it is this very structure that creates the framework for wide participation and fresh liturgical prayers, *“because we trust them enough, and the rest of the liturgy will hold it in some way or another”* (L.377).

This brings us back to the question discussed in Chapter two about what feminists mean by privileging women’s voices. Is it necessary for individuals to speak for themselves in worship? Is it presumptuous or appropriate for a priest or liturgical team to give voice to key concerns or raise alternative discourses, based on their pastoral involvement amongst their congregation? And on what authority do individual or representative voices stand? Procter-Smith would argue that both have a place (2010:286), although I suggest that this

needs to be undertaken with great care and sensitivity, cognisant of underlying power relations.

Trusting the worship process, and using the Prayer Book framework as a framework rather than a cage, would appear to be essential in authentic liturgical renewal that balances structure with creative expression. But this implies balancing a number of further tensions, as discussed below.

2.1.2 *Liturgy, Power and Resistance*

As discussed in earlier chapters, liturgy is not neutral. Like any other discourse, it is a site of power struggle. It became clear in the FGC that, given the power dynamics in a hierarchical clerical church like ACSA, the flexible use of APB may not be the norm. An illuminating way to examine institutional power dynamics is by analysing who controls the topic, who decides what is appropriate and whose interests are being served (Weedon, 1987:110). As discussed in the last chapter and above, a standardised liturgy such as APB has already established its ‘regime of truth’, including regulating through the rubrics the extent and nature of alternative localised expressions of worship. Chapter five explored some creative liturgical reframing to raise other discourse ‘voices’ that challenge or interrupt the dominant discourse and open other topics and fresh understandings of old topics.

The clergy grappled with issues of language: “*words give embodiment to the way we see the world. And so the kinds of words we use are ... really important*” (Judith, L.125-126). But language is not neutral either, as Thembi pointed out: “*language [is] intertwined with cultural baggage*” (L.167), which raises issues of how South African’s multiculturalism might be taken into account in revising APB. *Celebrating Sunday* (2016:112-113) proposes a set of criteria to ensure the inculturation of Anglican liturgy goes beyond assimilating Western concepts into African tradition, to being willing to review “the underlying patterns and shape of our liturgical rites” (2016:113). I would argue that a similar depth of process be considered to meet the socio-cultural needs of women and other marginalised groups in the Southern African context.

Given the lack of flexibility of APB to address SRHR, some participants mentioned other ways of resisting the dominant discourse outside of liturgical and institutional restrictions. For instance, Vincent confessed that he frequently uses a Eucharistic prayer ‘forbidden’ by his superiors, “*when no one’s around, and we hope the people don’t say anything*” (L.475-276).

On the other hand, Alan explained that he was able recently to incorporate sexual diversity issues ‘between the lines’ into a healing service:

“Not in the formal liturgy. But what was said before we started on page a hundred and four, er, the prayers, the talking afterwards with... um... While we still with the set formal liturgy there are other ways of having this conversation in this area of health” (L.411-414).

Clearly, it is easier for some clergy to accept the dominance of the set formal liturgy, and to find ways to work ‘between the lines’, while others feel it is important also to grapple with the words to feel they are giving voice to alternative theologies.

On the other hand, some of the clergy wrestle with their own power as priests in their congregations and are conscious about potentially imposing their own views on their congregations. Although this may be inevitable when taking up a prophetic role, being aware of its dangers does seem important for a worship leader, as expressed by Francis:

“...a struggle that I had, ... writing from that perspective as a privileged male but also writing from a feminist perspective, and running the risk of appearing to be to be ... for women and yet at the same time taking advantage of that privilege that I have.” (L.221-226)

But this also carries within it a further risk, that of rejection:

“... it doesn’t mean that automatically, people are going to say thank you for writing this. (Francis, L.311-312)

“if I am going to write... liturgy, ... but ... with an end view that might be good and might want to achieve something good, but if I express this liturgy in the wrong space there’s the fear of the rejection of all forms of liturgy thereafter.” (Vincent, L.205-208)

2.1.3 *Set Liturgy and Journeying with the People*

2.1.3.1 **Pastoral Journeying with the People**

An interesting implied tension raised by some clergy in the FGC was that between required compliance with a set formal liturgy and their view of their priestly pastoral role as journeying with their congregations. Themba saw himself as needing to “*articulate wherever I think that the community is*” (L.488), and “*every liturgy is an expression of who we are in relation to health issues and other issues*” (L.492). In the context of a small parish, Toni was able to use liturgy to support the Lenten journeys of her parishioners in a fairly concrete way, but needed to depart from APB quite significantly (using the less rigid Alternative Fifth Eucharistic Prayer), as she understood liturgy to be part of a shared ongoing conversation (L.341-350). This creates tension, however: “*I’m very intimidated to to to write my own liturgy*” (Vincent, L.191), given that “*there’s also the question of permission to use the liturgy*” (Thandi, L.194).

2.1.3.2 **Liturgy, Theology and History**

This surfaces yet another tension, associated with the idea of prophecy and progressive revelation. This is between the prophetic role of clergy in response to changing contexts and the belief in the authority of Scripture (and by extension, the liturgy). This is explained by Beth, and needs no further explication:

“...liturgy ... has history and future. And it’s about the theological understanding at that time... but often our theology is itself stagnant.... sometimes, our old theologies do not contain, our new thinking. It’s always a dynamic process. ...We shouldn’t feel that we are controverting our theological beliefs and hold them as sacrosanct and for all time. Because God is making this journey, and so we, so I don’t always think that ... theology comes from the top. It’s a two-way thing. It’s from the bottom as well. You can’t stop the Holy Spirit, and ...how can we hold those two constantly in tension?” (L.507- 516)

Unfortunately, history has shown that it can be difficult for the guardians of religious institutions, particularly those with a long patriarchal colonial history, to accept that the church is increasingly being challenged to reinterpret the gospel in a new light (Hamid,

2001: loc.1650). This creates potential for conflict, given that clergy are required to submit revised liturgies for their bishop's approval.

2.1.4 *The Roles of a Priest and Intersectional Power Dynamics*

Power is regulated and manifested through competing discourses, but also through institutional authority, particularly in a hierarchical, patriarchal church like ACSA, as discussed in earlier chapters. Three main areas of tension were raised by the clergy about their involvement in reframing liturgies for social justice, and SRHR in particular.

The first is the church hierarchy. Vincent explains his inner conflict about the liturgy being imposed upon him by his superiors, but feels powerless to change this:

“I have a problem with saying some of the words [that are] against my own theology, and yet, I have to because... because I have to” (L.479-480).

The second relates to power dynamics within congregations, and between the clergy and their congregations.

“And the context has to be receptive to your new ideas...I'm in a place where, the people were dead against using the third Eucharistic Prayer. ...Because I would be told that you should never use that, because it talks about Mary the Mother of God.” (Francis, L.433-438)

“I want you to imagine the, resistance, ... you are leading people in this process leading people into this liturgy that you've created. You are not sure so sure how they are going to respond.” (Thando, L.293-296)

And the third is the tension within the priests themselves, who are also on an ongoing faith journey as they respond to their sense of God's call on their ministry in the world. Francis takes seriously his prophetic role as a priest, which he feels has to be consistent with his conviction that SRHR must be addressed in liturgy because it affects the majority of his congregation. However, he feels conflicted because his liturgical reframing to promote gender equality for SRHR shapes his own theology, and yet he is acutely aware that it is risky:

“... it’s something, it’s also something that you are still processing this for yourself, ...you’re also trying to find yourself in liturgy.” (Francis, L.316)
“I believe in it, but the danger... of just not knowing...” (L.241-242)

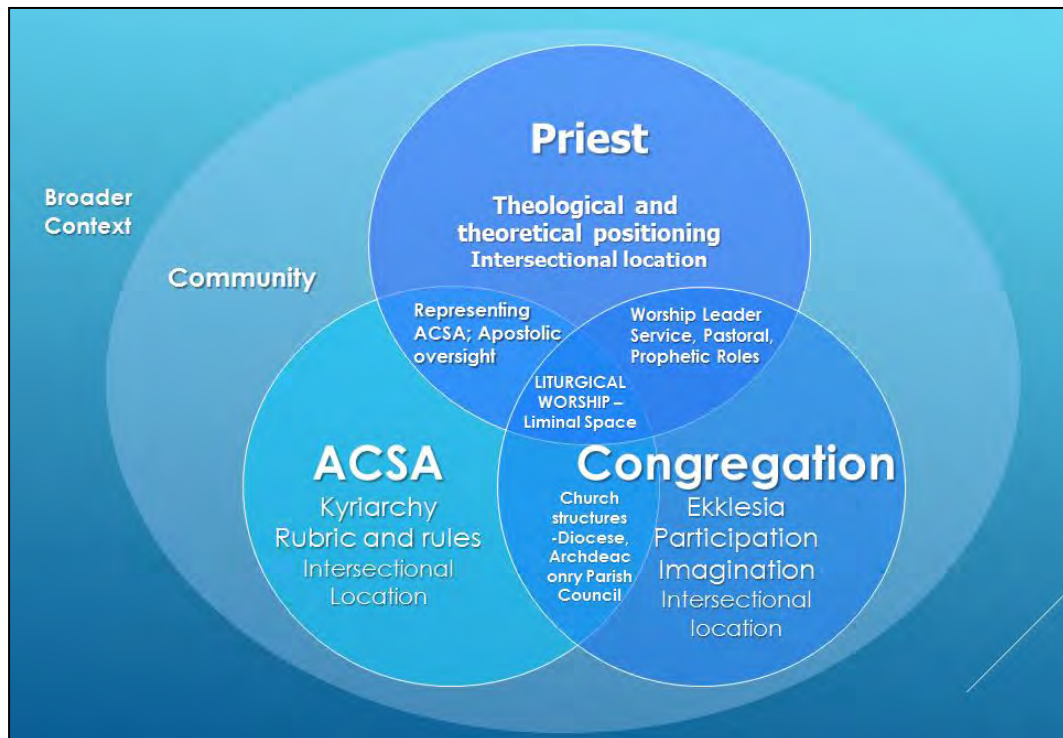
The above tensions are further complicated by the intersectional identities of the various role players, the priest, various levels of leadership and within congregations themselves. For instance, gender, race, ethnicity, education and economics all interrelate in diverse ways with each other and with the institutional powers of clericalism.

These need to also be recognised and consciously dealt with in ACSA as a postcolonial church that continues to carry within it multiple vestiges of colonialism, including deeply ingrained Eurocentric binary views of the world, rationalist approaches to worship (Carvalhoes, 2015:13-14), and archaic notions of male authority and headship (Moyo, 2005:131-134).

This matrix of identities and oppressions within the polarity between church unity and pastoral ministry on one hand, and church growth in the prophetic ministry of Christ, is succinctly summarised by Beth:

“So one’s got to find a way of holding people together and yet, being prophetic” (Beth, L.531-533).

This diagram summarises the interplay of power, relationship and the roles and functions of clergy in relation to liturgy in ACSA



2.2 Possibilities

Holding intractable tensions is inherent in liturgy, as it is in life. Considering that liturgy is a liminal space, in which ordinary pressures and expectations can be held in abeyance, is there perhaps more space for experimentation and pushing of boundaries than some of the clergy might fear?

The various tensions described above are not new and have shaped the Anglican Communion throughout its history, as discussed in Chapter five. In relation to liturgy, this manifests as a contention between maintaining a common approach to prayer and encouraging its local articulations (Hefling, 2006:5-6). Renee Hill interprets this as a power struggle between the hegemonic colonial patriarchal framework of the Anglican Communion “under the guise of ‘tradition’” (2001: loc.3716) and proposes exposing and transforming the church through “nurturing, just, emancipatory processes that will transform the church” (2001: loc.3780). A more optimistic view seeks a way of interpreting Anglican history as a kind of dialogue between the centre and the periphery, affecting and potentially changing both (Kwok, 2001: loc.1090).

In the spirit of this dialogical model of church transformation, it is possible to view the localised transformative liturgical gestures explored in this study, which are indeed

examples of nurturing and just ways of doing church, as ‘talking back’ to the church and inviting it into further dialogue. The next section seeks to do that.

3 Theoretical Reframing: Towards a Postcolonial and African Feminist Liturgical Theology

Kwok cites the need for liturgies that “will honour our bodies and rejuvenate our souls” (2010b:7). But what might this mean in practice? This section seeks to address this question, albeit in a very preliminary manner, given the small sample and the limited nature of a Masters research study. I propose some initial ideas for a postcolonial African feminist approach to liturgical theology, drawing on the key findings from my liturgical analysis and the FGC. I also draw on some key liturgical theological lessons gleaned from a number of postcolonial, feminist and African feminist liturgical theologians⁷⁰ whose work resonates in a patriarchal postcolonial church such as ACSA.

I begin with a discussion of some underlying principles, consider some fundamental theological underpinnings, and end with describing some liturgical, discourse and language strategies employed.

3.1 Underlying Principles

3.1.1 *Bias towards Justice through Intentional Liturgy*

A basic assumption is that liturgy is a site of struggle, and postcolonial feminist approaches to liturgy are not neutral. They are biased against all forms of oppression and violations of dignity and integrity, with a strong emphasis on gender. This is consistent with their commitment to advocating for churches to do justice by becoming “communities of resistance to abuse and injustice” (Moyo, 2015:103). Oduyoye goes so far as to say that the church is not church unless it is engaged in justice (2005: 155). In the context of South Africa’s status as the country with amongst the world’s highest levels of gender based violence, HIV prevalence and maternal mortality, issues related to SRHR form a vital part of the church’s call to act for justice.

⁷⁰ I draw on my literature review in earlier chapters, including the work of Berger (1999), Walton (1999, 2010), Procter-Smith (1990,2010), Oduyoye, 2004, 2005, 2010; Moyo, 2005; Edgardh Beckmann (2006), Neu (2010), Sokolove (2010), Rosa (2015), Carvalhaes (2015), Moyo (2015), Siwila (2015), and Stuart (2010). There is much overlap between their perspectives, which have all been discussed previously. Thus, except in the case of direct quotes, I do not in this section attribute specific ideas to specific theorists.

Postcolonial feminist liturgical theology is intentional. It interrogates underlying patriarchal or Western colonial religious and cultural norms, traditions and epistemologies, and introduces carefully chosen context-appropriate symbols or rituals. In sum, postcolonial African feminist liturgy must be deliberately designed to go “against the grain” (West, 2004),⁷¹ where this is necessary, while embracing those aspects of traditional liturgy that are life-affirming.

However, this is not just a random resistance, but is based on a clear postcolonial feminist ethic, rooted in universal human dignity and a vision of a more just world.

3.1.2 *Inclusivity, Expansiveness and Openness*

Postcolonial African feminist liturgy avoids exclusionary, prejudiced, essentialising or normative discourses, and deliberately embraces diversity and a multiplicity of faith expressions.

In brief, this implies at least the following things. First is rejecting the over-use of generalisations that reduce the spiritual and life experiences of all human beings to a single “*lowest common denominator*” (Appendix H, FGC, Judith, L.145), still largely rooted in Eurocentric white male heterosexual norms in ACSA as a ‘postcolonial church-in-progress’. Second, inclusivity welcomes diversity, but also affirms and recognises the whole person, including the body and sexuality, both of which are routinely rendered invisible or denigrated in Christian worship. Finally, it implies deconstructing the gendered nature of liturgy, resisting where female and other sexual identities are denigrated and challenging any form of intersectional oppression or stereotyping.

In sum, inclusivity is important in liturgy; it is identified by Denis (2016), Eriksson et al (2006) and Haddad (2014) as a significant influencing factor for health and wellbeing, particularly if it allows for the ability (and space) to act in one’s own name and as a full integrated human being.

⁷¹ Although this is a simple idiom implying going against what is expected, I use it in West’s sense, based on my assumption that liturgical texts, like biblical texts, can be said to have an ‘ideological grain’ - notwithstanding that this is modulated by other factors, such as a person’s intersectional identity and history.

3.1.3 *Authenticity: Resisting, Re-membering and Imagination*

Postcolonial African feminist liturgical theology values authenticity in worship, which involves truth-telling about the hard realities of life that are silenced in generalised expressions of faith. It also means re-membering the aspects of tradition that speak into one's life. This may be achieved through opening spaces for storytelling as part of "narrative repair" (Gibson, 2012: 641). It is essentially reclaiming the Christian practice of lament, which resists injustice and affirm the validity of people's experiences. This strengthens the resolve of those who suffer, to challenge the way their world is and how they have been defined by the church (Ackermann, 2001: 1205; West, 2011: 144).

But liturgical lament also means holding the complaints and griefs in tension with God's promises of healing and redemption, offered in the remembrance of the Christ-event. As they are repeatedly offered up during regular worship, prayers of genuine lament can lead people who have lost hope to believe that the way things are is not inevitable, and opens the possibility that God's transforming power is already at work in a situation (Ackermann, 2001: loc. 1995).

Oduyoye states plainly that "what women's ecclesiology demands is that Christians in Africa and elsewhere tell the truth about the church and that the church tells the truth of Christ." (2005: 154). This is possible within the liminal space offered by liturgy, where socio-cultural norms may be suspended. It provides a safe space that allows alternative discourses to disrupt the normality of traditional patriarchal and colonial discourses. One way to achieve this is to juxtapose old and new metaphors or biblical stories. Another is to intentionally subvert normative language about God and God's people by "exploring images of God based upon the experiences of oppressed peoples" (Henderson, Larson and Quinn, 1999: 38).

However, lament is risky, because it entails speaking truth to power. Nevertheless, introducing even small sections of this kind of authentic liturgy into APB opens opportunities for all people to perceive worship as rooted in their life-experience and

offering hope. This may over time reduce their sense of alienation (or automation) in worship.⁷²

3.1.4 *Liturgy as Ongoing Journey of Praxis*

Transformative liturgy is not a series of events, but is integral to the ongoing journeying of a faith community. Like any discourse (Weedon, 1987: 105) it not only reflects the experiences of the people involved, but also influences how they live their lives outside of the worship space and yet still in God's embodied presence. A vital, participatory worship experience that opens spaces for self-acceptance makes it possible to become open to the Holy Spirit's transformative work in one's life. Furthermore, as performative statements of commitment are repeated with each 'sending out to be part of God's transforming influence in the world, we are also called to "*change who we are into the Kingdom of God*" (Nadine, L.890).

3.2 *Theological Underpinnings*

Postcolonial African feminist liturgy is rooted in biblical hermeneutics that is consistent with its liberatory intentions.⁷³ One example is rejecting the many rules of exclusion to the Eucharist that contradict the inclusive intention of both Baptism and Eucharist. This can be achieved by reclaiming the original meaning of Eucharist as radical inclusion, baptismal theology as reflecting the equal status of all God's people and the notion of diversity in unity encapsulated in the metaphor of the universal Body of Christ. These theological perspectives also counter clericalism, encourage participatory leadership and justify including all people's voices into liturgical worship.

Another example is re-memorializing incarnational theology to recognise Christ inhabiting the sexual bodies of women and all those who are violated and oppressed or deemed immoral because of their HIV or sexually nonconforming status. Moreover, viewing incarnational theology from this perspective reinterprets atonement theologies from focusing on retribution and guilt to restoration and hope. This has the effect of bridging

⁷² Alternatively, the fact that only small sections may be re-interpreted locally, as per the rubrics, may render these attempts fruitless, particularly if they are not persistently applied.

⁷³ Some examples include: Russell (1993), Graham (1998), Oduyoye (2004); Hill (2001); Carvalhaes (2015); Moyo (2015) and Siwila (2015).

the patriarchal split between spirituality and sexuality inherent in liturgies rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, thus challenging stigma associated with HIV and sexuality.

Theologies of lament are fundamental to transformative liturgies. Based on biblical examples in Job and the Psalms, lament gives legitimacy to the voices of those who suffer to speak out about the injustices in their lives.

3.3 Liturgical, Language and Discourse Strategies

Perhaps the most powerful transformative liturgical tool is simply how we view liturgy itself. Recognising the liminality of liturgy, or that it takes place in an in-between place in time and space where socio-cultural norms are suspended temporarily, offers opportunities for challenging structural norms, so that transformation becomes possible.

It is possible in this space to challenge normalised power relations and normative assumptions by using subversive language about God and inclusive and transformative language for humanity that constructs alternative anthropologies based on mutuality and respect. This also creates opportunities for participatory models of leadership, because social and cultural norms that prevent women's leadership can be held in abeyance.

