

**“Living as a Methodist minister in the late  
Twentieth Century.”**

*Sub-title:* An oral history of Methodist ministers  
ordained between 1980 and 1999, with particular  
reference to clergy serving in the Natal West  
District.

By

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## **Abstract**

Very little has been written on the lives of Methodist ministers in Southern Africa. Even less has been written about ministers using oral history as the primary source of information. This paper will seek to capture the stories of some Methodist ministers and then to reflect on their experiences of ministering in the late twentieth century.

In order to maintain focus this paper will hone in on the clergy who were ordained in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa between 1980 and 1999. A considerable portion of the initial analysis has been taken from personal interviews with the ministers, focusing mainly on what they have encountered in their ministries. Most of the interviewees are currently serving in the Natal West District, however further valuable feedback has been received from ministers living in other communities around Southern Africa. These thoughts and comments were gathered by means of a questionnaire.

This research is further complemented with information gathered by means of a database. This database deals exclusively with all ministers ordained between 1980 and 1999. Making use of simple statistics and comparative figures, a number of results will be reflected upon.

This paper will also examine what impact ministerial training has had on the formation of the ministers, as well as their thoughts on further training. Chapters on the burdens of being in the ministry, the effect of politics on the clergy, understanding the reasons for ministers leaving the church and the impact of clergy moving into other forms of ministry have been included. The negative aspects of ministry have been countered by considering the number of blessings of being called into the ministry. This paper will also reflect on what lessons can be learnt from these clergy in order to leave a legacy for future generations of ministers.

The ultimate aim of this paper is to give voice to the stories of men and women who have been called to serve God, through the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. It is hoped that the readers of this paper will dignify the oral histories of these ministers and will indeed find them challenging, refreshing, insightful and powerful.

## **Acknowledgements**

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Lastly, to my Saviour, Jesus Christ. Thank you for opening the doors for me to study further. I acknowledge that without You I am nothing. Thankfully with You I can do all things.

**Declaration**

I, Delme Connett Linscott, hereby declare that this thesis, unless specified in the text, is my original work. I also declare that I have not submitted this research paper for any other purpose at any other Institution or University.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Delme Connett Linscott

Date

As Supervisor, I agree to the submission of this research paper.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Philippe Denis

Date

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# **1. Introduction - background to the research paper**

## ***1.1 Why this research?***

The idea for this research paper originated from class discussions centering on the discipline of oral history. As I encountered the powerful dynamic of oral history and discovered that we all have our own stories to share, I reflected on my situation as a minister within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. It dawned on me that I have many colleagues who could enrich our understanding of ministry if only their stories were given a voice.

The key research problem for this paper is to analyse how each minister's life experiences (i.e. their oral history) impact upon, and shape, their ministries. I believe that as we take a deeper look at the stories of each minister we will find many areas of pain, struggle, difficulty and celebration, which all seem to come 'part and parcel' with being a minister. My objective is to identify what some of these specific areas are, for the ministers, and how these have affected their ministry. This will be with particular reference to ministers who ordained between 1980 and 1999 and who are now stationed within the Natal West District.<sup>1</sup>

In their argument for the collection of oral stories, Daniel McLaughlin and William Tierney make the following point:

... individual memory must be preserved not simply for some romantic future where people will be able to see how we lived in the late twentieth century, but rather, we collect life histories as a way to document how we live now so that we might change how we live now. Archives are not static hermetically sealed museums; they are active commentaries about our lives.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is divided into nine geographic districts. At present there are two districts in KwaZulu Natal. They are the Natal Coastal District and the Natal West District, which incorporates regions such as Vryheid, Matatiele, Greytown, Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle, Escourt and includes Port Shepstone.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel McLaughlin and William G. Tierney (eds.), *Naming Silenced Lives: personal narratives and processes of educational change*, (New York & London: Routledge, 1993), p.4.

In many ways there is a risk that the stories and experiences of ministers will be forgotten, or somehow misplaced, unless we take the time to hear them. Even a greater danger will be that we do not grant their unique stories the dignity they deserve and consequently trivialise their personal narrative.

I believe this research on the lives of Methodist clergy is needed for a number of reasons: Firstly, the Methodist clergy who were ordained between 1980 and 1999 trained at a number of different academic institutions and I intend to show how their academic and spiritual formation, through these various institutions, prepared them for ministry. Secondly, it will help us to reflect on how much of an impact certain experiences have had on their own faith and their relationship with God and the church. Thirdly, I also believe that through hearing the stories of the clergy we will be able to analyse how situations have affected their own families and the broader communities. Fourthly, it will, I hope, reveal to us why certain clergy feel drawn or 'called' to certain aspects of the ministry. Finally, this paper will also help to pin-point potential 'crisis' areas in ministry and how the clergy can be better prepared to meet these situations.

This paper will not be an attempt to fix or make-right all the wrongs and hurts that have been encountered by the various ministers, but rather to reflect on the various issues that have impacted upon their lives.

### ***1.2 Why Oral History?***

Philippe Denis provides us with foundational insight into oral history when he says 'oral historians collect oral testimonies, transcribe them, and store them with a view to renewing the understanding of the past.'<sup>3</sup> In essence, this is part of my motivation for spending the time and energy interviewing Methodist ministers. They all have a story to tell and these stories reflect on their past experiences. Not only do their personal stories have a context, but as these are spoken out aloud they begin a process of helping the ministers feel that their voices have been heard.

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<sup>3</sup> Philippe Denis, 'Oral history in a wounded country', in J.A. Draper (ed.), *Orality, Literacy and Colonialism in South Africa (Semeia Studies, vol. 46)*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003), p. 205.



Paul Thompson adds to these sentiments in his book *The Voice of the Past*. He concludes, ‘oral history is a history built around people. It thrusts life into history itself and it widens its scope. It allows heroes not just from the leaders, but from the unknown majority of the people... in short, it makes for fuller human beings.’<sup>4</sup> It is precisely because of this dynamic that I have chosen to use the discipline of oral history as the instrumental framework of this research paper. Ministers may be rightly viewed as leaders in some capacity, yet they are often relegated to the unknown silent majority of our society. Oral history gives them a voice – not just of the past, but also of the present and hopefully one that will impact the future.

### ***1.2.1 Critical look at oral history in the context of this paper***

As we will read later in this paper, ministry can be a lonely place for the clergy, yet as their testimonies are heard and recorded they feel that in some way they are not alone and that someone has listened. Gary Okihiro picks up on this thought as he comments that ‘oral history is not only a tool or method for recovering history; it is also a theory of history which maintains that common folk and the dispossessed have a history and that this history must be written.’<sup>5</sup>

In his article, *The Story of our life*, Richard Niebuhr, states that history ‘is not the succession of events which an uninterested spectator can see from the outside *but our own history*’<sup>6</sup> (italics mine). Engaging in an exercise of listening portrays a certain degree of respect and gives dignity to another person’s life-story, but it also gives us insight into our own stories.

In a way oral history allows us a glimpse into the lives of people and provides us with knowledge and insight into how life has been and is being experienced by ordinary people. Denis adds that ‘oral history has the potential to affirm and consolidate identities, individual as well as collective, that have been repressed in the past.’<sup>7</sup> Clergy spend most of their

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<sup>4</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral history (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 23-24.

<sup>5</sup> Gary Okihiro, ‘Oral history and the writing of ethnic history’, in G.K. Dunaway and W.K. Baum (eds.), *Oral History. An interdisciplinary Anthology*, (Walnut Creek, 1996), p. 209.

<sup>6</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, ‘The Story of Our Life’, in Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones (eds.), *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.), p. ?.

<sup>7</sup> Denis, ‘Oral history in a wounded country’, p. 209.

ministry listening to the stories of their congregations and communities and so, in time, they forget that they are caught up in their own story. As we engage in listening to the stories of Methodist ministers we begin to affirm their identities and open up possibilities for healing and understanding.

In *The Biblical understanding of Reconciliation* Wolfram Kistner speaks about a loss of memory or what he also calls 'amnesia.' Although he refers mainly to this 'amnesia' in the context of tragic events, he is clear that 'amnesia inhibits the process of healing.'<sup>8</sup>

Although clergy experience many painful events in their own lives they are very seldom given the opportunity to express this anguish and as a result a cover-up takes place. They pretend that all is well within their lives and slowly amnesia sets in. They 'forget' these painful experiences in order to continue with their ministries, yet their brokenness becomes like a cancer eating away at the core of their souls.

One must remember that in compiling an oral history, the historian or interviewer can not force the oral informant to speak about anything in particular. However, the fact that they are present, to listen and converse, often opens the doors for 'silent memories' to reveal themselves.

I have sought not only to present this paper in the context of oral history, but also on some level in the realm of narrative theology. By its very name, narrative implies 'story', and it is the genuine testimonies of ministers that provide us with an understanding of how these narratives make theological sense. Anthony Balcomb writes, '... put simply, this means that people's experiences form the basis of what they believe and the way they talk about their experiences or tell stories. This enables them to mentally construct the reality of their world and locate themselves and others in it.'<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Wolfram Kistner, 'The Biblical understanding of Reconciliation' in H.R. Botman and R.M. Peterson eds.), *To Remember and to heal*, (Cape Town: Human and Rousseau, 1996), p. 91.

<sup>9</sup> Anthony Balcomb, 'Narrative: exploring an alternative way of doing theology in the new South Africa', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 101 (July 1998), p. 11.

Anthony Balcomb reminds us that ‘we must listen very carefully, and take very seriously, the stories that people tell, especially of their faith, because these stories are true, no matter how unlikely this appears to be.’<sup>10</sup> He carries on to say that ‘stories are the domain of all human beings who want not only to make sense of life but to open up all sorts of possibilities in life.’<sup>11</sup>

David Marcombe points out that the term ‘oral history’ is actually rather misleading as ‘no single source, whether spoken or written, can constitute ‘history’ in the true sense of the word, which by definition, is an amalgamation of evidence rather than a reliance on any single area of information.’<sup>12</sup> Stephen Archer and Nigel Shepley concur with this sentiment when they add that ‘oral evidence is not in itself history, but is simply a part of the raw material which can be used to write history.’<sup>13</sup> On one level I agree with Archer and Shepley – the recording of the stories of a few Methodist ministers does not constitute ‘history’ per se, but it definitely provides us with many wonderful resources, which we can add to our literature on oral history.

Perhaps it would be wise to make a brief distinction before we continue. For the sake of this research paper and for clarity, let us understand that *oral tradition* implies that certain information (stories, myths and so on) have been passed down from generation to generation, spanning many life times. On the other hand oral historians usually gather *oral history* (such as reminiscences, hearsay, testimonies, eyewitness accounts) from their informants, which have occurred during the lifetime of these people.<sup>14</sup>

For me, this paper needed to focus mainly on the discipline of oral history in order to maintain the integrity and core essence of the clergy within the South African Methodist context. Whilst there is some literature on the lives of well-known Methodist ministers of the

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<sup>10</sup> Anthony Balcomb, ‘The Power of Narrative: Constituting Reality through Storytelling’, in Philippe Denis (ed), *Orality, Memory and the Past: Listening to the Voices of Black Clergy under Colonialism and Apartheid* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p. 55.

<sup>11</sup> Balcomb, ‘The power of Narrative’, p.51

<sup>12</sup> David Marcombe, *Sounding Boards: oral testimony and the local historian*, (Oxford: Department of Adult Education, 1995), p.1.

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Archer and Nigel Shepley, *Witnessing History. Looking at oral evidence* (Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes Publishers Ltd, 1988), p. vi.

<sup>14</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral History as Tradition*, (London: James Curry Ltd), p.12

past, very little has been written based on the testimonies of 'ordinary' men and women who labour within the church at present.

I need to make it very clear that my desire is not give the discipline of oral history preeminence over written history or any other form of history. Each has their own unique place in the discipline, especially in the field of 'the history of Christianity.' Marcombe concurs with this when he writes, 'oral testimony is now recognized as a source which can stand alongside more traditional written accounts and complement them in a unique fashion.'<sup>15</sup> In part, I feel that it remains my responsibility to make sure that the unique stories of ministers are given the attention and respect they deserve, hoping that our lives can be enriched by them.

In a very real sense stories create meaning.<sup>16</sup> When we take the time to listen to the life stories of people (i.e. their testimonies) we not only gain an understanding of life from their worldview, but we help them to create meaning through the act of retelling their stories. It is interesting that some scholars believe that 'human beings make sense of life through stories.'<sup>17</sup> Perhaps we will find this to be true as we continue to reflect on the lives of the clergy.

In *African traditional religion and Christian identity* Philippe Denis comments that the Women's Manyanos offer a place of identity for African women. For women who have to face the difficulties of everyday life, these places of regular meetings offer an important place of affirmation and belonging<sup>18</sup>. Certainly one of the interviewees, Rev Cynthia Xaba, would concur with this sentiment. Cynthia remarked 'I do have some people in the congregation, mainly the women, who meet with me a few times a week to pray with me. They do encourage me a lot.'<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> David Marcombe, *Sounding Boards*, p. 56.

<sup>16</sup> Balcomb, 'The power of Narrative', p.49

<sup>17</sup> S. Crites, 'The Narrative equality of experience' in Stanley Hauerwas and G. Jones (eds.), *Why Narrative? Studies in Narrative theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), p.71.

<sup>18</sup> Philippe Denis, 'African traditional religion and Christian identity', *Missionalia* (August 2004), p.178.

<sup>19</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, interviewed by Delme Linscott on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2006 in Wembezi, Escourt.

On one level I hope that in the writing of this paper many people will identify with the stories of these ministers. As Robert McAfee Brown points out, somehow when we hear the stories of others we respond by saying ‘That’s my story too!’<sup>20</sup> As we learn from the stories of the Methodist clergy in Southern Africa, may these narratives resonate with some of our own experiences.

### ***1.2.2 The dangers in collecting this particular oral history***

In his work, *The voice of the past*, Paul Thompson asks the question ‘how reliable is the evidence of oral history?’<sup>21</sup> In his insightful chapter entitled ‘Evidence’, Thompson argues that although ‘oral recording provides the most accurate document’<sup>22</sup> there is a real danger that the memory or recollection process of the interviewee may be subject to a number of distortions.<sup>23</sup>

When we speak of distortions we speak of the manner in which the interviewee remembers events from their story. The process of recollection may not be entirely objective and may be guarded on some level. It could also be mellowed by time or altered by a change in values or norms since the time of the incident. These distortions, whilst not necessarily negative, may slant the oral evidence in a particular fashion. I have sought to be aware of these potential distortions, amongst others, whilst sifting through the transcriptions. Each minister interviewed has spoken from their own experiences and I have endeavoured to use this evidence in as reliable a fashion as possible.

We now move on to a different danger of collecting oral history. When one spends time speaking with and listening to any person, there has to be an element of trust involved. This is especially true when one seeks to listen to ‘stories’ from clergy, because invariably ministers are very reluctant to trust other people with their own feelings and experiences. As I have conducted these personal interviews I have been very aware of the enormous privilege

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<sup>20</sup> Robert McAfee Brown, ‘My Story and “The Story”’, in *Theology Today*, vol.32 (1975-1976), p.166.

<sup>21</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral history*, p. 118.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral history*, p. 119.

<sup>23</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral history*, p. 129.

I have had of hearing the accounts of joy, pain and trial in the lives of the ministers. It is because of this that I have sought to place a high value on the dignity of each person and to respect the comments they have made.

I have followed the correct protocol, as set out by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in terms of respecting the dignity of each interviewee. I acquired 'Informed Consent'<sup>24</sup> forms and 'Release Agreements'<sup>25</sup>, which have been willingly signed by each interviewee. Furthermore, I have also endeavoured to send each minister a copy of the transcript before I have finalised the paper. This has allowed them time to scrutinize the comments and reflections I have made, based on the interviews. If in anyway, they have felt uncomfortable with the views expressed, we have worked on a changed version of their thoughts. In this way, I have been satisfied with the final version and they have felt that no harm has come to their reputation and character.

Jan Vansina writes, 'the pool of information kept in memory and its relatively free flow means that we cannot assume that the testimony of two different informants from the same community or even society is really independent.'<sup>26</sup> Whilst he makes a good point, I must argue that this is not entirely true for these particular interviews. Firstly, I have based this paper on the interviews of nine ministers and not just two or three. Secondly, the central comments made by these nine clergy are substantiated by a further seventeen ministers who replied to the written questionnaire. Thirdly, although these ministers primarily reside in the Natal West District at present, they have not always done so and so one can not assume that they all live in the same geographic community. In fact, they come from a kaleidoscope of backgrounds and cultures. Fourthly, they have not all studied at the same theological institutions and so there is an element of dependence resulting from their formation for the ministry. In fact, the only thing these people have in common is that they were ordained as ministers within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, between the years 1980 and 1999.

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<sup>24</sup> 'Informed Consent' forms are signed by the interviewee acknowledging that they are aware of the nature of the research paper and that they are not forced to divulge any information that they deem to be private.

<sup>25</sup> These forms are a detailed agreement between the interviewer and interviewee stating the terms of the interview and how the material is to be utilized and stored. The interviewee has the right to stipulate the extent to which the interview can be used for the research paper.

<sup>26</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, p.159.

Consequently, I conclude that all of these factors combine to provide us with an independent window of insight into the lives of Methodist ministers in Southern Africa. However, despite this independence there is a clear thread that unites these men and women and we can learn from their collective stories.

### *1.3 Why the Methodist Church per se?*

The reasons for narrowing my research to reflect only on the lives of Methodist ministers are threefold. Firstly, I am a student minister (an ordinand) currently undergoing training within the Methodist Church and so being 'in the system' I am aware of what our present training entails and from where our training has come. Secondly, I have begun to build relationships with certain of the Methodist clergy in our Connexion<sup>27</sup> and it seemed obvious to hear the stories from the people whom I have encountered and who are currently laboring in our church. Thirdly, broadening this research to include other clergy from other denominations would have been interesting, but would have stretched out this paper into other avenues. For the sake of focus and clear direction I have kept my research focused on ministers within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

McLaughlin and Tierney comment that 'personal histories ... focus on the individual, revealing how past experiences, circumstances, and significant events may be related to the perspectives teachers bring to a classroom...'<sup>28</sup>. I am of the opinion that the same process takes place in the lives of ministers, as it does in that of the teachers referred to by McLaughlin and Tierney. What we experience, through both positive and negative events, shapes the way we understand ministry and ultimately impacts on the way we 'do' ministry. As we will soon discover, many clergy within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) are who they are today, because of the influence of their past experiences. In order for us to earnestly listen to their stories we need to assess how these various encounters impacted upon their lives and ultimately shaped them.

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<sup>27</sup> The term 'Connexion' is commonly used in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to refer to the vast regions covered by the Church. It incorporates South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique. The unusual spelling of the word 'Connexion' adds to the uniqueness of the Methodist people of Southern Africa.

<sup>28</sup> McLaughlin and Tierney, *Naming Silenced Lives*, p. 52.

### *1.3.1 On being an Insider*

There are inherent dangers in conducting interviews with people and one of these is that of a hidden agenda from the interviewer. By this I mean that the interviewer has some preconceived idea of what they want to write and then proceeds to twist the words and thoughts of the clergy interviewed, in order to support their own arguments. I have tried my utmost to remain as an observer and listener and then to write out of what I have heard. Whilst this has been my goal, it is obvious that I am also an 'insider', being a minister myself, and hence I will write with a degree of insight, on one level, yet I may also write with a lack of critical distance. I am aware of the potential danger in this and have consequently sought to avoid superimposing my own value judgements upon the stories shared by my colleagues.

As has already been mentioned being an insider does have both its pros and cons. For the context of this paper, and the sensitive nature of the content, I strongly feel that being an insider has been an advantage to my style of writing. As I have reflected on the sentiments of the ministers and then tried to draw elements from these personal stories I have constantly asked myself, 'would I be satisfied if these thoughts were attributed to me?' In asking this question, as an insider, I believe I have used a certain amount of discretion and integrity in trying to convey the essence of what has been said, but without the risk of harming a colleague. While I could not fairly argue that an outsider would not be sensitive, I do feel that when a person writes about 'one of their own', greater care is taken to protect the other.

The obvious negative aspect of being an insider for this paper would have to be the potential for me not to be objective and to exclude a degree of criticality in my writing. The mere fact that I have acknowledged this as a possible stumbling block has definitely affected my critical thinking throughout the compiling of the paper and allowed me the opportunity to take a step back and reflect with neutral eyes. While this could never be as effective as being a genuine outsider, I trust that it has contributed to a certain balance in the overall style of writing.



#### *1.4 Why the particular dates (1980 -1999)?*

The last twenty years of the twentieth century, 1980 – 1999, marked a plethora of changes, paradigm shifts and dynamics that impacted upon both the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) and the nation, during these years. The year 1980 became an important date in the context of this paper as it was the year that the Federal Theological Seminary moved into its premises at Imbali, in Pietermaritzburg. Something similar could be said of 1999 as it marked the year that Nelson Mandela's reign as the President of South Africa came to an end and that we entered into a new Millennium.

The early 1980's marked an increase in the outspokenness of the Methodist Church (MCSA) against apartheid. During the Church conference held in Johannesburg, in July 1981, eight hundred Methodist people adopted a document which became known as Ordinance '81. Not only did this document call on all people to reject apartheid, but it also spoke about the role the Methodist Church should play in transforming South Africa. The following is a quote from Ordinance '81:

God commands His church to be a pattern of His way of Love, proclaiming salvation, demonstrating unity, expressing acceptance of one another in and beyond our own cultural and racial group. This church, from its local congregation level, is to be an undivided community practising deep and costly reconciliation. The whole church is to proclaim and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ with clarity and conviction, to offer caring ministries, which can recognize and heal the pain of His suffering people.<sup>29</sup>

As far as academic training was concerned, this time period in our church's history witnessed a number of dynamic changes. If one analyses the theological training of Methodist ministers during these twenty years, one can see that training took place, in the main, at the following five institutions: the University of Rhodes, the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern

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<sup>29</sup> [www.methodistchurch.org.za](http://www.methodistchurch.org.za) 13 August 2006

Africa (Fedsem), the University of Southern Africa (UNISA), John Wesley College (Kilnerton) and the Theological Education by Extension College (TEEC).

Historically most white Methodist ministers did their academic training at Rhodes University or else at the University of Southern Africa (UNISA). Conversely, a large number of African, Coloured and Indian ministers studied mostly at John Wesley College, in Imbali and at Kilnerton. One must note that this is a broad generalization, as there were a number of exceptions in all of these institutions.

Despite what was taking place politically and within the Methodist Church, Rhodes University remained a constant provider of theological education to Ministers from the Methodist Church. In contrast, John Wesley College, underwent vast changes over these twenty years. From its' initial venue of Fort Hare, the College then moved to Imbali in Pietermaritzburg, where it joined up with other mainline Churches to form the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa (Fedsem).

After initial success and a harmonious ecumenical relationship a number of events transpired which led to the demise of the Seminary. Denis points out that Fedsem began to face ever increasing competition from other academic institutions as previously disadvantaged students were being given access to study at previously 'white' universities.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately it has been intimated that another reason for the seminary's closure may have been due to the Methodist Church's seeming desire to dominate and control Fedsem. My initial reaction to this is one of disbelief, yet as Denis points out in his article *Fedsem Ten years later*<sup>31</sup>, Methodists were moving into most of the positions of power in the Seminary and so it is easy to see why this may have seemed to have been the case.

Sadly Fedsem finally closed its' doors in 1992. The Methodist Church's training college for ministers, John Wesley College, then moved to its' new home at the historical site of Kilnerton in Pretoria. As of this year, 2006, John Wesley College is still currently in Kilnerton, although there has been talk of moving it back down to Pietermaritzburg. The

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<sup>30</sup> Philippe Denis, 'Fedsem Ten years later: the unwritten history of an Ecumenical Seminary', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 117(November 2003), p. 77

<sup>31</sup> Philippe Denis, 'Fedsem Ten years later' p. 76.

irony of this move, if and when it takes place, is that John Wesley College will again be part of an ecumenical set-up, this time under the umbrella of the University of KwaZulu Natal's Theological Cluster Programme.

On the political front, this period, 1980 to 1999 encompasses many key moments in our democratic history, including the launch of the *Sunday Post*'s nationwide 'Release Mandela' campaign, which resulted in about 15 million people signing the petition. This was the starting point in the eventual release of Nelson Mandela in 1990.<sup>32</sup> There were other key events, such as South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 and the appointing of our first black President. Even with the much publicised violence and unrest that marked the early years of this period, the church and her ministers were being trained to be "bearers of the Good News". In particular, 1980 saw many student protests all over South Africa, with thousands of students, lecturers and public leaders being detained. On the 7<sup>th</sup> August 1980, a delegation of the South African Council of Churches met the Prime Minister and other government leaders, following calls by churchmen for urgent discussions on the causes of unrest in the country.<sup>33</sup> All these events undoubtedly conspired to form and shape the lives and further ministry of these clergy.

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<sup>32</sup> Readers Digest, *Illustrated history of Southern Africa: The real story (expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> edition)*, (Cape Town, The Readers Digest Association Limited, 1994), p. 442.

<sup>33</sup> Readers Digest, *Illustrated history of Southern Africa: The real story*, pp. 443 & 537.

## **2. Overview of the methodology**

### ***2.1 Sketch of the ministers interviewed and of those who responded to the questionnaire.***

In terms of the ministers interviewed in person, I limited these to ministers who are currently stationed within the Natal West District, with the exception of Rev Themba Mntambo. This was done for practical reasons considering the vast geographic distances that the Methodist Church covers. The ministers who were interviewed reside in many far-flung regions of the Natal West District including Greytown, Escourt, Vryheid, Camperdown and Pietermaritzburg.

Rev Mntambo is currently part of the Western Cape district and is living in Cape Town. Whilst on our ordination retreat I had an opportunity to interview Themba Mntambo in person and decided not to let the opportunity pass by. Despite Rev Mntambo not being in this district at present, he did study in this district when he was at Fedsem. We were also colleagues together at the Bryanston Methodist Church, in Gauteng. For many years I served as a Youth Pastor under his leadership.

A special note must also be made concerning Rev Dennis De Lange. When I first interviewed him he was the Superintendent minister in the Umvoti Circuit and based at the Greytown Methodist Church. He has since moved to the Eastern Cape where he is serving in the Bathurst and Port Alfred circuits.

### ***2.2 Sampling methods.***

At present the Methodist Church has approximately 840 ministers in the Connexion. This number includes ministers who are in training, which account for almost 20% of the total figure. The number of ministers serving in the Natal West District, as of 2006, is sixty-two, ten of which are probationers (student ministers). There are a number of supernumerary ministers serving in the District at present, although their numbers are recorded separately.

There are presently thirty-four supernumerary ministers in the Natal West District. Thus one can work out that by interviewing eight clergy from this district (excluding Rev. Mntambo), I have narrowed my focus unto 13 % of the active ministers.

The group of interviewees provides a good balance in terms of their cultural diversity and is a fair representation of the ministers in this district, and also of the whole Connexion. For the record, they include four black ministers, four white ministers, and one Indian minister. Of this sample group of nine ministers, two of them are women ministers. At present the Natal West District comprises an almost equal ratio of white: black ministers. It currently has two Indian ministers and four women ministers within the region. Thus the sample group of interviewees is arguably accurate and balanced, considering that this research is focused on the Natal West District. If one views these results in conjunction with the Connexion, as a whole, then one could argue that the results may be slightly skewed in favour of white, male ministers.

When it came to sending out questionnaires to various ministers around the country, I took a sample of thirty-five ministers, who fall into the 1980 to 1999 time frame, and sent them each a written questionnaire. This sample works out to be roughly 5% of the ministers ordained in this time period. Again my aim was to choose ministers from across the race and gender spectrum as well as ministers who are currently serving in every district in our Methodist Connexion. There are nine districts at present in the Methodist Church of South Africa.

The questionnaire contains very similar questions to the ones used in the personal interviews that I conducted. I was seeking the individual returns to be anonymous, so that ministers could feel comfortable to speak their minds and to be brutally honest. However, in the covering letter that I sent out to them I failed to make this absolutely clear and so a few ministers wrote their names on the returns. In the actual research paper I have labeled each returned questionnaire with a number (i.e. Q. 5) and when a respondent's name is not on the form (and therefore will remain anonymous), their text will be referred to simply as a coded number.

Of the original sample group, I received seventeen forms back from the clergy, of which sadly a large number were only from white ministers. Of the sample group I sent questionnaires and self-addressed envelopes to ministers in an equal proportion to the racial breakdown of our Connexion. I was hoping for a broader base of ministers to respond to the questionnaire, and was a little disappointed that few black clergy responded. However, I still feel that the responses I received and their various comments are helpful in adding support to the thoughts of the ministers interviewed in person.

In hindsight I realise that this research paper may reflect a skewed history of Methodist ministers, leaning more towards the experiences of white clergy in comparison with that of other races within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. This paper would be further enhanced by the oral histories of more black and coloured ministers, as well as their honest responses via questionnaire. Regarding the questionnaires, this was not for lack of trying on my behalf, although given more time I am sure I could have eventually managed to convince these ministers of the value of their feedback.

### 2.3 *Looking at who these ministers are, where they are from, where they are now ministering.*

I do not want to abuse the privilege I have enjoyed of spending time with the ministers and hearing their personal stories. So in order to respect their dignity and yet also to provide a brief insight into their lives I have chosen to do the following. I have simply recorded their names below, with their current station and the year they were ordained. These names are in alphabetical order based on the surname of the ministers.

- Rev Brian Burger, South Midlands Circuit, 1995.
- Rev Cathy De Boer, Umvoti Circuit, 1994.
- Rev Dennis De Lange, Umvoti (now Bathurst Circuit), 1983.
- Rev Vuyo Dlamini, (Vryheid Circuit), 1998.
- Rev Simanga Kumalo, (Secoded to UKZN), 1998.