The juxtaposition of contradictory metaphorical language in liminal liturgy is able to hold seemingly irreconcilable opposites, to create openness to the unexpected and encourage participants to imagine that another word is possible. This calls for the use of "expansive juxtapositions" of old and new symbols (Carvalhaes, 2015:9), which make room for a multiplicity of interpretations, rather than the over-use of narrow metaphors such as God the father (e.g. "*O God unknown*" (Appendix F, Toni, L.576)).

Grammatical strategies, seemingly innocent, can also have a powerful influence on meanings created. Some examples include the following. Prayers that position women and other marginalised people as subjects rather than objects of sentences, construct them as capable people, versus possessions or objects of others' actions. The use of active vs passive further reinforces agency or passivity. Avoiding naming perpetrators of violence (eg. "*We remember people ... threatened by violence*" (CS, L.38) can be rectified by taking ownership of complicity in active voice: "*We long to control our violence*"

(Nadine, L. 828). Performative verbs and phrases that encourage commitment to transformative actions beyond the liturgy create spaces to respond to God's call into the world.

Finally, repetition is a key rhetorical device, as it reinforces alternative discourses and diminishes the habitual power of traditional discourses. Moreover, if new worship experiences are repeated regularly during Sunday worship services, the brief moments of imagining God, oneself and the world differently, may become 'the new normal', particularly in fairly stable faith communities. In this way, intentionally constructed liturgical worship can indeed become an agent of change.

4 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to explore some practical and theoretical implications of the findings of the liturgical analysis and the focus group conversation between Anglican clergy in light of the literature studies in Chapters two, three and four.

The first section explored some of the tensions experienced by clergy who expressed a desire to use liturgy creatively to address SRHR issues that diminish the lives of those on the margins of society. They exhibited a sense of urgency to respond meaningfully to the needs of women, youth and others on the margins, and sought to tap into the potential power of liturgy to create safe spaces for this to happen. However, this is tempered by anxieties about the risks involved in crossing conservative elements in their congregations, or challenging the leadership of the church.

The second section of this chapter has drawn together some important principles, theological foundations and strategies for developing hybrid liturgies (Dube, 2002), which potentially interrupt and perhaps destabilise the dominant patriarchal and essentialising discourses of mission-originated churches such as ACSA. At the same time, they build on some life-giving traditions and theologies that also undoubtedly undergird ACSA's standard liturgies. This is achieved primarily by the juxtaposition of old and new metaphors and symbols drawn from biblical and life stories, and the use of discourse strategies and linguistic devices that over time potentially reinforce new perspectives. "The theological imagination then becomes central to envisioning the world we would actually want to live in" (Smith, 2010:82).

For the ACSA clergy to build an authentic liturgical praxis would require that ACSA's liturgical renewal process be open to collaborative learning from local initiatives. Practically, this is much easier today than ever before, given available digital tools to gather and share information. A truly decolonised church based on a vision of *ekklesia* (fellowship of equals) requires a commitment from senior church leadership to transform the church at every level, even if this might entail risking having to question age-old certainties. The result might be a church that contributes more effectively to God's justice-seeking ministry, and that can truly feel like home for those on its margins (Oduyoye, 2005:154-5).

While not impossible, this is likely to be a long way off. However in the meantime, it seems appropriate to celebrate the small initiatives that this study has explored, "for our very hope and strength must come from a belief that small gestures can have huge significance" (Stuart, 2010:198). But this is important for another reason too – that the church and the academy might learn from them.

"The future is mixed, as it always is, anchored by... tradition and pulled ever forward by a God that is beyond names, beyond our wildest dreams: a holy Word that is much, much more than words". (Sokolove, 2010:189)

Chapter Seven: Conclusion: Making the Road by Walking⁷⁴

“All great changes in the world start with imagination, the dream of something different....”

(Judith, Sermon on Mary and Martha, Appendix G, L.109).

This study of liturgical reframing in ACSA has explored the interrelationships between liturgy, faith and sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). It has primarily sought to understand how selected creative liturgical practices recently developed in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for SRHR.

Underlying this exploration is my assumption that liturgies are not just forms of worship. In sum, this study has confirmed the conviction in liturgical literature that liturgy is a vital praxis through which churches communicate their theological, anthropological and cultural understandings of their faith and how it relates to the world (Senn, 2012; Suggit, 2009, Cilliers, 2009, Barnard et al, 2014). At the same time, liturgy also offers a space where theological reframing may influence how the church and its members understand their participation in God’s mission in the world.

In the South African context, with its many challenges to universal SRHR and church membership exceeding eighty percent, it is vital to understand how churches influence some of the key drivers of these challenges, such a gender inequality and destructive perceptions about sexuality and women’s bodies. Given that a church’s liturgical worship stands in a liminal space between its theological foundations and its mission in the world, the purpose of the current research has been to begin to explore this interface in relation to struggles for SRHR in South Africa.

1 Summary Overview

The literature review in Chapter two explored the scholarly terrain that would ground my research in the relevant conceptual fields, and identified a number of gaps. Much has been written on liturgy, its social relevance and social justice from within the traditional

⁷⁴ Attributed to liberatory educator, Paulo Freire.

liturgical renewal movement, mostly from (white male) clerical perspectives. While postcolonial African feminist biblical scholars have contributed significantly to understanding the oppressive as well as liberatory possibilities in the Bible, there is very little research on liturgy from this perspective. The literature from the Western feminist liturgical movement offers rich resources, and I have drawn on a recent collection on liturgy from a postcolonial perspective (Carvalhaes, 2015). Research on the contributions of the church to health, hardly touches on liturgy as a key conscious-raising tool to promote God's justice.

Chapter three explained the complexity of the theoretical framework, proposing some preliminary features of a postcolonial African feminist approach to the study of liturgy, which guided my own analysis of liturgies used in ACSA as a postcolonial Southern African church. It explained my choice of a qualitative feminist research paradigm, within a postcolonial framework that is rooted in poststructuralism. This was based on the assumption that gender relations are integral to sexual and reproductive health and are reflected in theology and (by extension) liturgy. The use of critical discourse analysis as the primary research method facilitated the interrogation of issues of silences, power and authority as they were expressed through the language of the liturgical samples.

Chapter four explored liturgical history in South Africa from two perspectives. A brief liturgical historiography of ACSA's journey revealed that tensions between the metropolitan centre and its local manifestations has been a theme for the Anglican Communion throughout its history. APB 1989 had already integrated some key social issues of the day and its writers were aware of its shortcomings regarding gender equality. ACSA's current liturgical renewal process has committed itself to gender equity and addressing other social issues as part of its revision of APB. The small systematic literature review that follows identified similar gaps in South African and African literature on liturgy and social justice as in the literature review, described above. Nevertheless, I was able to extract six key lessons for my liturgical study. These all relate to more consciously using the liminal space created by liturgy to reconstruct oppressive gender and other intersectional power dynamics. This can be achieved through careful use of the structural framework offered by liturgy and making conscious choices about incarnational metaphors and language devices in the Eucharist, to open the imagination to alternative perspectives that build an affirmative anthropology. This enables people to

develop an integrated spirituality in light of a variety of SRHR issues, such as HIV, gender based violence and sexual diversity.

Chapter five, the heart of this thesis, described the findings of the liturgical analysis, which was complemented by secondary data obtained from a conversation amongst Anglican clergy. The analysis emphasised the importance of intentional liturgy, which strategically uses the liminal spaces offered by liturgical worship to counter the patriarchal hierarchical grand narrative that privileges discourses rooted in white (Western) male heterosexism, through conscious inclusiveness, avoiding any forms of violence and speaking out against all forms of injustice.

Chapter six addressed some practical and theoretical implications of the findings of my research. It has grappled with the realities of liturgical reframing in a church which still carries vestiges of its colonial heritage and, despite high-level public utterances and increasing numbers of women in leadership, remains a deeply patriarchal clerical institution.

Theoretically, I posit some tentative proposals towards what might constitute a postcolonial African feminist approach to liturgical theology in the context of SRHR, including some principles, underlying theologies and effective strategies.

2 Proposals for Further Research:

The study has identified a number of gaps in the literature. The most notable is the lack of a theoretical framework for analysing the relationship between liturgy, gender, health and sexual and reproductive health rights in an African postcolonial church. As discussed earlier, this means that postcolonial and African women and feminist theologians may have missed an important opportunity to utilise a vital church practice as a space to communicate their radically liberatory theological perspectives to ordinary people on the ground. Betty Govinden argues that “worship is an important space for ‘doing’ and ‘practising’ theology” (2003:264), and Haddad (2013) calls for further research to gain a better understanding of the influences of intangible religious assets such as prayer and worship on HIV. Given that postcolonial as well as African women and feminist theologians agree on the importance of their work to influence social justice, further research in this area would seem important.

While I hope that the current research will offer a small contribution to this significant area of church practice, it has serious limitations in the nature and size of its data sample and its narrowly defined methodology as a masters study. Further postcolonial feminist liturgical research in other mission-initiated and more diverse church contexts in African and South African contexts may offer deeper insight into how liturgy might be utilised more strategically to promote a more gender just world. Chapter two provided evidence that women in Africa do engage in unique liturgical activities (Berger, 2001:24-25), particularly amongst the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians. Research on how different Circle chapters utilise African women's worship in relation to their theological, work might provide a good starting point.

Dube (2003:4) points out that spontaneous worship in song, dance and extemporaneous prayer is more common in Africa than the written liturgies of mission-initiated churches like ACSA. Hence, it may be appropriate to apply a rigorous ethno-methodological approach to whole worship services to offer more depth and accuracy to my very tentative proposals towards a postcolonial African feminist liturgical framework.

Further, it would be interesting to gain a better understanding of the extent to which liturgy indeed influences the contributions of churches and their members to gender transformation, holistic health and wider access to SRHR. Further research is needed to ascertain what would enable liturgy to be more formative in the lives of worship participants. One approach might be to research how clergy attitudes to liturgy influence the extent to which it might be used more intentionally as part of a prophetic ministry that invites church members to become more committed to gendered social justice action. Another may be to research how the attitudes and social engagement of ordinary church members might have changed through consistent exposure to such liturgies. A third approach may be to explore the influence of the liturgical work of ecumenical organisations such as PACSA and Diakonia on the liturgical praxis of local churches.

3 Conclusion: A “Hammer and Axe” or “*Malaka-Le*”⁷⁵ Approach to Liturgical Theology?

This study has questioned the validity of a standardised liturgy that makes almost universal use of broad generalised prayers, and that is too centrally regulated. It cannot adequately address the key justice issues of the day in ways that can make a substantive impact on the lives of those who do not fit into the Eurocentric heterosexual male norms that subtly persist in a postcolonial church like ACSA. What is required is an open dialogic liturgical renewal process, between the central liturgical committee and clergy producing local expressions of liturgy⁷⁶. Ideally, this would ultimately result in something other than a single prayer book and sets of standardised approved liturgies, but rather a creative and dynamic core liturgical framework for adaptation in specific local and cultural contexts.

Nevertheless, I have argued that it is possible for churches to become health assets that address SRHR in transformative ways. The liturgical analysis has demonstrated that how this is achieved is influenced by whether a church’s liturgical worship is consciously directed towards inclusiveness, avoids any forms of violence through its language and underlying discourses of power, whether it speaks out against personal and structural oppression and promotes abundant life. Liturgy needs to be intentional and employ language, discourse and liturgical tools deliberately- conscious that liturgical experience has an influence on the theological and ethical formation of the church and its members.

Moreover, liturgical renewal cannot take place in isolation from broader transformative processes within the institutional church as a whole. What is required is a church that is prepared to move closer in structure and function to Letty Russell’s concept of the “church in the round”, and to be more open to being transformed into an ever increasingly effective channel of God’s grace by “talking back and forth between tradition and its historical context” (1993:45-45).

⁷⁵ This juxtaposition of seemingly disconnected metaphors for different ways of doing theology, owes its origins to Mercy Oduyoye, at a consultation: “On Being Church, African Women’s Voices and Visions”, Kempton Park, 10-15 October, 2003. “Hammer and axe” requires no explanation. But it’s opposite does: “Malake-le”, in Ga, means “coaxing” or “encouraging through gentle tapping”. (Nadar, 2005: 26, Footnote2; 2006: 1-2)

⁷⁶ ACSA has established diocesan liturgical committees, although their brief in light of their new liturgical publication is not clear at this stage.

Oduyoye argues that transformation in the church cannot take place in a top-down fashion, but is already taking place organically in local church meetings, where women worship together (2010: 88-89). Indeed, this is the case in ACSA. It is becoming transformed, ever so slowly, using *'malake-le'* strategies, where women and men are using liturgies in ways that build on positive aspects of their liturgical inheritance, and that dare to talk back to tradition where it is not life-giving to those who are marginal to the central hierarchical clerical project of the church.

“The future is made by walking – on the edges, in the gaps, into the openings”, where welcoming, resistance, re-membering, imagination and just living meet and embody a living God” (Walton, 2010: 213).

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Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Certificate



7 June 2016

Ms Daniela Gennrich 216074953
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Ms Gennrich

Protocol reference number: HSS/0663/016M

Project Title: Liturgy, Faith, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: A study of Liturgical Reframing in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 30 May 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Professor Susan Rakoczy
Cc. Academic Leader: Professor P Denis
Cc School Administrator: Ms Catherine Murugan

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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Appendix B: Turnitin Report

12/1/2016

Turnitin

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About this page

This is the student portfolio page. The submissions this student has made to your class are shown next to their respective assignments. From this page, you can view a student's submission by clicking on a paper title or view an Originality Report by clicking a report icon.

assignment list

portfolio for Daniela Gennrich

show grades

| # | Assignment | Title | Submitted | Similarity | GradeMark | Download | Reviews |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------|---|---|---------|
| | Submission of Masters thesis | | | | | | |
| 1 | start: 25-Nov-2016 due: 28-Feb-2017 | Liturgy, Faith and Sexual and ... | 30-Nov-2016 | 2% |  |  | 0 |

Appendix C: Copy of Informed Consent Letters

Please note that are slight variations to the letters to the 3 different types of participants, as highlighted below.

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMED CONSENT

Reverend XX
University of KwaZulu Natal
Faculty of Humanities
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics.
Pietermaritzburg.

30 June 2016

Dear Reverend XX

Participant's Informed Consent.

Research Project on Liturgical Reframing in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa

FOR PRIESTS SUBMITTING LITURGIES:

This letter respectfully seeks your participation in a Research Project I am undertaking as a student in the Masters Programme in Gender, Religion and Health at the University of KwaZulu Natal.

You have been identified as a participant in this Research Project by virtue of my understanding that you have been engaged in reframing aspects of liturgical Sunday morning worship

As a participant in this research project you will be requested to:

- submit two or three samples (of your choosing) of your liturgies for worship services during Lent and Easter, or Advent and Christmas.
Given my research interest, it might be wise for you to select liturgies which you believe directly or indirectly address issues of gender and sexual and reproductive health issues (HIV and Gender based violence are the obvious ones, but there are also others, such as infertility or maternal mortality, sexuality; bodiliness or domestic violence, etc).
Additional documents such as a service plan, sermon text, and pew leaflet will also be requested, to help contextualized your liturgy text.

- attend one focus group, or shared conversation with other clergy who have submitted liturgies for study as well as others who have an interest in this aspect of ministry, to receive my first draft findings as well as reflect more deeply on your liturgical work;

Once you have had a chance to examine the nature, objectives and benefits of the Research Project as detailed below, we kindly request your consideration in signing the *Consent to Participation* at the end of this letter, on the attached copy and returning same to me as soon as you possibly can. I wish to draw your attention to the Clause below relating to your right not to participate in this Research Programme and will respectfully accept your decision if this is your choice.

The following Information Sheet offers a brief background to the Research Project.

FOR PRIESTS WHO WILL ATTEND THE FOCUS GROUP ONLY:

This letter respectfully seeks your participation in a Research Project I am undertaking as a student in the Masters Programme in Gender, Religion and Health at the University of KwaZulu Natal.

You have been identified as a participant in this Research Project by virtue of my understanding that you may have an interest in the concept of liturgical reframing, even though you might not have engaged in it in any significant way.

// OR you are a member of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa's Liturgical Committee.

As a participant in this research project you will be requested to attend one focus group or shared conversation with other clergy who have submitted liturgies for study as well as others who have an interest in this aspect of ministry, to receive my first draft findings as well as reflect deeply on what liturgical reframing might mean for ACSA clergy in the context of the Province with the highest HIV infection rates as well as gender based violence figures in the country.

Once you have had a chance to examine the nature, objectives and benefits of the Research Project as detailed below, we kindly request your consideration in signing the *Consent to Participation* at the end of this letter, on the attached copy and returning same to me as soon as you possibly can. I wish to draw your attention to the Clause below relating to your right not to participate in this Research Programme and will respectfully accept your decision if this is your choice.

The following Information Sheet offers a brief background to the Research Project.

Research Project Title Liturgy, Faith, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: A Study of Liturgical Reframing in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa.

Central Research Question In what ways do the current liturgical practices used in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights?

Research Aims and Benefits

1. To undertake a historical survey of literature on the history of liturgical practice and reform in South Africa in relation to social change, and to draw out lessons related to gender and SRHR in particular.

2. 1 To investigate how locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights;

2.2 To compare the reframed liturgical samples to officially sanctioned liturgical documents;

2.3 To understand how the clergy who have reframed the liturgies theologically understand their reframing;

3. To interrogate the ways in which the reframed liturgies challenge traditional forms of liturgy.

The research aims to contribute in two small ways: first, to contribute indirectly to the liturgical renewal work of ACSA's Liturgical Committee, and through this, to strengthen ACSA's engagement for SRHR in KwaZulu Natal; and second, to contribute to liturgical studies literature in South Africa.

Research Student

Ms Daniela Gennrich

Telephone : 0845810622 / 033 383 0100 Ext 2413

Email : danielagenrich8@gmail.com

Project Location

University of KwaZulu Natal [UKZN] – School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics, Pietermaritzburg.

Supervisor

Professor Susan Rakoczy

Telephone 076-960-4298
Email : srakoczy@sjti.ac.za

Programme Coordinator

Dr Fatima Seedat
Telephone : 079 193 8618
Email : seedatf@ukzn.ac.za

Participation is Voluntary

Participation in this Research Project, with the right being reserved to the Participant to withdraw participation without experiencing any disadvantage.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

Participants are offered the opportunity to elect that their involvement in this Research Project remains confidential and anonymous.

Research Instruments

Analysis of selected liturgical samples; A Single Focus Group conversation lasting 1.5 -2 hours. A copy of the key themes to be covered is attached. Audio Recording devices will be used to record the Interviews. A short questionnaire (for Liturgical Committee members only).

Disposal of Data

The primary data will be stored in the office of my supervisor at St Joseph's Theological Institute. Data on which any research publication is based will be retained in the School for at least five years after publication. The data will be retained by the University.

I look forward to receiving your response to this request.

Thank you.



Ms Daniela Gennrich

Appendix D: Copy of Communications with Gatekeepers

Box

388

Hilton, 3245

The Right Reverend Raphael Hess,
Bishop of Saldhana Bay Diocese
PO Box 420,
Malmesbury, 7299

4th May 2016

Dear Bishop Raphael Hess

Request for permission to study samples of reframed liturgies that have been produced by a small sample of local parish priests in the Diocese of Natal, as well as some extracts of some recently published by the Liturgical Committee

I understand that ACSA has recently committed itself to a review of the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book, and has also developed some useful liturgies for specific festivals and times of year, as well as some pastoral liturgies for different occasions. At the same time, I am aware that a small number of clergy in KwaZulu Natal (and elsewhere I am sure) have been undertaking some very creative ways of developing transformative liturgies that promote the sort of values that may contribute to improving women's access to their sexual and reproductive health rights.

A bit of background on my motivation for this study: I am a Masters student in Gender, Religion and Health at the University of KwaZulu Natal, as well as having been a lay minister in various parishes in North West and KwaZulu Natal over the past 18 years. As Director of PACSA (the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness), I engaged in developing pastoral liturgies for use by churches. As a development consultant since December 2012, I have worked with Councils of Churches in a number of SADC countries around gender transformation in churches.

My research direction is summarised briefly below:

Research Title: *Liturgy, Faith, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: A Study of Liturgical Reframing in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.*

Key Research Question: *In what ways do current liturgical practices used in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)?*

Research Sub-Questions

1. *What lessons can be learnt from the history of liturgical practice and reform in South Africa in relation to social change, with a focus on gender and SRHR in particular?*
2. *How do locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights, and how do these relate to officially sanctioned liturgical documents?*
3. *In what ways do the reframed liturgies challenge traditional conceptions of liturgy?*

I am hoping that some of my research findings, and perhaps my methodological approach, might offer some insights that could be of value to the work of the Committee? I intend to have completed my research by year-end.