- Rev Themba Mntambo, (Table Bay), 1986.
- Rev David Moodley, (PMB Metro), 1994.
- Rev Michael Stone, (PMB Metro), 1990.
- Rev Cynthia Xaba (Umtshezi Circuit), 1990.

#### 2.4 *Maintaining a critical distance.*

I am implicitly aware of inherent dangers of the interview process and I have already mentioned a few of these potential dangers. As Jan Vansina points out, 'if no social relationship can be established... the information given will be minimal, often inaccurate, and usually perceived as extorted under duress...'<sup>34</sup> While I agree with this sentiment, I would argue that in the case of the interviews I have conducted, there has been a definite prior relationship between myself and the interviewees. On a basic level we are all colleagues within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and, besides Rev. Themba Mntambo, we are all colleagues within the Natal West District.

Further more, I have further relationship ties with a number of the interviewees in that we have begun to develop a form of friendship over the past few years. Although I do not know them as intimately as I would a family member, there is definitely a relationship of trust between myself, as the interviewer and themselves, as the interviewees. This moves onto another level, where I would do all I can to ensure their 'protection' during the writing of this paper. It would never be my intention to harm any of my fellow clergy and hence I have allowed each one of them to read through this paper in order that they are satisfied with what has been attributed to them.

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<sup>34</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, p.62.

## 2.5 *Discourse analysis of transcribed interviews.*

My initial analysis of these interviews focused on what Paul Thompson refers to as ‘a collection of stories.’<sup>35</sup> After transcribing each interview I began to look for common themes<sup>36</sup> and stories that emerged from the group of interviews and questionnaires. Initially this was not too difficult as the questions I had asked provided a solid base from which to work. However, I found that as I deciphered thoughts and feelings that lay beneath the surface of the interviews, I needed to find the appropriate settings for these to be heard.

Thompson reflects on analysing narratives as follows: ‘They force the reader to slow down and look closely at both the whole text and its details, its images, forms of language, themes, its manifest and latent meanings. Ultimately, perhaps the greatest strength of narrative analysis... is to encourage an acuter and more sensitive listening.’<sup>37</sup> As I sought to listen to the interviewees with greater sensitivity I began to pick up on recurring key phrases and words which enriched my understanding of the content. This included words such as mentors, training, burnout, stress, family, colleagues, and politics.

Broadly speaking, the interviewees were not aggressive towards the Methodist Church per se, nor were they overtly trying to blame the church for every negative experience they had encountered. However, I did detect an overwhelming sense of disillusionment and frustration at certain aspects of ministry within the Methodist Church. I endeavoured to critically capture these emotions and to analyse them in the light of the general opinion of their colleagues.

I have already alluded to the fact that I am an insider in the context of this research paper. Whilst my awareness of this enabled me to maintain some critical distance, I inevitably ended up reviewing the stories of the clergy with a certain amount of emotion. Often I found myself silently echoing the thoughts of the ministers and thus I struggled to transcribe their

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<sup>35</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, p. 270.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Thompson writes that ‘when a project involves a group of interviews it is possible, on the basis of comparison and contrasting differences, to create a range of types or models of life-story.’ (p.285)

<sup>37</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, p. 286.



unique stories without including some of my own story. Writing this paper from purely an intellectual and distant standpoint was nigh impossible. Thus, the overall analysis is a intertwining of emotive reflection, intellectual ambivalence and personal appreciation.

## 2.6 *Reliability of interviews.*

Dana Jack understands the difficulties involved in any interview process. She comments, ‘the first, and the hardest, step of interviewing was to learn to listen in a new way, to hold in abeyance the theories that told me what to hear and how to interpret what these women had to say.’<sup>38</sup>

I have given each minister the chance to veto anything that has been written in this paper, especially if they may have felt uncomfortable with comments attributed to them. I did this by sending each interviewee a copy of my text and allowed them the opportunity to read through it objectively and then to give me their final approval. On the whole this worked well with the ministers being content with the comments attributed to them. In a few instances I needed to keep the ministers’ names anonymous for their protection.

In terms of the interview process I discovered many wonderful insights from Mary Loudon’s work *Revelations: The Clergy Questioned*. Although her goal in these interviews was very different from my own, her thoughts provided me with greater understanding of the dynamic of interviewing clergy. ‘As for the truth, I believe that the people I interviewed told me the truth about themselves as they saw it... where affairs of the heart and mind are concerned, truth is a matter of perspective.’<sup>39</sup> This was also my experience.

However, I also agree with Loudon on the point that questions used in an interview are actually the least important part of the process. ‘If people want to tell you something, they will. If they don’t, they won’t.’<sup>40</sup> Ministers may feel guarded and speak in generalized ways,

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<sup>38</sup> Dana Jack & Katherine Anderson, ‘Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses’, in Sherna Gluck & Daphne Patai (eds.), *Women’s Words: the Feminist Practice of Oral History*, (New York: Routledge, 1991), p.18.

<sup>39</sup> Mary Loudon, *Revelations: The Clergy Questioned*, (London: Penguin Group, 1994), p. xxviii.

<sup>40</sup> Mary Loudon, *Revelations: The Clergy Questioned*, p. xxix.

however sometimes they begin to open up and as the interviewer one needs to allow them to speak freely. And so, because of this a certain part of your interview has to be unstructured and spontaneous.

For this section, I will let Daniel McLaughlin and William Tierney have the final say: ‘The creators of personal narratives may, in fact, be collecting the multiple random points whose variability masks underlying patterns of human behaviour and belief... a search for regularity and explanations in social science research... involves a search for basic principles that generate larger social systems and subsystems.’<sup>41</sup>

## 2.7 *Literature survey of related works.*

Writers are often inspired by the work of other scholars and the world around them. Consequently no one writes in a vacuum, as we are influenced by our own experiences, literature, scripture, history and the lives of other people. In order to deepen the integrity of this paper I have conducted a literature survey on this research topic, with particular reference to the Methodist Church. As far as I am aware nothing of a similar vein has been written on this aspect of the Methodist Church and the lives of Methodist ministers. There have been a number of significant works that have touched on various aspects of the Methodist Church and her ministers, but not to the same degree as this paper.

Methodist ministers and scholars have written on a variety of topics, with very few having some connection with this paper. For his PhD thesis in 1977, Rev Simon Gqubule wrote the following paper: *An Examination of the theological education of Africans in the Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and Anglican Churches in South Africa: 1860 – 1960*. Although of some interest and deeply challenging, this paper falls outside our time frame for this research. Constance Oosthuizen reflected on the lives of the deaconesses in the Methodist Church in her work, *Conquerors through Christ: The Methodist Deaconess in South Africa*. As this was written in 1990 it provides some useful insight into the struggle of being a woman in ministry, albeit as a deaconess.

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<sup>41</sup> Daniel McLaughlin & William Tierney (eds.), *Naming Silenced Lives*, p.24.

Darryl Balia, writing as a Methodist minister in the late 1980's and early 1990's, contributed many challenging books and articles on the involvement of the Methodist Church in issues of politics. In 1989 he wrote *Christian Resistance to Apartheid: Ecumenism in South Africa 1960 – 1987* and in 1991 he wrote *Black Methodists and white supremacy in South Africa*. These works contribute towards the chapters which focus on the impact of state politics in the church and the role of church politics.

Rev Ockert van Niekerk wrote on the dynamic of Methodist ministers who had been through a divorce and how this had impacted upon their lives. His work, *a critical examination of the policy and practice of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa regarding the readmission of ministers who have resigned or who have been discontinued as a result of divorce*, was submitted to Rhodes University as part of his Masters paper in 1998. In his 2002 Masters dissertation Rev Philip Sharpe wrote extensively on *Stress and Burnout in the Methodist ministry*. His focus was on particular aspects of ministry and the tragic consequences of ministers living under stress or dealing with burnout.

There have been other authors and scholars who have written from a non-Methodist point of view. They have greatly contributed to the overall theme of this research paper. Philippe Denis, Thulani Mlotshwa, George Mukuka, edited *The Casspir and the Cross: Voices of Black Clergy in the Natal Midlands*. This work gave valuable vocal support to the voices of the Methodist ministers I interviewed. In fact, there were a number of black Methodists who made significant contributions to *The Casspir and the Cross* and their thoughts are widely quoted in this publication.

Peter Russell-Boulton adds another aspect to this paper with his Masters thesis entitled: *A survey of the formation of theological students with reference to ecumenical, multi-cultural and gender issues*. This recent publication offered some insightful background reading into my topic.

It must also be noted that a very significant book has been written drawing our attention to issues facing the American clergy. In their book, *Pastors in Transition: Why clergy leave the local church ministry*, Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger reveal many insightful reasons why ministers from the mainline denominations leave the ministry. Included in these churches were the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Lutheran Church. Although their book is written from an American perspective it contains many points of reference and similarities with my findings.

In a sense this research paper, *Living as a Methodist minister*, will be breaking new ground. It is my hope that in the end this paper could be used by the Methodist Church to help our clergy and perhaps to improve our ministry within the Southern African context.

### **3. Reflecting on the database**

For us to gain a deeper understanding of the clergy ordained between 1980 and 1999, we need to have some idea of the number of ministers involved and how their studies and further ministries transpired. In order to achieve this goal successfully I have put together a database which provides us with a brief overview of the ministers who were ordained between 1980 and 1999 (this can be viewed in the appendices). There are 640 ministers who were ordained by the Methodist Church in these twenty years. The database contains the following information: the name and initials of every minister ordained, the date of their ordination, what academic institution they studied at (if known) and what has happened to them since their ordination.

At a glance one notices that a large percentage of these clergy are still in ministry, as of 2006. However, many ministers have either resigned, retired, relocated, died or been seconded to other ministries. Most of this information has been gathered from the Methodist Churches *Minutes of Conference*, the annual *Methodist Church Yearbook* and the *Methodist Church Directory*<sup>42</sup>. I have consulted every one of these books, from every year, starting from 1978 and ending at the current edition.

In preparing this chapter I soon became aware that I could reflect on the database in much greater depth than I have, but I felt that this would take me beyond the scope and purpose of this paper. Consequently, I have not divided this data into sub-periods or the like and so there may be a slight over simplification in some figures. This will certainly be true in the case of some statistics involving ministerial studies. For example, Fedsem's figures will only reflect ministers who trained at the institution up until 1993, thus making the overall time period thirteen years instead of twenty.

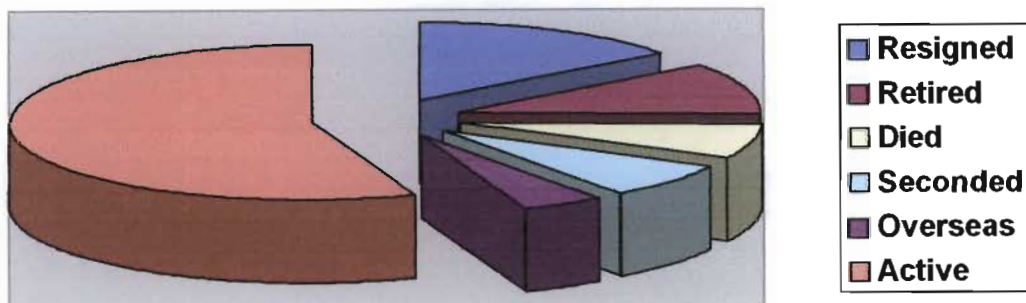
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<sup>42</sup> The *Methodist Church Yearbook* and *Church Directory* are given to every minister in the church. The same applies to the older *Minutes of Conference*. In order to access older copies of these resources I visited the Methodist Connexion Office in Durban, as well as borrowing copies from ministers from this time period. There are a few copies in the main University Library on the Pietermaritzburg campus.

Although I have endeavoured to compile this database as accurately as possible there will inevitably be a few errors, as some records are unclear. I apologise in advance for this. However, these minor errors should not distract us from the overall picture which emerges from this group of ministers. I would also like to note that I was graciously assisted in compiling this database by the Reverends Peter Grassow, Charmaine Morgan, and James Massey and by the staff at the Methodist Connexional Office. They have all given of their precious time to help me fill in valuable pieces of missing information.

### 3.1 *What has happened to the ministers?*

This is a brief look at the numbers of ministers who were trained in this period, those who have resigned, retired, died, been seconded or subsequently left to go overseas. I have chosen to use graphic representation to highlight some key findings.



<i>Where are the ministers now?</i>	<i>Numbers</i>
<b>Resigned</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Retired<sup>43</sup></b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Died</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Seconded</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Overseas</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Active</b>	<b>376</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>

**Please note:**

**Resigned** refers to the number of resignations over the 20 years<sup>44</sup>.

**Retired** indicates those ministers who retired or who are now supernumeraries.

**Died** refers to those clergy who passed away in this 20 year period or who have subsequently died (up until 2006).

**Seconded** refers to ministers who are either seconded to outside organizations, set aside for specific functions by the church or who are serving as chaplains to various institutions.

**Overseas** indicates clergy who are overseas (beyond Connexion), either serving in Methodist churches or who have transferred into other churches.

**Active** indicates the ministers who are still serving in the MCSA.<sup>45</sup>

A brief glance at the above diagram will show that 59% of the ministers trained in these two decades are still active in congregational ministry within the MCSA.

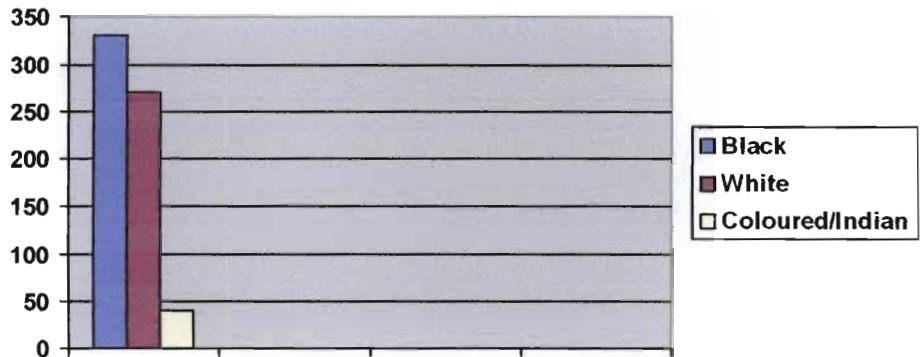
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<sup>43</sup> A small number of the retired ministers, who died, are recorded in both this figure and that of the number of deaths.

<sup>44</sup> Please note that this figure does not take into account any ministers who may have resigned from the Methodist Church and then continued to minister in another Church denomination in South Africa. It must also be noted that this figure also includes a few ministers who resigned from the MCSA at a certain time, but then returned to the Methodist Church at a later stage and were reinstated as ordained ministers.

<sup>45</sup> This includes a small number of ministers who have gone back into the ministry after initially retiring.

***3.2 Cross section of racial background of ministers.***



***Estimated breakdown of race groups ordained in 20 years period:***

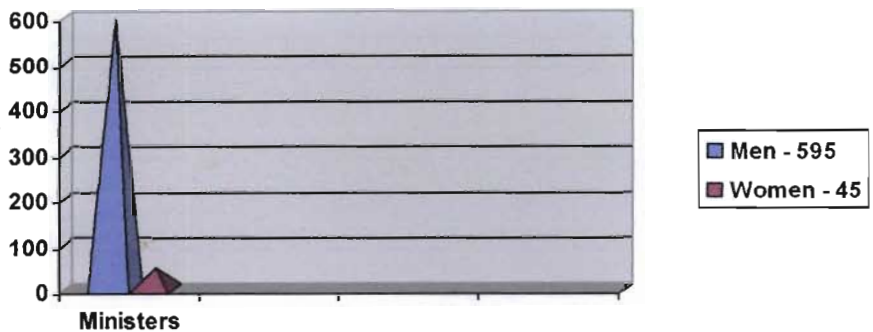
**Black – 330**

**Coloured/ Indian – 40**

**White – 270**

***3.3 Ratio of women to men ministers***

When we analyse the ratio of women to men ordained over this twenty year period we can see a startling contrast. Forty-five women ordained over the twenty years compared with 595 men during the same period. This is not a surprising statistic considering the history surrounding women in the ordained ministry. If one were to review figures during the 1990's compared with the 1980's it would be apparent that more women were ordained in the latter decade. If one compared these statistics with the figures over the past six years (since the start of the new century) one would see an even more significant percentage increase in the number of ordained women. Below is a graphic representation of the ratio of women ordained compared with the number of men.





### **3.4 Those who are now in leadership positions in the church.**

Of the group of ministers ordained between 1980 and 1999, the following are now serving in key leadership positions in our Church and in one of the nine districts.

- i. I. Abrahams (1982) – Presiding Bishop
- ii. V. Nyobole (1981) – Executive Secretary
- iii. G. Vika (1986) – Director of the Mission Unit
- iv. A. Hefkie (1984) – Bishop of Cape of Good Hope
- v. Z. Siwa (1991) – Bishop of Grahamstown
- vi. M. Noqayi (1993) – Bishop of Queenstown
- vii. J. Mdaka (1990) – Bishop of Kimberley, Namibia, Bloemfontein
- viii. P. Malinga (1988) – Bishop of Natal Coastal
- ix. D. Nzimande (1985) – Bishop of Natal West
- x. H. Mahlalela (1988) – Bishop of Mozambique
- xi. A. Mnaba (1980) – Bishop of Clarkebury

It is also interesting to note that Rev Mvume Dandala (1990) is now serving as the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). He is the predecessor of the current Presiding Bishop.

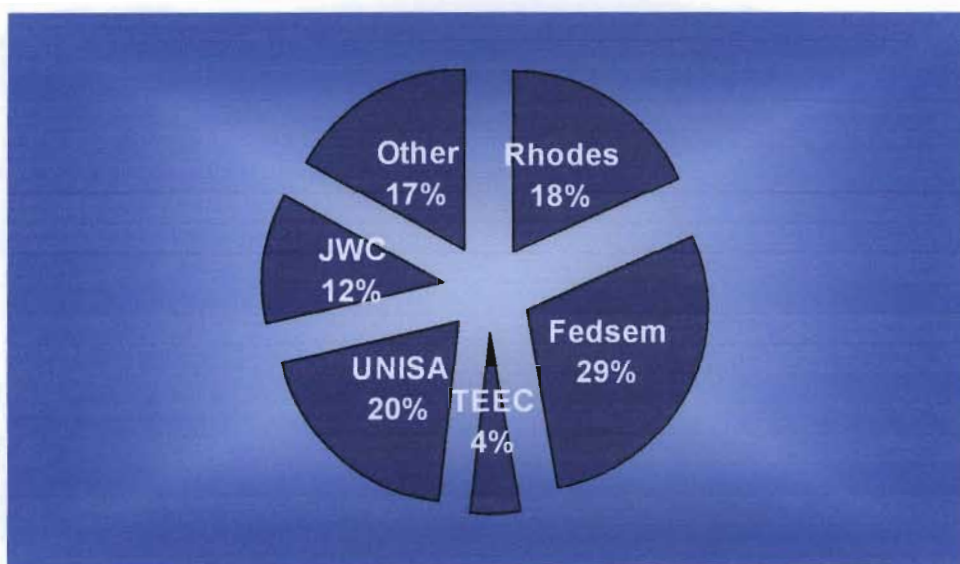
Only three of the present Bishops were ordained before 1980. They are:

- i. K. Meaker (1971) – Bishop of Highveld and Swaziland
- ii. P. Verryn (1978) – Bishop of Central
- iii. G. Taylor (1977) – Bishop of Limpopo

A further three ministers, ordained in the 1990's, are currently serving at the Education for Mission and Ministry Unit (EMMU), based at Kilnerton. They are Reverends Dion Forster, Madika Sibeko and Ruth Jonas. They are responsible for the training of the future ministers of the Methodist Church.

A very casual glance at these figures will quickly point out that the ministers who were ordained between 1980 and 1999 are now proving to be some of the instrumental leaders of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa. The success or failure of these leaders can only be evaluated over the next generation, but certainly the future decisions of the MCSA lie in the hands of this core group of clergy.

**3.5 Analysis of the various institutions where the ministers trained.**



***Actual breakdown of figures:***

<i>Academic institution</i>	<i>Numbers</i>
<b>Fedsem</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>JWC (Kilnerton)</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Rhodes</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>TEEC</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>UNISA</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>

Please note that the figure for Fedsem technically refers to the ministers who trained between 1980 and 1993, as Fedsem closed during that year. Similarly, the figure for John Wesley College (Kilnerton) would refer to ministers who studied between 1994 and 1999.

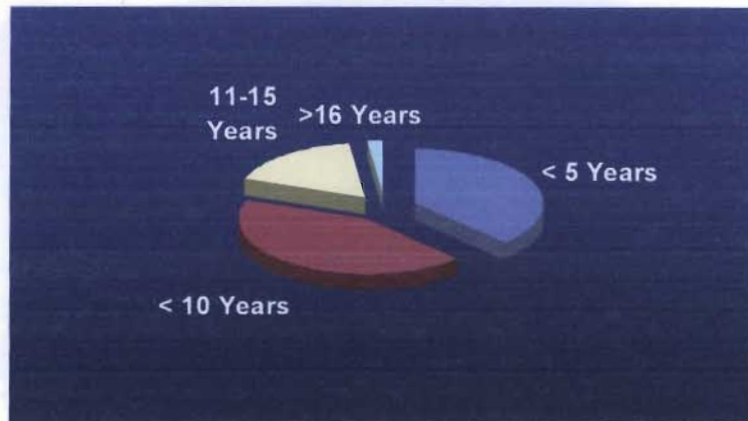
There are 109 ministers grouped under the heading of 'other'. This figure is made up of ministers who studied at an assortment of institutions, including: St. Benedicts, Ricatla, some overseas institutions, UNITRA, Universities of Durban Westville, Natal - Pietermaritzburg, Cape Town, Potchestroom, Free State, Western Cape and Fort Hare. There are also a few ministers for whom we can not trace their academic records.

### **3.6 Identifying if there is some correlation between the date of ordination and resignation.**

The question is worth asking: 'is there some kind of trend correlating the lapse in time between ordination and resignation?' If one analyses the information from the database one will notice that close on ninety-eight ministers have resigned since their ordination (1980 – 1999). Carefully working out the time span between the events of ordination and resignation, shows us the following interesting statistics:

- Thirty-seven of the ministers resigned within five full years of service. That works out to be a figure of 38 %.
- A further forty-two ministers resigned before completing ten full years of service. That is a further 43 %.
- Seventeen ministers resigned between ten and fifteen years of ministry, with two ministers resigning after fifteen years of service.
- Overall, seventy-nine ministers (of the ninety-eight) had left within ten years. That is a final figure of 81 %.
- Thirteen ministers who resigned from the MCSA re-entered the ministry again at a later stage.

The above results are graphically represented as follows:



A further analysis of these figures will indicate that white ministers made up the majority of resignations. In all, about sixty-five, out of the ninety-eight resignations recorded, were of white ministers. Although a few returned into ministry at a later stage, this is still a telling statistic. We will take a closer look at the issue of resignation in chapter seven.

It is not within the parameters of this research paper to comment in too much detail about these particular statistics, but they should prove interesting to those concerned with the ministerial training and formation of clergy. It could raise all kinds of pertinent questions, especially regarding the cost to train ministers who then leave the ministry early on. The Methodist Church is surely not gaining full advantage of the services of these ministers. It could also point to a clear pattern of crisis occurring in the lives of these ministers soon after their ordination.

## **4. The impact of Ministerial training**

### ***4.1 The historical set up of the Methodist Church's training***

Ministerial training within the Methodist Church has indeed been a very complex issue. This is especially true of our time period under discussion, namely, during the 1980's and 1990's. Historically white ministers were trained at different institutions from their non-white colleagues, with the majority of the white clergy being trained at Rhodes University. This was in the main due to apartheid, which excluded African students from studying at most 'white' universities.

On the other hand most African, Coloured and Indian ministers trained at the John Wesley College, which for many years was linked up with the Federal Seminary of Southern Africa (Fedsem). Fedsem was an ecumenical theological training centre where Anglicans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists joined their Methodist colleagues in preparing for the ministry. Along with Fedsem, John Wesley College was initially based in the former Transkei, at Alice, just outside the University of Fort Hare.<sup>46</sup> The government expropriated the premises at Alice in 1974 and so the College moved to Umtata, where it moved again in 1975. This move took Fedsem to Edendale in Pietermaritzburg<sup>47</sup>. Between 1975 and 1979, the institution was based in Edendale, but once the new premises were built, Fedsem moved further down the road, to Imbali in Pietermaritzburg.

This segregated training process was fraught with many complex and dynamic relationships, and in the end it had a number of sensitive repercussions. As if to make things even more complicated, Fedsem closed its doors in 1993 and so the Methodist Church moved its training programme to Kilnerton in Pretoria.

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<sup>46</sup> Olivia Le Roux and Joan Millard, (eds.), *The History of Kilnerton (1886 – 2004) and the development of John Wesley College (Kilnerton: 1994 – 2004)*, unpublished paper, (John Wesley College: Pretoria, 2004), p. 13

<sup>47</sup> Philippe Denis, 'Fedsem Ten years later', p.71

#### ***4.2 The move to John Wesley College - Kilnerton.***

Kilnerton was originally founded as an educational institution in 1886.<sup>48</sup> Between the years of 1953 and 1962 Kilnerton underwent a time of transition and sadly in 1962 the National Party succeeded in closing Kilnerton down. This was part of the then government's policy of wresting control of missionary schools and colleges out of the hands of the church and thus forcing thousands of young black students to be left at the mercy of the 'Bantu Education' policies.<sup>49</sup>

Thankfully this was not to be the end of Kilnerton and on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 1994, the institution reopened its doors as a training centre for ministers in training.<sup>50</sup> Le Roux and Millard reflect on this occasion and explain the background to this move:

The re-opening of Kilnerton came about as a direct consequence of the sad and sudden closing of Fedsem in 1993 which left eighteen Methodist ministers-in-training stranded and without a means of completing their training. Emergency meetings were held prior to the 1993 Conference and ... Conference resolved that Kilnerton should be re-opened in order to accommodate the stranded former Fedsem students and also ten new recruits to the ministry.<sup>51</sup>

With the advent of the new democratic dispensation in 1994, the church also began to amalgamate its academic training program, with all Methodist probationers (student ministers) being required to study through the John Wesley College in Kilnerton. Less and less students began to be given permission to study through Rhodes University and other tertiary institutions, although this had a few exceptions. Positively, what began in the beginning of this twenty year period as separate training for the clergy, ended up, two decades later, as being a unified training college for the ministers.

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<sup>48</sup> Le Roux and Millard (eds.), *The History of Kilnerton*, p.2.

<sup>49</sup> Le Roux and Millard (eds.), *The History of Kilnerton*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>50</sup> Le Roux and Millard (eds.), *The History of Kilnerton*, p. 12.

<sup>51</sup> Le Roux and Millard (eds.), *The History of Kilnerton*, pp. 12.

### ***4.3 Highlights of ministerial training***

Having taken a brief look at the historical set up of ministerial training in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa we now turn to consider the thoughts of the clergy who were ministers-in-training during this period. We will do this using the interviews and questionnaires as our primary sources.

Reflecting on the comments made in response to the question “what were the highlights in your ministerial training?”, one has to conclude that the experience of training impacted upon ministers in very different ways. In both the questionnaires and the personal interviews one picks up a spectrum of responses ranging from ‘my highlight was when the training was over’<sup>52</sup> to ‘a life changing experience’<sup>53</sup>. Rev Cynthia Xaba makes her feelings clear when she says, ‘I did my training at Fedsem in Imbali. It was a good time for me to be there. It was good to see the church of God together.’<sup>54</sup>

There seems to be a large number of ministers who enjoyed their times at Rhodes University, Fedsem and John Wesley College (Kilnerton) respectively. One notices that the sense of community and friendship at these institutions went a long way to making these years bearable. In fact, these academic institutions and seminaries became places of ‘personal, spiritual and theological formation’<sup>55</sup>. Although, technically Rhodes University lacked the official seminary ‘title’ per se, it none the less provided the community vibe found in seminary, with ministers living in residences such as Livingstone house. John Wesley College, on both the Fedsem campus and the Kilnerton site, offered the integrated community lifestyle which had its own merits and was enjoyed by many students.

Mention has been made of the uniqueness of ‘college life’ experienced whilst studying full time at either Rhodes University or at John Wesley College. Cathy De Boer restates this when she comments that ‘there is a lot of value in a closed community when you do training.

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<sup>52</sup> John Senekal, questionnaire returned via post, June 2006.

<sup>53</sup> Pieter Greyling, questionnaire returned via post, June 2006.

<sup>54</sup> Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

<sup>55</sup> Q.11 – questionnaire received via post- identity withheld.

You become part of a community....’<sup>56</sup> Ian France echoes this when he makes mention of how important friendships were to him during his training.<sup>57</sup>

Brian Burger says, ‘Look, I thoroughly enjoyed my university experience, in its totality. The social aspect, the interaction, the debates over a cup of tea... debating late into the night. I think those are the kind of dynamics that happen in a university setting that don’t happen when you are meeting together once every month or so. There is something that happens in that residential training. You are all in the same boat.’<sup>58</sup>

It seems true that a number of the ministers who studied solely via correspondence, at institutions such as TEEC or UNISA, felt they missed out on something unique in their ministerial formation. David Moodley, who studied through UNISA, commented that he felt his training was initially too academic<sup>59</sup> and thus he concludes that he could have really benefited from seminary life.

Peter Russell-Boulton argues that in any theological institution one needs certain programs in order to create effective formation within the lives of the clergy who are undergoing training. These must encompass not only the academic, but also the human, spiritual and religious aspects, so that every part of the individual’s life is moulded and prepared for ministry.<sup>60</sup> One identifies these specific qualities in the seminary life, where students are exposed to more than just academic studies. Peter Grassow provides us with a succinct summary of the benefits of attending a seminary: ‘my highlight was the time I spent at the Federal Theological Seminary. While I had a very difficult beginning, it became the place of personal, spiritual and theological formation.’<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Cathy De Boer, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 8 February 2006 in Greytown.

<sup>57</sup> Ian France, questionnaire returned via post, May 2006. (Q.2)

<sup>58</sup> Rev Brian Burger, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 9 February 2006 in Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>59</sup> David Moodley, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 21 June 2006 in Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Russell-Boulton, *A Survey of the formation of Theological Students with reference to Ecumenical, Multi-cultural and gender issues*, unpublished Masters Thesis, Pietermaritzburg, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2003, p.23.

<sup>61</sup> Peter Grassow, questionnaire returned via post, July 2006.



Another clear highlight for a number of ministers was their In Service Training (IST) experience. In general, this consisted of regular gatherings of the student ministers throughout their years of probation.<sup>62</sup> These IST meetings gathered for the purpose of training, accountability and continued formation. It was during these meetings that many clergy felt they had a support structure and a chance to share their struggles of ministry with colleagues. Rev Mike Stone comments on his experience of IST: 'I remember we used to get together for a week, once every three months for in service training and the biggest impact of that was not the material we covered, but it was the sense of friendship and being together.'<sup>63</sup>

Disturbingly, there were a few ministers who concluded that they had no highlights from their training. Perhaps the lack of highlights in ministerial training could be explained in part by the minister's studying through correspondence institutions such as UNISA or TEEC. The obvious lack of community lifestyle and family environment would have contributed to this sense of loneliness and isolation. Rev Vuyo Dlamini was one of a few ministers who were chosen to go straight from candidature into the University of KwaZulu Natal's Bachelor of Theology program. During our interview he had the following to say regarding his time of training:

I missed the seminary set up. Going to university straight from candidature was a privilege but I missed the seminary experience... bonding with other ministers. When I was ordained there were about forty of us and I hardly knew any of the people. The first time I had a relationship with them was at the ordination. I wish I could have got that opportunity to get the seminary experience.'<sup>64</sup>

One must not overlook that a small number of ministers literally 'endured' their training as a necessary prerequisite and failed to encounter any meaningful experiences along the way. This could have something to do with their own spiritual journeys or it could blatantly speak of the flawed nature of the training process that they went through and may point to its

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<sup>62</sup> 'Probation' is a term used in the MCSA to describe the years of training and formation which ministers-in-training need to complete before ordination.

<sup>63</sup> Rev Mike Stone, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2006, at the Prestbury Methodist Church in Pietermaritzburg.

<sup>64</sup> Vuyo Dlamini, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 31 August 2006 in Pietermaritzburg.

inadequacies. One does recognize that over a twenty year period ministerial training can be significantly different and many forms and styles of training can change. This has certainly been the case in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and for the many ministers ordained between 1980 and 1999 the process was quite different over this period.

#### *4.4 The lack of adequate training*

A few ministers made it clear that their ministerial training was totally inadequate. In Dennis De Lange's case this may have had a lot to do with the historical time period in which he found himself in the ministry, but there was a strong sense that he felt unprepared for the tasks that lay before him. Dennis entered the ministry at a time when married ministers were not sent to University and so he points out:

... being married with two young children – obviously I would have preferred to have gone to Rhodes, but going to study through UNISA - I found that there was a two week crash course with Jack Cook, which was totally inadequate and then suddenly being thrown into a situation in South West Africa where you are traveling over 500 kilometers for a service. Suddenly you have to find a way to actually experience for yourself what ministry was all about. There was no one to teach us what to actually expect.<sup>65</sup>

There was a definite sense of abandonment in Rev De Lange's thoughts and almost a resignation that he had to choose either to 'sink or swim' in his early ministry. Thankfully he chose to swim and he is still in the ministry today.

Dennis De Lange is not the only minister to comment that after his initial training he felt as if he was venturing 'blind' into his respective circuits and had to end up learning by trial and error. Rev David Moodley commented that:

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<sup>65</sup> Dennis De Lange, interview conducted by Delme Linscott in 17 November 2005 in Greytown.

It might be very simple practical things which you need to know, which the church takes for granted that you know. I've had to do this by myself, find someone to ask and then work it out. But, things like this happen when you are working in a church in your first year. You are suddenly expected to conduct a wedding or funeral and you don't know where to begin. Or you have to now lead a leaders meeting and there are people there who have been in the meetings for twenty years.<sup>66</sup>

Leading a church when you are surrounded by more experienced church going people can be a threatening experience for any minister, let alone for a newly ordained minister. David Moodley's case is perhaps just one example of many inexperienced ministers who had to learn the intricacies of ministry having just come out of University.

Rev Brian Burger laments the seeming lack of intentionality in his training process. '... there wasn't that same kind of intentionality as there was when I got trained. In fact, in ministry there seems to lack that same kind of intentionality with people saying, we need to train people to be good pastors in terms of hospital visits etc. The church needs to help ministers in the day to day ministry things...'<sup>67</sup>

Further gaps in the training process were exposed by the following thoughts from Rev Cathy De Boer, '... you know in training – reflecting on Rhodes, we never did things like conflict resolution and things like that. Thankfully I did it after that. Things like marriage counseling – you are left to your own devices. I think those kind of things are helpful and valuable.'<sup>68</sup>

While this form of learning may have taught them a lot about ministry in the end, it certainly could not have done much for their confidence. Again, this approach to training changed drastically over the time period concerned and ministers began to leave John Wesley College (Kilnerton) in the late 1990's with more practical training and preparation for ministry.

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<sup>66</sup> David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>67</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>68</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

As someone who has just completed the training for the Methodist ministry I can comment that a lot of these inadequacies in the training program have been reviewed and have changed. Thankfully modern ministers are benefiting in some way from the mistakes made in the past in ministerial training. The advent of the Phase One program has addressed a lot of these past shortcomings.<sup>69</sup>

While the training process is constantly being upgraded and revised, there is a loud cry coming from ordained Methodist ministers for further training. Every minister interviewed or who returned the questionnaire recognized the need, within their own situations, for some form of ongoing training.

#### ***4.5 The need for ongoing training***

In response to the question ‘would you say there is a need for ongoing training within the church?’ there was a unanimous ‘Yes.’ One minister commented that ‘there is a definite need for training – in the simple practical things.’<sup>70</sup> It seems that all ministers understand, on some level, that ordination is only the beginning of ministry and that one needs to have opportunities to grow and learn more about ministering with the church.

What struck me as being tragic was that many ministers feel that they are not getting adequate ongoing training from the church. Some training is being offered but it doesn’t seem to be meeting the overall needs of the clergy. The cost implication of offering further training is obviously a consideration for the Methodist Church, but it seems that most clergy would view this as a worthy upliftment of their own spiritual growth and that of the church as a whole.

Ministers are also realizing that they need further training in areas that they are confronted with on a weekly basis. Often these training needs are only being met through the ingenuity

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<sup>69</sup> When Candidates for the ministry start their formal training they enter what is known as “Phase One.” This year is compulsory for Methodist ministers-in-training and comprises a combination of theological studies and practical experience. All ministers are placed in cross-cultural appointments and are required to serve local congregations, whilst, at the same time, traveling to a satellite college for two days of reflection and further study.

<sup>70</sup> David Moodley, same interview.

of the individual ministers, who have the drive and desire to receive further development.

Rev Themba Mntambo expresses his feelings in this regard:

The challenges of ministry need to challenge us and to ask us how we can minister more effectively. We also need to train in other areas (fields), for example I have trained in the area of conflict resolution. These things I have worked on and developed myself. Training in coaching and development. The big thing today is “executive coaching”. You are sitting with a few executives in your church who are needing more than the Sunday service and you have to ask how you can minister to them. I sensed this was where my ministry was moving and so tried to equip myself for this.<sup>71</sup>

Another minister comments, ‘... they need to do workshops just like in other sectors. If you are a teacher they have workshops now and then. If you are a nurse they also have workshops now and then. It is important for the church to upgrade their ministers.’<sup>72</sup> The call for some form of further training seems very distinct and urgent.

This same yearning for more training comes through in the questionnaires and when one looks at some of the suggestions made by ministers it is noticeable that Methodist ministers are crying out for ongoing training. Although the types of training may vary between cultural groups within the church there are many overlapping training needs.

The following is a summarized list of the suggestions for further training which have been made by the clergy:

- Further counselling skills
- Preaching and teaching workshops
- Leadership training
- How to pastor a church
- Dealing with changing contexts & ideas

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<sup>71</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2006, at Delmas.

<sup>72</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

- HIV/AIDS training
- New technology in ministry
- Mediation/conflict resolution skills
- Prayer, meditation and discerning God's will
- Church growth principle
- Cell/growth group dynamics
- Church management
- Church building
- Evangelism

As I have already mentioned the modern ministerial training process does now cover a few of these needs in its courses. This is wonderful to note, but one is aware that the ministers who have already been through the process missed out on these opportunities and would greatly benefit from this sort of training. Undoubtedly this on-going training could have a positive ripple effect on the local church communities with many believers being impacted by the training received by their local minister. The ministers would be equipped with greater resources and perhaps a greater confidence in their own abilities, which would build up the Christian communities.

The world in which we minister now is already vastly different from twenty years ago. Although we acknowledge this, ministers are still expected to lead churches and communities based on what they were taught two decades ago. Is this an effective way of ministering to a modern generation? Brian Burger does not think so:

I look at my counselling style now – it is totally different from that of my undergraduate training. It was done in a modernized setting and it was good, but we are now living in a post-modern world. My methodology needs to change and I have appreciated that, whereas a lot of guys are still going on the old style and format. It may be working for them, but not for me.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

Rev Dennis De Lange echoes these same sentiments, when he reflects on the gap in ministerial training:

When one looks at the training one got in the 70's and now...it's totally different. What people expected in the 70's, is not what people expect now. And so people like myself are left floundering... That's why with us going down to Port Alfred now, you still have the old colonial mindset, which fits in with the 1970's ... but how do I fit in now in terms of 2005?<sup>74</sup>

The Methodist Church needs to embark upon training programs in order to help the clergy who have been ordained for a long time to understand the changing world in which we live. In her book *The Good Shepherd: Meditations on Christian Ministry in Today's World*, Lesslie Newbigin comments, 'It is well known that the gap between the older and younger generations has been growing wider and wider... it has reached a point where there is almost no communication between generations.'<sup>75</sup>

In our conversation David Moodley mentioned that sometimes congregation members believe that as soon as you are ordained that suddenly you know everything and they begin to treat you like this. This can be a very frustrating perception for ministers to live up to. For me, Rev Simanga Kumalo encapsulates the sentiments of the clergy when he says '...in the church there will always be a need to train, because society always changes. It poses many challenges. We need to appropriate what they are experiencing in society and their ministry. The church can never stop training its people.'<sup>76</sup>

One of the frustrating things about ongoing training in the ministry is the lack of financial resources available. As we have already made mention, a large number of ministers who desired to further their studies, have had to find their own means of support. One understands that a church the size of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa could not expect to

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<sup>74</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

<sup>75</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Good Shepherd: Meditations on Christian Ministry in Today's World*, (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1977), p.19.

<sup>76</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, interview conducted by Delme Linscott on the 9 February 2006 in Pietermaritzburg.

contribute towards every person's academic degrees, but there needs to be some avenue in which ministers can apply for funding.

It seems that at one stage there was a bursary fund of sorts, but at the time this fund was applying the 'affirmative action' stance of the government. While no one would begrudge previously disadvantaged clergy the opportunity to study further, the Methodist Church does promote itself as a 'one and undivided church'<sup>77</sup> and so perhaps needs to tread warily in this area.

Rev Brian Burger makes a good observation when he points out the potential dangers of the church adopting the OBE (Outcomes Based Education) policy, which many theological institutions seem to be doing. He reflects:

What's happening is that we are missing a lot of good scholarly work. As much as the other institutions try and provide an OBE format and try and make it relevant ... they miss good scholarship. So actually going and studying - what did Barth say, what did Schleiermacher say, what did whoever say? Just to go and study it thoroughly. What you are finding now is a lot of pastoral work being done, but there are not many sharp thinkers around. There is a gap... but now there is that crucial part of academic work that is missing.<sup>78</sup>

When it comes to the ongoing training of ministers, there is also a feeling that there needs to be a definite sense of intentionality about the training in the church – that is, both the actual training of clergy as well as the ongoing training. 'Peter Grassow used to meet with us and we would do some things intentionally – we would look at a topic, for instance, say we were going to look at death we'd go to the undertaker and find out what went on there. This was intentional training.'<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> This became a slogan of the church during the days of apartheid and has been a vision which the Methodist Church has held unto, even until the present.

<sup>78</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>79</sup> Rev. Brian Burger, same interview.



Sadly, a few Methodist ministers feel that the church is not actively being seen to encourage ongoing training. One minister says, 'there does not seem to be any formal encouragement to continue formation and training after ordination. I have continued formal education by my own motivation and resources.'<sup>80</sup> At a recent district retreat similar sentiments were expressed by a number of the clergy in the Natal West District.

#### ***4.6 The need for mentors***

Keith Anderson and Randy Reese make the following observation regarding mentoring. 'A healthy mentoring relationship should help you to give voice to the song God has sung in your life, to liberate the song that has lain dormant or imprisoned in your history.'<sup>81</sup> Every minister interviewed identified at least one person who acted as a mentor to them as they were training and preparing for the ministry. What is sad is that most of these relationships of 'mentor- disciple' happened without intention by the church. Each minister ended up having to find someone in whom they could trust and who could nurture their faith. All of these relationships proved beneficial but one wonders what happens to clergy who do not find this support and encouragement?

Rev Brian Burger was fortunate enough to have a few people who mentored him as a young man entering the ministry, one of which was Christian author and speaker, Rev Trevor Hudson. It seems that Trevor Hudson used the approach of intentional mentoring, whilst Brian Burger was still working as a youth pastor in the church. Rev Burger comments:

I was lucky enough to work with Trevor...he would take me with him as he would do an outside funeral...he would show me how he did it, how he visited the folk and then we would talk about it while we were travelling there and back. At the appointment I would just observe and the next time he would let me do it. And then we would reflect on it. He was quite deliberate in his training, but he took me with him and I appreciated that kind of thing.'<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Rev. Barry Marshall, questionnaire sent in via post – September 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Keith R. Anderson and Randy D. Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring: A guide for seeking and giving direction*, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1999), p. 155.

<sup>82</sup> Brian Burger, same interview.

A few ministers alluded to a sense of feeling isolated and adrift at times, and that they would have benefited from a mentor. 'Being a spiritual friend is being the physician of a wounded soul.'<sup>83</sup> A few wounded ministers may still be in the ministry today if they had had the privilege of a mentor in the faith. Again the Methodist Church has recognized this urgent need in its latest training of probationers and over the past five years has begun to introduce a 'learning partnership' programme which aims to address this need. Although still in its infancy this process still has lots of ironing out to do, but the concept of accountability and relationship seems very positive.

One can not help but wonder what impact it would have had if every probationer was allocated a senior minister (even a supernumerary minister) as a mentor for their five years of training. This 'one on one' type of mentorship, if done in the right spirit, could prove invaluable to student ministers. In fact, one could go as far to say that most ministers would benefit from this kind of relationship. 'Direction can be defined as the help that one man gives another to enable him to become himself in his faith.'<sup>84</sup> Another way of speaking of spiritual direction is to remember that it needs to aim at fostering union with God and therefore it has to do with an individual's relationship with God.<sup>85</sup> This relationship with God is nurtured well when it is done in partnership with other people.

Thankfully a large number of ministers have been proactive in setting these relationships up for themselves, but there are undoubtedly many ministers who are longing for someone to nurture them and support them. Clergy need 'to find their own centre, and spiritual direction is the form of pastoral care whose basic direct purpose is to assist them in that task.'<sup>86</sup>

Perhaps the church needs to be more intentional in this process. Vuyo Dlamini is one of many ministers who would appreciate some help from the church in this area, although he does recognize the difficulty in putting this in place:

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<sup>83</sup> Tilden Edwards, *Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual direction*, (New York: Paulist, 1980), p. 125

<sup>84</sup> Jean Laplace, *Preparing for Spiritual Direction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, (Chicago: Franciscan Herald, 1988), pp.26.

<sup>85</sup> William Barry & William Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1998), p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> William Barry, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 192.

I'm not sure about the feasibility of that, but I would appreciate it. If we go to a place and there is someone who would be there for you, you could sit down and talk to that person – maybe someone who is elderly, who has gone before me, so I could learn from them. I would appreciate if they could make some conscious effort.<sup>87</sup>

Thomas Merton reminds us that the role of a mentor is not to provide answers to the problems of people, but rather to help them to look for truth that has become hidden by the masks we use to disguise who we are. 'The whole purpose of a spiritual director is to penetrate beneath the surface of a man's life, to get behind the façade of conventional gestures and attitudes which he presents to the world, and to bring out his inner spiritual freedom, his inmost truth, which is what we call the like-ness of Christ in his soul.'<sup>88</sup>

Walter Wright shares a powerful illustration of climbers trying to reach the summit of a mountain and how these climbers are individually attached to the rope. He continues, adding that having a mentor to climb with you, during your spiritual journey, is just as encouraging. He writes, 'when you feel the security of the rope you are energized to climb, to take the risk. The rope, the relationship, the guide, the mentor create the safe space to risk the next step. Mentors provide a safe place to regain perspective and energy.'<sup>89</sup>

We have concluded that undoubtedly most clergy would benefit from having a spiritual mentor. Perhaps it would be fitting to allow Aelred of Rievaulx to have the final word on this: 'Here we are, you and I, and I hope a third, Christ, is in our midst... come now, beloved, open your heart, and pour into these friendly ears whatsoever you will, and let us accept gracefully the boon of this place, time and leisure.'<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Rev Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas Merton, *Spiritual Direction and Meditation*, (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical, 1960), p.16.

<sup>89</sup> Walter C. Wright, *Mentoring: The promise of relational leadership*, (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2004), p.31.

<sup>90</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, translated by Mary Eugina Laker, Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian, 1977.

## **5. Counting the Cost**

It has become abundantly clear, throughout this interview process, that ministry has a potential cost involved in it. When one speaks about a ‘cost’ one is not referring to only a material cost, but about the emotional, spiritual and physical cost to the entire life of a minister. In this section we will explore what some of these ‘costs’ are and what impact they are having on the lives of the Methodist ministers.

### ***5.1 The impact of the ministry on family and other relationships.***

If there was any doubt as to the reality of the ‘cost’ to ones family of being in the ministry then it was undeniably squashed by the responses to this question. Every minister in the nine personal interviews and in the seventeen questionnaires replied in the affirmative that their children and spouses had paid a price for their calling to the ministry. This should allow us to reflect that there is a painful dynamic in our churches and often the ‘ministerial family’ bears the brunt of the sacrifices. One could brush this sentiment aside if it were the experience of one or two ministers, but the fact that it has touched every one of them is a little disturbing, to say the least.

Fellow clergy, Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, confirm this finding in their reflections on their own ministries and they conclude that ‘the invasion of a family’s privacy cannot be helped, but we should do what we can to minimize it.’<sup>91</sup> How ministers can effectively minimize the cost and pain of serving in a church is debatable, but what we would be wise in doing is to hear from these ministers and try to avoid the same pitfalls that they have encountered.

Some ministers lament the lack of freedom their children are given. There is a sense in which the children of ministers live under a huge spotlight, with congregation members watching their every move. This burden of expectation is often coupled with unreasonably high

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<sup>91</sup> Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor*, (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004), p. 264.

standards that in the end can be harmful to any child. Rev Themba Mntambo speaks about this as follows:

The other cost has been the freedom for my children. Even if we have given them the freedom to choose, they are still minister's children. There have been times when they have wanted things that we could not provide. And there have been things that they have wanted to do which they could not do, because we did not have the means to do it. For the family it does cost.<sup>92</sup>

Vuyo Dlamini offers us a unique insight into the impact that the church has had on some black families. Often black male ministers, who find themselves far from their traditional family homes, end up sacrificing their appointed responsibilities. These responsibilities are cultural in nature and are seen as being deeply significant in the lives of the family and the broader community. Vuyo Dlamini says:

There are things that I know that I have sacrificed in the family – family responsibilities. In a black setting, especially if you are a boy, you have huge responsibilities. I get married and bring my wife into my whole family, not just the nucleus family and we have to take care of the whole family, because I am the eldest son. Now that I am in ministry and I am not with my family and I am all over the place, and sisters and brothers are there, my mother has to take responsibility for the family. When she dies (because I do not have a father now) I am always thinking about that... now.<sup>93</sup>

Brian Burger speaks from a white male perspective, but his thoughts probably speak for most ministers. He says:

I think that for a lot of people I know that have left the ministry, it has been family issues, because you are always away from family and that sort of stuff. Especially when they are home – you're not i.e.: at night or over weekends. When you can be

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<sup>92</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>93</sup> Rev Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

home, they are at school ... I know of ministers who went back to the world to work and they said they appreciated having their weekends back.<sup>94</sup>

The ministry can be especially tough on families where there is only a single parent in the home. Time and energy is divided amongst the children and the congregation members, with the children often having to forfeit many things. One minister writes, 'I am a single parent. My children sometimes come home from school and they need a bit of attention, but I have come back from visiting people and have a sore body. The area is scattered and people live far away and driving all over is tough. So they do not get my full attention. But by the grace of God I try to give them the attention they need.'<sup>95</sup>

Part of being in the itinerant ministry means that moving becomes a necessary evil at times. Whilst the minister is affected in many concrete ways, the spouses are often left to find new employment in a strange environment and this can take its toll on any relationship. David Moodley reflected on his wife having to find a new job every time they have moved. Although things ended up working out in the end, there is always lots of stress involved during these changes.<sup>96</sup> Often ministers feel responsible for putting their spouses work on hold in order to fulfill their own vocation. Mike Stone agrees: '... the cost to the family is huge. Also your wife having to resign from her job and then having to take up another job elsewhere is a huge cost.'<sup>97</sup>

There is an element of truth in that clergy are often their own worst enemies when it comes to finding time for their family. It could be about a matter of priorities for the ministers or perhaps just an internal thought pattern that justifies the amount of time spent away from the family. There is always the notion that 'they will understand.' Brian Burger reflects on this:

In different places we have experienced different things on the family. I think of one of my appointments where I was working fourteen to sixteen hours a day, excluding my lunch, - that was ridiculous. I never saw the family. If I was lucky I could take

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<sup>94</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>95</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

<sup>96</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>97</sup> Rev Mike Stone, same interview.

them to school and fetch them for lunch and then I'd be off again. I'd come back late at night – that did not work. I now place family as the most important thing in my life. It is more important than anything else in terms of my work. If my child has cricket, that is my priority. Unless of course there is a huge emergency.'<sup>98</sup>

In response to the question concerning the affect of ministry on his family, Rev Dennis De Lange remarked that his daughters had seen a fair amount of the negative aspects of the ministry. This was so much the case that he commented that they '... vowed never to marry a minister. They were also victimized at school, because their father was a minister. They could never settle in an area, 'because we were always on the move and they bear the scars of that.'<sup>99</sup>

Derek Prime writes that 'the real problem is not busyness, but our making sure that however busy we are, we still have time for our families, and especially when they need us.'<sup>100</sup> This is true in principle, yet it often plays out in a contrasting fashion. Rev Cathy De Boer recollected a time in her ministry when she discovered that her daughter (who was ten at the time) had an illness that could not be diagnosed. The response from the church was less than caring and in the end caused her a huge amount of pain.

We didn't know what it was and I had to leave her at home, being a single parent – I had to leave her at home to go and do my work. Although the church said they understood, when it came to the crunch, they didn't. That was the time when I was in IST (In Service Training) for the ordained ministry... and I got flack. My superintendent said to me... your daughter is part of the church, give time to her, but when I did give her the time, they moaned at me. And I got a bad report that year. I was very bitter about that. My child was sick.<sup>101</sup>

In the end it is not surprising that Cathy felt that even though she was a minister, she was just a number to the church and that she was expected to perform without thought of what she

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<sup>98</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>99</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

<sup>100</sup> Derek Prime, *On Being a Pastor*, p. 268.

<sup>101</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

was encountering on a personal level. 'I think we are just a number. At that time I felt I was just there to ... perform in the ministry, without having to count the cost and to be human. You know I just had to perform and that I didn't like.'<sup>102</sup>

Barry Marshall helps us to understand that taking care of your family in ministry does not just happen naturally in your local church and that as ministers often the onus will fall on the clergy to initiate this form of protection. 'I have been overly assertive about the church not expecting anything from my family. Church people go through me if they want to request something from my wife. I also don't encourage people to call my home.'<sup>103</sup> This is certainly a courageous sentiment. Some may argue that this is not always practical, but at least the intention is there - protect the family at all costs!

### ***5.2 Where has my time gone?***

There is one thing that few ministers are taught at university and college - that is the art of delegation. Certainly clergy are taught the principles of delegating, but actually perfecting the practice is a different story. Most ministers agree that 'time' is one of their dilemmas in the church and something they struggle with. They do not seem to have enough time to get everything done and then they find they have no time for themselves. This was made clear to me through the comments made by Vuyo Dlamini: 'I don't even know what leave is or a weekend off. When my opportunity came for a weekend off I could not take it, because there was some problem. Who was going to take my place when I was away?'<sup>104</sup>,

Mike Stone reflects on the subject of time: 'When I speak to people in the church they shake their heads when they hear we get one weekend off a quarter. When they do not want to come to church, they do not – we are there almost every weekend. I wonder what Jesus' ministry would have looked like if he had had a family?'<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

<sup>103</sup> Rev Barry Marshall, same questionnaire.

<sup>104</sup> Rev Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

<sup>105</sup> Mike Stone, same interview.



In our so called 'black' circuits in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa ministers often look after many churches. It is not uncommon for one minister to serve fifteen to twenty-five societies. This is quite typical of the rural communities in our churches. Obviously in cases like this, a minister's time is at a premium and they often end up preaching as well as doing Holy Communion, baptisms and leaders meetings all on the same day. In a lot of cases the minister has to delegate responsibilities to their circuit stewards, local preachers and other leaders.

On delegation Derek Prime writes, 'it eases the burden of responsibilities and enables us to know greater joy in what we do because we are not under such great pressure.'<sup>106</sup> The tragedy in the Methodist Church is that often many ministers battle to delegate. There are a number of reasons for this ranging from personality types, to a fear of the job not being done properly, to a fear of not being needed. However, the truth remains that no minister can do everything in the church and so perhaps we need to re-learn the art of delegation. If we perfected the 'practice of delegation' a few ministers may find some of their 'lost time' miraculously reappearing.

The final reality on the issue of time is that as ministers we are responsible for the division of our time. Yes, we often have to do things that are unplanned, but we could find more time for the things that energise us if we planned it into our diaries. Mike Stone takes a different view on the conventional 'day off' for ministers and argues for rather planning things into his schedule that energise him:

... at the moment I do not have a day off. Some people have said to me why do not you have a day off? I do not find that helpful. I would rather people ask me "what energizes you?" Then I would tell them, I play squash, I paddle, and I go for walks. On a Monday I can not go and watch cricket, because it is on a Saturday. My friends are also all working so I can not be with them and my wife is working. I would like to

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<sup>106</sup> Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor*, p. 242.

be creative with this... perhaps I can have two hours a day to do what I like and what energizes me or I can ask for two weekends off a quarter or one a month. That would work for me.<sup>107</sup>

In his book *Ordering Your Private World*, author and pastor, Gordon MacDonald writes a powerful chapter on recapturing our time. He writes ‘as a young pastor I discovered that because my time was not fully organized, I was at the mercy of anyone who ... wanted my attendance.... strong people in my world controlled my time better than I did because I had not taken the initiative to command the time before they got to me.’<sup>108</sup> We all only have twenty four hours in any given day and ministers will have to be more proactive in planning their time otherwise the frustration of ‘lack of time’ will continue throughout their ministry.

### ***5.3 The struggle to be oneself.***

On more than one occasion ministers have been heard speaking about having perfectionist tendencies. Of course there is nothing inherently wrong with wanting to do things well, but many ministers fall into the perfectionist trap as a way of trying to please people. The irony of this desire is that in the end no one is content or satisfied, least of all the ministers themselves. Edward Wimberley encapsulates this sentiment with his quote:

The emphasis on perfection has led people to describe the effort to achieve empathy as having “sucked the life out of the caregiver,” and as having “the potential to contaminate” us as caregivers if we have no place to turn to for emotional and spiritual renewal.<sup>109</sup>

Wimberley tries his best to warn of the desire for perfection amongst clergy, but one often senses that ministers struggle to let go of this impulse. If clergy were allowed the freedom to be ‘real’ or themselves more often, then perhaps the perfectionist tendency would become less of a driving force in their personalities. Wimberley clarifies this distinction between

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<sup>107</sup> Mike Stone, same interview.

<sup>108</sup> Gordon MacDonald, *Order Your Private World*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1984, p. 83.