I will follow UKZN's ethical procedures and endeavour to undertake this task in ways that will not undermine the efforts of the Liturgical Committee, but rather contribute positively to its deliberations.

I would be very glad if you could please send me a letter of affirmation and support of my Master's research, for me to submit with my research proposal to UKZN.

I may also request historical information about liturgical renewal in ACSA over the past 30 years so, given the drastic social changes we have seen in this time. I hope you might be able to refer me to the relevant person/s for this?

If you need further information, please contact my supervisor, Sue Rakoczy (srakoczy@sjti.ac.za) or our programme coordinator, Dr Fatima Seedat (seedatf@ukzn.co.za).

In case this might be useful, I would be very happy to send you a copy of my thesis, and/or share some key findings with the Committee in some other way.

Yours faithfully



Ms Daniela Gennrich

*University of KwaZulu Natal, Masters Student in Religion, Gender and Health
Development Consultant, Gender Practitioner, and Life-and Workplace Coach*

P.O. Box 388

Hilton, 3245

The Right Reverend Dino Gabriel

Bishop of Natal

Longmarket Street

Pietermaritzburg, 3201

4th May 2016

Dear Bishop Dino

Request for permission to undertake liturgical research with priests in the diocese:

Research Title: Liturgy, Faith, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights: A Study of Liturgical Reframing in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

It was lovely to meet you again at St Alphege's last month, after a very long time. I am writing to request to undertake a small research amongst 6-8 clergy in the diocese.

I am currently a Masters student in Gender, Religion and Health at the University of KwaZulu Natal, as well as having been a lay minister in various parishes in North West and KwaZulu Natal over the past 18 years. As Director of PACSA (the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness), and thereafter as a development consultant, I have worked with Councils of Churches in a number of SADC countries around gender transformation in churches, and have engaged in developing pastoral liturgies for use by churches.

I understand that ACSA has recently committed itself to a review of the 1989 Anglican Prayer Book, and has also developed some useful liturgies for specific festivals and times of year, as well as some pastoral liturgies for different occasions. At the same time, I am aware that a small number of clergy in KwaZulu Natal (and elsewhere I am sure) have been undertaking some very creative ways of developing transformative liturgies that promote the sort of values that may contribute to improving women's access to their sexual and reproductive health rights.

My research questions are summarised below:

Key Research Question: In what ways do liturgical practices used in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)?

Research Sub-Questions

- 1. What lessons can be learnt from the history of liturgical practice and reform in South Africa in relation to social change, with a focus on gender and SRHR in particular?*
- 2. How do locally adapted liturgies in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) promote holistic health and wellbeing for sexual and reproductive health rights, and how do these relate to officially sanctioned liturgical documents?*
- 3. In what ways do the reframed liturgies challenge traditional conceptions of liturgy?*

I have learnt that a small number of clergy in the Diocese have been engaged in creatively reframing aspects of the Eucharistic liturgy in response to local issues. Some liturgical seasons, such as Advent and Christmas, and Lent and Easter, with their emphasis on incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection, lend themselves more easily to this kind of adaptation.

I intend to request liturgy samples from 4-6 clergy that meet the above criteria, and analyse them with the above research questions in mind. Thereafter, I plan to facilitate a small focus group with perhaps 6-8 clergy with an interest in liturgy, to share some of my findings, and open up a space for further conversations about liturgy and sexual and reproductive health issues experienced in this province, which as you know, are a major challenge in KZN, with its high levels of both HIV and gender based violence.

I intend to follow UKZN's ethical procedures and endeavour to undertake this task in ways that will not undermine the efforts of the clergy nor ACSA's standards of liturgical practice, but rather contribute positively to its deliberations.

I would be very glad if you could please send me a letter of affirmation and support of my Master's research, for me to submit with my research proposal to UKZN.

If you need further information, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sue Rakoczy

(srakoczy@sjti.ac.za) or our programme coordinator, Dr Fatima Seedat, (seedatf@ukzn.co.za).

In case this might be useful, I would be very happy to send you a copy of my thesis, and/or share some key findings with Diocesan structures in some other way.

Yours faithfully



Ms Daniela Gennrich

University of KwaZulu Natal, Master Student in Religion, Gender and Health

Development Consultant, Gender Practitioner, and Life-and Workplace Coach

Appendix E: Focus Group Interview Schedule

This took the shape of two parts: Given the time constraints, participants answered a pre-questionnaire before coming into the focus group meeting, where only a few questions generated a rich conversation.

1 Pre- Interview Questionnaire

1. Name and title:

(Please note that your identity will not be published in this research study, nor will it be shared with any other person.)

2. Length of time in ordained ministry:

3. Role/s in your current parish:

4. How many congregations do you serve?

5. Profile of the different congregations: (rural/urban, language preference, income bracket, racial composition, gender composition)

6. Would you consider yourself a person who strives for gender equality?
(Explain.)

7. Liturgical theologians differ about the primary functions of liturgy.

Please rank the following four FUNCTIONS OF LITURGY in rank order of importance: (1= Most important; 3 = Least important. You may give those of equal value the same number.)

1. Simply to guide the worship of God, for enjoyment of being in God's presence;
2. To shape the theologies of church members/ liturgy participants – or to teach them the basic doctrines of the church;
3. To teach them how to live their lives when they leave the service;
4. To prepare them to answer God's call to participate in God's transforming mission for social justice in the world.

8. Have you engaged in writing alternative (sections of) liturgies before?

Yes / No Any Comments?

9. If no – what has influenced your decision not to?

10. If yes - have you submitted any for this study?

11. What are you hoping to gain from participating in this study?

Many thanks for participating! I greatly value your insight and experience in enriching this study.

2 Focus Group Discussion – Questions to stimulate the conversation:

The first two questions served to set the topic of the conversation, and also to ensure those who have reframed liturgies were able to explain their thinking.

1. What, if anything, does liturgy have to do with promoting health and wellness for sexual and reproductive health rights?
 - a. *Subquestion to frame the conversation:* How can liturgy be helpful, to make the link in terms of the church and sexual and reproductive health rights?
2. For those who have reframed parts of the liturgy: please share a little about your theological thinking about how you have used the liturgy?

The following questions were also asked, in response to what emerged in the conversation:

3. How does how you have reshaped liturgy relate to your theology about gender relations, health and sexual and reproductive health rights?
4. To what extent can one have a centralised liturgy that is quite controlled and what does it mean for local manifestations of liturgy?
5. What is the role of the priest in liturgy?

1 **Appendix F: Data Sample: Extracts from Creative Reframed Liturgies**

2

3 Extracts from ACSA. 2016. *Celebrating Sunday*. Cape Town: ACSA.

4 Sunday Eucharist in Lent (79-80)

5 *RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD [R]*

6 *R6 Affirming our Faith : A Creed for Lent*

7 Let us affirm our faith in the One, Holy and Undivided Trinity.

8 **We believe in God,**

9 **the Father who always welcomes us with lavish grace**

10 **and longs to be close to us**

11 **as a hen gathers her brood under her wings.**

12 **We believe in God,**

13 **the Son who was lifted up**

14 **so that salvation and abundant life are available to the whole world.**

15 **We believe in God,**

16 **the Holy Spirit who leads us into the wilderness where our sin is revealed**

17 **and our call to true holiness is renewed.**

18

19 *The Minister continues*

20 This is the faith of the Church.

21 *All say together*

22 **We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

23

24 *R7 Prayers of the People on the Sundays in Lent*

25

26 As we continue our Lenten pilgrimage, preparing for the joyful celebration of Easter, let us

27 return with all our hearts to the God who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and

28 abounding in steadfast love.

29 *The People kneel or sit*

30 *Petitions may be added here at the discretion of the Intercessor.*

31 *Care should be taken not to duplicate any of the formal petitions below.*

32 God of renewal, remember your church: especially *N.* our Bishop, *N.* our Archbishop, those

33 who shepherd your people, those ordained to serve, those called to leadership, and all your

34 faithful people. For this, remember your mercy, Lord:

35 **Take us as we are**

36 **and make us your faithful people.**

37

38 God of forgiveness, remember people and countries everywhere: communities and nations

39 threatened by violence and terror, cities devastated by war, peoples plagued with hunger and

40 afflicted by diseases; and our own blessed land, [struggling to break free from the sin of
41 racism and the bigotry of xenophobia.]
42 For this, remember your mercy, Lord :
43 **Take us as we are**
44 **and make us your faithful people.**
45
46 God of rest, remember your people: those overburdened by cares, those imprisoned by fear,
47 and those who have lost their way to you.
48 For this, remember your mercy, Lord :
49 **Take us as we are**
50 **and make us your faithful people.**
51
52 God of salvation, remember our parish: those who teach and those who learn, those who lead
53 our
54 worship and song, those elected to make decisions for your glory and our common good;
55 those who minister to the sick and broken, those who feed the hungry, those who pray for
56 those in need.
57 For this, remember your mercy, Lord :
58 **Take us as we are**
59 **and make us your faithful people.**
60
61 God of wisdom and grace, remember us on our Lenten pilgrimage: those who long to know
62 you, those who hunger for your bread of life, those who thirst for your cup of salvation; those
63 preparing for Baptism and our Confirmands as they prepare to make an adult profession of
64 faith.
65 For this, remember your mercy, Lord :
66 **Take us as we are**
67 **and make us your faithful people.**
68
69 God of resurrection, remember those who have died, especially those whom we love still but
70 see no longer.
71 For this, remember your mercy, Lord :
72 **Take us as we are**
73 **and make us your faithful people.**
74 O God, haven for the weary and home for the lost, in your great mercy sustain us with your
75 grace :
76 **That walking with Jesus Christ our Lord, we will find our way home.**
77 Almighty and holy God, your Son, in obedience to the Spirit fasted forty days in the desert:
78 give us e ourselves that we may press on towards Easter with eager faith and love; through
79 Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**
80

81 Sunday Eucharist in Advent

82 *R1 Lighting the Advent Candles On Advent 4*

83 Let us offer ourselves anew as witnesses to the advent of Christ's glory, seeking to bring
84 Christ's light and love to those who sit in darkness.

85 **O come, O come Emmanuel;**
86 **you are our light and our salvation:**
87 **Come Lord Jesus Christ.**

88 Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent when we marvel at Mary's gracious acceptance of her
89 divine pregnancy. We light the candle which depicts the star *Delta Crucis* in the Southern
90 Cross constellation to remind us that with Mary we carry the light of Christ in us.

91 *The far right candle is lit*

92 **Source of life:**
93 **conceive in us the same willing spirit which Mary exuded**
94 **so that, like her, we will be true servants of God;**
95 **Through Jesus Christ our Lord.**
96 **Amen. (29)**

97

98 *R2 Prayers of the People*

99 **On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day**

100 Today is the day we celebrate the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who took on flesh and became
101 a human being. We light the candle which depicts the star *Epsilon Crucis* in the Southern
102 Cross constellation. As we do this, we refuse to forget the one who brings light into the
103 world.

104 *The middle candle is lit.*

105 Let us pray.

106 **O Emmanuel:**
107 **we give you thanks and praise**
108 **for wrapping yourself in humanity**
109 **and dwelling among us.**
110 **Amen.**
111 **(30)**

112

113 *PRAYERS BEFORE WORSHIP [PW]*

114 *PW2 Prayer to the Chief of Chiefs*

115 O Chief of Chiefs,
116 We kneel before you in obedience and adoration.
117 Like the bird the branches,
118 We praise your heavenly glory.
119 Like the village sharpening-stone,
120 You are always available and never exhausted.
121 Remove our sins that hide your face from us
122 Keep us in health that we may rejoice in strength.
123 Set us free from fear and save all villages from evil.
124 All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ.
125 Amen (From Zaire, adapted)

126

127 *PW23 A Prayer of Self Offering*

128 You have our trust, Father,
129 And our faith,
130 With our bodies
131 And all that we are and possess.
132 Help us to do with our bodies what we proclaim,
133 That our faith may be known to you
134 And to others,
135 And be effective in all the world.
136 Amen (from the Maasai, Tanzania, adapted)
137

138 *RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD [R]*

139 *R2 Prayers of the People*

140 O God, as Advent people, we wait in hope and expectation for our King, our key to
141 completeness, who is coming again to redeem us; who is working in the present to give
142 birth to God's desired future for all. May we persist in situations of costly discipleship to
143 work and pray for the realisation of God's Kingdom here on earth, as it will be in heaven.
144 We are waiting:

145 **Come, Lord Jesus**

146 O God, we wait in hope and expectation with all who come together here in worship, with
147 those who hope to meet you in the stillness. Show us the truth where we are ignorant or
148 wilfully blind, that we may live our lives in the light of your love and grow your kingdom.
149 We are waiting:

150 **Come, Lord Jesus**

151 O God, we wait in hope and expectation with all who pray for a change in political
152 attitudes; with leaders who acknowledge your authority, who use their power selflessly
153 and promote lasting peace; with those who strive to change the law for the betterment of
154 the poor; and for all who fight for a better world. We are waiting:

155 **Come, Lord Jesus**

156 O God, we wait in hope and expectation with those who suffer injustice and oppression in
157 a world under curse; with those fleeing war-torn countries; with those who live with the
158 threat of terrorism; with those who are persecuted for their faith; and with those who
159 campaign courageously for justice and peace. We are waiting:

160 **Come, Lord Jesus**

161 O God we wait in hope and expectation with those who are victims of the inequalities of
162 our world, the poor, the homeless, whose shacks are destroyed by fire or on the whim of a
163 politician; with refugees who live in fear of xenophobic attacks, and with the millions
164 worldwide who are starving. We are waiting:

165 **Come, Lord Jesus**

166 O God, we wait in hope and expectation with those who are dependent on your creation
167 for survival; who pray that rain may ease the drought; with fishermen needing favourable
168 weather, that the ocean yield its bounty; with those who work tirelessly promoting the
169 preservation of our planet, that it may be well preserved for those who come after us.
170 We are waiting:

171 **Come, Lord Jesus**

172 O God, we wait in hope and expectation with those who seek healing; those in dark places
173 due to illness, death, loneliness, divorce, addiction; with those who know their illness has
174 no cure; with those who work in over-crowded and ill-equipped clinics, trying to make a

175 difference. We are waiting:
176 **Come, Lord Jesus**
177 O God, we wait in hope and expectation with all children who have to deal with abuse,
178 crime, violence at school, at play and in their homes; child-headed households; with
179 pregnant women everywhere, especially those who have not chosen their state and wonder
180 how they will cope. We are waiting:
181 **Come, Lord Jesus**
182 O God, we come to you in our waiting, filled with hope, expectancy and joy. We wait
183 patiently in faith and with compassion, ready to find you in those we encounter daily.
184 **Bring to birth your Son in us**
185 **so that we will be your hands and feet,**
186 **your eyes and ears.**
187 **Amen.**
188 **(34)**

191 St Alphege's Parish, Scottsville

192 Statement on Inclusivity in all pew leaflets:

193 "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male
194 and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (Galations 3: 28). At St Alphege's we
195 rejoice in being a diverse community from many different backgrounds and cultures. We
196 recognise that with diversity comes the possibility of misunderstanding and the potential for
197 hurt. Therefore, we pledge ourselves to using care and discretion in the way we speak and
198 act. In particular, we undertake not to use offensive language in respect of race, sex, gender
199 ethnic or social origin, nationality, sexual orientation, culture or physical or mental disability,
200 and not to behave in any way that might lead another member of the body of Christ to feel
201 unwelcome or less valuable than any other. As St Benedict counselled the members of his
202 community, we undertake to welcome each one as if they were Christ amongst us. "

204 Holy Week: Tuesday 26 March Evening Worship

205

206 *(The liturgy begins with a plain wooden cross in the centre of the worship space. Onto the*
207 *cross have been tied or hung flowers and leaves. A time of silence is kept before the opening*
208 *hymn)*

209

210 Hymn:

211

212 Litany:

213 Holy God, Maker of us all

214 **Have mercy on us**

215

216 Jesus Christ, Servant of the Poor

217 **Have mercy on us**

218

219 Holy Spirit, Breath of Life
220 **Have mercy on us**
221
222 *(As each prayer is said, a flower or leaf is pulled from the cross and thrown to the floor by*
223 *members of the congregation.)*
224
225 When children are beaten and abused
226 **Lord Jesus your body is broken**
227
228 When women are raped
229 **Lord Jesus your body is broken**
230
231 When people are hungry
232 **Lord Jesus your body is broken**
233
234 When people suffer and are in pain
235 **Lord Jesus your body is broken**
236
237 When prisoners are tortured
238 **Lord Jesus your body is broken**
239
240 When lonely people cry
241 **Lord Jesus you weep too**
242
243 When the earth and rivers and sky are polluted
244 **Lord Jesus you weep**
245
246 When animals are mistreated and killed
247 **Lord Jesus you weep**
248
249 When our hardness of heart keeps us from caring
250 **Lord Jesus you are crucified**
251
252 When our fear keeps us from speaking against injustice
253 **Lord Jesus are crucified**
254
255 When our greed keeps others poor
256 **Lord Jesus you hang naked on a cross**
257
258 *(A time of silence is kept)*
259
260 Lord Jesus, we learn that what we do to our brothers and sisters we do to you.
261 Forgive us our selfishness, our fearfulness, our lack of care.
262 Forgive us our destruction of the earth and its creatures.