<sup>109</sup> Edward P. Wimberley, *Recalling our own stories. Spiritual renewal for religious caregivers*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), p. 7

perfection and realism, ‘perfection refers to flawless performance. Realism refers to performance that is permeated with a grace-filled acceptance of our limitations and flaws (and our strengths). Grace-filled realism enables us to make significant – but not unflawed – contributions to the lives of others.’<sup>110</sup>

Part of the struggle to be oneself in the context of ministry has a lot to do with our own ‘glittering image’<sup>111</sup>. As a result of this our true selves are seldom, if ever, allowed to emerge. Marva Dawn reflects on this concept of a ‘glittering image’ in light of how clergy often use various skills and tools to win the approval of others, whereas their true selves would rather be serving God without regard to the response of other people.<sup>112</sup>

Rev John Wessels, comments that one of the things that has drained him in his ministry has been the sense in which some leaders and members of his church have unfairly rejected his ministry.<sup>113</sup> This can become the classic point from which many ministers start to minister in order to please other people. Eventually they become trapped in pleasing congregation members and forget what they are truly gifted in and soon an identity crisis can ensue.

The existential question of “who am I?” is also asked by clergy. The battle for most of us is to discern whether the person leading the church, as the minister, is the same person as the one who is at home with family and close friends. The closer we can bring these two together, the closer we will get to discovering who we really are.

#### ***5.4 Draining elements of ministry.***

As part of the interview process the question was asked of the ministers, ‘what drains you the most in your ministry?’ The following section is a summarised version of the comments and sentiments of the interviewees and of also of those ministers who corresponded via the questionnaire. Ministry is a difficult vocation and it poses all kinds of dilemmas for

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<sup>110</sup> Wimberley, *Recalling our own stories*, p.8.

<sup>111</sup> This phrase ‘glittering image’ was used in Susan Howatch’s novel *Glittering Image*.

<sup>112</sup> Eugene Peterson and Marva Dawn, *The Unnecessary Pastor*, Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2000, p. 23.

<sup>113</sup> John Wessels, questionnaire returned via post, June 2006.

ministers. Often clergy find themselves with less energy and passion to fulfil the functions of ministry that inspire them the most. What follows are some of the responses from the ministers. By analyzing this feedback we can understand some of the root causes of clergy frustration.

#### *5.4.1 Meetings and administration.*

We can understand that every minister is gifted in certain areas and yet a large amount of their time and energy is focused in doing things that drain them. One of these is undoubtedly meetings. Obviously meetings cannot be avoided, especially in a church setting, but it is interesting to hear the clergy's comments on this aspect of meetings.

Brian Burger honestly points out that 'administration is not my strongest gift. I hate it with a passion. In fact, I hate meetings with a passion. There is nothing worse for me than a meeting.'<sup>114</sup> Another minister writes, 'meetings and unnecessary structures are a constant drain for me.'<sup>115</sup>

Brian Burger carries on to identify how he tries to turn something which is immensely draining for him, into something that can be constructive in the long run:

... meetings drain me. I try and put all my leaders meetings in one week (to go to the different churches). I find that I am washed out after these and it takes me another week or two to recover. That drains me. I hate meetings. They achieve nothing for me, unless we actually say 'listen, that letter that needs to be written, please can you do it now and post it on the way home'. At least we get something down. In small communities the agenda of the meetings can drain one. But I think you have to intentionally carve out time, where you say at this time I am going to be doing XYZ.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>115</sup> Rev Barry Marshall, same questionnaire.

<sup>116</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

This sentiment concerning the draining element of meetings is further confirmed by Rev Charmaine Morgan. What particularly drains her is the ‘never-ending meetings with decisions that are not important.’<sup>117</sup> It seems that the church could save many working hours if the number of meetings was reduced or at least if they were made effective through the outcomes actually being implemented.

#### *5.4.2 The financial pressure of the local church*

We will cover the issue of personal finances in greater detail later on in the paper, however, there is another huge aspect of finance which can be very frustrating and draining for the ministers in our Connexion. This is the issue of Circuit finances. Many ministers find that they face a monthly battle just to make sure that there is enough money in the bank account. If they do not then they feel that their positions are potentially in jeopardy. One minister shares his experiences:

Of the eighteen years of ministry I find the financial aspect the most draining. Trying to meet the budget at the end of the month. Most of the societies I have worked in over the years have been subsidized by other churches and there has always been that threat that if the society does not meet their end of the bargain that they will be without a minister. So you never know if you personally are going to be re-invited to stay on at the church. It is based purely on a financial standpoint, not on whether you are good enough as a minister. So you find it incredibly difficult to plan and vision, because you do not know what the future holds. The people are also a bit wary to get on board because they do not know if you will still be there or not. I find this very draining.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Rev Charmaine Morgan, questionnaire sent in via post – September 2006.

<sup>118</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

### 5.4.3 *Dealing with disputes*

Bev Hill, who is retiring from the ministry this year, reflects that one of the most draining things in his ministry has been ‘dealing with disputes and disagreements between members of the congregation resulting in a need to ‘put out fires’ rather than being able to concentrate on more important issues.’<sup>119</sup> That same sentiment is echoed by Pieter Greyling who adds that dealing with historical conflicts that never get resolved can sap all of one’s energy.<sup>120</sup> Confrontation and conflict resolution are inevitable in church life, yet it is not one of the areas ministers are effectively trained in or prepared for.

Another aspect of disputes is conflict with ministerial colleagues. This takes conflict to a new dimension as often you are working intimately alongside a colleague and so any personal conflict can divert enormous amounts of energy away from the congregation and be consumed by trying to resolve the dispute. One minister commented that this was hugely draining for him, yet in the end it became an ‘excellent learning experience.’<sup>121</sup>

### 5.4.4 *Lack of resources*

As the ministers shared about their various struggles in the ministry the issue of the lack of adequate resources came up. It became clear that ministers serving in poorer communities faced greater obstacles in bridging the gap between what their congregations had and what they needed in order to function effectively. David Moodley speaks openly about this:

The third issue for me ... is the lack of resources, especially in terms of people power. Sometimes when you form a committee to start a feeding scheme or mission, you find that if you do not chair the meeting it does not happen. You have to meet with people – you cannot just let them run with it – they do not seem to do it. When you have a few societies you have to be at the helm of each one, leading it and so I find it very

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<sup>119</sup> Bev Hill, questionnaire returned via post August 2006.

<sup>120</sup> Pieter Greyling, questionnaire returned via post, May 2006.

<sup>121</sup> Name withheld for personal reasons.

difficult to give equal energy to each one – I have to juggle them and that is draining.<sup>122</sup>

Having a lack of resources comes at a great price for clergy, especially in terms of their own spiritual gifts and time. They end up having to do copious amounts of general work, which could be done other people or by employed workers. This can lead to a certain frustration as ministers begin to focus most of their time on doing things that don't excite them or which they are not passionate about. As a result the areas of ministry in which they normally excel are then placed lower down the list of priorities. In the end both the minister and the local church seem to be on the losing end. The minister is hamstrung and is not freed up to use their strongest gifts and the church loses out the blessing of the minister's passionate gifting. 'I do not think I am fully utilized. To be used to the maximum I would want to use my gifts more. But I can not – I have to steal time away from these things in order to do other work. I have to borrow time from these things in order to fulfill some other duty, which in a healthy situation I would not have to do.'<sup>123</sup>

Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter would argue that lack of resources is one of the first steps to work overload and eventual burnout. 'When we have to do too much in too little time with too few resources. It is a matter not of stretching to meet new challenges but of going far beyond human limits.'<sup>124</sup>

Dennis De Lange concludes, '... in most cases you are struggling, because you are trying to do everything, like to be the secretary and everything that you can. You have not got the resources that are adequate in terms of training and yet the church expects you to perform.'<sup>125</sup>

#### 5.4.5 Church politics

The issue of church politics is another aspect within the Methodist Church that ends up sapping a lot of energy from the ministers. This will be dealt with in much greater depth later

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<sup>122</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>123</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>124</sup> Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter, *The Truth about Burnout*, San Francisco: Jolley-Bass, 1997, pp.10-11.

<sup>125</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

on in this paper, but it is important to mention it under this section. It is important for us to remember that by 'church politics' we refer to the wrangling for position and power that often take place in the church, as well as general attitudes and policies that lie under the surface of the Methodist Church.

One minister writes that church politics disillusioned him<sup>126</sup>, whilst another colleague adds that '...politicising in the church discourages me and demotivates me...' <sup>127</sup>. Two more ministers from our sample group lament the onslaught of church politics in the MCSA. 'The other one is church politics and people who think they know where the church is, but really do not. Fortunately as you get on in years you get wiser in terms of handling it, so it does not become as draining as it used to.' <sup>128</sup> 'Church politics is frustrating, irritating and stress inducing...' <sup>129</sup>

There is another aspect of the church, which will also be mentioned later, which we need to include under this section. That is around the issue of the stationing of ministers. When we speak of stationing in the Methodist Church, we refer to where ministers are sent to serve congregations. Local communities or congregations are sometimes referred to as 'stations'. <sup>130</sup> A local minister wrote, 'I am drained by the stationing process.' <sup>131</sup> The reality is that the whole stationing process (i.e. how ministers are moved to other congregations) can be draining and is allegedly deeply impacted by church politics.

#### *5.4.6 Lack of affirmation*

This paragraph is brought to our attention through the honest comment from a minister. He writes, 'lack of affirmation can be draining...' <sup>132</sup> He is not the only one to feel this way. 'In a sense you have got to find it (support and affirmation) for yourself and the tragedy is that often you find it outside the church. You can be supported outside the church with incredible

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<sup>126</sup> Q.7.

<sup>127</sup> Rev Barry Marshall, same questionnaire.

<sup>128</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>129</sup> Rev Charmaine Morgan, same questionnaire.

<sup>130</sup> As an example of this, I am presently serving a community in the Umvoti region. In conversation with other clergy I will speak about being 'stationed at the Dalton Methodist Church, in the Umvoti circuit.'

<sup>131</sup> Rev Smanga Kumalo, same interview.

<sup>132</sup> Q.3



support systems.’<sup>133</sup> We will deal with the need for encouragement and affirmation later on in this paper.

#### **5.4.7 Funerals**

Many black ministers within the Methodist Church lament the number of *funerals* that they have to conduct. Compared with other ministers black clergy may conduct many funerals on a weekly basis. Lumka Sigaba says ‘it is fulfilling to have the privilege of comforting those who mourn. However having mass funerals and funerals every Saturday... has been rather heavy emotionally.’<sup>134</sup> Vuyo Dlamini adds to this sentiment by pointing out that ‘funerals, from a black minister’s point of view (are draining). When you are looking after eighteen congregations, there are funerals every weekend and even sometimes during the week.’<sup>135</sup>

Mary Anne Coate writes: ‘but on ministers ... falls an additional load: in addition to the pursuit of goodness and holiness for themselves they have the task of encouraging others and being a model for them in their endeavours.’<sup>136</sup> This indeed can be very tiring and draining for clergy. They spend vast amounts of emotional energy in serving others, especially in crisis moments, such as funerals, that at the end of the day, they have very little energy left for themselves.

#### **5.5 Am I cut out for this?**

Before clergy enter the ministry there needs to be some kind of call that draws a person into the understanding that God has a specific purpose for their life. ‘The ministry of undershepherds<sup>137</sup> and teachers is not simply a job. Rather it is a vocation, the answering of a specific call from God.’<sup>138</sup> However the confirmation of this call to ministry is of vital importance to ministers, as uncertainty can lead to tragic consequences for both the person

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<sup>133</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

<sup>134</sup> Lumka Sigaba, questionnaire returned via post, May 2006.

<sup>135</sup> Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

<sup>136</sup> Mary Anne Coate, *Clergy Stress: The hidden conflicts of Ministry*, (London: SPCK, 1989), p. 145.

<sup>137</sup> This term ‘undershepherd’ is one that Prime and Begg use a great deal in their work *On being a Pastor*. It is just another term to describe a minister, pastor or ‘spiritual shepherd.’

<sup>138</sup> Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On being a Pastor*, p. 17

and the church.<sup>139</sup> Cathy De Boer made a comment during our interview which made me ponder how often clergy question their own sense of call. She said: 'I think of a couple of times where I have felt burnt out, where you wonder should I be in ministry. I think sometimes people just get so get disillusioned that they just get out.'<sup>140</sup>

During difficult times ministers can so easily lose their sense of call and purpose. No one intentionally asks to go through a disillusioning time as a minister and yet these times seem to come to everyone. It is during these moments that one needs to have something to which you can cling. For a lot of ministers this anchor, besides being Jesus Christ, is their moment of calling. A number of ministers write down the passages of scripture that were given to them before they came into the ministry and they refer back to these in order to remember their moment of calling. This may seem like a simple technique, but when one is confronted with the question 'am I cut out for this?' then often this is the only thing one has left to cling to.

Other clergy respond in a similar vein: '...sometimes I wanted to quit. Especially during my entry into the ministry and the training. There were a lot of issues that I first needed to contemplate on and then to go forward.'<sup>141</sup> I think sometimes it is a floundering or we are just going through this and we feel that we aren't making any real impact. We do not know how to be present with people in their situations.<sup>142</sup>

In *Ministry and Spirituality*, Henri Nouwen thoughtfully reveals another aspect of this feeling of inadequacy among clergy. 'But today many ministers feel that they are amateurs in every field and professionals in none. And in the middle of this confusion they often feel very inadequate, suffer from painfully low self-esteem, and doubt if their theology can be made operational to such a degree that people can be helped in an effective way.'<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor*, p. 24.

<sup>140</sup> Cathy Be Boer, same interview.

<sup>141</sup> Rev Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

<sup>142</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>143</sup> Henri Nouwen, *Ministry and Spirituality*, New York: Continuum, 1996, p.51.

Without sounding like a masochist it seems that somehow disappointments and hardships make us stronger in our ministries. Biblical evidence also seems to suggest that people like the Apostle Paul (particularly in Romans 5) welcomed difficulties in their Christian experience as it showed evidence of growth. This may be undoubtedly true for people of deep inner strength, such as Paul, but most mere mortals, who find themselves serving parishes, inevitably ask the question ‘what am I doing here?’ What seems to ring true for most clergy, is that once they reach this questioning stage in ministry and they have the courage to answer the question honestly, then they do sense a shift and a moving forward with a new found strength.

### ***5.6 Seeing the church in a new light***

Our conclusions about ministry and the church are brought to light through all the experiences we face in the years of service. Dennis De Lange writes of his daughters’ response to what they saw taking place in the church: ‘... and seeing how I was treated in ministry... they have a very bad picture of the church and what it should be.’<sup>144</sup>

Clergy also tend to realize that the church they thought was so caring, can sometimes leave them with a sense of abandonment. However, this sentiment has been countered by other ministers who express their deep appreciation for the care shown to them by the Methodist Church. Perhaps there are certain times in ministry when one feels more isolated and uncared for compared with other times. One minister expresses his disappointment with the lack of support offered to ministers:

The third thing would be a sense of the church not offering as much support. When I talk about the church I am talking about the structures of the church. Ministers feel that they are expected to care for others, but they are not being cared for themselves. A sense of loneliness. Another one is also the issue that we are supposed to be servants of the church and the church is not our employer. Yet there are times when they act as your employer. They can fire you, they can pay taxes on your behalf.

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<sup>144</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

When is the church your employer and when not? And when things are not going well the minister is punished, yet he or she may not be the cause of the fault. They can be suspended. The caring side of the church has perhaps not been as apparent.<sup>145</sup>

Unwritten in many Synod reports or Conference addresses is the sense of loneliness that many ministers feel. The irony of this is that a minister can be surrounded by plenty of parishioners, yet still feel incredibly isolated and lonely. One minister commented ‘I find lately that I am more alone.’<sup>146</sup>

The danger of developing a loner mentality in ministry is that we slowly become disengaged from the people for whom we are meant to be caring.<sup>147</sup> This marks the beginning of a vicious cycle; starting with our sense of aloneness, moving onto a neglect of our parishioners and then slowly a sense of abandonment and perhaps resentment, which finally ends up with the minister feeling more isolated and alone.

This sense of aloneness was reinforced through the following thoughts:

I think your experience in the ministry affects your ministry. If you are having a tough time with your colleagues, then it will affect your relationship with the congregation. Very often in the ministry you are isolated and you do not have a spring board, you have got to struggle along. You are tired and you are exhausted, your health is effected and yet you have to minister. So it is tough.<sup>148</sup>

So the question deserves asking: ‘does the church care for her clergy?’ Cynthia Xaba would answer positively to this statement. ‘When it comes to caring, our church, the Methodist Church, is actually very caring – especially compared with other churches. Especially to the ministers. I do not think there are other churches that look after their ministers as our church does.’<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>146</sup> Questionnaire sent in via post – Q. 10.

<sup>147</sup> Edward Wimberly, *Recalling our Own Stories*, p.22.

<sup>148</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

<sup>149</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

Rev De Lange reveals some of his pain:

Look, I am not quite sure how one does prepare in terms of the whole structure of the church when one seems to get no support from the top of the church. And that is where I have struggled from. If that support was there... but in ministry, whenever I have been in trouble the bishops have not believed you. You had to fight the bishops, you had to fight the hierarchy, so where do you go from there?<sup>150</sup>

The pain of ministry runs deep. Reading between the lines, in the following comment, one can understand that the pain caused in leaving ministers to fend for themselves and to find time to enhance their own training, leaves the clergy feeling abandoned and unwanted. A similar hurt seems to rise to the surface when one touches on the issue of age in the ministry. As one takes the rose-coloured glasses off, one sees the church in a new light:

At least I would not be at a point where if I had actually resigned from the ministry I felt it would not have mattered. 'Because I had lost focus in many ways and so in that sense somewhere you are in the church, but you are not! Somewhere you got lost. And that whole thing when you look at the church now, saying that all the older ministers basically need to get out. That the church needs to be seen to be getting in young ministers in order to fulfill the mission of the church. If you reach a stage of retirement you are basically told you are not wanted.'<sup>151</sup>

One can not restrict our view of the church to only the negative images that are imprinted into our minds. It is with relief that one finds some clergy who have been impacted in a positive way by the church and this is often by people within the Methodist Church. Rev Simanga Kumalo reflects on how a particular bishop left an indelible mark upon his idea of ministry:

In fact, when I entered the ministry, I was motivated by the ministry of Rev Paul Verryn – he was my Pastor in Soweto. He was the first white minister to go and live in a black

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<sup>150</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

<sup>151</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

township and that spoke volumes to me. That he was able to go and cross the racial lines. And not now, because of course now every Tom, Dick and Harry can go and live where they want, but at the time it was a difficult time, but he did that. The way he ministered at the time was based on grace. He was one of the most gracious ministers I know... But at the time, people were first in his life – he was gracious. He influenced me a lot. He was in the poor houses, praying for people and visiting people who had lost loved ones. At the time in our country it was amazing what he did for the people. He could relate his faith to the socio-economic situation that the country faced at the time. It was unbelievable.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

## **6 The impact of the political situation**

### ***6.1 State politics and the effect it has had on the formation of ministers.***

As has already been intimated throughout this paper, clergy do not minister in a vacuum. They are often products of their own communities and families and they are impacted upon through the various experiences that are happening around them. One finds that this is especially true when it comes to politics. Politics is ‘the polis, or civil community, ordering its life together on the basis of the public good. And to be human is to be a participant in that kind of community.’<sup>153</sup>

Philip Wogaman claims that the ‘Christian perspective on politics lies at the intersection between one’s understanding of the faith and one’s practical experience in civil society.’<sup>154</sup> For a large number of ministers, ordained in the MCSA between 1980 and 1999, their faith was undoubtedly impacted by what was taking place around them. Vuyo Dlamini speaks freely of how this impacted upon his life:

Well with state politics, I am a rural township boy (grew up in a rural area) and that influenced me and my thinking. Now you come to a church with a whole lot of politics and you have to adapt your thinking. Some of the political things still influence the way you relate to other people, because there is some stuff from the past. And they also play a role in church politics. But you try to make this cloud not confuse you.<sup>155</sup>

Themba Mntambo adds these sentiments with his own story:

Looking at state and community politics... as a young person the church was a place of safety and security. When we were detained and found a Methodist minister in the cell it said to me that the church was with me. So we could hide in churches, hold

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<sup>153</sup> J. Philip Wogaman, *Christian Perspectives on Politics*, London, SCM Press Ltd, p. 11.

<sup>154</sup> J. Philip Wogaman, *Christian perspectives on politics*, p. viii.

<sup>155</sup> Rev. Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

meetings in churches and even the church leaders, such as Tutu and Peter Storey, led the community when the politic leaders were not around. For me the church become a sign of hope... My own theology was also formed by what was taking place in South Africa. My involvement in church and spiritual life could not be separated from political life.<sup>156</sup>

Cynthia Xaba also speaks about how state politics have impacted upon her ministry. Her story is a recollection of a recent incident that took place in her community:

There are often times you are affected as a minister – because the mission of the church is different from that of the state. You go out and see people, but the politicians also have their own agendas and they feel threatened. As a minister there are some things that we need to challenge, in the state politics, in order to help transform the lives of the people. Especially here in Wembezi...<sup>157</sup>

Speaking from a slightly different context, David Moodley remembers how his local congregation reacted to the democratic elections in 1994:

I came in to ministry in 1989. In terms of State politics, at that stage, there was an inevitable move to democracy at large. The churches were not being harassed as much as they were prior to my time – in the 1970's. There were a couple of incidences but none that really affected me – it was mainly during the elections. During this time, especially during the first democratic elections in our country, my society was not really affected – well, not as much as say in the black communities.<sup>158</sup>

In his work *Theopolitical Imagination*, William Cavanaugh writes, 'too often the modern Christian theological imagination has got lost in the stories that sustain modern politics. The Christendom model assumed the legitimacy of the nation-state and tried to preserve the

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<sup>156</sup> Rev. Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>157</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

<sup>158</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.



established position of the Church in guiding it.<sup>159</sup> Karl Barth takes this further when he ponders the office of the State. ‘According to the Scriptures the office of the State is that of the servant of God who does not carry the sword to no purpose, but for rewarding the good and punishing the evil, for the rescue of the poor and the oppressed, and to make room externally for the free proclamation of the Gospel.’<sup>160</sup>

‘There are Christians who believe that Christianity should be a purely private matter, involving solely the spiritual health of the soul.’<sup>161</sup> Clearly many clergy within the Methodist Church in Southern Africa, particularly during the 1980’s never felt this way. They felt that one could not focus solely on your own soul without reflecting on what was taking place in the country, especially if it was affecting the welfare of Christians. Walter Wink adds, ‘Jesus followers are to maintain domination-free relationships in a discipleship of equals that includes women. The hierarchical relationship of master and slave, teacher and student, is not to persist...’<sup>162</sup>

Although Hugh Montefiore writes mainly from an English point of view he makes a strong point on the involvement of the church and any particular political party. ‘The church should never identify with any party... to identify the church with a political party suggests that that party has the straight route to the kingdom of heaven on earth... It also prevents the subjection of all the policies of the chosen party to the critical scrutiny of the word of God.’<sup>163</sup>

Hugh Montefiore goes as far to say that ‘if Christians refuse to get involved in politics, their very silence has political implications.’<sup>164</sup> It was during 1985 a group of ecumenical Christian theologians in South Africa commented on the political situation via a document known as the Kairos document. This document showed that many Christians were not content to sit back with a ‘pray, wait and see’ attitude, but rather chose to respond through

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<sup>159</sup> William T. Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination*, (Scotland: T & T Clark Ltd, 2002), p.3.

<sup>160</sup> Karl Barth, *The Church and the Political problem of our day*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1939), p. 52.

<sup>161</sup> Hugh Montefiore, *Christianity and Politics*, (Hampshire: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1990), p.2

<sup>162</sup> Walter Wink, *When the power falls*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), p. 7.

<sup>163</sup> Hugh Montefiore, *Christianity and Politics*, p.26.

<sup>164</sup> Hugh Montefiore, *Christianity and Politics*, p.23.

radical reform and justice.<sup>165</sup> Political theology often sees itself responding to a crisis, a *kairos*, a moment of truth.<sup>166</sup> John Yoder speaks about a *kairos* moment as being a revelation. ‘The political existence of the incarnate one, that is the decisions of Jesus in the face of his political problems, are a revelation of God’s command in the realm of politics.’<sup>167</sup> It was precisely this *kairos* moment, during the stranglehold of apartheid, when the churches chose to voice their discontent at the injustices and unchristian attitudes that were prevailing.

From another corner comes a word of caution. ‘Too often political theology, even when advocated in the name of the church, has been theologically superficial. Though it may reflect admirable sentiments and concerns, it can lack theological consistency and coherence and thus theological warrant.’<sup>168</sup>

Politics within the South African context has impacted upon people and ministers from every walk of life. No one can say that they have not been affected by it. This is especially true of the Methodist ministers who trained during the turbulent 1980’s and 1990’s. These are the comments of white minister who grew up during this time period and who also trained for the ministry at the same time.

I think with the political landscape changing, there are still some folk who are locked into the past – the apartheid thing and the whole racial tension. Still vying for power in the church and so on. I think the landscape has changed for me. For example, I used to be very anti-police, because I thought they were all involved in upholding apartheid. I have subsequently learnt that that was not the case. But the political landscape has changed such that I think my involvement in the political activism is still relevant for me today because I still believe that the church needs to be in the world – not of the world, but in the world. So community Police forums and so on are important. I involve myself in these things...<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Hugh Montefiore, *Christianity and Politics*, p.7

<sup>166</sup> Duncan Forrester, *Theology and Politics*, (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 154.

<sup>167</sup> John Howard Yoder, *Discipleship as political responsibility*, (Ontario: Herald Press, 2003), p. 54.

<sup>168</sup> Eberhard Jungel, *Christ, Justice and Peace*, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992), p. ix

<sup>169</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

Simanga Kumalo speaks of the impact that politics had on his social outlook and the role the church can play in addressing the imbalances:

... in a way, being in the South African situation one has been aware that there is a politics of inequality in the country. It has forced one to realize that there is this inequality and that humanity can create lies and one can support this lie until it becomes a truth. The church is able to unpack each and every lie which we bring. It can then go to scripture and say that "it is a lie." Scripture can liberate us.<sup>170</sup>

The political violence that gripped South Africa during the apartheid era had an immediate effect on the ministry of many ministers in the Methodist Church. In his work, *The Casspir and the Cross*, Philippe Denis writes, 'refugees came to occupy their church halls. The funerals they conducted were disrupted by police. They had to take risks to visit parishioners in no-go areas.'<sup>171</sup> Even though ministers refused to see themselves as political activists and may have refused to align themselves with any political party, the political climate of these two decades undoubtedly impacted upon these ministers.

It seems as though Methodism has been linked with politics from the early days of the movement. 'In politics, Wesley's Methodism was lampooned by an early generation of political radicals in Britain for its narrow devotion to the status quo, while members of the British Labour Party have nostalgically searched for their radical roots in the religion of the Methodist Chapels.'<sup>172</sup> Charles Villa-Vicencio adds his thoughts to this debate, 'democracy appears in the history of humanity as the liberation of men from certain other categories of individuals among them who abused their social position and strength to exploit unjustly the mass of people in general.'<sup>173</sup>

The Methodist Church was very active and outspoken against apartheid, although it was often individuals who led the criticism of the policies of government. As a church,

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<sup>170</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

<sup>171</sup> Denis, *The Casspir and the Cross*, p.9.

<sup>172</sup> David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 203

<sup>173</sup> Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, Cape Town, David Philip, 1986, p.169.

Methodists aligned themselves with Jesus as he spoke out against a system of domination. In Jesus' day, those who were in power, both politically and religiously sought to assert their power on the ordinary people. Walter Wink reflects on this when he writes, 'the failure of churches to continue Jesus' struggle to overcome domination is one of the most damning apostasies in its history. With some thrilling exceptions, *the churches of the world have never yet decided that domination is wrong.*'<sup>174</sup> Thankfully this could not be said of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and her ministers were particularly vocal in fighting for the cause of the oppressed.

In his work, *Christian resistance to Apartheid: Ecumenism in South Africa: 1960 -1987*, Methodist minister Darryl Balia wrote, 'In the face of these social ills, Christians and churches are challenged to move beyond descriptions, impressions and moral outcries to searching analyses of the political systems.'<sup>175</sup>

In moving to a conclusion on this point I want to focus on a comment made via one of the questionnaires. On the issue of politics in general a minister wrote, 'Politics informs my preaching and worldview.'<sup>176</sup> This is a wonderful reflection on the impact of all forms of politics on our ministry. We must not be consumed by it, but we can not ignore it. If we allow what takes place in our world to shape us and then to critically respond to it, we are being wise stewards of the Gospel entrusted into our care.

## **6.2 Have the Prophets fallen silent?**

We focused earlier on a quote by Walter Wink which lamented the fact that the churches of the world have not yet decided that domination is wrong. We mentioned that the Methodist Church was one exception to this statement. However, Wink continues further by explaining that the church can not tackle evil on a piecemeal basis. He explains:

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<sup>174</sup> Walter Wink, *When the power falls*, p.11.

<sup>175</sup> Darryl Balia, *Christian resistance to Apartheid: Ecumenism in South Africa 1960 – 1987*, Braamfontein, Skotaville Publishers, 1989, p.165.

<sup>176</sup> Questionnaire – Q.10.

Even in countries where the churches have been deeply identified with revolution, there has been a tendency to focus on only one aspect of domination, such as political freedom, and to ignore economic injustice, authoritarianism, the immorality of war, domestic violence, hierarchicalism, patriarchy, and the physical and sexual abuse of children.<sup>177</sup>

If there is a present danger in the modern Methodist Church, it is that we rest on our laurels and think that the work has been done. In fact, there is a sense that the work will never be finished. The prophets who courageously spoke out against apartheid now need to lead the way and speak out against the new 'evils' of our South Africa society. These evils could easily include corruption, immorality, neglect of the poor, crime, abuse of women and children and lingering racism.