263 Forgive us our unkindness and cruelty.
 264 Give us courage to face the destruction we have wrought;
 265 Remind us that we too are crucifiers.
 266 When we have been injured and crucified
 267 Give us grace to forgive.
 268 **Amen**
 269 *(The service ends in silence. People are invited to remain in silent prayer)*
 270
 271 Eucharistic Prayer for the feast of Mary Magdalene
 272 We praise you our God
 273 who has created us women and men together
 274 to bear your image to all creation.
 275 We give you thanks that you reveal yourself in surprising and unexpected places:
 276 in people who are poor and outcast and rejected by society,
 277 in the gentleness of a small child,
 278 in the brilliant clarity of star-filled winter nights
 279 and in the smile of a stranger.
 280 We rejoice with Mary Magdalene
 281 to whom you first revealed the good news of the resurrection of Jesus
 282 and with all who have since come to trust
 283 that you do indeed overcome death and hatred and division
 284 and bring about new hope and joy.
 285 And so with the saints and ancestors
 286 and all who know the life-giving power of your love we praise you saying:
 287 **Holy, holy**
 288
 289 We give you thanks and praise for Jesus, beloved friend of Mary.
 290 We give thanks for Jesus who in Mary saw love and devotion
 291 where others saw sin and pronounced condemnation
 292 and so teaches us to love one another
 293 We give thanks for Jesus who breaks through the tears of sorrow
 294 and gives new hope and a new vision of that which might be.
 295 We give thanks for Jesus, who in the midst of his own suffering
 296 gave us a way to remember him and to become part of one another.
 297 On the night before he died he shared a meal with his friends.
 298 He took bread, gave thanks for it, broke it and gave it to them saying:
 299 "This is my body which I give for you. Do this to remember me"
 300 After supper he took a cup of wine and said:
 301 "This is my life blood poured out in love for you. When you drink this together, remember
 302 me"
 303
 304 So we proclaim the mystery of faith
 305 **Christ has died etc**

306
307 Come now Spirit of Jesus, transform this bread and wine
308 that they may be for us Christ's body and blood.
309 Transform us too
310 that we may become bearers of the good news of God's love and hope
311 for all that has died, all who mourn, all who are hopeless.
312 We ask this of you our God, through Christ, with Christ and in Christ
313 in the hope of your Spirit, now and forever.
314 **Amen**
315
316 Eucharistic Prayer - Feast of St Mary
317 We praise you and give you thanks
318 because you create us men and women together
319 to bear your image and bring life and hope to the world.
320 We thank you for Mary,
321 God bearer, our mother of hope.
322 We thank you that you invite us,
323 like Mary,
324 to carry the Christ in us and be bearers of the good news
325
326 So with the saints and ancestors we praise you saying
327 **Holy, holy...**
328
329 We thank you for Jesus of Nazareth
330 who received food and anointing from women.
331 We thank you for Jesus
332 who invited women to be evangelists and healers,
333 who called a woman to be the first apostle.
334 We thank you for Jesus
335 who in every age feasts with outcasts,
336 gives dignity to the despised and befriends the lonely.
337
338 We thank you for Jesus
339 who even in the face of death chose to give up life, his body.
340 On the night before he died,
341 at a meal with his friends,
342 he took bread, blessed it and broke it and gave it to them saying:
343 "This is my own body given for you."
344 So too after supper he took the cup of wine
345 and when he had given thanks he gave it to them saying:
346 "This is my life-blood shed for the love of you. Do this to remember me"
347
348 So we proclaim the mystery of faith

349 **Christ has died...**
 350
 351 Come Spirit of God
 352 and as you brought to birth in Mary the incarnation of God,
 353 bring to birth in us the incarnation of God in our own time.
 354 Transform we pray this bread and wine
 355 that it may be for us Christ's body and blood.
 356 Transform us that we may become one body
 357 and new life for your world.
 358 Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
 359 in the unity of the Holy Spirit be glory now and forever.
 360 CHECK THE LAST ARTICLE IN POSTCOLONIAL BOOK RE JESUS AND WOMEN –
 361 ALSO NCA FILE...
 362
 363 Eucharistic Prayer: Focus on HIV/AIDS
 364 O holy Wisdom of our God
 365 compassionate to those who suffer and are in pain
 366 we praise you and give you thanks because you emptied yourself of power
 367 and entered our struggle,
 368 taking upon you our unprotected flesh.
 369 You opened wide your arms for us on the cross
 370 becoming scandal for our sake,
 371 that you might sanctify even the grave to be a bed of hope for your people.
 372
 373 Therefore, with those who live with life-threatening disease,
 374 those abandoned or betrayed by friends
 375 those whose bodies are violated or in pain,
 376 with those who have died alone,
 377 and with the company of saints who have carried you in their wounds
 378 that they may be bodied forth with life,
 379 we praise you saying:
 380 **Holy, holy.... (as per APB)**
 381
 382 Blessed is our brother Jesus, bone of our bone & flesh of our flesh,
 383 from whom the cup of suffering did not pass;
 384 who on the night that he was betrayed,
 385 took bread, gave thanks for it, broke it and said:
 386 "This is my body which is for you. Do this to remember me"
 387 In the same way also, the cup, after supper, saying:
 388 "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this whenever you drink it to remember me"
 389
 390 So we proclaim the mystery of faith:
 391 **Christ has died... (as per APB)**

392
 393 Therefore as we eat this bread and drink this cup
 394 we are proclaiming Christ's death until he comes.
 395 In the body broken and blood poured out we restore to memory and hope
 396 the broken and unremembered bodies of those who have died.
 397 And we long for the bread of tomorrow and the wine of the age to come.
 398 Come then, life-giving Spirit of God, brood over these bodily things
 399 and make us one body with Christ
 400 that we who are baptised into his death may walk in newness of life;
 401 that what is sown is dishonour, may be raised in glory.
 402 We ask these things through Christ, with whom and in whom in the unity of the Holy Spirit
 403 be all honour & glory now and forever.
 404
 405 Eucharistic Prayer – Women's Day
 406 Loving God, of infinite tenderness, source of our being, we rejoice that you give birth to the
 407 whole creation – stars and rain, oceans and sky, birds and buffalo, and women and men
 408 together in your image. We thank you that when your creation suffers you bring forth hope of
 409 a new creation. Today, we give thanks especially for those women who have given birth
 410 to the faith that is ours: Mary Magdalene who announced good news; Lydia and Priscilla
 411 who founded churches; Martha who proclaimed belief; Hildegard and Catherine who
 412 challenged the injustice of the church; Julian who proclaimed your goodness and all women
 413 who have nurtured and sustained our faith.
 414
 415 As you, our God of justice, grieve over our suffering we mourn with you the women burnt as
 416 witches; slave women, women denied education, dignity and hope, the women who have
 417 suffered in every generation.
 418
 419 With you, our God of hope, we celebrate women, who have refused to remain silent and
 420 down trodden who have challenged injustice and worked for a new age. Today especially we
 421 remember the grandmothers, mothers and sisters of this land. With them and with all creation
 422 we proclaim your goodness as we sing
 423
 424 **Holy, holy... (as per APB)**
 425
 426 We give thanks for Jesus who befriended the Samaritan woman rejected by her community,
 427 accepted loving service from Peter's mother in law, took shelter in the home of Mary and
 428 Martha and welcomed his anointing by an unnamed woman of the city.
 429 Jesus showed that to be fully human is to respect, and treat all people with dignity.
 430 In his conversations, his friendships and interactions with women, he raised them to their
 431 rightful place in society; he touched their bodies when they were reviled; he appreciated their
 432 giftedness; he spoke up for them; he included them in conversation; he trusted them to
 433 announce the good news of his resurrection; and he chose them to be his intimate friends.
 434

435 We remember Jesus who, before his suffering and death, shared a meal with his friends.
436 He took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said: "This is my body which is for you. Do this to
437 remember me" In the same way after supper he took a cup of wine and said: "This cup is the
438 new covenant in my blood. Do this whenever you drink it to remember me"

439
440 And so as we eat this bread and drink this wine, we proclaim the mystery of faith

441 **Christ has died... (as per APB)**

442

443 In the body broken and the blood poured out we restore to memory and hope the broken and
444 unremembered victims of violence, oppression and discrimination; and we long for the bread
445 of tomorrow and the wine of the age to come.

446

447 Come then life-giving Spirit of our God; come and make us one body with Christ; that we
448 may bring in a new world; a world where all are free and unafraid. Empower our celebration
449 and feed us with your life, fire us with your love, confront us with your justice and make us
450 whole. Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit

451 Be honour and glory now and forever.

452 **Amen**

453

454

455 St John the Baptist Church, Pinetown: Tinotenda Forbes Maupa –

456 *SERMON Advent Sunday*

457 **"...Prepare for his birth"**

458 **1 Thessalonians vs. 3 vs. 9-13:** Good reports at Thessalonica

459 **Luke 21 vs. 25-36, 22 -26:** The second coming?

460 *"And may he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our*
461 *God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones"* (1 Thessalonians 3 vs.
462 13).

463 *"So with you when you see these things happening: know that the kingdom of God is near"*
464 (Luke 21 vs. 31b).

465

466 Today marks the beginning of the church calendar and so as I begin may I say "Happy New
467 Year and I wish you fresh beginnings". It is not my intention today to do an in-depth textual
468 analysis of the passages of scripture we read today. Rather, the intention is to set a road map
469 of the journey that I propose we take together from today until the Feast of the Holy
470 Innocents in January. Where possible, I am making a request that we attend church together
471 right through this season and not miss Sunday services. The lay ministers and the clergy felt
472 that our focus should not just be on Christmas day but that we should consciously celebrate

473 the whole season starting with Advent. By now, we all know that Advent means the coming,
474 which historically spoke to the imminent birth of Jesus Christ and for us today may suggest a
475 second coming or **a continuous coming** which I will be suggesting right through this season.
476 Today we are symbolically preparing for a baby shower, yes, Jesus' baby shower and
477 everyone (male and female) is invited. To visually demonstrate what we hope to express, we
478 have prepared the shoe boxes you see in this church today each of them with a very humble
479 wish list. We are encouraging as many as can, to take these shoe boxes and fill them with the
480 "baby shower items" you will find listed inside. As early as next Sunday we should start
481 bringing the gifts back and when they are all here, we intend taking them to the Marrianhill
482 Orphanage where Jesus who is to be found in human form will be waiting for us. Remember
483 that Jesus who said anything we do for any of these little ones, we do for him? We are
484 consciously going to walk the journey of pregnancy and the women among us will be sharing
485 with us the joys and anxieties of the last 4 weeks of this amazing pregnancy. Something new
486 and amazing is about to break forth into us, into our world and we are Mary through whom
487 this will happen.

488 We are all familiar with the concept of being born again and often that has referred to the
489 conversion process of humanity. This season we are suggesting that Jesus be born again in us,
490 yes the process of his coming again in and through us! We might have forgotten what
491 Christmas meant as we have reduced it to wild parties but now we are going to give birth
492 Christmas.

493 Last week Rev Matthew asked us what the reign of Christ looks like and how we see it; today
494 I am suggesting that we are going to give birth to that Christ and the kin-dom! The kin-dom
495 of Christ will be that which we give birth to. *Uzofuza bani loJesu sim'zalayo?* (who will he
496 look like) In pregnancy, one is advised to eat well, exercise, avoid intoxicating substances
497 and so on to ensure that the baby is healthy. As we work on this baby shower, the same
498 applies! We must do all we can to make sure that as Christ is born, a healthy kin-dom
499 accompanies that birth. Let us be busy in our hearts, in our communities and in this church to
500 prepare for this wonderful birth that the world yearns for. We are going to pray, eat and drink
501 healthy, think before we speak, not swear or curse. We yearn for love, deliverance, blessings,
502 peace and so many things that are assured to us as the fulfilment of the Incarnation of Jesus
503 the Christ. We are the channels of that birth. My friends, the baby shower is on, let the
504 preparations begin and may the world that waits eagerly in anticipation receive this gift we
505 are preparing for throughout this Advent.

506 Jesus the Christ, let your kin-dom come! Amen

507 Alternative Eucharistic Prayer: Advent Sunday
508 The Lord is here
509 **His Spirit dwells bodily with us**
510
511 Lift up your hearts
512 **We lift them to the ever loving parent**
513
514 Let us give thanks to the Lord, our friend and parent
515 **It is appropriate to give thanks to the creator who redeemed us in the Christ and sustains**
516 **us with Sophia**
517
518 You our Creator assumed the human body to walk with Mary Magdalene, the unnamed woman
519 and allowed the despised woman to touch and kiss you. You did not reject our mortal bodies
520 but accepted to be one of us. You embraced us as your own and one with you as you
521 scandalously chose to be born of an unmarried woman. You have redeemed us who were far
522 off and marginalised.
523
524 Our Creator, in Christ you shared our life and gave us your own
525 **The Christ opened the way of salvation and hope for all the lowly and marginalised.**
526
527 On the night Jesus was handed over to the authorities,
528 he sat at supper with his friends. He took bread, gave you thanks;
529 broke it and shared it with them saying:
530 Take and eat, this is my body broken for you
531 Do this as often as you eat in remembrance of me.
532 **Creator, we remember Jesus who unites us in his body.**
533
534 After supper, Jesus took a cup of wine,
535 He gave you thanks, and gave it to his friends saying:
536 Drink this all of you, this is my blood poured out for the
537 Forgiveness of your sins and reconciliation with the creator.
538 **Creator, we remember Jesus who unites us with his life blood.**
539
540 As we commemorate his birth in a manger, proclaim his death and celebrate his resurrection in
541 our bodies, we ask you Creator to send your life giving Spirit that these elements made by
542 human hands may be to us the body and blood of Christ.
543
544 **As we eat and drink these holy gifts**
545 **unite us bodily in Christ the first born of all humanity.**
546

547 Anglican Parish of Prestbury: St Mary's & St David's, with Sunnyside
548 **From the Pew Leaflet – Statement of Welcome**

549 We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, gay, filthy rich and
550 dirt poor. We extend a special welcome to those who are crying new-borns, skinny as a rake
551 or (like our vicar) could afford to lose a few KGs. We welcome you if you can sing like
552 Pavarotti or can't carry a note in a bucket. You're welcome here if you are "just browsing",
553 just woke up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the
554 Archbishop of Canterbury, or haven't been to church since little Jack's baptism. We extend a
555 special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are
556 growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit mums, rugby dads, starving artists, tree huggers,
557 refugees, latte sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters. We welcome you if you are in recovery
558 or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, or you're down in the dumps,
559 or even if you don't like "organised religion". (We've all been there too!) If you blew all your
560 money on the horses, you're welcome here. We offer a welcome to those who think the earth
561 is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or came because granny is in town and wanted
562 to go to church. We welcome those who are inked, pierced, or both. We offer a special
563 welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down your throat as
564 a kid, or got lost and wound up here by mistake. We welcome tourists, seekers and doubters,
565 Bleeding hearts... and YOU!

566

567

ALL are welcome!

568

We hope that we can be a place where all are welcome at our table...

569

Where no one feels unworthy to stand in the presence of God and neighbour...

570

Where no one goes away empty and afraid..

571

572 During Holy Week – Evening Eucharist Services – Holy Mon (Tears), Tues (Water), Wed

573 (Wilderness)

574 *The following prayers are used for all 3 services – using 2nd Eucharistic prayer*

575

576 COLLECT OF THE DAY –

577 O God unknown,

578 In our mother's womb

579 You formed us for your glory.

580 Give us a heart to long for you,

581 Grace to discern you;

582 Through the one whom you loved

583 Before the foundation of the world,

584 Our saviour, Jesus Christ; Amen.

585

586 THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

587 With open hands we receive and give;

588 With open minds we imagine and envision;

589 With open hearts we love and embrace,

590 With open lives we accept and include.

591 We, who have been given so much,
592 Share with You, our living Lord,
593 The gifts we have and the gifts we are.
594 Take them, take us; Use them, use us,
595 To bless and transform the needs of the world,
596 And all the children that You love,
597 Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

598

599 *Used 2nd EUCHARISTIC PRAYER throughout – except at Para 66 of APB – replaced the 3rd*
600 *para with: (This is used often on any Sunday – also in Healing Services)*

601 Gentle God,

602 We pray for those who on this day
603 will hurt the most;
604 the grieving and the abandoned;
605 the resentful and the frightened.

606 We pray for those who live with
607 pain or anger or depression;

608 We pray for those who feel
609 surrounded by threats,
610 and lost in a wilderness
611 of debt or addiction.

612 So many who hurt,
613 yet in the treasury of Your love
614 there is hope for all,
615 and healing, and wholeness.

616 May we, so far as we are able,
617 Be agents of Your grace in the days ahead,
618 Modelling in our lives
619 Your patience, mercy and steadfast love.
620 Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
621 who taught us when we pray together to say...

622 *(Before The Lord's Prayer) – using Standard*

623

624

625 Extracts from Good Friday – Celebration of the Lord's Passion

626 *Prayer of Recognition & Reconciliation* *(A prayer of lament in place of Prayers of the People)*

627

628 O Christ, in whose body was named all the violence of the world, and in whose memory is
629 contained our profoundest grief...

630

631 We lay open to you: the violence done to us in time beyond memory; the unremembered
632 wounds that have misshaped our lives; the injuries we cannot forget and have not forgiven...

633

634 *Silence*

635

636 The remembrance of them is grievous to us;

637 **The burden of them is intolerable.**

638

639 We lay open to you: the violence done in our name in time before memory; the
640 unremembered wounds we have inflicted; the injuries we cannot forget and for which we
641 have not been forgiven...

642

643 *Silence*

644

645 The remembrance of them is grievous to us;

646 **The burden of them is intolerable.**

647

648 We lay open to you: those who have pursued a violent knowledge the world cannot forget;
649 those caught up in violence they have refused to name; those who have enacted violence
650 which they have not repented.

651

652 *Silence*

653

654 The remembrance of them is grievous to us;

655 **The burden of them is intolerable.**

656

657 We lay open to you: the victims of violence whose only memorial is our anger; those whose
658 suffering was sustained on our behalf; those whose continued oppression provides the ground
659 we stand on...

660

661 *Silence*

662

663 The remembrance of them is grievous to us;

664 **The burden of them is intolerable.**

665

666 **We wholeheartedly repent of the evil we have done,**

667 **And of the evil done on our behalf.**

668 **We look for grace to offer forgiveness,**

669 **And to know ourselves forgiven.**

670 **Wounded God bear the burden of our prayer**

671 **Deep into your heart.**

672 **Unstop our ears that we may receive the gospel of the cross.**

673 **Give light to our eyes that we may see your glory**

674 **In the face of Jesus crucified.**

675 **Sharpen our minds that your truth may make us whole.**

676 **Warm our hearts with the radiance of your love**

677 **That we may love one another,**

678 **Forgiving to seventy times seven.**
679 **Wounded God, may the scars of this day shine with light; Amen.**
680
681 *All are invited to come forward, and receive the anointing of oil – as a symbolic act of our*
682 *acceptance of God's reconciling and healing power...*
683
684 Healing Service as part of Sunday Eucharist
685 *Prayers of Confession (insertion into APB):*
686 **Lord, open our eyes that we may see you**
687 **in our brothers and sisters.**
688 **Lord, open our ears that we may hear**
689 **the cries of the hungry, the cold,**
690 **the frightened, the oppressed.**
691 **Lord, open our hearts**
692 **that we may love each other as you love us.**
693 **Renew in us your spirit.**
694 **Lord, free us and make us one. Amen**
695
696 *Congregational prayers for one another in pairs:*
697 We lay our hands upon one another
698 In the name of Jesus Christ,
699 Healer and lover of the world.
700
701 May the Lord of love, who is more powerful
702 Than all those who would harm us,
703 Give us healing for all that is past
704 And peace for all that is to come.
705
706 May we be surrounded
707 with comfort and warmth
708 And filled with life that is stronger than death.
709 **Amen.**
710
711 *Invitation to Communion:*
712 This is the table,
713 not of the Church, but of the Lord.
714 It is to be made ready for those who love him,
715 and who want to love him more.
716 So, come, you who have much faith,
717 and you who have little,
718 you who have been here often,
719 and you who have not been for a long time,

720 you who have tried to follow,
721 and you who have failed.
722 Come, not because it is I who invite you:
723 it is our Lord.
724 It is his will that those who want him
725 should meet him here.

726
727 **Take this cup as a sign**
728 **Of our community with you.**
729 **Your tears are our tears;**
730 **Your hope is our hope;**
731 **Your prayer is our prayer;**
732 **You are not alone...**

733
734 *Sending out:*

735 Go in peace
736 And may God your Maker keep you safe;
737 God in the Christ take you by the hand;
738 And God the Spirit cover you
739 With her warm bright wings.
740 Amen

741

742

743

744 Noelene Ahrends – East London (Parish?)

745 *Special ecumenical service for 16 Days –, liturgy written by Noelene*

746 Voices that Challenge

747 Call us to hear the voices that challenge, deep in the hearts of all people!
748 By serving your world as lovers and dreamers, we become voices that challenge!
749 For we are the voice of God!

750 Voices that challenge:

751 The children who long to be heard and respected!
752 The lowly and broken destroyed by oppression!
753 The old and the fearful who hope for a new day!

754 Voices that challenge:

755 The lives and the cries of the poor and the silenced!
756 The young ones who dream of a world free of hatred!
757 The sick and the dying who cry for compassion!

758 Voices that challenge:

759 The ones who seek peace by their witness and courage!
760 The women who suffer the pain of injustice!
761 The people with HIV and those plagued with addiction!
762 The prophets and heroes who call us to question!
763 The healers who teach us forgiveness and mercy!
764 The victims of violent abuse and aggression!
765 The Christ who gave his life that we might live!

766

767 GBV Service – Anglican and other churches – 16 Days Campaign

768 **Psalm of Lament:**

769 We are the Church - the body of Christ.
770 Let us, with the victims of domestic violence,
771 express our anger, grief and pain in a lament.
772 taken from Psalm 55.

773 Please respond with the words in dark print.

774 **Hear my prayer, O Lord**
775 **and do not hide yourself from me.**

776 This response will be said at the pause in the reading Readings are Psalm 55 : v. 1-2,
777 response, v. 4-8, response. v.12-15. response. V. 16-18, response and 20-21, response.

778 **Prayer of Confession:** (Please join in the words in dark print.)

779 We are the Church - the body of Christ.
780 We, as the Church, have allowed Scripture
781 to be distorted and misused
782 to imprison others in situations of domestic violence
783 We, as the Church, condone the violence by our silence.
784 We, as the Church ignore the suffering
785 and the cries of pain of the victims.
786 We do not reach out in love and compassion
787 to those in situations of domestic violence

788 who desperately need help and hope
789 because we have not even seen them in our midst.

790 As we make our choices
791 As we violate each other
792 The light of God is hidden.

793 (The candle is extinguished)

794 **Let us join together in a prayer of confession:**

795 We grieve O God,
796 When we see the violence in our community
797 Between the powerful and the defenceless,
798 men and women,
799 adults and children.

800 **As your Church, and as your people,**
801 **we acknowledge our guilt.**

802 We grieve the anger and the pain
803 the wounded minds and bodies
804 the fear in our hearts and in our homes
805 our loss of hope O God,
806 in your love and mercy,
807 in ourselves and in humanity

808 **We confess that too often we have failed to be your Church.**

809 **We have felt paralysed**

810 **in a moment that call for acts of courage and kindness.**

811 **Apathy and ignorance,**

812 **prejudice and fear have kept us silent,**

813 **when we should have spoken with conviction,**

814 **and condemned domestic violence**

815 **in our homes and in our worshipping community.**

816 **We have ignored and abandoned women, men and children,**

817 **in their pain and suffering.**

818 **By our silence, we have condoned domestic violence.**

819 **We confess that too often we have interpreted your Word**

820 **in ways that justified and even encouraged domestic violence.**

821 **We confess that too often we have been the last hope**

822 **for victims of domestic violence,**

823 **and we have withheld hope.**

824 **They have come to us for compassion**

825 **and received, instead, rejection.**

826

827 We long to control our violence,
828 and to find new ways through
829 to love our neighbour as ourselves-
830 to reach out in love and compassion.
831 to be your Church.
832 We long to find again, a peace built on justice for all
833 We long to find the peace that comes through Christ.

834 **Forgive us for what is past**
835 **and show us a new way to be your Church, and your people.**
836 **In Jesus name we pray.**
837 **Amen**

838 **Words of Assurance:**
839 We bear the consequences for what we do
840 but we are not condemned.
841 Our hope is in God, who makes all things new.
842 Hear the good news, and believe it:
843 Our sins are forgiven

844 **Thanks be to God.**

845 (The Christ Candle is relit)

846 **Affirmation of Hope:**
847 Christ makes all things new
848 Let us stand and affirm the hope that we have in Christ.

849 We believe in the gift of sorrow
850 which carries us back to humanness
851 and reminds us of the way
852 we dreamed life ought to be,
853 which marks truly our love for people
854 and stills us to find new paths
855 through the blurred landscape of our tears.
856 We believe that despite betrayal and deception
857 in a way which we do not always understand
858 we are never alone: in Christ, God is with us
859 and Christ is our hope.

860 **Scripture Readings:**
861 John 3: 19-21.
862 2 Corinthians 4: 1-6

863 **A Litany of Hope:** (Intercession)

864 *As each group prays the two members from that group who were the speakers (see Note 4)*

865 *will light two of the candles on the communion table from the Christ candle.*

866 *They will take their light back to the congregation, and light the candles of people sitting at*

867 *the ends of the pews in their group who in turn will pass the light down the row, until all the*

868 *candles in the group are lit.*

869 *As the litany continues, the light will spread further through the congregation.*

870 **Leader:** Compassionate God, our prayer is for all people who are victims of domestic

871 violence Those who have lost their dignity, through the denial of basic rights

872 Whose bodies, minds and spirits have been battered

873 **Group 1: May the light of Christ warm and heal their suffering.**

874 **Leader:** Merciful God, our prayer is for the perpetrators, the abusers.

875 Those who have, through excessive control, removed the rights of others

876 Who have battered bodies, minds and spirits.

877 **Group 1: May the light of Christ expose the acts of violence and illuminate the truth**

878 **that leads to repentance.**

879 **Leader:** Transforming God, our prayer is for the church Those who are the body of Christ,

880 May the church become willing to be open to all people. May the structures that were barriers

881 to the truth become the foundations that will support all who come for help

882 **Group 3: May the light of Christ be central to the church, to provide the light to whom**

883 **all will come for comfort.**

884 **ALL: May the light of Christ be our light, that we will take into the world. The Light**

885 **that illuminates the darkness. The light that we offer to the world. The light of Christ.**

886 **Commission and Blessing:**

887 Christ bids us to follow him to be his Church.

888 To carry the light of his love out into the world.

889 To turn things upside down and inside out.

890 to go where the hurting is

891 and, in the power of the Spirit.

892 to change who we are into the Kingdom of God

893 May God go with you

894 in all that is gentle:

895 Christ go with you

896 in all that is brave

897 and the Spirit go with you

898 in all that is free
899 Amen.

900

901 Betty Govinden (Retired Priest)

902 *Good Friday Prayer: "Reproaches"*¹

903

904 I gave you healing and hope in the long years of your wandering to the day of your freedom. I
905 united you above our differences, and gave you a new vision in your struggle for freedom.

906 *My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!*

907 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

908

909 What more could I have done for you? I strengthened you in your will to fight injustice. I
910 suffered with you through the long, dark years of your pilgrimage to the promised time. I did
911 not forsake you.

912 *My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!*

913 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

914

915 You scourge me and strike me, consumed with your hatred for other nations. You rage
916 against your brothers and sisters from across your borders. I weep to see the fear and hatred
917 amongst you. You build fences and walls, divided by the blight of racism and xenophobia.

918 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

919

920 I suffer with the wounds your women bear, their scars of body and of spirit. They are abused
921 and raped, victims of violence both in the home and on the street.

922 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

923 I suffer with the wounds your children bear. They, too, are abused and violated. You have
924 ignored that of them I have said, "suffer the little children come unto me, for such is the
925 kingdom of heaven".

926 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

927

1

928 I see poverty and hunger darken the face of the land. You harden your hearts and ignore the
929 cries of my people. You now love other gods; you are tempted by power and profit to swerve
930 from truth and justice.

931 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

932

933 I see faces upon faces hollowed out by HIV/AIDS> I see the fear and secrecy, the prejudice,
934 discrimination and isolation that add to the burden of disease.

935 *Holy is God! Holy and Strong! Holy Immortal one, Have mercy on us.*

936

937 I am leading you now as a people to the new land of promise. I long for you, of different
938 tongues and tribes, to rise beyond your divisions and come together as one people. I will
939 restore you to the land of your birth, to the land of your mothers and fathers.

940 *We praise you and adore you, O Christ. By your cross and precious blood you have*
941 *redeemed us.*

942 You are worthy O Christ, for you are slain;

943 And by your blood you purchased us from every tribe, language, nation and race,

944 To reign upon the earth.

945 You are Lord, our God;

946 You have brought us out of the house of bondage.

947 We shall lay down our weapons of war,

948 And strive for peace.

949 We will protect the weak and embrace the alien.

950 We shall love our neighbours,

951 Regardless of colour, class, creed or nationality.

952 We shall bind the wounds of the sick and fallen.

953 We will obey your voice and keep your covenant.

954

955 *We praise you and adore you, O Christ. By your cross and precious blood you have*
956 *redeemed us.*

957

958 To God who loves and saves, who binds our wounds and restores us, to God who sets us
959 free... Be Glory and Dominion Forever and Ever. Amen.

960

961 Mother Forgive Them (Beth)
962 Those that sexually harass the weak
963 **Mother forgive them**
964 **For they know not what they do**
965 Those that spit on my body
966 **Mother forgive them**
967 **For they know not what they do**
968 Those that condemn me for loose living
969 **Mother forgive them**
970 **For they know not what they do**
971 Those that judge me with pious words
972 **Mother forgive them**
973 **For they know not what they do**
974 Those that delay in treating me
975 **Mother forgive them**
976 **For they know not what they do**
977 Those that exploit my illness for profit and gain
978 **Mother forgive them**
979 **For they know not what they do**
980 Those that prevaricate and analyse endlessly
981 **Mother forgive them**
982 **For they know not what they do**
983 Those that fight for power but not for those who suffer
984 **Mother forgive them**
985 **For they know not what they do**
986 Those that squabble about anti-retroviral drugs
987 **Mother forgive them**
988 **For they know not what they do**
989 Those that speak in hushed tones and whispers
990 **Mother forgive them**
991 **For they know not what they do**
992 Those that erect barbed wire around us
993 **Mother forgive them**

994 **For they know not what they do**

995 Those that submerge me under a mountain of statistics

996 **Mother forgive them**

997 **For they know not what they do**

1 **Appendix G: Sermons**

2

3 **Advent 2014: St John the Baptist Pinetown, Rev**
4 **Tinotenda Forbes Maupa**

5 **“...Prepare for his birth”** By Forbes T Maupa ©

6

7 **1 Thessalonians vs. 3 vs. 9-13:** Good reports at Thessalonica

8 **Luke 21 vs. 25-36, 22 -26:** The second coming?

9 *“And may he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our*
10 *God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones”* (1 Thessalonians 3 vs.
11 13).

12 *“So with you when you see these things happening: know that the kingdom of God is near”*
13 (Luke 21 vs. 31b).

14

15 Today marks the beginning of the church calendar and so as I begin may I say “Happy New
16 Year and I wish you fresh beginnings”. It is not my intention today to do an in-depth textual
17 analysis of the passages of scripture we read today. Rather, the intention is to set a road map
18 of the journey that I propose we take together from today until the Feast of the Holy
19 Innocents in January. Where possible, I am making a request that we attend church together
20 right through this season and not miss Sunday services. The lay ministers and the clergy felt
21 that our focus should not just be on Christmas day but that we should consciously celebrate
22 the whole season starting with Advent. By now, we all know that Advent means the coming,
23 which historically spoke to the imminent birth of Jesus Christ and for us today may suggest a
24 second coming or **a continuous coming** which I will be suggesting right through this season.
25 Today we are symbolically preparing for a baby shower, yes, Jesus’ baby shower and
26 everyone (male and female) is invited. To visually demonstrate what we hope to express, we
27 have prepared the shoe boxes you see in this church today each of them with a very humble
28 wish list. We are encouraging as many as can, to take these shoe boxes and fill them with the
29 “baby shower items” you will find listed inside. As early as next Sunday we should start
30 bringing the gifts back and when they are all here, we intend taking them to the Marrianhill
31 Orphanage where Jesus who is to be found in human form will be waiting for us. Remember
32 that Jesus who said anything we do for any of these little ones, we do for him? We are
33 consciously going to walk the journey of pregnancy and the women among us will be sharing

34 with us the joys and anxieties of the last 4 weeks of this amazing pregnancy. Something new
35 and amazing is about to break forth into us, into our world and we are Mary through whom
36 this will happen.

37 We are all familiar with the concept of being born again and often that has referred to the
38 conversion process of humanity. This season we are suggesting that Jesus be born again in us,
39 yes the process of his coming again in and through us! We might have forgotten what
40 Christmas meant as we have reduced it to wild parties but now we are going to give birth
41 Christmas.

42 Last week Rev Matthew asked us what the reign of Christ looks like and how we see it; today
43 I am suggesting that we are going to give birth to that Christ and the kin-dom! The kin-dom
44 of Christ will be that which we give birth to. *Uzofuza bani loJesu sim'zalayo?* (who will he
45 look like) In pregnancy, one is advised to eat well, exercise, avoid intoxicating substances
46 and so on to ensure that the baby is healthy. As we work on this baby shower, the same
47 applies! We must do all we can to make sure that as Christ is born, a healthy kin-dom
48 accompanies that birth. Let us be busy in our hearts, in our communities and in this church to
49 prepare for this wonderful birth that the world yearns for. We are going to pray, eat and drink
50 healthy, think before we speak, not swear or curse. We yearn for love, deliverance, blessings,
51 peace and so many things that are assured to us as the fulfilment of the Incarnation of Jesus
52 the Christ. We are the channels of that birth. My friends, the baby shower is on, let the
53 preparations begin and may the world that waits eagerly in anticipation receive this gift we
54 are preparing for throughout this Advent.

55 Jesus the Christ, let your kin-dom come! Amen

56

57

58

59

60

61

62 SERMONS: Rev Janet Trisk

63

64 17 July 2016 St Alpheges

65 Luke 10: 38-42

66

67 What is the connection between Evan Mawarire and Mary of Bethany? Ok, we get
68 Mary of Bethany because we just read about her in the gospel; but Evan who??
69 Evan Mawarire is the Zimbabwean minister who courageously led a strike protesting
70 corruption in Zimbabwe last week. He was arrested and later charged with
71 incitement to bring down the government. So what do these two people, centuries
72 and worlds apart, have in common? I think it is this: They can imagine another world.
73 Mawarire imagines a world where there is no longer corruption in Zimbabwe, where
74 people who work are paid, where everyone can eat, where a small brutal elite will no
75 longer use all the resources of the country to keep themselves in comfort. And Mary?
76 What is the other world she imagines? I will come back to this in a moment. For now,
77 let's just enter the text in a little more detail.

78

79 We hear that Jesus and his companions, already on the road to Jerusalem and *its*
80 world of power and brutality, stop at the home of Martha. Don't leave that phrase too
81 quickly. A house owned by Martha, a woman? That was pretty unusual in those
82 days. Houses were owned by men. We don't know how she came to have this
83 house, but even more remarkably, she welcomes Jesus and his rag tag bunch of
84 followers into it. Her neighbours would be sure to notice. That would mark her as
85 "one of *them*." But welcome them, she courageously does. We can just imagine her
86 scurrying about getting bowls of water for washing, preparing the meal, setting the
87 table. And what does Mary, her sister do? She plonks herself down at Jesus' feet to
88 listen to him. Can you just imagine how mad Martha would have been? But it gets
89 worse, because when she complains to Jesus: "Get Mary to help me" Jesus, instead
90 of telling Mary to help, says that Mary has chosen a better way. A better way? If
91 that's a better way, no-one would ever get supper.

92

93 How can this be a better way? Is Jesus, the foot-washer, down-playing service?
94 Absolutely not. I think we need to recognise that it is a caricature to reduce this story
95 to two ways – the active and contemplative - and then to downplay the active in
96 favour of the contemplative. Service is one of the marks of the followers of Jesus.
97 He says of himself: I am among you as one who serves. But service is not just
98 scurrying about getting a million tasks done. Jesus reminds Martha that she is
99 *distracted* by these many tasks. If her hospitality was wholehearted, focussed, that
100 would be something different.

101

102 So back to Mary. Why is it that Jesus says she chosen the better way? She also
103 offers hospitality, but of a different kind. Mary offers a hospitality of listening. Unlike
104 Martha's many things, Mary's is a hospitality of whole heartedness. But even more
105 than this, Mary shows imagination. In a world where women were not supposed to
106 learn, where the disciples of a teacher were all men, she chose to include herself in

107 the circle of those sitting at the feet of Jesus. She imagined a world where women as
108 well as men are disciples of the teacher.

109

110 All great changes in the world start with imagination, the dream of something
111 different. It doesn't have to be this way. Mary, in a patriarchal society, imagined a
112 world where women could learn. Jesus, in spite of the violence of Roman occupation
113 and economic exploitation saw a world in which all people are valued, all people are
114 the image of God, a world where there is justice and peace. Nelson Mandela, in the
115 face of apartheid imagined a country where all people, regardless of race, are
116 equally citizens of their homeland. Evan Mawarire imagines a free Zimbabwe.

117

118 By way of contrast, I believe that cruelty and injustice is a failure of imagination. We
119 can be violent and hateful towards one another when we fail to imagine what it is like
120 to be that person. If I can't imagine what it is like to have lived as a black person
121 under apartheid, or a lesbian or gay person in a homophobic world, or poor person in
122 a world of consumerism, or a foreigner in a xenophobic land then I can allow myself,
123 at best, indifference and at worst unimaginable cruelty.

124

125 So what world do we imagine beyond the corruption of the SABC and the violence of
126 Nice; beyond the seemingly intractable war in the Sudan and the endless cycles of
127 poverty and hardship? Do we even have a vision? Or are we so busy scurrying
128 around, completing our many tasks that we have no time to imagine anything
129 different?

130

131 Martha and Mary show us twin sides of a new world, and the way to that new world
132 through hospitality. Like Martha, we are called to the hospitality of service – not as a
133 scurrying around to get things done, but as a way of showing value and care to every
134 person. We are also called to a hospitality of listening and learning. Only then, can
135 we begin to imagine something different. Sometimes, if we are very fortunate, those
136 two dimensions came together, as they did in the home of Martha and Mary. On
137 Friday some of us offered our 67 minutes for Mandela Day, to pack food for Stop
138 Hunger Now. It was marvellous to be part of the project, a work of service to bring
139 food to hungry children. But just as marvellous, was the glimpse of a different world
140 as we saw our team at work: a rainbow of ages and stories and colours and cultures
141 working as one to do the best we could.

142

143 That team is an image, an icon, of what we can be, when we allow ourselves to be
144 who we really are. I keep hearing on the radio: "Make every day a Mandela Day"
145 Yes indeed. Make every day a day where we serve. But also make every day a day
146 where we listen so attentively to one another that we hear the deepest part of the
147 other, the desires of their hearts. And make every day a day when we look at our
148 world and, like Mary, like Evan Mawarire, like Nelson Mandel, like Jesus, we imagine
149 a new world into being.

150

151

152 **Ash Wednesday**

153

154 **Joel 2:1-12, 2 Cor 5:17-6:2 and Matthew 6: 1-6 & 16-18**

155

156
157
158
159

Rev. Janet Trisk

160 If you asked 1000 Christians, “What’s your favourite day in the church’s year?” I don’t think
161 even one would answer: “Ash **Wednesday.**” **If you asked 100 000 I don’t**
162 think you’d get any takers either. It’s not re- ally anyone’s favourite day. Not many of us
163 look forward to the fast of Lent, to the aus- **terity of a church without flowers, to week**
164 after week of the Ten Commandments and no Gloria. And yet today, Ash Wednesday, is a
165 pretty amazing day. It’s a hopeful day.

166
167 **Those first two readings from Joel and 2 Corinthians contain a message of hope:**
168 after a long litany of warnings – blowing of **the trumpet, sounding of the alarm, fire and**
169 earthquakes – Joel goes on, “Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,”
170 or as Paul says it to the Corinthians: “Be reconciled to God.” This is not about
171 gloom and doom so much as a welcome invitation: Return to God. Be reconciled.

172
173 In the gospels of Matthew and Mark, Je- **sus’ first public words are: “Repent, for the**
174 kingdom of God has come near.” Repentance means reconciliation with God too. The word in
175 Greek, *metanoia*, means turn
176 around. Go in the opposite direction. In- stead of travelling away from God, go back to God.
177 Be reconciled

178
179 Repent is a hopeful word too. It is not so much about breast-beating and misery as recognising
180 where we could change. The whole idea of repentance encompasses the

181
182 idea that we *can* change. And we can all do
183 it. We have all made changes in our lives. We are not doomed to be like this forever. What
184 happened in the past does not need to dictate what happens in the future – both for our
185 individual and communal lives. Nothing is beyond being transformed. We can trust that
186 others will change and that the world will change because that’s what Jesus has already
187 done. He has inaugurated another way.

188
189 This Lent in the parish, and indeed in the di- ocese, we will be looking at a series of Bible
190 studies on economic justice. I don’t need to tell anyone that there is very little justice when we
191 talk about the economy. Some people work hard all day and do not bring home enough money
192 to feed their children, let alone paying for rent and transport and **education. Others, and this**
193 **is an official sta-**

194 **tistic issued by the Revenue Office, others** brought home over R5m last year. And in some
195 parts of our country 60% of the peo- ple in a community are unemployed.

196
197 Last week I saw the disturbing play, *Tshe- pang*, based on the rape of a 9 month old baby in a
198 small, very poor community near Uppington in 2001. The play reminds us, as if we need
199 reminding, that those horrifying events, that appalling violence, is a pre- dictable

200 consequence of deep and terrible poverty where people scrape together a few cents at the
201 end of the week and drink themselves into oblivion to try to forget how they live.

202

203 The grinding poverty, the horrendous rape, the loss of hope are not just events over there.
204 They are our responsibility too. But if you are like me, you feel helpless in the face of such
205 appalling circumstances. And if you are like me you also feel ashamed when we are not
206 grateful for what we have.

207

208 But the good news is that it doesn't have to be this way. It *can* all change. That's what Jesus'
209 invitation is all about. Repent, turn around. And we don't do it alone. Je- sus promises: The
210 kingdom is already here, amongst us. All we have to do is return to the Lord with all our heart.
211 Be reconciled to God. And a new society, a new way of living, comes to be. It's possible. It's
212 the promise **of Jesus. It's the hope we are offered.**

213

214

215 **Joseph Isaiah 7:10-16, Romans 1:1-7 and Matthew 1:18-25**

216

217 **Rev. Janet Trisk**

218

219 This morning I am going to ask you to do something quite difficult. I'm going to ask
220 you to pretend to yourself that you have never seen a nativity play, that you don't
221 know the Christmas story, that you have
222 never sung Christmas carols and don't re- member any of the words, and especial-
223 ly, that you have never read the gospel of Luke, from which most of us get our ideas
224 about Jesus' early life. And then I'm going to ask you to listen again to part of
225 Matthew's gospel: Matthew 1:18-21.