It would seem that Rev Themba Mntambo agrees: 'The church needs to have a role in challenging the politics of the day – being a prophetic voice in the midst of all that goes on. I personally can not be a member of a political party – yes I can have sympathy, but I can't be involved in one. I need to keep a prophetic distance.'<sup>178</sup> Charles Villa-Vicencio adds, '... the church itself needs a prophet, and Desmond Tutu is on record as having reminded this church of its obligation to address itself to violation of human rights in Africa.'<sup>179</sup>

Rev Simanga Kumalo concurs with these sentiments, when he speaks about the strength of the church, as representing the body of Christ, and having the opportunity to address any injustice: 'But it is has the abilities to raise voices and prophets in its midst who come up and rescue it and that is what is great about the body of Christ.'<sup>180</sup>

On some level Rev Kumalo is speaking about the disturbing element of toleration. Toleration is often quiet diplomacy at its best and chooses rather not to challenge the status quo in order to protect some self interest. William Cavanaugh regards toleration as the beginning point of

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<sup>177</sup> Walter Wink, *When the power falls*, p.11.

<sup>178</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>179</sup> Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, (Cape Town, David Philip, 1986), p. 165.

<sup>180</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

the eventual downfall of the church. He argues that ‘toleration ironically becomes the tool through which the church is divided and conquered.’<sup>181</sup>

It was during the days of apartheid that Charles Villa-Vicencio recognized that being a prophet in a land caught up in political upheaval is never easy. He writes: ‘Indeed those who have remained faithful to the prophetic tradition of the church have been condemned by those who have deviated from this tradition.’<sup>182</sup> Whilst this was undeniably true during this turbulent time in the history of South Africa, it seems even more real in our modern political climate. This is particularly true of black clergy who are brave enough to speak prophetically into the lives of the country’s leaders. These modern day prophets are labeled as unpatriotic or siding with the opposition or even as trouble causers. Yet, it seems that every generation needs a prophetic voice to hold the country accountable to patterns of life laid down by God. If there is injustice and domestic violence in our land, then the ministers of all churches should be able to speak out against it. Faith, loyalty to Christ, and love for one’s neighbour, should compel all believers to speak with the courage of the Prophets of old.

A phenomenon of an emerging democracy, especially in our South African context, is one of ‘political correctness.’ Everyone is highly sensitive to the wrongs of apartheid. Ideologies were forced upon our nation and certain Christians played a role in enforcing these upon the people of South Africa. The pendulum has now swung the other way and there is a sense in which the church is seeking not to cause further offence and so tries to be diplomatic about sensitive issues in our land. This has begun to frustrate the clergy and one minister expressed his concern as follows: ‘I get frustrated and angry when the church has to be seen to be ‘politically correct’ in its statements and decisions – for example on issues such as homosexuality and the interpretation of scripture.’<sup>183</sup> This quiet diplomacy can be seen as one form of silence. When the church should be speaking prophetically on these issues there is a deafening silence that resonates throughout our land.

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<sup>181</sup> William Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination*, p. 42.

<sup>182</sup> Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*.

<sup>183</sup> Rev Bev Hill – same questionnaire.

As has been made mention, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa was fairly vocal against the ideology of apartheid, although most of the challenge initially originated from individual voices. Darryl Balia, himself a Methodist minister at the time, was one of these voices. In his book *Christian resistance to Apartheid: Ecumenism in South Africa 1960 – 1987*, he wrote:

The church and Christians alike have a prophetic role, part of which consists in the public denunciation of the evils of society. For this denunciation to be socially valid, it is not sufficient for church leaders simply to denounce what they think is evil. A moral judgement on political matters cannot avoid being based on particular social analysis.<sup>184</sup>

He continues by adding, ‘for the Christian is called not to oppress but to free, not to dominate but to equalize, not to stifle but to educate for liberation. It is only in opting for such an authentic praxis that the risk of faith is placed at the service of humanity.’<sup>185</sup> Balia would argue that true prophets can not remain silent. Regardless of their past victories or struggles, prophets need to keep the voice of Christ and the church audible so that our communities continually hear the truth of the Gospel. The church loses her authority to speak prophetically if she condones certain practises by remaining silent.

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<sup>184</sup> Darryl Balia, *Christian resistance to Apartheid: Ecumenism in South Africa 1960 – 1987*, p.171

<sup>185</sup> Darryl Balia, *Christian resistance to Apartheid: Ecumenism in South Africa 1960 – 1987*, p.175

## **7. Two important debates in the Methodist Church**

### ***7.1 The impact of church politics upon ministry.***

When one takes a deeper look at clergy within the South African context, it becomes clear that they have been shaped by politics – that is by both church politics<sup>186</sup> and government (or state) politics. By ‘church politics’ one implies the way in which issues and decisions are handled in the broader Methodist Church. It also involves the ‘ordering of life’ on a local church level and consequently on a national level. Another aspect of ‘politics’ per se has been the treatment of women in the church and especially in the ministry.<sup>187</sup>

We often look at the political wrangling that goes on in most churches as being totally negative, yet if we are honest, we would need to agree that the church is a body of people and just like any organization which is ‘people driven’ there will be hidden agendas amongst the members. ‘On the church front, the church is just the same as any other organization and in a way one needs to say ‘why shouldn’t it have politics in it.’’<sup>188</sup>

Rev Themba Mntambo continues:

Where it begins to become a problem is when people who are involved in church politics take away other people’s dignity and when they disrespect other people and also the politics that will be involved in jockeying for positions instead of allowing for discernment... the time it goes wrong is when certain people push their agenda or when people appoint someone into office so that their agenda can be pushed. That is when the church becomes a dirty place.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> In our new democracy we speak of being ‘politically correct’ in a number of arenas. One of these is certainly centred around women and their perceived role in the community.

<sup>188</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>189</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.



The invitation system has also caused some rumblings and is seen, by many ministers, as being a major contributor to church politics: ‘With church politics, besides the usual power struggles and the things that normally go on in the church, there was one thing that hasn’t really hampered my ministry, but it has just been one of the not healthy happenings. Invitations in the MCSA are done basically, by and large, on colour or culture backgrounds.’<sup>190</sup>

The reality of power struggles and jockeying for positions is an unfortunate element in the church. However, it seems that a lot of ministers are quite content to be ‘blissfully unaware’ of the goings on, until the politics within the church begins to impact upon them or they choose to meddle in it.

But the problem is when you get into a circuit you get quite blasé, unless the politics of the church negatively impacts upon your circuit. You just get so caught up in your own work. You are trying to better yourself in ministry, but in the end... unless you are directly involved in it you don’t actually see what’s going on. The politics in the church only really affects you if it impacts upon you negatively or if you actually consciously engage in it.<sup>191</sup>

Rev Simanga Kumalo reflects on politics in the church in the following thoughts:

Political organizations will come and go, but the church will never disappear. The people will always have a home, no matter who they are. So when I am here at the moment I am cynical about the church, sometimes, especially about the way some things are done, but at the same time, the question comes – “if not the church, then what?” and I never go beyond that. So the church is God’s gift to humanity. It can be manipulated by people, because it is a human enterprise (as much as it is divine) but it is run by people and they have the capability to manipulate it and use it for their own gains.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>191</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>192</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

Simanga Kumalo reminds us that although some ministers may clamour for power in the church and try to influence the political environment within the church, the Methodist Church in Southern Africa was actually planted by a lay-person, namely Barnabas Shaw. 'And so that is a powerful reality that the Methodist Church in our country was planted by a lay-person, a soldier ... That is unique. It goes beyond the politics of ecclesiology, where you think that you always need someone needs to be ordained to plant the church of Christ.'<sup>193</sup>

There is another aspect of church politics that needs to be mentioned and that is the issue of the stipends of ministers. It was a policy of the church, particularly during the early 1980's, to pay its ministers different stipends depending on their racial identity. This was not only a policy of the Methodist Church, but seemed to be rooted in a number of the mainline denominations. Presbyterian minister, Rev Siphon Mtetwa, who studied alongside many Methodists at Fedsem, between the years 1981-1983, shares the following story, 'there was apartheid in the church. My first stipend cheque was a paltry four hundred rand, whereas my white counterpart, a classmate ... received nine hundred. And yet we received the same theological training. Sooner or later I was going to do something about this. But it landed me in hot water with the church authorities.'<sup>194</sup>

Before we conclude this section on politics in the church it would be good to mention the Black Methodist Consultation (BMC). When black Methodists saw the blatant racism in the church they responded to it by forming the BMC. 'Although the Methodist Church took a stand against apartheid and proclaimed itself 'one and undivided' many black clergy had a different experience.'<sup>195</sup> Darryl Balia remarks that for many black Methodists the 'one and undivided church' simply did not exist on an empirical level.<sup>196</sup> So the BMC was formed in

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<sup>193</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

<sup>194</sup> Siphon Mtetwa, 'Ministering in a bleeding South Africa: The Life story of a Black minister during the dirty years of Apartheid', in Philippe Denis (ed.) *The making of an Indigenous Clergy in Southern Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p.184

<sup>195</sup> Mokhele Madise, 'From Mokone to the Black Methodist Consultation: Challenging racism in the Methodist Church of South Africa', in Philippe Denis (ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p.270.

<sup>196</sup> Darryl Balia, *Black Methodists and White Supremacy in South Africa*, (Durban: Madiba Publications, 1991), p.87

1975 under the leadership of Ernest Baartman and Khoza Mgojo and initially sought to address the arrogance of the white leadership in the church. The BMC wanted recognition in the church and they wanted a church with equal power sharing.<sup>197</sup>

The political struggle within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has had its roots in the apparent racism that has been prevalent in the church since the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>198</sup> Rev Mokhele Madise reflects deeply on the life of Mangena Mokone, who eventually broke away from the white-controlled Methodist Church in 1892.<sup>199</sup> Many of the reasons given by Mokone, for his resignation from the church, were still practiced in the church up until late in the twentieth century. This brought Madise to this conclusion: 'It would be naïve to think that the Methodist Church has always opposed racism... it is true that the Christian Citizen Department came out against apartheid as early as 1958 in its document on race relations... (yet) they continue to maintain black ministers in subordinate positions.'<sup>200</sup>

Among the many issues on the agenda of the Black Methodist Consultation were the separate synods for black and white ministers (including the issues of separate catering and sleeping arrangements at these synods), the quest of the white leaders to retain power and suppress their black colleagues, the thorny issue of the then South African Defence Force<sup>201</sup> and the discrimination in financial assistance to ministerial families.<sup>202</sup>

Similar sentiments are echoed by Rev Lymon Dlangalala who commented that 'the synods were separate. The whites used to have their own... we had separate dining halls, separate toilets, and separate sleeping arrangements. Worship in the church was strictly on racial lines. There was no secret about it.'<sup>203</sup> Rev Don Shongwe adds, '... there was a lot of double

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<sup>197</sup> Thulani Mlotshwa, 'Struggles from within: The Black Caucuses' quest for recognition', in Philippe Denis (ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p. 260.

<sup>198</sup> Denis, P.,(ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, p.266.

<sup>199</sup> Denis, P.,(ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, p.267.

<sup>200</sup> Denis, P.,(ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, p.270.

<sup>201</sup> This particularly a thorny issue as the Methodist Church had Chaplains who served in the SADF and these posts were spoken about at synods.

<sup>202</sup> Thulani Mlotshwa, 'Struggles from within: The Black Caucuses' quest for recognition', in Philippe Denis (ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p.261.

<sup>203</sup> Quote in Philippe Denis, *Casspir and the Cross*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Books, 1999), p.35.

crossing in the church. Our white brethren were not sincere. They often sided with the government.<sup>204</sup>

Darryl Balia reminds us that the BMC was intended as a 'Black Consciousness formation' and so its membership was exclusively black.<sup>205</sup> Not surprisingly black caucuses, such as the BMC, were met with differing reactions across the church spectrum, with many white Methodists feeling threatened. 'The BMC found itself confronted by fears and insecurities in many quarters of the church.'<sup>206</sup> It is also pointed out that 'many whites were uncomfortable with these developments. The black caucuses were labelled as racist. Some thought that they would break away and form separate black churches... On the positive side, there were a few whites who welcomed the move. They saw it as a step in the right direction.'<sup>207</sup>

What is interesting is that many white ministers are now calling for the closure of the BMC as they feel it has served its purpose and that it now excludes them from any meetings. It is being seen as discrimination in reverse. The irony in this sentiment is surely not missed by many of the black ministers' who laboured for years to gain equal rights for all Methodist ministers. There are indeed a number of black ministers who still feel that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa is not a "one and undivided church" and so they will continue to use the BMC as a forum for addressing these imbalances.

In a conversation with one of the interviewees I sensed a growing frustration with some of the church organizations, including the BMC and the Young Men's Guild<sup>208</sup>. This minister was not saying that they did not play a role in the church, they were merely questioning the future focus of these organizations. Another minister spoke of the continuing need to empower black people within the church and so the BMC still has a key part to play in fulfilling this goal.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Denis, *Casspir and the Cross*, p.35.

<sup>205</sup> Daryl Balia, *Black Methodists and White Supremacy in South Africa*, p. 90.

<sup>206</sup> Daryl Balia, *Black Methodists and White Supremacy in South Africa*, p. 91.

<sup>207</sup> Thulani Mlotshwa, 'Struggles from within: The Black Caucuses' quest for recognition', in Philippe Denis (ed.), *Orality, Memory and the Past*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000), p.263.

<sup>208</sup> Name kept anonymous.

<sup>209</sup> Name kept anonymous.

It is also pertinent to note that the BMC saw the Methodist Connexional Office (MCO) as a strategic place in which to get black ministers into power. The position of the general secretary was especially coveted as the position to elect a black person to. In their interviews, recorded in the *Casspir and the Cross*, Reverend's Don Shongwe, Alison Chonco and Lymon Dlangalala make this point clear. Rev Dlangalala says: 'we were able to push Dr Stanley Mogoba's name to be elected as the first general secretary of the MCO... that was a giant step. It thus opened many avenues which were closed to us...' <sup>210</sup>

Rev Themba Zwane, himself a Methodist minister at the time, commented on the dynamic of church 'politics' during the 1980's, especially in the area of inequality and segregation: 'There was no worshipping together, there was no joint service. The administration for the whole church rested in white hands. The law of the church favoured the whites. It never ever considered the feelings of the black people.' <sup>211</sup>

## ***7.2 The struggle of being a woman in ministry.***

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the ordination of women in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Despite this fact, many women have struggled to minister in a male dominated church and there have been many hurtful moments for them. One female minister commenting on her time of ministerial training, says, 'there were also a few other women ministers there... it was during the time when women were not fully accepted in ministry. We stood by each other, because a few of our brothers in the ministry didn't understand why we wanted to be ministers. We got a hard time from them sometimes and even from our lecturers too. But we survived.' <sup>212</sup>

Woman ministers have needed to band together to fight against the stereotypical attitude of many of their male colleagues and slowly these men are learning to accept women in ministry and work alongside them. This issue goes even deeper than purely a gender issue. On some levels it begins to challenge various cultural norms too. I asked one women minister

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<sup>210</sup> Denis, *Casspir and the Cross*, p.50.

<sup>211</sup> Denis, *Casspir and the Cross*, p. 33.

<sup>212</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

if men had slowly changed their mindsets and relaxed a bit. This was her reply, ‘... they have relaxed a bit, but there are still many who struggle with it. In our culture the men won’t allow the women to lead and so it does become difficult. Even now we face some difficulties. In this community people have accepted me and even invite me now and then to various things. Which means they like me...’<sup>213</sup>

Lavinia Byrne, writing from a Roman Catholic context, reflects on the exclusion of women from the ordained ministry in the following way:

Where the churches refuse ordination to women, where they say of women that they are unordainable, what are they saying about God and what are they saying about women? If sacraments are ways in which God names people and shares this naming with the church, if they are this rather than magic, then the root question becomes, can women know God and bring God into the lives of others, (and) bring others before God?<sup>214</sup>

The debate about women in ministry vacillates between the poles of total exclusion to the extreme of feminism. Many scholars use scripture to argue their points and enough evidence can be found to support both a ‘for’ and ‘against’ argument. In her work *Women Leaders and the Church*, Linda Belleville comes to following conclusion: ‘... God gifts women in exactly the same ways he gifts men. Nowhere in the New Testament are gifts restricted to a particular gender.’<sup>215</sup> ‘God places men and women in leadership to serve, watch over, and protect those he has committed to their care.’<sup>216</sup> Our mandate in this paper is not to enter fully into debate, but merely to acknowledge the struggles and joys of being a woman in the ordained ministry.

Reflecting on the role of the early Methodist Church in encouraging women in the ministry, David Hempton writes, ‘Feminist scholars still disagree about whether Methodism advanced

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<sup>213</sup> Name kept anonymous.

<sup>214</sup> Lavinia Byrne, *Women before God*, (London, SPCK, 1988), p. 46.

<sup>215</sup> Linda L. Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, (Michigan, Baker Books, 2000), p. 181.

<sup>216</sup> James Beck and Craig Blomberg (eds.), *Two views on women in Ministry*, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 2001, p. 286

or hindered women's liberation.'<sup>217</sup> Whatever ambivalence transpired in the past is slowly being readdressed as women are given greater acknowledgement in the church.

Rev Cathy De Boer shares some of her pain of being a woman in ministry: 'I think another thing in the ministry that causes some pain, is the whole stationing thing... especially for women. Yes, I have been in two year appointments for the last ten years and this is also now a two year appointment. To me that is also not the ideal. You can not do anything in that time.'<sup>218</sup>

Towards the end of her book *Women before God*, Byrne touches on the topic of role models for women in ministry.<sup>219</sup> It seems that within her context there have been a shortage of women role models – women who have inspired other women to enter the priesthood. Within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa there is a slightly different scenario. Whilst being an ordained women minister, amongst many male peers, is not easy, the women who were ordained between 1980 and 1999 have had the towering example of Rev Constance Oosthuizen to inspire them. Constance was the first woman to be ordained in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and that was in the year 1976.<sup>220</sup>

Since then more women have taken the mantle and have proven to be an inspiration to others considering the calling to the ordained ministry. The first black woman to be ordained in Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Nikiwe Mavis Mbilini, also contributed enormously to this list of powerful women role models<sup>221</sup>. Another towering example is Bishop Purity Malinga, herself ordained in 1988, who is the first woman to be appointed a Bishop in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Her appointment is certainly not an attempt to be politically correct and if one took the time to interview the ministers who serve in her district, one would hear an overwhelming positive assessment of her leadership ability.

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<sup>217</sup> David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, p. 203.

<sup>218</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

<sup>219</sup> Lavinia Byrne, *Women before God*, p. 107.

<sup>220</sup> Constance Oosthuizen, *Conquerors through Christ: The untold story of the Methodist Deaconess in South Africa*, Port Shepstone: The Deaconess Order of the MCSA, 1990, p. x.

<sup>221</sup> Constance Oosthuizen, *Conquerors through Christ*, p. x.

With a few exceptions, most woman ministers within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa battle the gender issue on two fronts. Firstly, there is a struggle to prove themselves amongst their male colleagues and to show that they are worthy enough to be a woman in the ordained ministry. Secondly, there are still many congregational members who traditionally see women as not taking a lead role in the running of a church.<sup>222</sup>

Congregation members are fine with women being involved in certain roles in the life of a church, but there is still a reticence in worshipping under the authority of a woman minister. Thus, being a woman in ministry is tough. So much emotional energy is spent in fighting these two battles that one wonders how women ministers have sufficient energy to minister to their congregations effectively. This fight for recognition is surely an unfair burden to place upon their shoulders.

Lavinia Byrne challenges perspectives of women in ministry by arguing: 'Where women's identity is allowed to be distinctive, where women's experience of development is vindicated as a legitimate way to God, this way is made accessible to more people, including those men who are learning to recognise and nurture the divine image as an image of wholeness.'<sup>223</sup>

Reflecting on the burden that women in the ministry have to face, Rev Constance Oosthuizen believes that women may have to just accept this for the time being. 'Although women can serve in the church as deaconess and ministers it must be borne in mind that there are certain problems which have to be faced... women have to accept that it is so.'<sup>224</sup> She continues by speaking of the loneliness of being a woman in ministry. 'A woman can be much more lonely in the work, particularly if single, and such loneliness must be accepted.'<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Constance Oosthuizen, *Conquerors through Christ*, p. 77.

<sup>223</sup> Lavinia Byrne, *Women before God*, p. 69.

<sup>224</sup> Constance Oosthuizen, *Conquerors through Christ*, p. 77.

<sup>225</sup> Constance Oosthuizen, *Conquerors through Christ*, p.77.



Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger speak of a 'stained glass ceiling' for women in the ministry. They speak of this in the context of the fact that women are less likely to be chosen as senior ministers in flourishing and desirable churches.<sup>226</sup> It is still a reality that in many Protestant denominations the congregations prefer men as senior pastors. Thus a 'stained glass ceiling' for women ministers is created. Although in some areas of Southern Africa this is slowly starting to change, one would have to concur with these sentiments. This is especially true in the Methodist context. Some would use 'cultural traditions' or 'our patriarchal society' as arguments for this phenomenon in the Church. However, regardless of cultural norms the 'glass ceiling' exists in almost all Southern Africa churches. In reality the ceiling is slowly starting to crack, but it could take generations before it no longer exists.

Yet, with all the struggles women face in the ministry, there is definitely place for them in church leadership. Women certainly bring a different perspective and expression to ministry. Rev Beauty Dlamini who serves as minister (not in the Methodist Church) shares on the unique insight and bond a woman in ministry can have with other women in the local church:

There is that motherhood within me. I want to be with the women. I don't want to be away from them and even if some of them do not want to come to me, I try to work with them. I am more often with the mothers because I know their needs. I help them a great deal as a mother. It is easier for me than for male pastors. I can go places where they cannot go.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition: Why clergy leave local church ministry*, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing company, 2005, p.45.

<sup>227</sup> Beauty Dlamini, 'Three Pastors under the same roof: the story of a woman minister', in Philippe Denis' (ed.) *The Making of an Indigenous Clergy in Southern Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2000, p. 180.

## **8 Resigning, Retiring and Relocating**

Our reflection on chapter three indicated the numbers of ordained ministers leaving the Methodist Church. While some of these ministers left through expected avenues, such as retirement or even death, there are alarming numbers who either resigned or relocated overseas. This chapter will take a closer look at the reasons for these trends.

### **8.1 Major causes of resignations**

In their work *Pastors in Transition: Why clergy leave local church ministry*, Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger conducted extensive research into the reasons why clergy left the local church. Although this research was done in the United States of America we can certainly see a number of similarities with the situation in Southern Africa. The research done by Hoge and Wenger focused on a number of different denominations (including the United Methodist Church) and the most common reasons for clergy leaving the America churches were: opportunities for new ministries, burnout and stress, family needs, conflicts, doctrinal conflicts, marital difficulties, financial issues, sexual misconduct, health reasons and desire to study further.<sup>228</sup>

In our South African context, the reasons for ministers resigning from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, include the following: divorce, issues of doctrine, a dilemma of calling, financial stress, burn out, power struggles, conflict between people and church related issues. The similarity with our America counterparts is striking and I am convinced that we would have similar findings in most church groups around the world.

David Moodley's comments on the subject of why people resign from the ministry are very candid and succinct:

... a few left (the ministry) because they just did not feel called anymore – ministry was more than they bargained for. Some of them left or moved on to Connexions

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<sup>228</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p.36.

outside South Africa and others to Para-churches or other employment. This could have been due to gifting or maybe something else. The last group moved off because of doctrinal issues or because they felt the church wasn't vibrant enough for them – not charismatic enough. I do not mean charismatic in style, but rather in nature.<sup>229</sup>

In the context of the clergy ordained in our focal period, resignation affected ninety eight ministers. This is 15 % of the total number of ministers ordained and is a large enough number to seriously reflect on the causes of resignation within a church context, especially that of the MCSA. Resignation inevitably impacts upon all forms of ministry and the Methodist Church is no exception. In this regard the Laws and Disciplines of the Methodist Church comments on resignation as follows: 'a minister who resigns, or has been deemed by Conference or the Connexional Executive to have resigned from the ministry ceases to be a minister and may not perform any of the functions or use the title or dress of a minister.'<sup>230</sup>

In the context of this paper it would be impossible to deal with all the reasons for Methodist ministers resigning from the church. I have chosen just four of what I believe are key reasons for ministers leaving the ministry<sup>231</sup>. These four reasons have been compiled with the assistance of the clergy I interviewed.

### **8.1.1 Financial stress**

On the issue of financial stress within ministry Mary Anne Coate writes 'this is but one of the more hidden sources of stress in what appears on the surface to be a rather secure existence.'<sup>232</sup> In one of the interviews I asked what had been some of the contributing factors in friends and colleagues leaving the ministry. The response was clear that financial constraints play a leading role in clergy leaving the church. 'For those that I know, one has

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<sup>229</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

<sup>230</sup> The Laws and Disciplines of the Methodist Church: Tenth Edition, 2000, paragraph 4.92, p.41.

<sup>231</sup> I have intentionally not covered any reasons of resignation linked with sexual misconduct, divorce and doctrinal issues. I acknowledge that these are often key reasons in clergy resigning from the church, but for the sake of focus I have avoided concentrating on them in this paper.

<sup>232</sup> Mary Anne Coate, *Clergy Stress*, p. 13.

been financial struggles. At a certain point in their life they realized that they couldn't cope with the financial constraints and they were offered something else.<sup>233</sup>

Themba Mntambo's thoughts are echoed by Rev Dennis De Lange who remarks:

I know that we should be relying on God and that whatever they are going to pay you will be wonderful, but in reality it's not. You have a family... What about your children? So the tendency is get into a big church where you will be paid adequately and like a lot of ministers there is no way they will go to a small church. So where is the calling? ...So yes, it has a lot to do with finance.<sup>234</sup>

Rev Cathy De Boer is another minister who agrees with these thoughts: 'Thankfully nowadays we are getting a bit more of a reasonable salary. But I think of days gone by and a lot of people have left because they just couldn't cope anymore. Especially if there is family involved.'<sup>235</sup>

Writing in *Ministry and Money: A Guide for clergy and their friends* Dan Hotchkiss expresses his agreement with the sentiments expressed by Reverends De Lange and De Boer. This is in particular reference to the issue of ministers moving to areas where their spouses may not be able to find employment and consequently place the family in a situation of dependence. He concludes:

... many clergy today are married to spouses who make more money than they do. There is nothing wrong with that, except that it puts clergy in a doubly dependant situation relying on both spouse and congregation. One consequence for congregations is that it can be difficult to attract the leader of their choice. Even when the match is good, the clergy family may not feel that it can give up a higher-paying job in favour of a lower-income calling.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>234</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

<sup>235</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview

<sup>236</sup> Dan Hotchkiss, *Ministry and Money: A Guide for clergy and their friends*, (Bethesda, The Alban Institute, 2002) p. xi.

Although it was not clearly stated by the ministers interviewed, there seems to be a growing number of clergy spouses who are choosing to work. In part, this could be due to the financial strain placed on a family within the ministry or it could just be symptomatic of spouses choosing to have their own careers. While there is nothing inherently wrong with the spouses choosing to focus on their own sense of vocation, it undoubtedly places further strain on the family life with a ministerial home. Apart from trying to balance two contrasting timetables there is also the added pressure of which vocation carries more importance. Mary Anne Coate writes: ‘on a deeper level conflicts arise over the competing claims of ‘mere jobs’ and ‘overriding vocations.’<sup>237</sup>

Although much has changed in the Methodist Church since the time of the Wesley family, the issues of financial stress still seem to be as pertinent today in Southern Africa, as they were in eighteenth century England. David Hempton writes on this issue: ‘...hence, financial problems in churches, as with families, are never confined to the account books and are rarely about money alone. Financial stresses and strains within Methodism exposed manifold layers of conflicts endemic in the wider society.’<sup>238</sup>

‘Unfortunately the financial lives of many clergy are in disarray. This state of affairs is due partly, but by no means only, to our being underpaid. A low salary does not always lead to financial disorder.’<sup>239</sup> This is a bold statement to make, yet it comes from someone who has struggled with financial issues and the Church. We note that whilst many clergy within the Methodist Church could be receiving better salaries outside the church, they are by no means being underpaid at the present time. This obviously excludes a few exceptions where clergy are not being paid their assessments or traveling allowances, but this is another issue altogether.

Essentially a number of the financial stresses, which may have contributed to clergy leaving the Methodist Church, could have equally been a result of poor financial management as

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<sup>237</sup> Mary Anne Coate, *Clergy Stress*, p. 13.

<sup>238</sup> David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, p. 110

<sup>239</sup> Dan Hotchkiss, *Ministry and Money: A Guide for clergy and their friends*, p. 19.

much as it may have been lack of caring from the church. One must be careful not to make a generalization that because clergy left the Methodist Church it was only due to poor salaries.

We end this section with a frank remark made by Dan Hotchkiss: ‘Most of us who choose to enter the ministry... do so with at least some sense of financial sacrifice.’<sup>240</sup> For every person who decides to enter the full time ordained ministry there has to be a realisation that sacrifices may need to be made. Having said this, one could still enter ministry with a positive attitude towards one’s financial situation and then still end up facing huge financial stresses.

### **8.1.2 Burn out**

Some people question if burnout is really as serious as it is made out to be. Many insensitive people flippantly dismiss burnout as merely being a lack of drive and commitment to one’s calling. However there are more and more people who recognize burnout as a major problem facing all forms of employment in our modern world. In fact, some scholars believe that ‘burnout is the biggest occupational hazard of the twenty-first century.’<sup>241</sup>

Before we continue further let us uncover what burnout really is. Ross and Almaier identify burnout as having three key ingredients. These are physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion and mental exhaustion.<sup>242</sup> Maslach and Leiter take this further by adding that when you begin to burn out, ‘you become chronically exhausted; you become cynical and detached from your work; and you feel increasingly ineffective on the job.’<sup>243</sup>

A few years later, in her book *Burnout: the cost of caring*, Christina Maslach writes, ‘burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do “people-work” of some kind. It is a response to the chronic emotional strain of dealing extensively with other human beings,

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<sup>240</sup> Dan Hotchkiss, *Ministry and Money: A Guide for clergy and their friends*, p. 99

<sup>241</sup> Michael Leiter and Christina Maslach (eds.), *Banishing Burnout*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), p.3.