226

227 Joseph was "a righteous man" *and* was plan- ning to divorce Mary quietly. Why? In
228 Bibli- cal terms, to be righteous meant to know and keep the sacred law, the Torah.
229 And in this context what the law said is this: If, as in Mary's case, a woman who was
230 betrothed (engaged), was found to be pregnant, and her betrothed was not the father
231 of the child, the law allowed the future husband, Joseph in this case, to divorce her.
232 Joseph must 'return' Mary to her father as dam- aged goods.

233

234 And how would a woman such as Mary be-
235 come pregnant? Either she would have had sexual relations willingly, with someone
236 not engaged to be her husband, or she would have been raped. The only way to find
237 this out would be to have a trial and examine the evidence. The law prescribed that
238 there
239 should be a public enquiry into her preg- nancy and then Joseph could divorce her
240 before public witnesses.

241

242 It seems that Joseph knew and was sensi- tive to another aspect of the law. You
243 see, the law demanded not only justice, but mer- cy too. So, Matthew tells us,
244 Joseph want- ed the divorce to be undertaken "quietly" so as not to humiliate Mary.

245 He knew that the law demanded both justice and mercy. And insofar as he was able
246 to keep both aspects he looked for a way to do so. He didn't want a public trial which
247 would disgrace Mary. But he knew the law – her pregnancy meant that he could not
248 go ahead with the marriage.

249
250 It was then that he had this strange dream.
251 And maybe that reminds us of another Joseph, much earlier in the story of Israel,
252 who was also a dreamer. Do you remember that Joseph? He was the youngest of
253 twelve brothers, sold into slavery in Egypt. His dreams led to the salvation of his
254 people when they faced famine and death. This later Joseph has a dream that
255 similarly leads to the salvation of his people. Joseph's
256 dream offers him a way to keep the law *and* stay married to Mary. Because by
257 naming the child he could claim it as his own, give it a father, have it recognised.
258 Which is what
259 he did. In Jewish law, long before paternity tests and DNA, if a man said a child was
260 his (which is what Joseph does by naming Jesus) then the child is his by law. Unlike
261 Luke's story, Matthew has *Joseph*, not Mary, name the child, and so it becomes his
262 own.

263 Where Luke has Mary's consent to the an- gel: "Be it unto me according to your
264 word,"

265 Matthew has Joseph agreeing to go according to God's will.

266
267 I want to look at just two implications of this for us today.

268
269 We have just come to the end of the 16 days of activism against abuse of women
270 and children. We have heard, again, about what constitutes abuse and what *should*
271 *not* happen. I would like to suggest that Joseph gives us a positive model for men.
272 He is a model of what *should* happen. This is the kind of man parents might
273 encourage their boy-children to follow. Despite what the law says, despite what
274 people might say, he takes Mary for his wife and accepts her child as his own. He
275 risks losing esteem in the community because mercy and the strange instructions of
276 God in his dream ask him to act in a way different from what
277 the law allows.

278
279 But he is not just a model for men. He is a model for all of us when we have power or
280 the law or 'right' on our side. And he displays for us how to use that power for good
281 rather than to justify or promote our- selves. For example, it may be my right not to
282 work after 5 in the afternoon. Or it may be my right to expect someone else to pick
283 up litter on the road. It may be my right to hold onto my hard-earned cash. Or
284 whatever rights I think I can claim. But the question rather is: what is the merciful and
285 loving thing to do? We hear lots about rights in the social and political environment.
286 But what about mercy? What is the loving merciful thing to do?

287
288 The second insight that this story offers us is this: it alerts us to the role of dreams. It
289 took a dream to awaken Joseph to the alternative to sending Mary away. I wonder
290 how many of us take dreams seriously. For

291 instance, just think of a dream you have had. It might be one you dreamed in your
292 sleep, or a day-dream. Whichever, I'd be willing to bet that you don't lead much of
293 your life based on that dream. You discount it as 'simply' dreaming, not practical and
294 therefore not important. We don't trust our dreams as a guide to life. Most of our
295 lives, when we try to come to a decision we ask: What does the law say? Or: What
296 does the church say? Or we ask ourselves: What will other people think of me? Very
297 seldom, if ever, do we ask: What does my dreaming suggest? And yet dreaming is a
298 very significant part of the spiritual life. I am not just talking about dreaming whilst
299 asleep, but day-dreaming too: using the imagination, seeing other possibilities.

300
301 Ignatius of Loyola was a 16th century soldier who was injured in a battle. During his
302 recovery he read a book about the lives of the saints and started day-dreaming
303 about what he might be if he followed the gospel rather than fighting in someone's
304 army. As a result of his dreams, he gave up his life as a soldier and later became the
305 founder of the Jesuits, a religious order that still is strong 4 centuries later. The
306 Jesuits use imagination as a central tool in discerning God's will. In other words, if
307 one is trying to listen to God, and to understand what God
308 is inviting a person to do, one is to use the imagination, a kind of day-dreaming to try
309 to listen to God. Think about it. What do you dream about? What are your heart's
310 deepest desires? – not "I wish we could have ice cream for lunch" but the really deep
311 de- sires. Those deep desires are one of the ways God draws us into new
312 possibilities.

313
314 And so as we consider today Joseph's "Yes" to God – every bit as important as Mary
315 's "Yes" to the angel – maybe we could look at our own dreams, and listen to God's
316 invitation there.

317
318 6.4 You have heard it said ... **Matthew 5:27-37**

319
320

Rev. Janet Trisk

321
322 Last week the gospel invited us to start looking at this series of 6 sayings in which
323 Jesus says: "You have heard it said...but I tell you ..." and then he goes on to
324 interpret and explain and get to the heart of the law. We have some more of those "
325 You have heard it said...but I tell you ..." teachings today.

326
327 These few verses which I have just read have caused a great deal of confusion,
328 judge- ment and heartache over the centuries, so let's give them some closer
329 attention.

330
331 The first two verses are clearly addressed to men. Jesus says: "You have heard it
332 said that you shall not commit adultery, but I say to you, if you look at a woman with
333 lust you have already committed adultery with her in your heart." I think the first thing
334 to notice here is that Jesus is not saying you

335
336 must not have sexual feelings. That would
337 be absurd, inhuman. And Jesus as a good Jew would know that the teaching of his
338 time encouraged procreation. Here he is not talking about desire but about lust;
339 about the drive to possess another person and use her for your own gratification. He
340 is not here talking about the loving desire for intimacy. He is talking about the
341 objectivising of a woman, turning her into an object for use, rather than seeing her as
342 a person in her own right, with her own feelings and desires and hopes and fears.

343
344 And this is remarkable. Because Jesus lived in a time and culture that did not value
345 women at all. They were not regarded as fully human. They were never viewed as
346 adults, always being subject to either fathers or husbands. Their evidence could not
347 be used in court. They did not count when deciding whether a quorum was present
348 in the synagogue. They could not run a business, or attend school, or become
349 rabbis.

350
351 So what Jesus is saying here is this: Women are not like cattle or tables, or any
352 other object a man might wish to possess. They are human beings. And to want to
353 possess and
354 use a woman for your own gratification is
355 as bad as committing adultery.

356
357 It's a radical teaching. He is teaching men to see women as human beings, to be
358 valued and respected in their own right and not just as objects to be possessed or
359 discard- ed. And, by implication, then, the point of the law against adultery is not just
360 to punish people who don't keep their marriage vows, but to invite people to
361 recognise one another as human beings.

362
363 Let's jump now to verse 31: Jesus goes on to teach: "It was said, whoever divorces
364 his wife should give her a certificate of divorce; but I say, any man who divorces his
365 wife,
366 except for unchastity, causes her to commit adultery, and the man who marries a
367 divorced woman commits adultery."

368
369 In Jesus' time the law regarding divorce was
370 contained in Deuteronomy 24. That law provided that if a man married a woman, but
371 thereafter at some time she did not please him because he found something
372 objectionable about her, all he had to do was write out a certificate of divorce and
373 that was the end of the matter. A wife could be 'not pleasing' if she grew old, or didn't
374 produce male children, or was no longer pretty, or didn't work hard enough in the
375 house or fields. She had no say in the matter and she was put out, with no claims for
376 maintenance. Her options then were to return to her father's house, if he was still
377 alive and would allow her to come home, or find another man to marry her, or she
378 could sell her body as a prostitute, or she could starve. The injustice is obvious. It left
379 women in a very vulnerable position.

380

381 Just by the way, the law didn't work the other way around – a woman could not
382 divorce her husband if she found him objection- able, or indeed for any other reason.
383

384 So when Jesus says, "If a man divorces his wife he causes her to commit adultery,"
385 he is recognising that a woman has no choice in the matter. And then he goes on to
386 challenge the hardness of heart and the injustice that the law allowed. He says, in
387 effect, even if the law allowed the husband to divorce his wife, in fact he should still
388 be responsible for her, as if they are still married. A husband can't get rid of his
389 responsibilities just by writing out a certificate of divorce.
390

391 Our civil law recognises something similar today. The father of a child can't escape
392 responsibility for the maintenance of the child just by divorcing the child's mother.
393

394 And when Jesus says: "A man who marries her commits adultery," he is saying: she
395 isn't really divorced, in the sense that the first husband can wash his hands of her.
396 She is still, despite the certificate of divorce,
397 'married' to her first husband. He is still responsible for her. He can't get away with
398 just abandoning her.
399

400 These "You have heard it said... but I tell you ..." teachings of Jesus are not easy.
401 They challenge us not to rely on a quick and easy stating of the law, but instead to
402 con- sider what is at the heart of Jesus' teaching, which always invites us to look for
403 what is most life-giving and whole-making. As John 10:10 puts it: "I come that they
404 may have life in abundance."
405

406 Sadly, many modern-day Pharisees have turned Jesus' law of responsibility and love
407 into a law of hard-hearted absolutes. Christian ethical living is much more difficult
408 than simply asking: "What does the Bible

409 say?" – as though we can find some clear statute law. And of course at one level all
411 of us recognise that we don't take the text literally. Just look at those three little
412 verses

413 tucked into the middle of this reading for today. "If your right eye causes you to sin,
414 tear it out and throw it away. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off." If
415 we took the text literally we would be a congregation of one-eyed, one-armed
416 people.
417

418 Christian living, following Jesus, means asking: "What is the loving thing to do?" And
419 this is a much harder question to answer. It may be the loving thing to keep going,
420 looking for *something* to love in a spouse who, in the words of Deuteronomy, "no
421 longer pleases me." But it may be more loving for a married couple to separate. And

422 when people choose to divorce, it's not for us then to make that into the unforgivable
423 sin, as though the failure to be able to keep one's marriage vows is worse than
424 telling lies, or turning away when a poor person asks for food. Even if we can keep a
425 commandment not to commit adultery, we still can disrespect others by treating them
426 as less than fully human.

427

428 The heart of the law, Jesus teaches, is to imitate the heart of God. And when we
429 discover our failure to love as God loves, we are called back to God, who loves and
430 strengthens us, and sends us out to love again. That's what these teachings are
431 about. They are Jesus' way of helping us to foster within us the heart of God.

432

433

434

435 The woman caught in adultery **John 8:1-11**

436

437 Rev. Janet Trisk

438

439 You can just see it, can't you. Jesus in the temple, with a group gathered around
440 him. He's teaching them. Suddenly, enter stage left, a group of clergy, self-
441 righteously indignant, shoving this woman towards Jesus. She is ashamed, head
442 bowed. They force her to stand before him. He looks at her. She won't look at him. "
443 Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of adultery." Scandalous!
444 Outrageous! Adultery in Jesus' time was a crime. And the penalty was death. (Check
445 Leviticus 20 if you don't believe me.) She would have known that. And the scribes
446 and Pharisees caught her in the act. She and they knew that her death was assured
447 if she was pronounced guilty. I wonder what was going through her mind. I wonder if
448 she had children and she was worrying what would happen to them. And certainly
449 her whole family would be shamed in the eyes of the community.

450

451 "So what do you say, teacher?" they ask Je- sus. And he says nothing. Again they
452 ask: "Aren't you going to pass the death sentence? Don't you know the law?" And he
453 bends down and doodles in the sand.

454

455 What's she up to? The text gives us a clue. The writer of the gospel says the scribes
456 and Pharisees brought this woman to Jesus to *test* him. This story is not so much
457 about the woman, or the crime of adultery, as a story about power.

458

459 Firstly, it's about the power struggle between the legalistic way of the scribes and
460

461 Pharisees and Jesus' seemingly anarchic

462 way that upsets those who want the letter of the law kept. Everyone knows the law,
463 but Jesus won't apply it to this woman. He says to her accusers: Only if you have

464 never sinned, then cast the stone to kill her. But the test is even more complicated
465 than this. You see, the Roman law, the law of the army of occupation, specifically did
466 not provide for the death sentence in cases of adultery. So if Jesus says, "She is
467 guilty, put her to death", he will be breaking the *Ro- man* law and will be subject to
468 punishment.

469 If he says "Let her go", despite the fact that she has been caught in the act, he will
470 be breaking the *Jewish* law, which, as a rabbi, he is bound to uphold. It is a test in
471 every sense of the word.
472

473 Secondly, it's about patriarchal power. No- one commits adultery alone, but only the
474 woman is brought before Jesus. What happened to the man? He is not used in the
475 game of power played by the scribes and Pharisees. They are not interested in
476 either of the couple as people. They are interested in finding a means to test Jesus.
477 The woman is the pawn in their game.
478

479 Jesus knows all of this. And in the face of the power games, he doodles in the sand.
480 What's he up to? Litres of ink have been used up speculating on what he was doing.
481 I want to add my own suggestion. I think he was allowing the scribes and Pharisees
482 to recognise what they were really up to. He gives them a time to think about the fact
483 that they are using a real person, a human being, in their game. But they won't. They
484 press him. So in the end he has to point it out to them. "Let the one without sin cast
485 the first stone." And finally, finally they get it. And one by one they slink away.
486

487 The uncomfortable part of this story for me is that it reminds me of my own self-
488 righteousness; the times when I *know* I'm right, and insist on showing others that
489 they are wrong. Isn't it always easier to point out someone else's faults than face my
490 own?
491

492 But there's good news in this story too. And in a way the good news is much more
493 significant. The story encapsulates Jesus' attitude to all people when we do wrong: "I
494 don't condemn you. Just go on your way and don't sin again." In other words, we are
495 always given another chance. No matter how dreadful the thing we have done, even
496 if we have done something that warrants a death sentence, God sends us on our
497 way to try again.
498

499 As we remember today [21 March 2010] the 50th anniversary of the massacre at
500 Sharpe-ville, and mourn the violence and injustice of our country's past, this is a
501 good message. Despite what has been, we are given the chance to try again. Even
502 those police who shot people in the back are given this chance to try again. And 50
503 years later, with stories of corruption and nepotism in government, we might be
504 tempted to feel justified in casting stones. But Jesus' message is, "If you are sinless,
505 cast a stone. If you have never done anything dishonest, cast a stone. If you have

506 never lied, cast a stone. If you have never abused another person's trust, cast a
507 stone. Otherwise, I invite you to go on your way and to try again."

508
509 6.6 Understanding the Trinity

510
511

Rev. Janet Trisk

512
513 On Wednesday night maybe, like me, you braved the cold and went out to watch the
514 eclipse of the moon. I confess I didn't stay out long. I dashed in and out watching the
515 progress of the earth's shadow as it covered the face of the moon. A day or two lat-
516 er someone asked me to explain how this all happened. Now I am no astronomer,
517 but I managed to get the basics right. So I told her about the earth going round the
518 sun and the moon around the earth and the alignment of the three bodies to cause
519 the shadow over the moon. Yes, she said, but
520 what really happened? Why did we all go out to watch this? Why were we drawn to
521 the beauty and mystery of the eclipse?

522
523 The more I thought about that question, the less I had to say. Yes, I can explain the
524 simple facts. But by comparison with the majesty of the event, those words seem
525 totally inadequate. That there is a beautiful full moon in our night sky; that our planet
526 (perhaps alone in our solar system) has conditions suitable for life so that we are
527 here to watch an eclipse; that we are just one solar system in our huge galaxy of mil-
528 lions of stars; that there are other galaxies whose light only reaches earth millions of
529 years later; this is all just so mind-blowing as to defy explanation.

530
531 We live at the wrong end of the Age of Enlightenment, so we often feel if we can give
532 a scientific explanation of something, that's
533 all that's needed. And by way of contrast, if we can't explain something then it's not
534 worth knowing.

535
536 Some of these things came to mind as I thought about the Trinity this week. I can
537 explain to you how Christians came to think about God as three, but what does that
538 mean for us sitting here in Prestbury this cold winter morning? A German mystic and
539 theologian in the 16th century, whose name was Meister Eckhart, once said:

540 *Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things.*

541 *Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God.*

542 *Every creature is a word of God.*

543 *If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature –*
544 *even a caterpillar –*

545 *I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature.*

546 Well, you might prefer to go and spend time with a caterpillar, but maybe I can risk it
547 and say one or two things about God as Trinity.

548
549 Perhaps the first thing to say then about
550 Trinity, is that we are missing the point if we

551
552 are trying to develop some kind of scientific or mathematical formula to explain God.
553 A few weeks ago the Youth Group was asked to draw pictures of God. They came

554 up with some brilliant images – a rock, the sun, a tree, a swing. And I think their
555 insights are the beginning of something important for us. When we talk about God
556 we have to use metaphors. We cannot say God is this or that. Even the word ‘God’ is
557 just a word. It doesn’t describe the nature of God. So we use metaphors. The
558 problem is that some of those metaphors get over-used and so we come to think of
559 them as literal: such as the word ‘Father’. God is *like* a father in some senses. But
560 God is quite unlike a father in others. So it’s quite helpful for us to try to expand our
561 metaphors, to try to use other images when we speak about God or pray.
562

563 I taught some students who really struggled with the metaphor ‘father’. For them
564 father meant someone who was seldom at home; or if he was, he was drunk and
565 abusive. So to call God ‘Father’ was difficult. When I suggested that they try to use
566 other images, they usually struggled with that thought too for a bit. But one was a
567 very good lace maker. And slowly she began to picture God as the most beautiful
568 lace, more intricate and fine and lovely than anyone could make. That’s the invitation
569 to each of us – to try to discover fresh new images for God which speak to us and
570 out of our experience.
571

572 The next thing to say about God is that God is not a thing, like any other thing or
573 being in the universe, even though lots of our im- ages suggest this. The problem
574 with using an image, whatever the image is, is that it suggests God is in this place or
575 another.
576

577 A thing can only be in one place at a time, even if it is a very big thing. The ocean
578 covers almost the whole face of the earth. But God is not in there. God is not a thing,
579 even a thing as big as the ocean.
580

581 One of my favourite theologians suggests a helpful way to think about God is to think
582 of God as embodied. God’s body is the whole universe – stars, us, the sun, the
583 moon. Now just as you and I are our bodies, we are also more than our bodies. For
584 example, although our bodies are here, we can imagine ourselves sitting at the
585 beach. Or we can be ‘present’ in Cape Town when a friend there is thinking about
586 us. So too with God. If we think about the whole universe as God’s body, God is also
587 more than the universe.
588

589 This insight also leads us to a third point which is this: (and it is a uniquely Christian
590 insight,) God is not singular, one. The first followers of Jesus have helped us here.
591 Al- though they were Jewish monotheists, they also were so convinced that in Jesus
592 they encountered God, that they were prepared to challenge their Jewish teachers
593 and say: “No. In this person, in this human being, we come face to face with God.”
594 They were called blasphemists. But they trusted their experience. Which, to make a
595 long story short, is how the early church came to speak of God as Trinity.
596

597 Trinity is also just a model. But it's a supremely helpful model, because it says to us
598 God is not one thing, or one being. God is community. And as we know from our hu
599 man experience, a community is more than just a collection of people. For example,
600 here at St David's or at St Mary's we are a group of individuals. But we are much
601 more than that. We are a network of relation- ships. We are the body of Christ.
602 Because of the other members of this community, each of us is a different person
603 than when we first came here. We had a wonderful embodiment of this last
604 Thursday, Youth Day, when 25 young people participated in the service at
605 Sunnyside and then went visiting residents at the home. Community, generous love,
606 was expressed as the young people of the parish spent some of their holiday with
607 older people who don't often get out.

608
609 That little reading from 2 Corinthians tries to capture some of these ideas when Paul
610 writes about the grace, the love and the fellowship of God. God is loving relationship,
611 embodied in the entire universe. This is something of what we celebrate on Trinity
612 Sunday – not some mathematical formula, but loving, graceful relationship which
613 holds all creation together. Just as the eclipse is in some ways definable, it is much
614 more than

615
616 that. It is awe-inspiring. It is beautiful. It is ancient and new at the same time. It draws
617 us out of everyday concerns into something way bigger than each of our own
618 individual lives. The same goes for God.



619

620

621

622 **Sermon preached on 7 August 2016 by Andrew Warmback at St Paul's, Durban in**
623 **celebration of Women's Day**

624 **Text: Matthew 26:6-12 [a reading given in the lectionary that can be used on Women's**
625 **Day]**

626 Introduction

627 Today in church we celebrate National Women's Day.

628

629 We celebrate the role and contribution of women in our country as well as in our church and
630 lives.

631 Today's celebration is rooted in the 1956 women's march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria
632 to protest against the pass laws and the carrying of pass books.

633 The words "Wathint' Abafazi Wathint' Imbokodo" became well known – meaning "you
634 have struck a women, you have struck a rock." We celebrate the courage and power of
635 women.

636 We celebrate the great progress in recognising the status and role of women in society since
637 that time. And we celebrate the rights of girls and women guaranteed in our constitution.

638

639 Gospel story

640 Today's gospel reading today reflects the mood of our celebrations.

641 It is a story that, with variations, occurs in the other gospels too.

642 In this account an unknown women breaks a jar of expensive oil over Jesus' head in an act of
643 generosity, and love for Jesus.

644 Her action has been interpreted as anointing Jesus' body in anticipation of his impending
645 death. It was common to anoint a body in preparation for burial.

646 The only ones who complained were Jesus' disciples who complained that the women wasted
647 the oil and that, considering the cost of the oil, something more useful could have been done
648 with it, like feeding the poor.

649 Jesus' response to what the woman did was a very positive one.

650 Jesus appreciated what the woman had done for him and commended her publicly for doing
651 it. What a wonderful affirmation it must have been for her.

652 Jesus gives her rightful place; he truly values her act of devotion.

653

654 Often in the gospels we read of Jesus affirming women – healing the women with the flow of
655 blood, meeting the women at the well, etc.

656

657 Women in our church

658 Today is also a day to celebrate women in the church. You will have perhaps seen in the
659 notice of the parish women's breakfast coming up next month – an opportunity for women to
660 celebrate together and for us all to appreciate and value the women in our church.

661

662 I am struck by the many ministries willingly undertaken by committed women in this parish –
663 from our rector, to lay ministers, to choristers, servers, as well as those whose ministries are
664 exercised behind the scenes.

665

666 Like Jesus lavishly anointed by this woman in our story today we too are truly blessed here at
667 St Pauls – thank you to the women, and girls. May God give you strength to continue and
668 may we men support you. We love and appreciate you and the contribution that you make to
669 our church.

670

671 Abuse of women

672 At a time like this in our national life, when we celebrate the life, gifts and significant
673 contribution of women to our country and church it is always mixed with a concern for the
674 way in which women are treated. Our media rightly uses the opportunity to highlight the
675 abuse women often experience.

676

677 South Africa experiences high incidences of what is referred to as gender based violence.
678 This violence can take various forms, including psychological abuse to beatings and rape
679 itself. This is our shameful reality.

680

681 Campaigns

682 There are two campaigns that our Diocese has supported to work with others to address some
683 of these issues. The first is “Thursdays in Black”. This is an international campaign in
684 which all people are encouraged to dress in black on Thursdays to highlight the need to stop
685 violence against women. There is a broach that goes with it. If you wear this too then it
686 makes clear to people why you are wearing black.

687

688 The second is the campaign of 16 Days of Activism against Violence Against Women and
689 Children, held annually from 25 November to 10 December.

690 Materials are made available for churches to use during this time.

691

692 Let us as a parish support both these campaigns.

693

694

695 Dream

696 I want to conclude with a dream of what we want for our church, St Pauls. It consists of
697 seven areas:

- 698 1. We are a church where all are welcomed and accepted without discrimination.
- 699 2. We are a church in which we teach respect for and appreciation of women in all we
700 do: in our baptism and confirmation preparation classes, in our Sunday school and
701 youth teaching and formation, in our marriage preparation classes, in our preaching
702 and bible study sessions.
- 703 3. We are a church that is safe place, a place in which the integrity of women is affirmed
704 and safeguarded, where those who are vulnerable feel protected.
- 705 4. We are a church where stories can be shared and listened to without judgement; where
706 healing from abuse can take place.
- 707 5. We are a church where the men treat the women of this congregation and in their
708 homes and communities with the utmost respect and dignity.
- 709 6. We are a church in which in our worship of God– our singing, our prayers – the
710 words, images and symbols used, make all feel included, both men *and women*.
- 711 7. And finally, we are a church that celebrates, that is creative, that incorporates fully the
712 feminine, the gifts that women alone can bring to our worship and community life.
- 713 8. Surely such a church is one that Jesus would have wanted to see. Let us work
714 together to make it a reality.

715

716 Happy Women's Day! And enjoy Tuesday. Amen

717

718

719 **Sermon on preached on 29 May 2106 at St Pauls by Andrew Warmback**

720 **Reading: Luke 7:1-10**

721

722 **Introduction**

723 Healing was central to Jesus' ministry.

724 Jesus came to make help make people whole; to set them free.

725 How did Jesus heal people? Healings in the gospels take place in different circumstances and
726 in different ways. However, listening and speaking were often important aspects in the
727 healing process.

728 For four days this past week two people from this parish, Jackie Zondo and myself attended a
729 Gender Sensitisation workshop in Johannesburg, run by Hope Africa, which is a development
730 agency of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

731 The main focus of the workshop was on responding to sexual gender based violence. This
732 refers to violence against men by women, and men against women, as well as the abuse of
733 children, which seems to be on the increase. This violence or abuse can take various forms,
734 including psychological abuse to beatings and rape.

735 It took place in Johannesburg. There were about 25 other delegates from about 12 other
736 dioceses.

737 I will look at Jesus' approach to healing in today's gospel to see how it may guide us in
738 responding to gender based violence.

739 The gospel is about a Roman centurion whose slave is sick and he seeks healing from Jesus.
740 His strategy was to send some Jewish elders to approach Jesus to ask him to come to his
741 house to heal his slave.

742 *Jesus listens to the story* of these representatives. Later in the story Jesus is required just to
743 *speak the word* for his slave to be healed. And that is what happens – the slave is healed.

744 Jesus heals people because he cares for them and has compassion for them. He was willing to
745 respond to the request from the centurion. He does not discriminate in terms of who he
746 responds to. Jesus treated everyone with respect.

747 At the Workshop most of our time was taken up with small group Bible studies. The
748 passages chosen were those that highlighted the abuse of people in various forms as well as
749 those that pointed out how we should be caring and compassionate towards others. We
750 focussed on the attitude and approach of Jesus to those who were abused and in need of
751 healing.

752 Those who survive emotional and physical violence often feel a sense of guilt or shame at
753 what has happened to them, sometimes feeling that they themselves were to blame. This
754 trauma may lead to withdrawal, anger, and depression.

755 Jesus listened to people, without judging them. This was an important step in their healing
756 process. Being accepted as one is and being shown unconditional love can be deeply healing.

757

758 **Response of the church**

759 The workshop challenged us to consider what positive responses the churches make could
760 make.

761 How can our churches become safe spaces for people to tell their stories?

762 Like Jesus, we can show compassion towards others, listening with empathy and respect.
763 What “professionals” may there be have among us? – counsellors, nurses and social workers
764 who can help survivors of sexual violence.
765 We can speak words of affirmation that help the healing process.
766 The challenge is also: How can we as the church also speak out against the perpetrators,
767 saying clearly that this behaviour is wrong? Also, can we find ways to support the police and
768 other social services so that those who are abused and raped are treated with dignity and
769 respect in the process of reporting and treatment?
770 And how can we protect those who are vulnerable among us, especially children?
771 **Finally**
772 A powerful biblical image of the church is that we are the body of Christ – when one part of
773 the body suffers, we all suffer. So when one among us is abused we all suffer.
774 It is the responsibility of us all to respond in constructive and helpful ways. The gospel of
775 love motivates us to offer what we have in ways that can be healing to others.
776 At some stage we need to look at what particular response we at St Paul’s can make.
777
778 I conclude with the Collect printed in today’s pew leaflet: [though actually set for the
779 following week]
780
781 God of all wisdom,
782 whose love enfolds the needy
783 and comforts those who mourn:
784 give us strength through Jesus Christ
785 to be instruments of your compassion
786 to those who are wounded by life:
787 through Jesus Christ our Lord
788 who lives and reigns with you
789 and the Holy Spirit,
790 one God, for ever and ever. AMEN

Appendix H: Focus Group Conversation

One Focus Group Meeting was held with eleven priests (one retired) from 13h50 – 14h30 at the Anglican Cathedral, Pietermaritzburg on 15 October 2016 (the second day of the Anglican Diocesan Synod).

Background to the Focus Group

Background and Context: *It was difficult to find a common time and place for this group to meet, because they come from different parts of a large diocese. Therefore I sought and was granted permission from Bishop Dino Gabriel to host the meeting over the one-hour lunch break during the tri-annual Diocesan Synod meeting held on. Unfortunately, due to various factors, the time was reduced to 45 minutes.*

Present: *(To ensure confidentiality, all the names below are pseudonyms.)*

| | |
|------------|------------|
| A. Mandy | G. Thembi |
| B. Toni | H. Alan |
| C. Beth | I. Michael |
| D. Thando | J. Thembi |
| E. Francis | K. Vincent |
| F. Judith | |

Breakdown of Participants and Their Church Contexts:

- Gender: 7 women, 4 men.
- Race (as per government categories): 4 ‘African’, 3 ‘Coloured/ Indian’, 4 ‘White’.
- Ordination: 10 ordained priests, 1 lay minister.
- Years in ordained ministry: 8 participants had between 2 and 24 years, and 3 participants had less than 3 years).
- Roles in their parish: 4 rectors (of whom 3 are writing liturgies), 6 assistant priests, and 1 lay minister.
- Profile of the congregations: All English medium, mostly urban; 8 mostly women; all congregations are racially mixed, except two – one with mostly

Indians and another, mostly whites; mostly middle income bracket – with 2 majority upper income bracket, 4 congregations comprise all three – poor, middle and upper income brackets.

- Those participants who see themselves as striving towards gender equality: 10 - with one participant stating that equality aims too low!.

1 **Transcription:**

2 *Interview starts at 13h48, while people are still eating lunch, seated around the*
3 *table in the Cathedral library.*

4

5 3. 00 (R): I really appreciate you giving up your lunchtime. I was concerned because –
6 I've been trying to get everyone together for a while - but everyone is so incredibly
7 busy, and I don't want this to be an imposition, another stress in your busy lives. So
8 that's why I thought this would be a good day, when we are here anyway. So I hope
9 you are all feeling comfortable? Um- so in light of the time constraints, which are
10 now...

11

12 3.12 (B): Thirty-five minutes.

13 (General laughter.)

14

15 3. 16 (R): Forty minutes. I'm going to really pick and choose and just open up a
16 couple of questions for us to have a conversation around. ... Um...

17

18 My understanding of sexual and reproductive health rights is that it is basically about
19 freedom of choice and freedom from coercion, in regard to one's sexuality and one's
20 reproductive capacities. I hope that's not controversial?

21 *(Researcher's note: general shaking of heads.)*

22 And so my question is: What if anything, does Anglican liturgy have to do with
23 promoting health and wellness for sexual and reproductive health rights? What is the
24 link? Some people I have spoken to, have looked at me like I'm completely mad.

25 *(General laughter)*

26 How could I be doing research that is trying to make the connection between liturgy
27 and sexual and reproductive health rights? So maybe I can put two questions together

28 as part of the... this conversation. So how ... what does it mean to be trying to make a
29 connection between Anglican liturgy and sexual and reproductive health rights, and
30 health and wellness. And how can liturgy be made... how can liturgy be helpful, to
31 make the link in terms of the church and sexual and reproductive health rights? So
32 let's just have a conversation.

33

34 4.30 (E): If I can kick off, what I think would be helpful is to note the definition that
35 the World Health Organisation has given to what health is. Now when you define that
36 by the WHO standards, then you realise the holistic approach to wellness, so it is not
37 then possible to have liturgy or to have any form of connection with God that puts
38 health elsewhere, because it is part of that connectedness. You link that together with
39 the MDGs that have now become sustainable development goals, and you realise that
40 they are focused. For me, especially, the focus 4 and 5, when you are looking at
41 maternal health, you are looking at maternal health, you are you are looking at infants
42 and so on, they are actually focused in my personal context, on the greater number of
43 people that attend church. So if I have more women and more younger people, I
44 cannot then proceed with liturgies that forget those that are coming to my church.

45

46 5.40 (F): I think the... just following on from what Tinotenda is saying – that
47 absolutely, I am with you. But what I think I struggle with is that so much of our
48 liturgy is alienating for women. And so, with the best will in the world, here we are
49 trying to make a place that promotes health, and spiritual connection and physical
50 connection, and just for healing, and mental healing... but this alienating liturgy.
51 I mean the alienating language, the language of separation between the divine and the
52 human, the separation between church and the world... you know those kinds of
53 divisions are so embedded in so much of our liturgy, not all, but a lot of it.

54

55 6.30 (C): I agree. I think that the liturgy, and the holy Eucharist implicitly connects
56 the material and spiritual, connects all the material and all the dimensions, the
57 immanent and the real world with the transcendent. And I think that if we spell out the
58 liturgy, it, um, it connotes... healing... in every dimension of our lives... and that's
59 the wellness. And it's about it's really expounding on those dimensions, which
60 sometimes are taken for granted when the holy Eucharist is performed.

61

62 7.20 (R): Thank you, I think...

63

64 7.21 (G): We serve a God who says go out and replicate. We serve a God who gives
65 us the right to be able to replicate humankind, and in my mind, the very same God we
66 serve on a daily basis still stands in our churches, still prophecies still comes through,
67 in our liturgy as it currently stands, because it is the very same God who prophesises,
68 the very same God who says go out and prophesy, er, so go out and multiply,
69 replicate. So it is still there, still... the only thing that is really not coming out is the
70 actual words. But if you can be sitting down and interpreting, or taking the
71 interpretate- or taking the interpretation rules to interpret our liturgy, it is there, the
72 only thing is that it's got to be out there an interpreted out.

73

74 8.50 (I): Daniela, I just have a question, is reframing a technical term?

75

76 8.55 (R): Um – it is. In terms of the literature, we talk about liturgical renewal and we
77 talk about liturgical reform, but there are arguments, um, that it's about not just the
78 superficial changes, you know, to have more marimbas, or more women taking part in
79 the readings, or this or that, but it's about, you er know it's based on a psychological
80 term, we think in frames, and when we reframe, we kind of um allow different
81 perspectives to come in. So theologically, it's um about um my understanding of
82 liturgy, is, as (C) says, it's stands between a church's theology and its work in the
83 world. And so, the way it expresses think in the liturgy influences how people
84 understand their call into the world. And so theologically, if we understand God to be
85 a particular way, theologically, it will influence how we respond to people with HIV,
86 or issues of motherhood, or whatever it might be. And so the way we talk about things
87 actually reflects how we understand them, but the way discourse works, is that it
88 doesn't just reflect how we understand them, but it also promotes, so that people learn
89 how we understand, they are schooled in our theology, as it were. And so liturgy is
90 actually very important in em - consciously thinking about what messages it is getting
91 across about our theological understanding about men and women, and God and um
92 their relationships and all that. Does that make sense? So it's a deeper shift. Sorry,
93 (E).

94

95 10.44 (E): um you speak of sexual and reproductive health rights (others – hm) and I
96 think it's key to um, to underline rights. And then, we say to ourselves is, maybe what
97 you are looking at, is intentional liturgy, because you are not just trying to pray, but
98 you are saying, in connecting with God, liturgy is therefore making people aware of
99 their worth and their rights in the here and now. So that it's not just a kind of liturgy
100 that is taking you out somewhere out of the body, but makes you aware of body, and
101 what rights belong to body, which is em, now.

102

103 11.33 (B): And of course, there is the other side of that, if there is such a thing as
104 intentional liturgy, if we're not intentional, we're not doing those things.

105

106 11. 40 (R): Or, we could be unintentionally doing harm...

107 *(General hm)*

108

109 11. 47 (D): ... in the name of tradition.

110 *(General mhm)*

111

112 11.56 (E): Ja.

113

114 12. 00 (R): Thank you. Um... could I just ask for maybe each of the 3 people that are
115 here that have submitted samples, to just share a little bit about your theological
116 thinking, about how you have used the liturgy, So that it kind of just opens up the
117 conversation just a little bit more. And feel free to take just a couple of minutes – like
118 two minutes...

119

120 12. 39 (F): You want my theology in two minutes?

121 *(General loud laughter and jest.)*

122

123 13.00 (F): Ok so so .. one of the things that resonated with what you have just been
124 saying, Tino, is that my understanding is that we don't just use words but but words
125 give embodiment to the way we see the world. And so the kinds of words we use are
126 are really important. I mean, the obvious examples are patriarchal terms, but it's not
127 just that, at all, So if for example, if you remember that, some of us are old enough to

128 remember the old Prayer Book ... “Lord have mercy on us, miserable offenders” –
129 remember all that stuff?

130 *(Laughter)*

131

132 13.44 (F): It’s an attitude that shapes us in in the liturgy, and even when I have said
133 OOHH I am so sinful I’m so horrible! I going to come back next week and say those
134 same same terrible words... I’m just a miserable offender. So so I think=- I choose
135 words very carefully... um... and that is an attempt to bring into being a particular
136 way of seeing the world. That’s MY way of seeing the world, and that’s one of the
137 dangers of it... It’s very - I find it very hard to to create liturgy in conversation with
138 other people, because it’s such a very personal thing.

139 *(General agreement mhm)*

140

141 14: 26 (F): And I think that the - one of the downsides of our Prayer Book is that it’s
142 liturgy by committee and so it’s the lowest common denominator. It’s not - it doesn’t
143 really resonate, because it’s not really .. a voice. And that can sound hugely ... and
144 individualist, but if you just reduce it to the lowest denominator, and if you reduce it
145 to the lowest common denominator, it’s just what everybody agrees, and sometimes
146 what everybody agrees is not very poetic... that’s why the poets the poets say things
147 that sometimes irritate me, but they give a voice to something that that is important
148 for someone, and but and not just the poets and prophets and ... so I think language
149 for me is key.. and that’s my theology actually, is is that our language shapes our
150 reality. I could say lots more, but let me stop there...

151

152 15: 06 (C): And yet, Judith, we vote at Synod, where we decide what the Holy Spirit
153 says, by voting, it’s much more a quantitative

154 *(All laugh.)*

155

156 15. 22 (F) *(laughs)* - at Synod that’s not the same as liturgy, voting to make a
157 decision, that’s a very different scenario

158

159 15.35 (C): By a committee, making decisions,

160

161 15.43: (F): yes yes yes, and I I I think that research, is well done, in conversation. But
162 that's why I'm saying that liturgy is a very particularly thing and and it is a kind of
163 poetry.

164

165 15.52: (C). Yes.

166

167 15.55: (G): Just a thought, isn't language intertwined with cultural baggage:

168

169 15.59: (F): mhm, it's inseparable. That's why I think, it doesn't just work, to take the
170 English Prayer Book and translate it into isiZulu. What you've got is a Zulu
171 translation of an English concept, instead of it emerging organically from, from, for
172 example.

173 *(General mm)*

174

175 16: 19 (R): Can I make a comment there, er.. the lens I am using for the research is
176 actually a postcolonial lens, because of that.

177

178 16: 25 (G): mm OK

179

180 16.30. (R): Because um it opens up conversations around ... um... to what extent can
181 one have a centralised liturgy that is quite controlled and what does it mean for local
182 manifestations of liturgy. I mean there's no easy answers there's lots of questions.

183

184 16.50: (G): When I'm looking at cultural dimensions I'm not looking at culture of an
185 individual but culture of the community.

186 16. 56 (F): No no, of the community – exactly. That's right.

187 16.59 (G): Ja.

188

189 17. 00 (R): Vincent go ahead, and then I want to Tinotenda a chance.

190

191 17.01: (K): I'm very intimidated to to to write my own liturgy maybe because I
192 haven't had the chance to do it... er er cos of where how I'm placed, but ...

193

194 17: 16 (D): There's also the question of permission to use the liturgy.