<sup>242</sup> Randall Ross and Elizabeth Altmaier, *Intervention in Occupational Stress*, (London: Sage Publications, 1994), p.14.

<sup>243</sup> Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter (eds.), *The Truth about Burnout*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), p. 17.

particularly when they are troubled or having problems.<sup>244</sup> So we understand on a basic level that when burnout becomes a reality often ‘people are emotionally, physically and spiritually exhausted.’<sup>245</sup>

So does this mean that burnout also affects vocational careers such as the ministry? Lloyd Ogilvie definitely thinks so. ‘The church is not exempt from burnout. Church leaders and lay workers are feeling it increasingly. Working for God gives no sure exemption from exhaustion. Running a religious institution ... can become as draining as any other work.’<sup>246</sup> Frank Minirth agrees: ‘Some of the prime candidates for burnout are people who want to serve the Lord ‘full-time’ with all their heart, soul, and mind. Christians in vocational ministry often find themselves on the edge or in the depths of burnout.’<sup>247</sup>

Other scholars also agree that ‘ministry is just as much a hazardous occupation as that of high-rise window-washing or stunt car driving. In fact, all of the “helping professions” are hazardous in the sense that they include a high danger of burnout and a high risk of fallout.’<sup>248</sup> Ministry is certainly an occupation that has large amounts of stress attached to it. ‘Occupational stress can be considered as an accumulation of stressors, job-related situations that are considered ‘stressful’ by most of us.’<sup>249</sup> Henri Nouwen adds, ‘... ministers have given so much of themselves in their daily, often very demanding, pastoral activities that they feel empty, exhausted, tired, and quite often disappointed.’<sup>250</sup>

Rev Philip Sharpe, who is a local Methodist minister, considers clergy burnout to be an important topic. His desire to recognise the dangers of burnout, especially amongst Methodist ministers, is very evident in his Masters research paper *Stress and burnout in the Methodist ministry: towards a holistic helping model*. He states ‘it is not surprising that burnout claims

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<sup>244</sup> Christina Maslach, *Burnout: the cost of caring*, (Cambridge, Malor Books, 2003), p.2.

<sup>245</sup> Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter (eds.), *The Truth about Burnout*, p. 1.

<sup>246</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Making Stress work for you*, (Texas: Word Books, 1984), pp. 119-120.

<sup>247</sup> Frank Minirth (ed.), *How to beat burnout*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), p. 81.

<sup>248</sup> H.N. Maloney and R.A. Hunt, *The Psychology of Clergy*, (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1991), p. 33.

<sup>249</sup> Randall Ross and Elizabeth Altmaier, *Intervention in Occupational Stress*, (London, Sage Publications, 1994), p.11.

<sup>250</sup> Henri Nouwen, *Ministry and Spirituality*, p.19

so many of our ministers. Stress and burnout is a reality in ministry that is not going away and we need to take it seriously and seek to address the issues in a proactive way.<sup>251</sup>

So what are some of the reasons ministers encounter burnout? ‘Ministers are at risk for emotional burnout due to the multiple roles they must fulfill and the pressures they feel from all sides. We might go as far to say that ministry is a high-risk occupation in this respect.’<sup>252</sup> There is also the understanding that a minister needs to be available twenty four hours a day. ‘The sense of being constantly ‘on call’ is another major factor in ministry burnout... frequently, one crisis call is interrupted by another, with little time in between for recuperation.’<sup>253</sup>

Lloyd Ogilvie takes a slightly contrasting view when he argues that ‘burnout really is caused by taking on too much for the wrong reasons. Being unable to say no may be caused by a deep insecurity and lack of clearly defined goals for life.’<sup>254</sup>

Frank Minirth explains that burnout can not always be blamed on the demands of a congregation or the lack of understanding from the church leaders. Often pastors display certain personality tendencies, such as the constant need for approval, being unassertive or even being workaholics.<sup>255</sup> Ray Anderson agrees: ‘ “We are Driven” is not only an effective advertising slogan for automobiles but a shrill echo of the divine call sunk deep in the psyche of a minister who seeks salvation through ministry.’<sup>256</sup> Understanding what drives their ministry could be a crucial factor in ministers identifying their risk of burnout.

How do ministers react to stress and feeling burnt out? One minister said, ‘I think of a couple of times where I have felt burnt out, where you wonder should I be in ministry. I think sometimes people just get so get disillusioned that they just get out.’<sup>257</sup> This is backed up by

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<sup>251</sup> Philip Sharpe, *Stress and burnout in the Methodist ministry: towards a holistic helping model*, submitted as a requirement for a degree of Masters of Theology, Pietermaritzburg, 2002, p. 9.

<sup>252</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p.129.

<sup>253</sup> Frank Minirth (ed.), *How to beat burnout*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1986, p. 84.

<sup>254</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Making Stress work for you*, p. 118.

<sup>255</sup> Frank Minirth (ed.), *How to beat burnout*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>256</sup> Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2001), p.286.

<sup>257</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.



the findings from Hoge and Wenger's research into why clergy leave the local church. A large number of ministers left the church because of strain, weariness, burnout, and frustration.<sup>258</sup>

The tragic end of burnout is often that a minister resigns and is lost to both the church and to ministry. 'Eventually, some people reach the point where they can not take it anymore and they quit. Even when it is necessary, such a decision can be painful if it means walking away from a career that was once a source of pride, prestige and personal identity.'<sup>259</sup>

Mark McMinn takes a different view on stress. In his book *Making the best of stress*, he concludes his first chapter with the following positive thoughts on stress:

Stress gives us opportunities we cannot otherwise find. As drought causes a tree's roots to go deeper, stress causes us to become people of depth and substance. Only when the pressures of life make us confront our neediness and brokenness do we look to God to meet our deepest emotional and spiritual needs.<sup>260</sup>

This is certainly a contrasting view on stress. The reality of full-time ministry is that stress and tiredness will be a part of the calling. There is no avoiding the risk of stress and burnout, just because one works for God. On the contrary, clergy need to be prepared for it, because it will come. Being prepared for the warning signs of fatigue and burnout may result in ministers overcoming these dangers instead of realizing too late and then having to resign from the ministry.

Resignation from burnout and stress is indeed tragic. Sadly, the church seems to have climbed aboard the same super-sonic jet that the world flies around on. Instead of preaching more about Jesus' attitude towards the Sabbath rest, we find more sermons nowadays on fulfilling your potential and working for the kingdom of God. 'A theology allowing no

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<sup>258</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p.115.

<sup>259</sup> Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter (eds), *The Truth about Burnout*, p. 19.

<sup>260</sup> Mark R. McMinn, *Making the best of stress*, (Illinois: Intersivity Press, 1996), p.21.

“Sabbath rest” for the one who does the work of ministry is a theology of curse, not a theology of the cross.<sup>261</sup>

Rev Brian Burger concurs: ‘I think one needs to always work at the priority God, family, work. Often in ministry we equate God and our work and that is where the dilemma comes in. People can not live up to that for long and soon they burn out. Now that is another whole area to talk about – the whole burn out situation.’<sup>262</sup>

Christina Maslach touches on an aspect of the initial stages of burnout when a care-giver (minister) begins to become unsympathetic to the problems of the person who has come to them for help. An attitude slowly permeates into the spirit of the clergy who subconsciously wish that the other person would simply leave them alone. She concludes, ‘a virtual hallmark of the burnout syndrome is a shift in the individual’s view of other people – a shift from protective and caring to negative and uncaring.’<sup>263</sup>

Her research findings point us into the following conclusion regarding burnout: ‘Although personality does play some part in burnout, the bulk of the evidence I have examined is consistent with the view that burnout is best understood in terms of situational sources of job-related, interpersonal stress.’<sup>264</sup>

One of the ministers I interviewed commented on his experiences of burnout as follows:

The guy I had worked with... was burnt out.<sup>265</sup> He had just worked too hard, for too long. The leaders could see it. Christmas services, when you are supposed to be upbeat and so on, he spoke for fifteen minutes about his own aches and pains and 5 minutes on the Christmas message. You could just see he had burnout. In every

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<sup>261</sup> Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, (Illinois: Intersarsity Press, 2001), p.287.

<sup>262</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>263</sup> Christina Maslach, *Burnout: the cost of caring*, p.6, 27.

<sup>264</sup> Christina Maslach, *Burnout: the cost of caring*, p.14.

<sup>265</sup> The identity of the minister involved is withheld for reasons of confidentiality.

circuit I have been in I have had something to do with a minister who was burnt out...  
I have come across it a lot...<sup>266</sup>

There is some clear reasoning why I have honed in on this particular cause of resignation from the ministry. Besides the obvious costs to the individual concerned and their immediate family, there is also the damage that could be caused in relationships amongst church members, particularly if there is no clear communication between the minister, the leaders of the church and the congregation.

However, there is another major cost of burnout and that is to the Methodist Church as an organisation. Although the following quote from Christina Maslach applies to organizations in general, I believe the church would encounter the same implications of burnout. ‘The damaging impact of burnout goes beyond the individual caregiver... it can hurt an institution, which gets less than optimal performance from its employees and has to struggle with the disruptive problems of absenteeism and high turnover.’<sup>267</sup>

While churches should guard against treating their ministers as ‘ordinary employees’, there is a sense in which the church does bear some cost of her clergy suffering from burnout. Maslach and Leiter argue that not only can organizations do something to help ‘employees’ (clergy), when they are feeling the effects of burnout, but that they should actively be seeking further solutions to minimize the risk of burnout.<sup>268</sup> Without digressing too much, one could suggest a few starting points for the church to reflect on. Firstly, teaching clergy how to recognize the early symptoms of burnout. Secondly, assisting the clergy with relevant counseling or spiritual mentors, as has already been discussed. Thirdly, conducting workshops or further training opportunities to allow ordained ministers the chance to understand the implications of burnout.

In the light of our discussion on burnout, I would like to refer to a comment made on one of the written questionnaires. In response to the question regarding the level of energy for

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<sup>266</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>267</sup> Christina Maslach, *Burnout: the cost of caring*, p.123.

<sup>268</sup> Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter (eds), *The Truth about Burnout*, pp. 64 – 65.

ministry now as compared with the energy when the minister started out, this was the comment: 'I have less energy now. Having worked very hard for twelve years, I need more than a three month furlough in order to re-energise.'<sup>269</sup> There is a lot of depth beneath this comment. Ministers are expected to give and give, almost continuously, throughout their ministry and this is without much thought to their energy levels and sense of passion for the calling. Whilst a three month furlough is very welcome, most ministers struggle to take this time off in effective ways and hence the idea of a sabbatical is nullified. Perhaps the church could reduce the number of ministers suffering from burnout and hence the number of ministers resigning from the ministry, by taking a closer look at the effectiveness of the furlough system.

'All church organizations need to recognize this problem (of burnout) and institute safeguards – which ... are sorely lacking.'<sup>270</sup> As far as I am aware, the Methodist Church does not have any concrete safeguards in place for our clergy, when it comes to burnout. Ministers can take some special leave if the need arises, but the reality is that most ministers, who are potential burnout victims, would feel too guilty doing this. As a way forward, this could potentially be a wonderful opportunity for the Methodist Church to minister to her clergy.

### **8.1.3 People**

Derek Prime and Alistair Begg make the observation that the call into ministry comes to people in a variety of ways. However in most cases 'the call usually begins with a desire to care for the spiritual well-being of others and to preach God's Word. Circumstances may put us in the position where we feel that we must do something to help people.'<sup>271</sup> The essence of a call is that it involves the person being called, God and the people of God. The frustrating thing about this triangular set up is that people, and especially church people, can be very difficult at times. One realizes very soon in ministry that if it were not for people, ministry would be a lot simpler. However, it is to both God and people that clergy are called to serve.

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<sup>269</sup> Rev Charmaine Morgan, same questionnaire.

<sup>270</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p.129.

<sup>271</sup> Derek Prime, *On being a Pastor*, p.22.

In their frank discussion on stress, Derek Prime and Alistair Begg write, ‘stress comes through the open-ended nature of our work and our essential commitment to people. People may stress us. We probably underestimate what is taken out of us in pastoral work...’<sup>272</sup>

In his book ‘*Restoring your spiritual passion*’ Gordon Macdonald comments that ‘spiritual passion, or energy, is also affected by the people who populate our worlds. Being with people can be exhausting...’<sup>273</sup> Most clergy would say a loud “Amen” to this statement. He identifies five groups of people that are present within the average church setup. He refers to these people as follows:<sup>274</sup>

- a) The Very Resourceful People (VRP). These are the people that ignite our passion for ministry and service within the Church.
- b) The Very Important People (VIP). These are the people that share our passion for the ministry and other things in life.
- c) The Very Trainable People (VTP). It is these people that we can easily train to catch our passion for various aspects of ministry.
- d) The Very Nice People (VNP). These people enjoy our passion.
- e) The Very Draining People (VDP). It is these people who sap most of our passion.

It is my experience that the fifth category of people, the very draining people, end up demanding most of our time and hence, as ministers, we find less and less time to be with the people who energise us. One can not ignore this group of people as Jesus himself spent vast amounts of time with people we may consider to be very draining. These included the sick, the distressed, the poor, those who were curious and those who sought answers. However, the key is that ‘they never captured His full schedule. In fact, they accounted for very little of it.’<sup>275</sup>

As far as the interviews are concerned, a number of ministers alluded to the impact that ‘people’ have had on their ministries. Although there were testimonies of positive influences,

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<sup>272</sup> Derek Prime & Alistair Begg, *On being a Pastor*, p.301.

<sup>273</sup> Gordon MacDonald, *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1986), p.71.

<sup>274</sup> Gordon MacDonald, *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion*, pp. 71-91.

<sup>275</sup> Gordon MacDonald, *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion*, p. 88.

there were equally many stories of pain. We have covered a number of these in our section on ‘what drains you in ministry?’ What often starts as something that drains a minister often ends up being a key reason in their decision to resign from the ministry.

Rev Brian Burger shares a powerful testimony of how people in his community caused him a lot of pain. This is his story:

I had a situation where I had been working my backside off to be at every place at all times trying to please people and people started to get irritated. Funny enough it was the people who I was spending the most amount of time with that were getting irritated. They called a big meeting with the circuit stewards and came with a whole lot of allegations and I wrote back to them a whole document, which I gave to them. But that kind of thing irritates one. In the end they were fine with what I said, but it did far more damage to the relationship, the way they had gone about doing it. That day I thought I’m not going to break my back for these people. It’s not worth it. Because whether I do or don’t they are going to moan, so I would rather wait...and I haven’t (broken my back for these people)! Now, it has become a barrier...<sup>276</sup>

Rev Simanga Kumalo sheds some light on how he handles people in the church. ‘Maybe I’m being too cynical , maybe I am disillusioned, but I have learnt to separate the church from the people who are in the church – whether, clergy or laity. And be able to see their mistakes away from the church and never say that the church is always like that.’<sup>277</sup>

Ministers need to identify the people within their community that fall into MacDonald’s five categories and analyse how much time they are spending with each group. This exercise may be helpful for ministers and may give some indication as to why people sap their energy sources. It could also give a little insight into how one could rectify the situation. As has been mentioned, being in ministry automatically implies being with people. If people are an issue for clergy, then ministry itself becomes an issue.

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<sup>276</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>277</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

#### 8.1.4 *Power struggles and conflict in the church*

Following on from the issue of church people and their personalities, is the combined effect of these people living together in one community – that is the issue of a struggle for power. One would think that Christians would seek to emulate the example of Jesus Christ, who modeled absolute servanthood throughout his earthly ministry (John 13), yet the opposite is often the case.

‘Present day Christian communities are often riven with petty quarrels which at root seem to have to do with jealousies and envies that have got denied and repressed.’<sup>278</sup> Whilst Mary Anne Coate is correct in her analysis of contemporary Christian communities being places where rivalries and jealous reveal themselves, one can hardly label this as a new phenomenon. In fact, the Methodist Church has had its problems with struggles for power since the times of John Wesley. David Hempton writes a fascinating chapter on ‘Money and Power’ in his book *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, where he notes, ‘After Wesley’s death a combination of unseemly jockeying for power and influence among the senior preachers... revived older allegations of financial malpractice, only this time from within the ranks of Methodists themselves.’<sup>279</sup>

Mary Anne Coate touches on an interesting concept, with regards to power. She maintains that often what happens amongst believers (and especially clergy) is that we ‘swallow in’ or internalise the omnipotence of God and use that power as if it were our own.<sup>280</sup> The result is an abuse of power and consequently harm is caused within the body of Christ.

In a fundamental sense clergy are organizers. They organize the spiritual life of a congregation and they remain responsible for the implementation of what they plan. However, with this comes an inherent danger – that is the danger of power. ‘People who organize are in constant danger of creating small kingdoms for themselves. It is extremely difficult to take initiatives and develop new plans without claiming it as something that is

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<sup>278</sup> Mary Anne Coate, *Clergy Stress*, p.157.

<sup>279</sup> David Hempton, *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, p. 110.

<sup>280</sup> Mary Anne Coate, *Clergy Stress*, p.159.

yours.<sup>281</sup> Nouwen added that, ‘people who organize are in constant danger of creating small kingdoms for themselves... many ‘organising priests’ want to keep running the show and telling people what to do.’<sup>282</sup>

Pieter Greyling, who recently resigned from the Methodist Church, wrote in his questionnaire that ‘dealing with historical conflicts that never get resolved’ added enormous stress onto his ministry.<sup>283</sup> In our follow up conversation he alluded to the fact that power struggles, within the church, often add fuel to these historical conflicts. Unresolved conflict is frequently nurtured by strong personalities who use their power to manipulate congregations and their members.

As has been said, the result of power struggles in a church setting is invariable conflict. Conflict is uncomfortable and ministers normally spend a huge amount of time and energy trying to deal with matters of conflict. When the situation does not involve the minister per se, then they are often called in to mediate the problem and this can also be an extremely sensitive and frustrating process. However, when the area of conflict directly affects the minister concerned or is as a result of their behaviour then the outcome can be equally destructive and divisive.

Rev Mike Stone had this to say on the issue of conflict and power struggles in our church:

The other is unresolved conflict – and of course the church does nothing to help us resolve this. It is specifically in the Methodist Church that this is badly done. The way we do it is when we have a difficult situation or person, we move that person somewhere else. One year move, two year move etc. Or you have two ministers in a church and there is conflict, then the church moves both of the ministers. That is the unwritten rule. There is no discussion what so ever. That is just the way it works. In the N.G. church there are structures there to deal with conflict. We can learn from them.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Henri Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, p. 74.

<sup>282</sup> Henri Nouwen, *Ministry and Spirituality*, p. 69.

<sup>283</sup> Rev Pieter Greyling, same questionnaire.

<sup>284</sup> Rev Mike Stone, same interview.



Psychologists tell us that conflict is not necessarily a bad thing and that it is an inevitable part of any close relationship.<sup>285</sup> A former Lutheran minister concurs with this sentiment:

I would say conflict is essential. If there is no conflict in a church, I would point to a church that is probably doing nothing. I think conflict is traumatizing for people, and most of us are frightened. And most of the people that are attracted to seminary are really horrible at handling conflict.<sup>286</sup>

It is all very well arguing that conflict can be constructive in a church, but most clergy, in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, are not adequately trained to handle conflict resolution. Furthermore, when these power struggles arise in our churches they often end up deeply embroiling ministers in the centre of the battle and inevitable conflict arises between colleagues. The scars of the battles for power amongst clergy run close to the souls of these ministers and sooner or later one of them either resigns or moves on to another circuit.

### **8.1.5 Conclusion**

There is definitely an element of tragedy in the fact that ministers spend years training towards the goal of serving God in particular communities and in the end these people leave the ministry. Obviously, not all ministers who resign within the Methodist Church leave the ministry completely, with a handful moving on to other denominations or churches. Sadly, though, a large number are disillusioned and scarred to such an extent that it may take years for them to recover. Reflecting back on the earlier section on mentoring one wonders whether any of these resignations could have been salvaged if the ministers had had someone to support them through these moments. Walter Wright uses a very powerful mountaineering analogy of ‘clipping into another climber’s rope’<sup>287</sup> to describe how people can support one another. This reminds us that if ever a minister ‘falls’ or ‘slips’ whilst on the journey, they are stopped from falling all the way by the strength of another climber (minister).

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<sup>285</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p.76.

<sup>286</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p.76.

<sup>287</sup> Walter Wright, *Mentoring: The promise of relational leadership*, p.144.

## 8.2 Retiring to what?

The issues surrounding ministers retiring from the ministry are legion. It is important to note that in the context of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, a minister who retires in good standing with the church is referred to as a *supernumerary minister*.

When a minister becomes a *supernumerary* they are normally required to vacate their station in order to make way for another minister. There are some exceptions to this rule and a retired minister sometimes holds a station until a suitable minister can be found. Once a minister has retired they 'belong to the district in which they reside and they are subject to Synod in all matters of discipline.'<sup>288</sup> At present the mandatory age of retirement in the MCSA is sixty-five.

While there may be a few ministers who are seemingly in a hurry to retire, there are also many who face the prospect of retirement with fear and trepidation. One of the biggest fears amongst ministers on the brink of retirement is insecurity. Rev Bev Hill shares that his major worry was that he wondered if his pension would be enough to sustain his wife and himself, while he was deeply concerned that he had nowhere to retire to.<sup>289</sup>

The above comments may be common amongst clergy in our church. The huge financial implications of retirement could cause enormous amounts of stress for a minister. In her book *Fill your days with life*, Mildred Vandenburg speaks about the issues facing a retiree: 'Odds, generally chalked up against retirees, relate to fixed incomes, health, housing, nutrition, transportation and leisure time.'<sup>290</sup>

In reality retirement is not something we suddenly wake up to. Normally a minister has years of anticipation before retirement begins and so clergy need to be advised to plan for their transition. 'Planning for retirement can help workers make the transition from years of active

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<sup>288</sup> The Laws and Disciplines of the Methodist Church, Tenth Edition, Salt River: Methodist Publishing House, 2000, paragraph 4.85, p. 40.

<sup>289</sup> Telephonic interview with Rev. Bev Hill – Friday 30 September 2006.

<sup>290</sup> Mildred Vandenburg, *Fill your days with life*, (California: Regal Books, 1975), p. 25.

employment to their leisure time years. Our society is work orientated and youth orientated: retirement can produce a real identity crisis, and often a loss of interest in living...'<sup>291</sup>

The Methodist Church does have a number of retirement villages and homes situated around the country. In fact, there are in excess of twenty homes or villages under the care of the Methodist Church. Although these places of retirement do not cater exclusively for Methodist ministers and their spouses, they do offer very reasonable accommodation for supernumeraries. While these homes do exist it seems that a few ministers are not fully aware of the set up of these villages and one minister spoke of his frustration at not being able to plan effectively for retirement as the situation at these homes was unclear. On speaking to the Methodist Connexional Office and a few of these retirement homes<sup>292</sup>, I was able to ascertain that these villages are available for ministers, but there is often a long waiting list, depending on the availability of accommodation. It does seem that it is the prerogative of the clergy themselves to place their names on the waiting list when they are nearing retirement.

There are a few circuits which encourage their ministers to try and acquire their own property, yet it seems that ample provision is not made to facilitate this process. It is all very well suggesting this to the ministers, but there are a large number of clergy who simply can not even afford the deposit on a house. Perhaps the Methodist Church could see this as one of its special focuses for the future.

Many faithful ministers in our church have sweated and toiled for decades, serving the Methodist people, yet tragically are left to fend for themselves once they have become supernumeraries. Yes, they are given a pension, but this is solely dependant on one's years of service and often simply not adequate enough to meet the pressing needs of the family<sup>293</sup>. Thankfully the Methodist Connexional Office has worked hard at providing better pension

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<sup>291</sup> Turner, J.S. and Helms, D. B., *Contemporary Adulthood*, (Philadelphia: W. B. Sanders Company, 1979), pp.211. This quote is attributed to Senator Walter Mondale.

<sup>292</sup> Telephonic conversation with 'Margaret' at the Port Shepstone Methodist Church on the 3 October 2006. This church oversees the David Morgan Cottages, which cater for retired folk and they have special accommodation for Methodist Supernumeraries.

<sup>293</sup> Methodist ministers contribute actively towards a Pension fund and the Church also makes contributions on behalf of their minister, but the final pension depends on many factors. In the end a minister's length of service and their ability to buy back 'pension years' will have a big impact on their overall pension.

benefits for the ministers, but one fears that the clergy who retire in the immediate future may not receive the full benefit from this venture. If one looks at the ministers ordained between 1980 and 1999, perhaps those ordained in the 1990's will receive greater returns in the long run, if they remain in the Methodist Church.

We have already mentioned the cry from the clergy for some form of ongoing ministerial training. However, there is another aspect of this training that comes to light in speaking to supernumerary ministers or those ministers who are about to retire. That is on preparing oneself for retirement. Rev Hill spoke about how a seminar, perhaps even five to ten years before retirement would have greatly benefited him in preparing for this transitional stage in his life. There seems to be a lot of wisdom in this and in her Masters thesis on *Preparation for Retirement*, Penelope Fox writes:

The impact of retirement differs from individual to individual. However, literature and research isolate various factors that need to ... be considered for there to be adequate adjustment to retirement. Most of these factors may be planned for in advance, thereby lessening the often negative impact they may together have on the individual at the time of retirement. Pre-retirement programmes attempt to promote the awareness of the need to, and possibility of, planning in certain areas before retirement, so as to enable the individual to experience an easier transition.<sup>294</sup>

According to F.M. Carp, retirement is:

A consequence of complex industrialization, a basic requirement of which is the orderly replacement of old with new workers. The presumptions are that new generations must succeed the old, that chronological age is correlated with diminished capabilities to perform tasks, and more recently that retirement to a non-work career or leisure is a reward.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Penelope Fox, *Preparation for Retirement: A Study of Pre-retirement seminar effectiveness*, unpublished Masters Thesis, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal, 1987, p.1

<sup>295</sup> F. M. Carp, *Retirement*, (New York: Behavioural Publications, 1972), p.31.

Bev Hill would not entirely agree with this sentiment. He reflected on the comment that some people argue that ‘ministers never retire.’ He believes that the church does not help ministers to live into this statement. He laments that there seems to be a trend to push ministers out of the church and to replace the older ministers with younger men and women. He argues that many supernumeraries can still make a tremendous contribution to the church. He himself feels that he could still help, perhaps in a training capacity, if he was wanted and needed. Reflecting back on the section focusing on mentors, perhaps this is where retired ministers could make their greatest impact on the Methodist Church. There is a need for active ministers to have a place of support, encouragement and mentorship. There is desire on the part of supernumeraries to help somewhere. Joining the two could provide a workable solution to this situation.

We have spoken mainly about retired ministers who desire to be involved in ministry beyond their age limit, however we must not ignore the fact that some ministers have grown very weary over years of active service and look forward to retirement. Although Rev David Schooling (1976) was ordained outside our focus group, in our recent conversation he expressed a longing for retirement. It is not that he has lost his love for Jesus Christ, it is just that he has grown tired of church and all that comes with leading people over many years.<sup>296</sup> Thirty-five years in ministry is a life-time in anyone’s language and so as he reflects on retirement, he sees it not as a shadow, but as a light and perhaps as a new lease on life.

Penelope Fox would endorse the idea of retirement as being a new beginning for clergy. ‘Unfortunately, too many individuals think of retirement as the end of productive living. Too few consider this new period in their life as revitalization. Yet this is what it can and should be if you are to be happy, have a ministry, and fulfill the work and will of God for your life.’<sup>297</sup>

As of 2006 there are a number of supernumeraries in the Natal West District who are still involved in some form of ministry. This could speak of a number of different scenarios. It

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<sup>296</sup> Based on a series of conversations held during the course of 2006.

<sup>297</sup> Marjorie Collins, *Manual for today’s missionary: from recruitment to retirement*, California: William Carey Library, 1986, p. 364.

could say something about the struggle of clergy to let go of the ministry when the age limit arrives. Likewise it could say something about the financial constraints on these ministers and their families and so when an opportunity arises to serve in a church, they do not pass this up. Alternatively, the number of supernumeraries in active service could speak of another dilemma – that is of the lack of good quality ministers. In reality, if there were adequate ministers to replace those who were retiring then there would be little need for retired ministers to continue serving congregations full-time.

In her work *Fill your days with life*, Mildred Vandenburg quotes some thoughts from a retired Lutheran minister: ‘what a vast reservoir of time, talents and experience the Lord has given His church in the members who are retired. What a tremendous amount of good could be accomplished if we always knew how to channel their abilities into productive avenues for God and for society.’<sup>298</sup>

Many ministers are so busy in ministry that they find there is no time for hobbies and adequate recreation, so when retirement comes ministers are suddenly left floundering. This could in part be due to the impact of societal pressure. ‘As products of a society in which the work ethic prevails, for many individuals the role of work is central to their pattern of life.’<sup>299</sup>

What is a concern though is how this excessive work ethic can affect ministers beyond their retirement. Donald Demaray makes a startling point on retirement. He says ‘the aging process varies from person to person. Enforced retirement for one at peak capacity may indeed kill a man or woman. The mind and body cannot tolerate the enormous distress of meaninglessness.’<sup>300</sup>

‘An aspect that appears absent in the views of retirement ... is that retirement is generally involuntary, and may not be desired by many who are thus forced to undergo the process of change.’<sup>301</sup> According to J.S. Turner and D.B. Helms, ‘requiring people to leave their job,

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<sup>298</sup> Mildred Vandenburg, *Fill your days with life*, California: Regal Books, 1975. p. 26.