195

196 17:19 (K): Well, well, But, well, that that's that's one of the that's one of the reasons,
197 but for me, it's because... my lens... will also be postcolonial but it will be
198 postcolonial from a different perspective, and I will write into my understanding, my
199 reading and
200 my own worldview, and I think if I don't do that, and I know that consultations seems
201 like a bit of a swear word er but in my church community, cos this is where it's going
202 I'm going to sort of open up this liturgy, if I don't take a good consensus of the
203 different views and the different ... I'm going to be tackled so I'm I I I'm a bit like
204 I'm a.. I don't know how I will connect with this with... if I am going to write It will
205 be yes, like Judith says, it will be my liturgy, formed by me, but with a with an end
206 view, with an end view that might be good and might want to achieve something
207 good, but if I express this liturgy in the wrong space there's the fear of the rejection of
208 all forms of liturgy thereafter, so I'm a bit aware of that when I'm thinking about this.
209

210 18,50 (R): it goes to me, what you saying, it it goes to me also about how we
211 understand the role of the clergy, and how we interpret that and how we understand
212 that, the calling... I mean it is not an easy question. So I want to give over to...
213

214 19.11 (Tino) I will respond, because I submitted something to you, including my
215 sermon (*laughs, and others join*)

216 19.19 (R): And your prayer as well.

217 19.20 (E): And so, one – I started writing liturgies 14 years ago because of her (*points*
218 *to Judith*), and they were terrible, but she was very kind.
219 (*General laughter, and jest*)

220 19. 22 (E): But I need you to I also I first want to say, the difficulty I had, because at
221 that stage we were getting into feminist and womanist theology is is a struggle that I
222 had, you've probably noticed in what I've submitted to you, the idea of being a
223 privileged male, writing from that perspective from that perspective as a privileged
224 male but also writing from a feminist perspective, and running the risk of appearing to
225 be to be running the risk of appearing to be for women and yet at the same time taking
226 advantage of that privilege that I have. So for example what what I what I sent to
227 Daniela has to do with the whole advent thing, and the focus not being on Jesus. But
228 the focus of advent being on the pregnant mother, so it's around birthing, and saying

229 we we are not celebrating Jesus, we are celebrating... the woman. Let's preach right
230 through advent, and er M Michael was part of some of the things we did, and so he
231 can tell how terrible it was. But I found it affirming that were focusing on, even
232 dealing with labour pains, and what do we when when when a woman is expecting,
233 what are they expected to eat, I asked people in the different cultural contexts, what
234 do they say when you are a month away from giving birth, you are forced to do this
235 thing you eat like this you eat like that, you do like this, let's focus on that. That is our
236 advent theme, to Christmas, It's got nothing to do with Christmas now, because I felt,
237 then that the celebration of Jesus, in a way that, in a way perpetuated this whole
238 patriarchy. And the woman, Mary, Mary or whoever else, was ignored in the whole
239 process. But you understand where I'm coming from. I'm still male, I'm still the
240 rector, I'm still privileged. So there's always this tension between the academic
241 process that I started 14 years ago, and I believe in it, but the danger... of just not
242 knowing.

243

244 21.51 (K): You see, I am where you were 14 years ago (general laughter). I should
245 have just let you speak first, and would have gone aha! (more laughter)

246

247 21. 57 (R) there's something very important that you saying there because it's this
248 whole question, who whose voice, and who's speaking, and who has the right to
249 speak, and it's the same as my discomfort writing from a postcolonial perspective as a
250 white privileged South African. Um..and ... and am I just appropriating, because I
251 wanna be cool, you know, or is it because I believe that the postcolonial voice, the
252 postcolonial feminist voices are important to teach me, so so there's something
253 important in how I approach it, and then and then in in your work, Tinotenda, I really
254 feel that sense of wanting to learn wanting to listen, to enrich your .. masculine
255 spiritual life from a feminine perspective, because for so long we've had masculine
256 imagery that women have had to appropriate into their own experiences. And you've
257 kind of just opened that up, so ... thank you. Did you want to say anything more
258 about your theological thinking?

259

260 23.10 (F): The theory of that is is the Spivak article "Can the subaltern speak?", so it's
261 exactly that

262 23. 16 (R): Ja

263 23.17 (F): ... that, the theory

264 23.18 (R): Yes

265

266 23.20 (E): And I can assure you ... on those parts (F) was not very kind.

267 *(General laughter)*

268 23.25 (D): (F) was not very kind

269 23.27 (R): And (F) herself is a white ... so we all

270 *(more laughter)*

271 23.30 (R): We all sit with these contradictions... these different dimensions...

272

273 23.34 (G) This tension that you are always highlighting, I really want us one day to sit

274 down cos it's one of the topics we really need to address as women, cos... whenever I

275 I address issues,, all of us had to go through a lot of um... I'm trying not to use the

276 word discrimination or prejudices because if you look at the law in South Africa, it

277 did not just address er black women, white w- females also also had to be subjugated

278 to their husbands, right? For quite some time. So, I always want us to look at the law,

279 analyse it and look at the pain and, and then project it and try and appreciate that what

280 is it that we share with each other because there's so much that we share, but then

281 when we speak we tend to be, separating each other and that is not going to be getting

282 us to a point where we agree.

283 24. 27 (R) Ja, that's true.

284

285 24. 29 (G): It is so much. In fact what I've, I've done an analysis, but it was on the

286 legal side, we almost had similar struggles, and um we have to still try and undo those

287 struggles because they still, are perpetuated, by a number of laws that are still

288 standing, Canon law biblical, and still be slightly, to try and get the patriarchal system

289 being er perpetuated.. so possibly that's one of the things we have to do as women in

290 the diocese.

291 24.57 (R): Ja

292

293 24.58 (E): But I want you to imagine the, resistance, because I think as someone

294 writing because it's very personal as Judith earlier expressed, you can imagine how it

295 feels because it's you are leading people in this process leading people into this

296 liturgy that you've created. You are not sure so sure how they are going to respond,

297 let me give you an example, we are used to the adoration of the cross in the ways in
298 which it is done. In 2014 this is why I've been struggling to package this for you
299 (R) mm
300 25.43 (E): In 2014 we did the same, adoration of the cross, in Holy week, and said we
301 will do the normal one on Friday but in Holy Week what we will do at the cross, at
302 the adoration of the cross we are not going to adore Jesus, we are going to adore the
303 women that remained at the cross remember, you know, so the focus will be, on those
304 women, and through those women, let's see how, through those women, what we
305 have as gospel was preserved because of those women at the cross. Now, the pain that
306 came to the liturgist, which is almost seen as blasphemy, that you cannot go to the
307 adoration of the cross and look at anyone else, who is not Jesus. So I I need you to
308 beware that it's not...
309 *(Many mms and ja-s around the table)*
310 26. 09 (K): Ja
311 26.10 (E) ... you would dive into this it doesn't mean that automatically, people are
312 going to say thank you for writing this.
313 *(General laughter)*
314 26.12 (E) Because because, it's something, it's also something that you are still
315 processing this for yourself, Because the I... you still haven't found resolution for
316 yourself. Because you're also trying to find yourself in liturgy, and when you done
317 with it, it doesn't mean I've found myself in it, it's just happening.
318
319 26.36 (K): That's why there's one alphabet, and then it's like...
320 *(General agreement mhm)*
321
322 26. 40 (R): I think, what you're pointing to also is the whole issue of repetition and
323 the socialisation into a particular discourse, and how hard it is when we make a break,
324 because we've been all socialised in a particular discourse. When I prayer the Lord's
325 prayer as Our mother, and I love doing that, because I've had a much better
326 relationship with my mother than with my father, and but then I always have this
327 guilt... about being blasphemous... So can I just ask, before we come to you, Betty
328 had her hand up
329

330 27.25 (C): To respond to Francis, I see and hear how you were trying to upset the
331 balance and you were kind of cutting... and... and, rather than but how is it to find the
332 feminine in Jesus and the maternal face of God, in God and in Jesus, and how... I've
333 had a wonderful father, I'm comfortable saying Our father but I've learnt, in my
334 journey, to also seek God as mother.

335

336 (R) Thank you. Toni?

337

338 28.02 (B): Um... well just to say that there's some echoes in terms of what ... not that
339 I'm, a black male!

340 (General laughter)

341 28.20 (B): Fancy that! Um – but there's some echoes in terms of there being a, um... I
342 I liked it being more of a process in terms of a a seasonal focus. Erm cos that gives a
343 bit more time for there to be a dialogue and a a a kind of exploring of the different
344 aspects of a um particular theme. Um I know for my er e r this last lent going into
345 holy week and going into the Triduum it was a , it all built on er something else, and
346 then the the language we used in the end was at the end, at Easter time, was very
347 different, from the language we started with. Um but it took us time, you know like
348 we had forty plus days to get there. And we'd agreed in the community, early on, that
349 that we were going to follow a certain theme, and so that's what we moved over to,
350 um... so just to say that a a big part of it is about being a conversation yes, but I also
351 hear the echoes in terms of ... hey, I think my writing is far more poetic than than...

352 *(General laughter)*

353 (R): the prayer book?

354 29.45: (B) Yes, the the prayer book, but also I'm just aware that when people are
355 writing and they try and be creative, they take a bit from here and a bit from there and
356 they just kind of put it together. And if they – ok it's different, and that's great! But I
357 find I struggle with those kinds of liturgies, because they they don't hang to... for me
358 the theme is not, there, there isn't a flow, the the language isn't consistent, the there
359 isn't a rhythm that draws you in.

360

361 (R) J. Can I just... Um There's something I'm hearing um about journeying with
362 people, and liturgy emerging... am I right?

363 *(General mms of agreement)*

364

365 30.41 (R) So it's not about, so, it's not about, OK what shall we do this week, but
366 there's something about liturgy reflecting the community, the the journey that the
367 community is on.. going back to the question of what is the role of the clergy, in being
368 able to listen and somehow embody, the word you used Judith, in the words the the
369 struggle and the journey that that, you hear...

370

371 31.04 It's that tension, again, between giving a frame but also creating a space, so so a
372 practical example tomorrow our children are going to be making a prayer chain with
373 the names of all the students in the parish affected by the Fees Must Fall thing, so I
374 I've actually no idea what's going to come out of it, but but what we've done is we've
375 given them the space to say they wanted to deal with the Fees Must Fall thing and the
376 students and whatever, and we've said to them – it's yours, you do whatever you like,
377 because we trust them enough, and the rest of the liturgy will hold it in some way or
378 another. And they might burn the church down, but... (laughter) but it's it's that
379 tension I think between the framing, whether it's words or action or whatever it is, and
380 the space for community to to act .. But there's got to be a .. we've got to build the
381 liturgical bodies first ... you know.. at one of our meetings the other day a person
382 said" I hate just opening the prayer book on page 104... Well get used to it, that's
383 where we do it, but there's such an opportunity if we open it there because everyone
384 knows where we are and now you can put new stuff into it. If you just up there in the
385 stratosphere nobody knows where you are. (*General hms and nods*) I think that's the
386 genius of being Anglican, if you start with the Prayer Book then you've got a
387 framework... Sorry sorry too long..

388 (*Many people start to speak*)

389 (R): I will come back to you... let me just go back to Tinotenda who's been waiting.

390 32.30 (E): Because it's being recorded, I just wanted to indicate to Beth that I agree
391 with her entirely that there are numerous ways of finding lot of things but God the
392 Father and Jesus Christ. I think my response was based on what I've given her. There
393 there a whole series of other things that don't focus on women, but I singled out these
394 because they are intentionally subverting everything we are used to. So so I've
395 worked with just the image of Jesus I've worked with the stations of the cross and all
396 the pains that are there, and so on. But these two I just wanted to put it on record

397 *(laughs)* that these ones I found particularly subversive and I enjoyed them, and for
398 academic purposes I thought – you need this!

399 *(General laughter)*

400 33.16 (R): Thank you. Alan-

401

402 33.18 (H): Just to respond in the context to what Judith said and yourself Daniela. Er
403 between formal liturgy and less formal perhaps what actually takes place. U- the
404 church where I work has service during the week and um, every Friday there's a
405 healing service I think there's been maybe a hundred and sixty seven years of that

406 *(General laughter)*

407 33.40 (Alan): During the World AIDS Conference recently, we are a few hundred
408 metres away from there, we had people coming over to the service. So they were
409 obviously concerned about health. Those who went to the conference will have seen
410 there were large displays of sex workers, transgender people, so some of that came
411 into our service. Not in the formal liturgy. But what was said before we started on
412 page a hundred and four, er, the prayers, the talking afterwards with... um... While
413 we still with the set formal liturgy there are other ways of having this conversation in
414 this area of health.

415

416 34.22 (R) And also, the liturgy isn't just the written word.

417 *(General yeses and ums.)*

418

419 34.28 (R): I was warned, I wanted to do much more and I was warned I have to bring
420 it into something containable otherwise I'll never finish. Um, but I am hoping to
421 continue that that thinking around that because there is just so much to the richness of
422 of worship.

423 *(General murmur and nods)*

424

425 34. 48 (H): On Eucharist Prayers, I think there are a bout twenty, that the bishops have
426 authorised. And the Unity in Worship that ecumenical CUC booklet also has quite a
427 few. Some of the those could be used in particular circumstances. So it's not just the
428 formal..

429 35.04 (R) Yes, thank you.

430 35.05 (H): So it's not just Sundays.

431 *(Multiple voices speak at the same time)*
432
433 35.11 (D): And the context has to be receptive to your new ideas.
434 35: 17 (R): Yes, absolutely.
435 35. 18 (D): I'm in a place where, the people were dead against using the third
436 Eucharistic Prayer. And fortunately, nobody had warned me so somebody had died
437 and I used it. Because... *(some laughter)* Because I would be told that you should
438 never use that, because it talks about Mary the Mother of God.
439 *(General laughter and ums, yeses)*
440 35. 38 (R): So there's something about... the congregation
441 *(Different voices - Ja. Mhmm. Mm.)*
442 3.41 (R): And you're standing between the congregation your sense of what God is
443 calling you, in terms of what the ministry and how you interpret that , um, and how
444 you are encouraging people to be out there in the world, and yet, there's that
445 resistance within the community.
446 *(general ums)*
447
448 36.00 (D): People get offended by one of the Eucharistic prayers from... our brother
449 Jesus and all the women that touched him, you know *(laughs)*
450 *(General mms and yeahs)*
451
452 36.13 (K [*loud*]): Yup.
453 36.18 (D): And so you have to take a step back. I do have great difficulty with the
454 Prayer of Humble Access, I just have difficulty with waiting for the crumbs under the
455 table. And so often would ban it *(laughs)*.
456 *(Gentle laughter and yeah yeah)*
457 36.27 (R): My son always gets the giggles.
458 36.32 (D): I think in the place of that, I prefer that we use the Prayer of Preparation on
459 page five one five.
460 36. 41 (K): I think...
461 36.42 (D): ...And some people have been terribly upset with that cos others love it
462 and others feel ok if I I sort of occasionally bring it up.
463
464 36. 49 (R): (K), and then *(unclear)* and (J), I want to give you a chance

465

466 36. 53 (K): I think that's where I am, because I mean, I've never been in the position
467 yet, to say well I am the priest in charge or the rector, and so, you know...

468

469 37.00 (B) And do you think priests get to do that?

470 (Much laughter)

471

472 37.06 (D): And then you'll be left alone and no assessment!

473 37. 12 (K): Unfortunately, I've been under two people who were able to say " in this
474 parish, we do first and fourth, and only that". (Laughs out loud) During the weekdays,

475 when no one's around, we do two and three and Alternate. And we hope the people

476 don't say anything. But that's been my experience so far. And so that's where my

477 struggle is with writing and not writing and and that's exactly where I'm at. I

478 (...unclear, - other voices making affirming sounds). I have a problem with saying

479 some of the words. I don't.. It's against my.. my own theology, and yet, I have to

480 because.. because I have to. And so maybe this conversation goes out to me, for me,

481 to open up, also... my own, framework, for writing.. liturgy... So that's where I am.

482

483 38.03 (R): Thank you. Um... let me just ask Themba, and then Betty, and then I think

484 we finish

485

486 38.12 (J): I think in in my own journey, I often find that I often find that um... much

487 of the liturgy... I think it's best when it arises from from the community. Where I as

488 the priest, I mean wherever I am, I articulate wherever I think that the community is. I

489 think often the mistake that we make is that we also, we are theologically literate, we

490 like jump 15 years of formation that we've undergone and we want people to

491 understand that. SO I think it's very rich when when we journey through this, and

492 every liturgy is an expression of who we are in relation to health issues and other

493 issues. It becomes very rich. It it certainly has saved me from some pain that I hear

494 others saying, where others will come and say why did you bring such a thing you

495 can't, but it was a brilliant service. So, you know, because of what the community was

496 at that stage.

497

498 39.14 (R): Thanks Themba. Mm. It raises for me the question, again, of the role of the
499 priest. To what extent are you just there to reflect to what extent do you have a
500 prophetic role too? Um.. how, you know, your pastoral and your teaching role, er,
501 and.. Ja.

502

503 39.37: (D): Your relationship with the people.

504 (General ums of agreement.)

505 39.40 (R): yeah. Absolutely. Um (C).

506

507 39.44 (C): Thank you. I know time is short, but I want to say. Um liturgy occurs and
508 is performed and formulated in a point in time. It has history and future. And it's
509 about the theological understanding at that time. And but often our theology is itself
510 stagnant. It it's reworked, and that's part of the Spirit which er we've lived my
511 theology, and so sometimes, our old theologies do not contain, our new thinking.
512 Certainly, the Prayer Book at the moment was produced when we were still debating
513 the ordination of women. And it certainly does not contain that kind of imprint and so,
514 one's got to understand that it's always a dynamic process. Liturgy, our theology, and
515 that's fine. We shouldn't feel that we are controverting our theological beliefs and and
516 hold them as sacrosanct and for all time. Because God is making this journey, and so
517 we, so I don't always think that um theology comes from the top. It's a two-way
518 thing. It's from the bottom as well. You can't stop the Holy Spirit, and and how can
519 we hold those two constantly in tension? Your point about the priest being prophetic
520 is a very important one. And so one's got to find ways in which you, so we
521 understood that the Prayer Book was published in nineteen eighty-nine, and, at that
522 time the ordination of women had not been secured. I understood that, and and it was
523 actually quite an awkward moment in the history of the Anglican Church, because the
524 prayer book was out, we were celebrating it, but here was all this ferment, of the
525 ordination of women. And we in fact raised it with the liturgical committee and said
526 but at this time. So it's about finding that kind of balance, between marching ahead
527 and and erm...

528 42.08 (R) Thank you.

529 42. 11 (C): But in that is the prophetic ministry. Certainly when we are talking about
530 the hospitality about God, as we were reflecting on the other motions earlier. It's
531 about, as we were talking about, Father Vincent, it's about holding the people in your

532 congregation together. So one's got to find a way of holding people together and yet,
533 being prophetic.
534
535 42.45 (G): What about the role of male clergy, though, in terms of shifting the
536 paradigms. Because, for quite some time, we've been sitting with male clergy giving
537 us ...and propagating the liturgy that we have but without bringing in what um (points
538 to (E) he's bringing in, for me...
539 42. 55 I've got too many names
540 *(general laughter)*
541 42.58 (G): Come again?
542 42.59 (E): I've got too many names!
543 43.00 (G): Um I think that it would be such a brilliant thing I don't want to sound
544 sexist and leaving women out, but if they start a new narrative about the issue of
545 sexual and reproductive health into our liturgy, it will be shifting, because if I come in
546 or you come in (looking at another woman priest), we will be told I would not want to
547 talk about Mary because, already, we are pro-Mary and whereas they will be giving a
548 totally different picture er focusing on Jesus Christ being a man.
549 43. 39 (R): um You know I've got just a very very last question, maybe one or two
550 people...
551 43. 41 (B): I'm just concerned they gonna start on the debate...
552 43.47 (R); Can I just put this question in, for thought: So what are we expecting from
553 the new prayer book. And maybe I can just ask, if you've got time, when you send me
554 your questionnaire or just email me,
555 44. 00 (Toni): Ja
556 *(General affirming mms)*
557 44. 04 (R) Because the *Celebrating Sunday* experimental liturgies are out, and they
558 are inviting response and and ... thank you so much for your time.
559 44.18 *(General thank yous and farewells)*
560
561 ***Focus Group meeting ends at 2.32 pm, and people rush to Synod, where some***
562 ***participants are to present a motion on sexual diversity training for clergy.***
563