<sup>299</sup> Penelope Fox, *Preparation for Retirement*, 1987, p.6

<sup>300</sup> Donald Demaray, *Watch out for burnout: a look at its signs, prevention, and cure*, (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1983), p. 60.

<sup>301</sup> Penelope Fox, *Preparation for Retirement*, p.8.

relinquish what is often a meaningful and important role and accept a lowered income, all because they reached the age of sixty-five, may constitute one of the greatest injustices of our time.<sup>302</sup>

Herbert Parnes believes that the term 'retirement' is in itself ambiguous. 'It is not clear whether retirement is most appropriately conceived as an event, a process, a social role, or a phase of life.'<sup>303</sup> However we choose to look at the meaning of retirement, the reality is that a sizable percentage of ministers ordained between 1980 and 1990 have already retired. They are currently dealing with some of the issues we have already highlighted and soon more and more of their colleagues, from this generation of ordinands, will find themselves confronting the same dilemmas.

### 8.3 *Relocating – the lure of the pound and dollar?*

Our statistics reveal that eighteen ministers have relocated overseas since their ordination. A large percentage of these ministers are currently serving in the British Conference. Of this number there are eight serving in the United Kingdom and one in Ireland. Whilst it may not be an alarming statistic, it certainly warrants further understanding. It begs the question, 'what are some of the 'push' and 'pull' factors in this relocation of ministers?'

Perhaps the first big 'push' factor most people would assume to be a reason for clergy relocating, would be crime. Yet, in hearing from a few ministers serving overseas, this ranked low down in their reasons for moving abroad. In fact, one minister commented that the socio-political climate in the church was more difficult to deal with than that of crime and violence in the country as a whole.<sup>304</sup> Certainly there would be a few ministers who probably left South Africa due to concerns for the security and safety of their family. People, who are employed in other sectors, leave our country due to the astronomical increase in crime and

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<sup>302</sup> J.S. Turner and D.B. Helms, *Contemporary Adulthood*, (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1979), p.202.

<sup>303</sup> Herbert Parnes (ed.), *Work and Retirement: a Longitudinal study of men*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1981), p.155.

<sup>304</sup> Minister's name to remain confidential.

violence, so there is no evidence to the contrary to suggest that this would not apply to ministers.

Another reason often given for clergy leaving South Africa for foreign shores is the lure of the stronger currency and the perception that ministers in the United Kingdom and America are paid better salaries. One minister who now serves in England disputes this. He states that his family earned a better combined salary in South Africa than they now do overseas. ‘There was no financial pull, because we had a joint income in South Africa of twice what I am now earning...’<sup>305</sup> He added that whilst they were serving in the MCSA they had seen how God had provided financially for their family. Although ministers are not paid badly overseas, it is not always initially easy for spouses to find employment and often they need to look after children as domestic workers are seen as luxuries.

It has also become known that the European Methodist church has recently struggled to find ministers to fill all their vacant stations and has invited a number of South African ministers to serve overseas for a term. This speaks volumes of the standing and recognition that ministers in South Africa are given abroad, but still presents a problem for the MCSA.

Methodist ministers who see their colleagues relocate overseas are left with mixed emotions. Sometimes comments are made without fully knowing the reasoning behind the move.

Another minister who serves in Europe wrote in a private questionnaire:

‘I took a bit of flak from all sorts of people – some of the black ministers told me I was running away from the problems in South Africa. Some of the white ministers told me I was using the MCSA to get trained and then moving to somewhere more comfortable.’<sup>306</sup>

In a sense Rev Vuyo Dlamini expresses some understanding of clergy who decide to leave the church:

... there are many things that precipitate people leaving the ministry...stressful situations could be a reason. I think it does cause one to quit for somewhere

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<sup>305</sup> Minister’s name to remain confidential.

<sup>306</sup> Information to remain confidential on request of minister.



else... finance... that is a bigger problem. If as a circuit you are not viable and it has to close down, then the minister suffers. But if you are a minister that has a BCom, you say to yourself, why do I have to suffer and you leave.<sup>307</sup>

In light of the vast number of South Africans living abroad and employed in non-church related work it would be foolish to single out the clergy as the only people having ulterior motives in relocating. Yes, the lure of foreign currency may have had some bearing on their decisions, just as security may well have also had an impact. The reality is that we are now living in a global village and opportunities to move between continents are much more prevalent than fifty years ago. Ministers are just as likely to be caught up in this trend and we should guard against quick and unfair judgements of their motives.

#### 8.4 *Secondment and Chaplaincies*

Technically one should not separate secondment and chaplaincy from ministry within the local church, as the clergy involved are still serving as ‘ministers.’ This is especially true in the case of chaplains, who are daily using the skills and tools they learnt in preparation for the ministry. However, I have grouped these two callings together in order to point out that a few ordained ministers have subsequently felt called to other places of service, after their ordination.

Although secondment and chaplaincy have been grouped together for this chapter, they are not entirely the same thing. Secondment refers mainly to ministers who now minister outside a church setting and often this is in the secular workplace. On the other hand chaplaincy should rather be seen as a special functioning within the wider church, but not on a local church level. This specialized ministry ‘was created to give special care to all our members involved in military, police or prison situations. Chaplains are responsible to the relevant Chaplain General for the faithful discharge of their chaplaincy duties but as ministers they are under the oversight and discipline of the church.’<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Rev Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

<sup>308</sup> Laws and Disciplines of Methodist Church: Tenth Edition, 2000, paragraph 11.6.1 & 11.6.4, p. 142.

The number of ministers who are no longer serving in the local church and who fall into this category presently stands at forty-eight. This is currently made up of eighteen who are seconded to outside organizations, twenty-six who have taken up chaplaincy positions and another four who are serving in Connexional departments.

Dealing first with secondment, we notice from the database that only 3.5 % of the ministers (ordained in the twenty year period) have left congregational ministry for employment outside the church. While this number may not seem large enough to cause any major concern, it has urged the Methodist Church leadership to tighten its rules surrounding ordained ministers and secondment. The Methodist Church has laid down strict guidelines for ministers who seek secondment. The following comments from the Laws and Disciplines of the church may shed some light on this matter:

- 4.93 ... the Connexional Executive may permit an ordained minister to labour in a position which is neither within the Methodist Church nor under its direct oversight. Such permission shall be granted only where the Connexional Executive considers that the position should be filled by one of our ordained Ministers and where it requires an ordained minister in the position to enable the church to perform its ministry.
- 4.94 Ministers being seconded must accept that the secondment may at any time be withdrawn and they be appointed to a Circuit. Every seconded minister remains under the discipline of the Methodist Church.
- 4.95 Secondment shall be granted only where the minister is competent and acceptable and will worthily represent the church.
- 4.96 Secondment shall not be granted to posts of a party political nature, or to any other appointment which...compromises the necessary independence of the Methodist Church in its witness to the Gospel in society.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> The Laws and Disciplines of the Methodist Church: Tenth Edition, pp. 41-42.

Looking at the variety of agencies that ministers are seconded to, one can not pin-point one particular sector as strongly attracting Methodist ministers, although there are a number who are labouring in educational institutions and in government departments. These include the Universities of KwaZulu Natal and Transkei, the Departments of Health, Social Development and of Arts and Culture.

Turning now to chaplaincy, we need to note that this is definitely not a move away from ministry at all. In fact, it is merely a move into a different, but still much needed, form of ministry. Most ordained ministers that move into the area of chaplaincy do so because of a sense of calling to work in this particular field. It is certainly a specialized form of ministry and yet training as an ordained minister is often an ideal platform for these ministries.

In the context of the Methodist Church a large number of ministers serve as chaplains to the South African Police Force (SAPS) and to the South African Defence Force (SANDF). Of the twenty-six Methodist ministers who serve as chaplains, twenty of them serve in the either the SAPS or in the SANDF.

It is a sad reality that often ministers themselves view their colleagues as dropping out of the church when they take up a chaplaincy position. This has certainly been the case in South Africa as well as overseas. In their work *Pastors in Transition*, Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger conducted extensive interviews with clergy from a number of different denominations. A number of their responses came from ministers within the United Methodist Church who had subsequently taken up posts as chaplains. This was their finding:

Several persons felt strongly that a move to a non-parish ministry was not at all a change of careers and that they were ministers in non-parish settings as much as they ever were in parish ones... we heard numerous complaints from ministers ... that they were not taken seriously by denominational leaders and by other ministers... they felt they received little respect.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors in Transition*, p. 26.

The ambivalence to these forms of specialized ministry often spills over into synods and conferences where chaplains feel that they are not taken seriously or that they are even made to feel that they are not fully-fledged ministers. One chaplain spoke of another minister who commented, 'Parish ministry is tough. Why can you not stick it out like the rest of us?'<sup>311</sup>

One could argue that the hospitals, the Police Force and the Defence Force are where the 'coal-face' ministry is taking place. These are real life environments where people are facing daily struggles and are contemplating the tension of life and death. This is in some way opposed to the arena of the church building, where people come out of choice to worship or for counselling and seem more open to ministry. Chaplaincy can be seen as going into the 'real' world to share Christ's love with those in need. It should never be seen as leaving the ministry. Rather it would be more encouraging to view chaplaincy as entering another form of ministry, which is equally demanding, draining and rewarding.

At present only two Methodist ministers are currently serving as full-time chaplains in the area of health. One recognizes that hospital chaplaincy is a specialized ministry and one that can be extremely demanding. Most ordained ministers do a lot of hospital visitations in their various stations, yet this is of a different nature to a full-time chaplain. It somehow seems very appropriate that the church is represented in the wards and corridors of a hospital. After all, 'the church has historically been an innovator in the field of health care. The first hospitals were sponsored by churches and religious orders.'<sup>312</sup>

The function of a chaplain does vary from traditional church ministry in that a chaplain often gets to meet people that local clergy may not encounter. 'Chaplains have the ability to hear confessions, deep concerns and laments in such a way that a person experiences a degree of confidence and/or grace.'<sup>313</sup> Honing one's skills as a chaplain is important as 'the chaplain needs to strive to be ... the "complete philosopher" – the person who is required to be aware

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<sup>311</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, pp.61-62.

<sup>312</sup> Laurel Burton (ed.), *Making Chaplaincy Work: Practical Approaches*, (New York: The Haworth Press, 1988), p.21.

<sup>313</sup> Larry Vandercreek (ed.), *Professional Chaplaincy and Clinical Pastoral Education*, (New York: The Haworth Press, 2002), p.243.

and sensitive to many sub-universes and to determine the relations of those sub-universes at the moment of critical need.<sup>314</sup>

The Methodist Church does have a policy on the length of time an ordained minister can serve as a chaplain. In general, ministers can not serve as chaplains for longer than ten years without review by the Connexional Executive.<sup>315</sup>

Finally, it must be reiterated that although, for the purpose of this paper, I have analysed the number of clergy who serve in seconded ministries or as chaplains, it is not my intention to make these ministries appear to be of less importance than 'normal' church related stations. The church needs to be present in all situations and these clergy are seeking to reveal Christ's love into these diverse surroundings.

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<sup>314</sup> Larry Vandercreek (ed.), *Professional Chaplaincy and Clinical Pastoral Education*, p.220

<sup>315</sup> Laws and Disciplines of Methodist Church: Tenth Edition, 2000, paragraph 11.6.4, p. 143.

## 9 Reaping the rewards

### 9.1 *The blessing of the Ministry*

Andrew Blackwood reminds us that ‘the life of a pastor ought to be happier than that of any other man.’<sup>316</sup> This is not to say that if you serve in any other vocation you can not be happy, but rather to make the point that clergy are indeed blessed to be in their present profession. What greater joy could there be in serving God’s people and thus serving God? Sadly, this is often not the case and many clergy spend enormous amounts of time and energy lamenting their vocation and complaining about being in the ministry. In his book *Twice-Born Ministers*, Samuel Shoemaker writes: ‘One comes upon quantities of people who go far enough in their religion to be earnest, but few who go far enough to be glad.’<sup>317</sup>

‘The minister who counts the blessings of God finds unusual opportunities to praise God. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift, and constantly we are reminded of the benefits received.’<sup>318</sup> This sentiment expresses a powerful element of truth. Many ministers get so caught up in dealing with the struggles of ministry that they forget the blessings of being in the position they are in. Simanga Kumalo makes this point strongly in his interview, where he says that he gets irritated with the complaining of a lot of ministers. He points out:

... my family has received an unbelievable gift from the church and I try to make them aware of that. For instance I was educated by the church. My parents were not able to send me to university. The type of life I am living is because of the ministry. I am able to send my children to the best schools around. They eat well – they are not hungry. It is because of the church. I sometimes get cynical and impatient with ministers who become fussy with the church. They say I need this and this. They forget what they have got from the church. I find it selfish and arrogant. The church gives us so much, which we should be grateful for and I try to make my children

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<sup>316</sup> Andrew Blackwood, *The Growing Minister : his opportunities and obstacles*, (New York: Abingdon, 1960). p. 20.

<sup>317</sup> Samuel Shoemaker, *Twice-Born Ministers*, (New York: Fleming Revell Company, 1981), p. 83.

<sup>318</sup> Ralph G. Turnbull, *A Minister’s Opportunities*, (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 288.

aware, even when they complain. I tell them that if the church had not educated me I could have been working on the streets or as some clerk battling to make life happen.<sup>319</sup>

Simanga Kumalo has a refreshing outlook in response to the question revolving around family and ministry. Initially he agreed with all the other ministers that his family had made an unbelievable sacrifice to be in ministry with him, yet he chose to rather focus on what they had gained as a family. Focusing on the blessings of being a minister is a healthy attitude to adopt and one that all ministers would do well to immolate.

In his paragraph on the many blessings pastors receive from being in the ministry, Derek Prime points out that ‘we and our families are more prayed for than any other members of our church fellowship, and value cannot be put onto those prayers.’<sup>320</sup> So clergy are recipients of many good things in the ministry. These blessings may not always come in the form of financial rewards, as they do in company promotions, but they are indeed invaluable to the ministers and their families.

Brian Burger highlights the dilemma in ministers receiving the many blessings that often come their way. ‘Yes, there are privileges that go with the ministry, such as housing and that sort of thing, but it does not work sometimes, because there is a sense that some churches make the minister feel as if they are doing him a big favour by paying him.’<sup>321</sup> So, it seems that ministers are aware of the perks of being cared for by a congregation, yet there is also sometimes a sense of guilt that comes attached with these blessings. Clergy are tempted to move into operating out of guilt and there is a danger that they can become performance orientated. An unspoken truth emerges and that is: ‘we need to work hard to justify what we are given.’ The unfortunate result is that what was intended to bless can end up being a curse.

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<sup>319</sup> Rev Smanga Kumalo, same interview.

<sup>320</sup> Derek Prime, *On being a Pastor*, p. 269.

<sup>321</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

Lastly, I want to echo the sentiment of Ralph Turnbull who states, ‘no one reads and studies in the Scriptures without the reward of the treasury of knowledge.’<sup>322</sup> Perhaps we have not really considered this to be a reward or blessing of ministry, but it certainly can be. Clergy have the incredible privilege of being able to read and study Holy Scripture more than the average congregation member. Indeed it must be a blessing to deepen one’s understanding of the Bible and of the vast reams of literature written by generations of Christian authors.

## ***9.2 The power of encouragement***

Ministry can be an incredible blessing when people understand the power of encouraging their ministers. In *On being a Pastor*, Derek Prime writes, ‘the hidden factor in every encouragement we give, or exhortation... is that God the Holy Spirit indwells the believer to back it up, and to apply it with a force we do not possess.’<sup>323</sup>

Hidden between the pages of the interview transcripts lies the reality of who actually encourages the ministers in their daily ministry and when things get difficult. First, we notice that the main source of encouragement comes from fellow colleagues. Second, the close family of the ministers often end up playing the role of the encourager. Third, their various mentors or spiritual friends also offer many words of encouragement. This is captured in the following thoughts from a minister:

Yes, for me I have four colleagues who I can pick up the phone and say to them ‘I am struggling.’ Or I can say to them that I am thinking of doing this programme and they can comment on it. They can also minister to me. But they can also do the same with me, if they are battling. We can speak into each other’s lives. I speak to at least one of them every week. The other one is the mentors that I have had over the years... the other group is my family – they have been angry with me at times and have criticised me and that has helped me to come back to myself. They have also said to me at times

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<sup>322</sup> Ralph Turnbull, *A Minister’s Opportunities*, p. 240.

<sup>323</sup> Derek Prime, *On being a Pastor*, p. 169.



that I am fantastic, when I know I have not been that fantastic. Family are very important.<sup>324</sup>

Rev Vuyo Dlamini would echo these sentiments. He says he gets a lot of support from his friends in ministry, but because he ministers in Vryheid, he is far from most of his friends and the colleagues that he can deeply trust.

... it is just the distance. So we have to do lots of our interaction over the phone. We still have a relationship but not a close one. We can talk issues. I really miss that you know. I miss that, because sometimes you want to talk and there is no one to talk to. There is not enough time to come down (from Vryheid), because of work pressure... because you have a long way to travel to see someone you can trust.<sup>325</sup>

Sadly, despite the encouragement he does receive, one also picks up an air of loneliness and isolation in this comment. There is a sense in which this sentiment could be echoed by many ministers. They have moments of being encouraged and these go a long way in renewing their passion for ministry, but it would be more beneficial if these could take place more often. Rural ministers often pay the price for being stationed far from many friends and colleagues and in the end this isolation causes a deep sense of loneliness.

Rev Cynthia Xaba's experience has been one of receiving plenty of encouragement in her spiritual journey. Not only has this come from present ministers, but also from retired ministers as well as from congregation members:

... we have those people who like Baba Mgojo encourage us – the old ones especially are encouraging. They tell us to 'go on' and it's nice to know that they are there for us. Some of the women ministers are also there for us. Our bishop (Dan Nzimande) is also very encouraging... I do have some people in the congregation, mainly the women, who meet with me a few times a week to pray with me. They do encourage me a lot.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> Rev Themba Mntambo, same interview.

<sup>325</sup> Rev Vuyo Dlamini, same interview.

<sup>326</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

A lot of the respondents to the questionnaire also expressed similar feelings. In answer to the question, 'who has been the biggest encouragement to you in your ministry?' These were a few of the responses:

'My wife... and various colleagues in the Natal West District.'<sup>327</sup>

'A friend in the ministry and retired ministers.'<sup>328</sup>

'I have found some of our church leaders to be very encouraging.'<sup>329</sup>

'Colleagues from other denominations...'<sup>330</sup>

'Friendship and support from other colleagues and my wife.'<sup>331</sup>

David Moodley explains that he received a lot of encouragement before he came into the ministry, but after he started as a minister, there was suddenly an unspoken expectation that he could handle things and that he must just get on with it. Thankfully he still received some support from colleagues and friends:

... a lot of this (encouragement) happened before I came into the ministry. A lot of support and encouragement came from people in my home congregation. They saw you had potential and a calling into the ministry and so they encouraged you. But when I became a minister, I obviously moved away from my home congregation, and there was just an expectation that you are now a minister and you have to get it done. So I say there has been very little encouragement – more expectation. There were one or two ministers over my probation that helped me. Sometimes we would sit together once a month over a cup of coffee and talk. Even casually these conversations helped me a lot.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Rev Bev Hill, same questionnaire.

<sup>328</sup> Rev Pieter Greyling, same questionnaire.

<sup>329</sup> Rev Charmaine Morgan, same questionnaire.

<sup>330</sup> Rev Wendy De Waal, questionnaire returned via post.

<sup>331</sup> Rev Edwin Myers, questionnaire returned via email.

<sup>332</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

On encouragement, Rev Cathy De Boer says, ‘I think as a deacon I had a lot of support, from the order of Deacons. Constance Oosthuizen has had a tremendous influence on my life over the years. She is really helpful. Others have even cared for my family. In my ministry, there was one guy who really stood out for me and I unfortunately only worked with him for one year...’<sup>333</sup>

Ministers are not the only people who need encouragement, yet congregation members and church leaders seldom understand how long ministers savour encouraging words. In reality encouragement is a blessing that all clergy could do with.

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<sup>333</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

## **10. Leaving a legacy - a reflection on ministry in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.**

Arguably one of the greatest rewards of being in ministry is the knowledge that on some level you are making a difference in the kingdom of God and that you are laying foundations for future generations of believers. In his work *Creative Ministry*, Henri Nouwen writes, ‘when a minister discovers that he really can give life to people by enabling them to face their real life condition without fear, he will at the same time cease looking at himself as a man on the periphery of reality. He is then right in the center.’<sup>334</sup> It is precisely this realization, of being in the center of reality that can spur ministers on to leave a powerful legacy for themselves and for the church. We begin our penultimate chapter by reflecting on the potential legacy that clergy can leave behind for the church.

Unfortunately, one legacy that has been passed down from our ministerial forebearers has been an imbalance towards clericalism and a mentality of having to be ‘all things to all people.’ Ministers are constantly trying to break down the stereotypical ideology of what a perfect minister must look like and what their function needs to be. One of these misnomers is that the minister is the trained professional and so they must then do everything in the church. We speak about a minister who then becomes a ‘jack of all trades.’ One of the interviewees commented that:

... you are a jack of all trades in the ministry – you do not always get the chance to focus on your gifts. You try and motivate people to try and take over, but people have not reached there yet. I have tried to train people, but it is always the question that some people want to see the minister. You can equip people and set them free to minister, but ... the people still expect you to do it.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> Henri Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>335</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

Thankfully, the Methodist Church realized the harm in these sentiments a number of years ago. During the early 1990's the church focused on six specific areas of ministry (or 'calls') as part of their 'Journey to a new land'<sup>336</sup> programme. One of these was the rediscovery of 'every member ministry' or the priesthood of all believers. This goal would be an uplifting and dynamic legacy to leave the next generation of believers. To foster a church environment where the laity fully recognise their role in building up the church and where the clergy release their grip on every department within the local church, would indeed be a powerful legacy to leave for future generations of Methodists.

In reflecting on this concept of legacy, one needs to ask if there are any insightful lessons that can be passed on to future generations of Christians within the local church. Firstly, a few ministers spoke of a desire for financial freedom in the local congregations and circuits. How one actually achieves this is another dynamic altogether, but there is a deep seated reality that financial issues could further hamper the effectiveness of the Methodist Church's ministry unless we can find creative ways to free churches and clergy from the burden of assessments<sup>337</sup> and financial constraints. Rev Simanga Kumalo spoke candidly on this dynamic:

I became unhappy with the assessment system and how taxing it was to the poor. The fact is that Methodist ministry is an expensive ministry – compared with other churches. I was quite unhappy and disappointed with that. It has become such an expensive commodity to have a minister – just any minister. This is not even being sure that he is going to deliver the goods. Just to have someone in your midst who wears a collar – that is so expensive. My belief, which was given to me by the church, is that *ministry is a sacrament – an act of grace (italics mine)*. This is so that all people can have good ministry.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> This was the vision of the MCSA during the early 1990's.

<sup>337</sup> Assessments are financial amounts paid to the Methodist Connexional Office on a monthly basis. These include amounts to pay for the salary of the ministers, pension fund contributions, and medical aid. Included in the assessments are amounts that contribute towards the running of the various departments in the MCSA.

<sup>338</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

Secondly, another lesson we would do well to implement is in allowing the ministers to focus on the things that energise them, instead of only those things that drain them. A number of ministers spoke of their longing to work in areas of ministry that they feel passionate about. Rev Kumalo reflects on his understanding of this:

I get drained when I have to sit down and listen to problems – one problem after another. But I get energised by strong leadership – giving direction. Also by preaching... that builds me up. And also education – learning, reading and having conferences and listening to them. That energises me.<sup>339</sup>

If we are considering what legacy we want to leave behind as clergy, then we need to spend some time analysing the thoughts of ministers in response to the question ‘what would you change about your ministry if you had a chance?’ Reflecting on this question offers us another insight into the lives of the clergy and also provides us with some way forward. The following collection of quotes encapsulate the thoughts of a few Methodist ministers in response to this pertinent question:

Cynthia Xaba says: ‘... for me our church needs to move from maintenance to mission. I would change those things that affect me – like mission. Transformation needs to take place in the church.’<sup>340</sup> This statement speaks clearly of a growing frustration amongst ministers at having to lead maintenance orientated ministries. By maintenance it is implied that churches spend enormous amounts of time, energy and resources in maintaining present ministries and structures. The result is that clergy have almost no time available to focus on mission.

Simanga Kumalo follows these sentiments up by speaking about a different aspect of mission. He considers the impact of ministers becoming teachers and facilitators in their communities, instead of just being preachers. In this way the clergy could use their positions to empower the congregation members to do various things, instead of the ministers trying to hold on to all aspects of ministry. He reflects:

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<sup>339</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

<sup>340</sup> Rev Cynthia Xaba, same interview.

Christian education is important to me. Christian people, especially Methodist people are people who are over sermonized, but often under educated people. I would reduce the amount of time we spend on homiletics and sermon construction and increase the amount of time and resources we spend in teaching our pastors to be educators. To be teachers and facilitators. Empowering people to do these things. The understanding of ministers being the centre of ministry – I would change that.<sup>341</sup>

Brian Burger takes a slightly different view on this as he dreams that there would be more ministers to serve the people of God: ‘I wish that each congregation could have its own pastor, so that the pastor could deal with the community individually, instead of being so spread out, looking after fifty congregations or in my case three. That dynamic would be great. Also we could do with some improvements in terms of training and some encouragement and incentive to do further training.’<sup>342</sup> It is not his intention to have more ministers so that they can do all the work, but rather that they could reach more communities effectively and facilitate the process of equipping the laity.

David Moodley ponders the weaknesses in the way ministers are stationed. In particular he laments the fact that ministers are moved too frequently and it is often at a point when ministry is just starting to blossom in that particular community. The Methodist Church could learn from a few of the modern churches who often keep their pastors for long periods of time. This adds to the stability of the community and helps to build up trust amongst the people. David Moodley says:

... there must be some kind of way where you could find that if a minister chooses to stay in a community, then they can stay - even if they want to stay ten years or more. Personally where I am right now, I would like to stay on for as long as possible – even until retirement if they want me to stay. You can start to do projects and follow them through. You have time to develop people... long term ministry is definitely beneficial.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> Rev Simanga Kumalo, same interview.

<sup>342</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>343</sup> Rev David Moodley, same interview.

A number of ministers reflected on the potential for ongoing training amongst the clergy. It is a growing concern that although ministers are willing to train further, there are very few opportunities for them to do so. If the Methodist Church wants to nurture her ministers then providing some form of further training would greatly assist them becoming more effective ministers. Brian Burger speaks out strongly on this issue:

We need an incentive to train and study further. At the moment there is no incentive for me to do my masters or doctorate. I have done it purely because that is what I have wanted to do – there is no one offering you an incentive to study further. Not that I want someone to push me, but to offer some recognition that you have studied further.<sup>344</sup>

Dennis De Lange argues that the resources for further training lie dormant within our church. He is convinced that the MCSA currently has the people to assist in this avenue of training, if only a means of tapping their skills could be arranged. He says:

This is my personal opinion. If the church used the resources that it has and created teams that could come to a place like Greytown – where you have deficiency in terms of leadership at the moment – to train the leaders and get it going and from there move on. The same with evangelists. If the church started to use those resources it would be good...<sup>345</sup>

In agreeing with the above sentiments Cathy De Boer urges for some form of further training for clergy spouses as well as for the ministers. She states: ‘I would like to see all our ministers go through something like that (further training). And even as a family. You know to expose the wives to it – it is another thing that I found lacking – I do not know what it is like now. The wives are not trained. They just concentrate on the minister and the spouse is left out. I think it is vital.’<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Rev Brian Burger, same interview.

<sup>345</sup> Rev Dennis De Lange, same interview.

<sup>346</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.



She continues by adding another plea for mentors. This would be a constructive change to our present situation in the church. 'I would like to have had a mentor - to guide me and help me along on my journey. I think we need it. I really think that we need it! Not just anyone, but someone with whom you can identify. It has to be someone who you relate to, who you can trust and who you can talk to. That I think is something that I would change.'<sup>347</sup>

As has been mentioned, there are scarce resources on the topic of *Living as a minister in the Methodist Church*. However, Hoge and Wenger's *Pastors and Transition: Why clergy leave local church ministry*, has proved to be hugely inspiration. Towards the end of their work they reflect on a few recommendations that they suggested to the American churches regarding the issue of ministers leaving the church. I believe the Methodist Church of Southern Africa would do well to heed their advice in the context of preventing ministers leaving the church. Their four recommendations are<sup>348</sup>:

1. Seminaries should do more to prepare their students for the practical aspects of ministry.
2. Improve the call process (this is referred to as the 'stationing' or 'invitation' system in South Africa).
3. Provide ongoing support for pastors.
4. Provide support for pastors in conflict or crisis.

These four recommendations strongly echo the voices of the South African ministers. As we have already highlighted, local clergy are pleading for similar things in their present situations and contexts. The Methodist Church has invested time and money into creating a powerful resource. This resource is its ministers. If we desire to leave a telling legacy for future generations then we need to intentionally begin to nurture these people. Their stories and insights speak strongly to all of us and we would be wise to learn from their experiences and suggestions.

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<sup>347</sup> Rev Cathy De Boer, same interview.

<sup>348</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p. 202 – 212.

## **11. Conclusion**

In conclusion we reflect on our findings, as regards the Methodist ministers who were ordained between 1980 and 1999. We have understood that living and serving as ministers is not easy and involves many dynamics, some of which inspire us, whilst others prove to be negative and discouraging.

The critique on the database has opened my eyes to the number of ministers ordained over this twenty year time span and what has subsequently happened to them. I have been saddened by the number of ministers who have resigned since ordination, and I hope that as a church we can address this issue. Analysing where and when ministers trained has proved interesting and I hear the plea from the clergy for further ministerial training.

One thing that has struck a chord with me, throughout this paper, has been the desire of Methodist ministers to have some form of ongoing support, either in the form of mentors or from the church leadership. This is crucial if we are to help our ministers survive in the long term. Again this is not just a South African phenomenon. Hoge and Wenger argue that one of the vital interventions denominational leaders can make in the lives of American clergy involves ongoing support. ‘New ministers need help forging bonds with veteran ministers, and ministers newly arrived in a community need to make connections with everyone there.’<sup>349</sup>

Perhaps on some level we intellectually acknowledge that ministry is complex, however in hearing the stories of these ministers I have been deeply impacted by the ‘cost of ministry.’ Every minister has encountered a plethora of difficulties and the ministry has taken its toll on their personal lives, their health, their relationships with family and even with their outlook on the church. Even sensitive issues in the country and in the church have affected their ministries, either positively or adversely. Hence, we are strongly reminded that ministers do not live in a protected vacuum, but that are shaped by the communities they serve in and what is taking place around them.

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<sup>349</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors and Transition*, p. 48.

As we have delved into the major reasons for resignations within the church, we have understood that these are not unique to Methodist ministers. A number of ministers are impacted by financial stress, burnout, broken relationships and conflict. We have also sympathised with clergy facing retirement, as well as hearing from ministers who have relocated overseas. It has been made clear that our presuppositions about the reasons for people leaving the South African church are not always accurate.

As much as I have comprehended the vast number of difficulties involved with the ministry, I am delighted that many ministers recognize the unique blessing of serving as a minister. There are indeed rewards and hugely positive aspects of being in full time ministry. I have also understood the tremendous power of encouragement. Ministers are not superhuman beings who survive on a diet of no sleep, no food, little family time and criticism. All ministers value words of encouragement and thrive on the knowledge that they are effectively serving Christ, by serving God's people.

In their work *Naming Silenced Lives*, McLaughlin and Tierney make a simple, yet profound point. They remark that 'a story is always told to someone.'<sup>350</sup> The stories that we have reflected on in this paper were told to us by clergy from the Methodist Church. We have listened to them, but have we truly heard them? My hope is that these personal accounts will not be recorded in this paper only for the sake of fulfilling academic requirements, but rather so that we could all learn from them and somehow make a meaningful contribution to the future of the Christian church.

The ministers who serve with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa are a precious resource. They are the servants who need to have their stories told. As Henri Nouwen says, 'for many individuals professional training means power. But ministers, who take off their clothes to wash the feet of their friends, are powerless, and their training and formation are meant to enable them to face their own weakness without fear and make it available to others. It is exactly this creative weakness that gives the ministry its momentum.'<sup>351</sup> Even amidst the

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<sup>350</sup> McLaughlin and Tierney, *Naming Silenced Lives*, p.130.

<sup>351</sup> Henri Nouwen, *Ministry and Spirituality*, p. 93.

weaknesses of individual people, there lies a powerful testimony of God's mysterious salvation and the calling to allow our lives to be embedded in God's story.

Finally, we turn to some wisdom from Alan Jones, who in his book *Passion for Pilgrimage* speaks of the need to hear the stories of other people, as they help us to understand our own lives. He says:

We need a song to sing, a story to tell, a dance to dance so that we know where we are and who we are. But we seem to have lost the art of storytelling and dreaming. Singing bits and pieces of what we know and telling snatches of half-remembered stories is better than nothing... there is an overall theme played in the heart of God. We have listened to that tune and share in the larger drama if we are to make sense of our own.<sup>352</sup>

May we listen to and comprehend the stories of Methodist ministers in Southern Africa and may they inspire us to be better people, focused ministers and Christians of true character and purpose.

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<sup>352</sup> Alan Jones, *Passion for Pilgrimage*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1989), p.4

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  4. Vuyo Dlamini in Pietermaritzburg on the 31 August 2006.
  5. Simanga Kumalo in Pietermaritzburg on the 9 February 2006.
  6. Themba Mntambo in Delmas on the 18 August 2006.
  7. David Moodley in Pietermaritzburg on the 21 June 2006.
  8. Michael Stone in Pietermaritzburg on the 18 January 2006.
  9. Cynthia Xaba in Wembezi on the 20 July 2006.

The material collected from these interviewees will be kept in the library at the Alan Paton Centre as part of the Sinomlando collection.

- The following clergy responded to the questionnaire:
  1. Jonathan Anderson
  2. Wendy De Waal
  3. Ian France
  4. Dick Mahne
  5. Lumka Sigaba
  6. John Wessels
  7. Barry Marshall
  8. Pieter Greyling
  9. Kevin Needham
  10. Keith McLachlan
  11. John Senekal

12. Pete Grassow
13. Bev Hill
14. Alan Molineux
15. Edwin Myers
16. Charmaine Morgan
17. Anonymous

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**Internet Resources:**

[www.methodistchurch.org.za](http://www.methodistchurch.org.za)

13 August 2006

## **13. Appendix**

### *13.1 List of questions used in interviews and in the questionnaire.*

#### **Title of Research Paper:**

##### **Living as a Methodist Minister in the late Twentieth Century.**

*The experiences encountered by clergy within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and how this shaped (or is shaping) their ministry. This will be with particular reference to ministers who were ordained between 1980 and 1999.*

#### Outline of Questions:

1. Reflecting back on your ministerial training, were there any clear highlights for you?
2. Would you say that there is a need for ongoing training within the Church and if yes, what kind of input would you appreciate?
3. Do you feel that you have more/less energy for the ministry now than when you first started? Explain.
4. What have been some of the things that have "drained you" in your ministry?
5. Are you more focused (intentional) in your ministry now than when you first came into the ministry?
6. Are you able to use your spiritual gifts effectively in the ministry?
7. What impact has the ministry had on your family?
8. What impact has 'The Church' had on your experience of Faith?
9. Who has been the biggest encouragement to you throughout your ministry?  
Who have been the influential people in your life and ministry?
10. Have your experiences in ministry (as clergy) changed the way you relate to your colleagues and the congregation members?
11. In what way have your personal struggles shaped your ministry?
12. How have "politics" (both government and Church) impacted upon your ministry?
13. If there was one thing about your ministry that you could change, it would be...

### 13.2 Database of all ministers ordained in twenty years

#### Record of all Minister's ordained in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) from 1980 – 1999.

**Basic Key:** R. = Resigned; D = Died; Supern. = Retired and now a Supernumary; B.C. = Beyond Connexion (Overseas); S = Secondment; T = Transfer out/in; Y = Yes; YB = Yearbook.

The following records have been taken from the MCSA *Yearbooks* dating from 1978 until 2006. The church publications for these respective years contain the *Directory*, the *Yearbook* and what is now classified as the *Minutes of Conference*.

	Initials	Surname	Year Ordained	Institution at which studied	Still in Ministry?	Other	Station as at 2006
1	P	Abbot	1993	Rhodes	Resigned in 2002		-
2	IM	Abrahams	1982	Fedsem and later at Rhodes	Yes		Presiding Bishop
3	F	Abrahams	Actually in 1974.	N/A	Received back in 1993. Supern.	Received into full Connexion 1993.	Heathfield Circuit
4	AW	Adam	1982	Rhodes?	Supern. – Died in 2000		-
5	JJ	Adams	1993	Fedsem	Y		False Bay
6	MH	Allen	1990	Fedsem / UNISA	Supern. 1996		Ungeni
7	JD	Anderson	1985	Rhodes	Y		Edendale/ Kempton Park
8	MC	Anderson- Viljoen	1985	UNISA	Leave of Absence	Pg 25 of 1989 minutes	-
9	MG	Ashburner	1992	Rhodes	R. 2002 - May have transferred to Australia		-
10	ZP	August	1991	Rhodes HDE (Fort Hare) – 1994	Died – 2000	(pg 63 of 1995 YB)	-
11	KR	Bailey	1992	UNISA	Y		Klerksdorp
12	GF	Baillie-Stewart	1981	UNISA	R. in 1991	Pg. 45 of 1991 minutes	-
13	DM	Balia	1989	UDW	R. in 1998	Pg 258 of 1998 YB	-
14	AG	Bangushe	1998	Rhodes	Y		South Durban
15	DR	Barbour	1999	UNISA	Y		Magalies
16	ML	Barnard	1989	UNISA	Y		Outeniqua
17	S	Barry	1987	Rhodes	Y		Vereeniging
18	JM	Basset	1983	Rhodes	T. to UMC	2004 YB - 131	-
19	S	Bates	1994	Rhodes	R. in 1998	Pg 258 of 1998 YB	-
20	P	Bauser	1984	Rhodes	Supern.		Roodepoort
21	JM	Bavu	1999	TEEC	Y	Received into Full Connexion	Cala
22	JG	Beck	1994	UNISA	Y		East London
23	W	Begbie	1990	Fedsem	Supern. in 1992	Pg 78 of YB, 1992	Seconded
24	KG	Behrens	1990	UNISA	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	-
25	RT	Behrens	1996	Rhodes	R. in 2001		-
26	MC	Belani	1991	Fedsem	Y		P.E. Zwide
27	AP	Bell	1993	UNISA	R. 1997 Transfer to Presbyterian Church in New Zealand.	See pg 270 of 1997 YB	-
28	KR	Benjamin	1992	UNISA	R. in 2001	Secretary of Western Cape C.C.	-

29	PL	Bester	1988	Actually ordained in 1969. reentered in 1988	Y	Received into full Connexion	Moreleta
30	A	Bester	1993	Rhodes	Y		Hennops River
31	N	Bixa	1988	Uncertain	D. 1999	Death recorded in 1999 YB, pg 14	-
32	B	Bodenstein	1998	UNISA	Supern. in 2004		Empangeni
33	TL	Bongco	1997	JWC	Y		Bathurst/ P.Alfred
34	EJ	Bosman	1990	TEEC	Supern.		Springs
35	SD	Bosman	1994	Rhodes	Y		Clerpine
36	P	Botha	1987	UNISA	Transfer to the Uniting Church in Australia.		-
37	CJ	Botha	1994	Rhodes	Y		Bathurst/ P.Alfred
38	AA	Bothma	1980		Supern. in 2002		Outeniqua
39	AS	Brews	1983	UNISA	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	-
40	WA	Britton	1987	Rhodes	R. 1989	See pg. 25 of 1989 minutes	-
41	EC	Brown	1988	Rhodes	Y		Molopo Eye
42	HJ	Bruiners	1992	Fedsem	R. 1999 Resigned in 1999 – pg 373 of yearbook	Received into Full Connexion – 1992	-
43	RM	Bubu	1994	Fedsem	Y		Kwantshunqe
44	PR	Buckland	1986	Rhodes	Y		Helderberg
45	RPA	Buffel	1987	Fedsem	Y		P.E./Algoa
46	B	Burger	1995	Rhodes	Y		South Midlands
47	RL	Burton	1991	Rhodes	Y		P.E. Central
48	DH	Bussey	1994	TEEC	Supern in 1997	See pg 269 of 1997 YB	Clerpine
49	PJ	Butterworth	1990	UNISA	Y		Durban Metro.
50	AL	Buttner	1991	UNISA	Y		Bellville
51	MG	Caba	1996	Fedsem/ JWC	Y		Ulundi
52	OF	Calverley	1990	UNISA	Supern. in 1994	Pg 79 of YB, 1994	Kraaifontein
53	KB	Carr	1993	UPE	Y		Nahoon river
54	RW	Cawood	1982	Rhodes Bcomm (UNISA) – 1994	Y		Fish hoek
55	F	Celliers	1981	Rhodes	Secondment		Chaplaincies
56	SR	Ching	1982	Rhodes	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
57	G	Chinnasami	1983	Fedsem	Super. – 2000		Umgeni
58	JM	Christie	1987	Rhodes	Y		Umgeni
59	JC	Christowitz	1990	UNISA	Died in mid – 1990's		-
60	DRH	Clack	1990	Uncertain	Transfer 1993	Pg. 48 of 1993 YB	-
61	PJ	Clark	1990	Studied in UK	Transfer back to U.K		B.C.
62	JJJ	Cloete	1996	UNISA	R. 1997	Received into full Connexion in 1996. Resigned in 1997. See pg 270 of 1997 YB	-
63	N	Coetzee	1982	RU	Y		Bloemfontein
64	HJ	Colley	1988	UNISA	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
65	OT	Conjwa	1986	Fedsem	Died – 2003	Received into full Connexion 1986	-
66	MT	Crockett	1985	UNISA	Y	Received into full Connexion 1986	Dumisani



67	M	Crommelin	1981	Rhodes	Y		Kraaifontein
68	PS	Crundwell	1980	UCT	Y		Clerpine
69	JA	Cuff	1998	UNISA	Y		Vryheid
70	AG	Cundill	1995	TEEC	Died – 1999		-
71	VV	Dandala	1990	Fedsem	Secoded		Secoded to All Africa Conference of Churches
72	B	Daniels	1992	Uncertain	R. 1994	R. into F.C in 1992 Pg 47 of 1994 YB	-
73	NJ	De Beer	1982	Rhodes	Supernum -1996 R. 1997	See pg 270 of 1997 YB	-
74	KM	De Beer	1995	Rhodes	Y		Golden West
75	CS	De Boer	1994	TEEC	Y		Umvoti
76	A	De Gruchy	1982	Rhodes	Secoded		Secoded
77	D	De Lange	1983	Rhodes	Supern.		Bathurst/ P. Alfred
78	CL	De Villiers	1989	UNISA	Y		Jo'burg East
79	BA	De Villiers	1993	Uncertain	R. in 2001		-
80	WA	De Waal	1995	BA, B'Ed (TUC)	Y		Harrismith
81	RPF	De Winnaar	1988	UNISA	Died – 1994		-
82	J	Deacon	1987	UNISA?	Y		Vaal south
83	NO	Dithlake	1989	Fedsem	Y		Parys
84	MJ	Dithakanyane	1987	Fedsem	Died – 2005		-
85	WT	Dlamini	1990	Fedsem	Y		Empangeni
86	MP	Dlamini	1995	TEEC	Y		Mahamba
87	OT	Dlamini	1996	JWC/ UDW	Y		Lower tugela
88	WV	Dlamini	1998	UKZN	Y		Vryheid
89	J	Dlepu	1980	Fedsem	Y		Sipaqeni
90	ZZ	Dobe	1991	Fedsem	Y		Xora
91	AM	Dondashe	1987	Fedsem	Y		Wodehouse Forests
92	AJAJ	Du Bruyn	1993	UNISA	Discontinued – 1996	Pg 32 of 1996 YB	Rand West
93	IM	Dugmore	1993	Ordained at 71 years of age	Died in 2005		-
94	WG	Du Plessis	1980	Uncertain	Y		-
95	CL	Du Plessis	1987	TEEC	Y		Parys
96	GA	Du Plessis	1988	UNISA	Supern – 1999 Died in 2005	Pg 373 of 1999 YB	-
97	SM	Duma	1980	TEEC	Died in 2005	Received back into full Connexion 1990	-
98	MC	Durrant	1989	UNISA	Y		Magalies
99	HM	Dzingwe	1992	St. Bede's	Died – 2004	Received into Full Connexion	-
100	GW	Edgar	1984	UNISA	Died in 2002		-
101	R	Edminson	1985	FCMA?	Supernum. 1995	Pg 73 of 1995 YB	Victoria Road
102	Y	Edwards-Vivian	1995	UNISA	Resigned in 2005		-
103	NJ	Els	1983	UNISA	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	-
104	ANV	Emmett	1981	Rhodes	Y		Hennops River
105	J	Erwin	1995	TEEC	Super in 2004		Germiston
106	RS	Fabrik	1990	UNISA	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
107	WWF	Faku	1992	Fedsem/JWC	R. 2006		Buntingville
108	JT	Fakude	1995	JWC/UDW	Y		Durban
109	TH	Fandaleki	1994	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Greater Nelspruit
110	SDZ	Fikeni	1990	Fedsem	Y	Received into full Connexion	Tombo
111	D	Fikeni	1996	JWC	Y		Emfundisweni
112	X	Fikeni	1999	JWC	Y		Keiskammahock
113	RP	Finger	1985	BA Hons (UWC)	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	Reinstatement
114	MJ	Finger	1995	Fedsem	Y		Transgariep
115	PJ	Fisher	1996	Rhodes	R. in 2000		-

116	DW	Florence	1982	Uncertain	D	Death recorded in 1999 YB, pg 15	-
117	DA	Forster	1998	Rhodes	Y		EMMU
118	S	Fouche	1991	UNISA	Resigned in 2005		-
119	I	France	1998	BTH (UNISA) BSc (Wits)-1994	Y		Pinetown
120	JB	Freemantle	1995	Rhodes	Y		P.E. North
121	DH	Furness	1983	Rhodes	R in 1990	Pg 37 of 1990 minutes	-
122	E	Gabriel	1996	Fedsem	Y		Lower Tugela
123	G	Galtere	1992	Uncertain	Transfer/Resign 1996	Received into Full Connexion 1992	-
124	DA	Galtere	1994	Fedsem/JWC	Transfer/Resign 1996	Received into full Connexion 1994	-
125	MG	Gamede	1990	Rhodes	Y		Fourways
126	TG	Gcwane	1992	Uncertain	Supern.		Palmerton
127	GM	Gece	1990	Fedsem	Y	Received into full Connexion Pg 63 of YB, 1991	Engwaqa
128	AD	George	1990	UNISA	Supern in 1991		-
129	CB	Gerber	1986	UNISA	Supern.		East London
130	EI	Gerber	1989	UNISA	Supernum. 1995	Pg 73 of 1995 YB	Durban Metro.
131	JD	Gillmer	1981	Rhodes	Y		Four Ways
132	CM	Goniwe	1989	Fedsem	Supern. in 2004	Received into full Connexion	Ngunge
133	IS	Gourlay	1981	Rhodes	Resigned		-
134	R	Govender	1993	UNISA	Y	Received into full Connexion	Umgeni
135	RN	Gowana	1997	Fedsem	Y		Mahlabatini
136	PS	Grassow	1984	Fedsem	Y		Victoria Road
137	PG	Greyling	1994	Rhodes	Resigned - 2006		-
138	SN	Griffin	1984	Uncertain	Supern. 1996		PMB Metro
139	SH	Griffiths	1995	UNISA	Supern.		Vaal South
140	SF	Gura	1994	Fedsem	Y		Mafeteng
141	ZA	Gushu	1989	Rhodes	Y		Shawbury
142	M	Guwa	1986	DTH (UWC)	Seconded		Seconded
143	WA	Guy	1994	JWC	Supern.		Alberton Mission
144	AM	Gwala	1996	UDW	Y		Ladysmith & Jonono's Kop
145	DZ	Hadebe	1991	Fedsem	Y		?
146	SM	Hadebe	1992	Fedsem	Y		Kopano
147	C	Hams	1989	Lovedale	D. 1994 - Death recorded in 1994 YB, pg 79	R. into full Connexion	-
148	GP	Hancocks	1988	UNISA	R. 2002 Transfer to UK		-
149	MW	Hansrod	1991	Fedsem	Y		Helderberg
150	JM	Harman	1988	UNISA	Supern.		Karoo East
151	R.B.F	Harrison	1980	UNISA	Supern. in 1992	Pg 78 of YB, 1992	-
152	CD	Harrison	1987	Rhodes	Y		Fourways
153	VI	Harry	1995	Uncertain	Y		P.E. West
154	OV	Hartebees	1995	Fedsem	Y		-
155	LS	Hausiku	1985	Fedsem	R. in 1992	Received into full Connexion R. in 1992, pg 53 of YB	-
156	LY	Hazel	1998	JWC	Y		Fish Hoek
157	A	Hefkie	1984	Fedsem	Y		Bishop of Cape
158	SP	Hein	1988	Fedsem	R. 2002		-
159	GC	Hendry	1996	Rhodes/	Resigned		-

160	JJ	Heuer (now Sandaam)	1989	UNISA Fedsem	Y	R.into full Connexion	Seconded
161	BG	Hill	1989	UNISA	Y		Umtshezi
162	CE	Hiscock	1987	UNISA	Y		Magalies
163	SD	Hlangani	1998	Rhodes	Y		P.E. Kwazakhele
164	N	Hlatshwayo	1993	Fedsem	Y		Wittebergen
165	NP	Hlope	1996	R.R. Wright School of Religion	Died in 2005	Received into Full Connexion 1996	-
166	JK	Hobson	1988	UNISA	Y		P.E. West
167	JH	Hofmeyer	1988	UNISA	Y		Magalies
168	PL	Holden	1982	UNISA	Supern. 2002		Outeniqua
169	RA	Holden	1991	TEEC	Died - 1999		-
170	WJ	Hollington	1986	TEEC	R in 1992	Pg 52 of YB, 1992	-
171	SG	Holly	1990	Rhodes	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
172	GT	Hoole	1996	JWC	Y		Lower Tugela
173	RJ	Howard	1990	JWC	Supern.		Greater Nelspruit
174	PL	Howarth	1989	UNISA	Y		Queenstown
175	IA	Howarth	1993	TEEC	Y		Durban Metro
176	TM	Howell	1988	UNISA	Y		Vereeniging
177	JE	Hudson	1986	UNISA	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	-
178	JP	Hulshof	1989	UNISA	Y		Ysterberg
179	GJ	Huxtable	1986	Rhodes	Y		West Vaal
180	WR	Ingpen	1983	UNISA	Seconded		Seconded
181	WM	Jacobs	1986	TEEC	Supern in 1991	Pg 63 of YB, 1991	PMB Metro
182	AA	Jacobs	1992	Fedsem	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	-
183	MBB	Jadezwi	1990	Fedsem	Y	Received into full Connexion	Without Appointment
184	MB	January	1993	Rhodes	Y		False Bay
185	JZ	January	1997	JWC	Y		Jo'Burg East
186	HP	Jenkins	1991	Fedsem	Y		KingWilliamstown
187	PC	Johnstone	1985	UNISA	Y		Alberton
188	R	Jonas	1998	UKZN	Y		EMMU
189	E	Jones	1983	Fedsem	Transfer 1993	Pg. 48 of 1993 YB	-
190	DW	Jonga	1990	Uncertain	Died 2001	Received into full Connexion 1990	-
191	NM	Jonsson	1989	UNISA	Y		Germiston
192	JW	Jooste	1987	Fedsem	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB	-
193	DAC	Jordaan	1996	UNISA	Y		Roodepoort
194	E.N	Jurgenson	1980	UNISA	Transfer 1993 to New Zealand	Pg. 48 of 1993 YB	-
195	PJ	Kaltenbrun	1994	UNISA	Supern. 2005		Clerpine
196	FK	Kamanga	1990	TEEC	Y	Received into full Connexion	Qaukeni
197	KF	Ketshabile	1985	Fedsem	Y		Study Leave
198	JT	Kgotle	1998	JWC	Y		Mafikeng
199	TA	Khalema	1980	MTS (Edmonton)	Discontinued - 1996	Pg 12 of 1996 YB	B.C.
200	RS	Khumalo	1998	UKZN	Seconded		Seconded to UKZN
201	LD	Kirstein	1992	UNISA	R. in 1998	Pg 258 of 1998 YB	-
202	EM	Kiviet	1990	Uncertain	R. 1994	R into F.C. in 1990. Pg 47 of 1994 YB	-
203	SJ	Kobuoe	1998	JWC	Y		Thaba'nchu
204	SZ	Kowa	1995	Fedsem	Died in 2003		-

205	JR	Krige	1999	MTH (London)	Y		Alexandra/JHB
206	DC	Kuhn	1989	Uncertain	Y		Kopano
207	R	Kumalo	1998	Rhodes	Y		JHB North
208	N	Kwasa	1990	TEEC	Y	Received into full Connexion	Tamara
209	DA	Kweyama	1998	UDW	Y		Bongweni
210	LW	Lake	1990	UNISA	Y		
211	JW	Laughton	1988	Rhodes	Y	Received into full Connexion	Paarl Valley
212	AA	Lawrence	1996	UNISA	R. 1999	Pg 373 of 1999 YB	-
213	RJ	Laxton	1983	Rhodes	R in 1988	Pg 27 of 1988 minutes	-
214	A	Le Roux	1989	Rhodes	Transfer out 2003		-
215	Y	Le Roux (now Moses)	1993	Rhodes	Y		Helderberg
216	LS	Lebaka-Ketshabile	1986	Fedsem	Seconded		Seconded
217	CA	Lee	1993	Fedsem/JWC	R.		
218	DV	Lces	1995	Uncertain	Supern.		Piet Retief
219	RM	Legoete	1991	Rhodes	R. 1997	See pg 270 of 1997 YB	-
220	PT	Lehasa	1990	Fedsem	D	Death recorded in 1995 YB pg.73.	-
221	TD	Lekeka	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Taung
222	PS	Lekhatlanya	1992	Uncertain	Supern.		Fletcherville
223	M	Lescba	1994	Fedsem	Chaplain		Chaplain
224	KD	Lesia	1992	UCT	Chaplain		Chaplain
225	W	Letsholo	1984	Fedsem	Y		Vaal South
226	GJ	Leverton	1989	Rhodes	R in 1995	Received into Full Connexion in 1989. But, R. in 1995, Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	Resigned again in 2005.
227	GE	Lewis	1991	From UK	Supern - 1998	Supern in 1998 - pg 258 of YB	-
228	KJ	Light	1994	Rhodes	Y		Dumisani
229	BK	Lill	1986	Rhodes	R in 1988	Pg 27 of 1988 minutes	-
230	JT	Liphoko	1989	Fedsem	Died 2002 Leave of absence 1994 (pg. 48)	R. into full Connexion - 1989	-
231	AG	Loans	1984	UNISA	Supern.		Victoria Road
232	JRM	Lofafa	1994	BA (Unitra)	Seconded	Received into full Connexion	Seconded
233	JSM	Losaba	1996	UNISA			Roodepoort
234	M	Lujiva	1993	Fedsem	R. 2003		-
235	ER	Lutge	1992	Uncertain	Supern. in 1994	Pg 79 of YB, 1994	Bathurst/ P. Alfred
236	NL	Luthuli	1998	JWC	Y		Makapanstad
237	RJ	Mabidikama	1993	Fedsem	Y		Makapanstad
238	B	Mabone	1986	Ricatla	Y		Macie
239	S	Machabane	1989	Ricatla	Y	Received into full Connexion	Mavalane
240	RM	Machola	1991	Fedsem	Y		Pilanesberg
241	SS	Madadasane	1994	Fedsem	Y		Kroonstad
242	MH	Madibo	1989	Rhodes	Y		Alexandra/ JHB
243	NW	Madonsela	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Southdale
244	SL	Madwe	1992	Rhodes	Y		Annshaw
245	TW	Mafungwa	1995	Fort hare	Y		Fort Malan
246	AM	Magadla	1991	Fedsem	Y		Wesleyville
247	NA	Magerman	1994	UNISA	Y		Chaplain
248	EMN	Magqazana	1992	Fedsem	Y		Ncambediana
249	RJO	Maguire	1993	BA. BC om	Received back in	Received into	Benoni

			(Ordained earlier – 1962)		1993. Supern.in 1996.	full Connexion	
250	HD	Mahlalela	1988	UNISA	Y		Bishop
251	NN	Mahlangeni	1987	TEEC	Supern.		Marubeni
252	BJ	Mahne	1998	JWC	Y		Bethlehem
253	KJ	Mahupela	1991	Fedsem	Y		Morcleta
254	LA	Majoe	1995	Fedsem	Secondment		Chaplain
255	MC	Majola	1991	Fedsem	Y		Kutlwanong
256	NA	Majola	1992	Fedsem	Y		Entembeni
257	FS	Makananda	1988	Rhodes	Y		Cape West
258	AT	Makananda	1998	B Iuris (UWC)	Y		JHB West
259	CN	Makehle	1985	Fedsem	Y		Bensonvale
260	SA	Makgetla	1993	Rhodes	Y		Bela-Bela
261	SH	Makhaye	1996	TEEC	Y		Ludeke
262	DM	Makumsha	1996	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Germiston
263	BJ	Makhwenke	1989	Fedsem	D. 2004		-
264	GS	Makoko	1992	Uncertain	Supern. in 1994	R into F.C in 1992. Pg 79 of YB, 1994	Lowveld
265	GM	Makole	1996	Rhodes	Y		Benoni
266	PN	Malinga	1988	Fedsem	Bishop		Natal Coastal
267	LBM	Malotana	1998	JWC	Y		Tsojana
268	VT	Mamanc	1987	Fedsem	R. 1995		-
269	N	Mananga	1996	Fedsem	Y		Horton
270	WV	Manciya	1990	Fedsem	Y		Emqokezweni
271	LE	Mandindi	1996	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Clerpine
272	B	Mandlate	1993	Fedsem	BC in UK		-
273	JP	Mangole	1996	Uncertain	Y	Received into Full Connexion	Molteno & Stormberg
274	S	Mankayi	1995	Fedsem/TEEC	Y		Ayliff
275	T	Manolsi	1986	Fedsem	Y		Francistown
276	SS	Mantini	1988	Fedsem	R in 1995	Rec. into F. Connexion in 1988, but R. in 1995, Pg. 46 of 1995 YB	-
277	SE	Mantini	1990	Fedsem	D. 1998	Received into full Connexion Death recorded in 1998 YB, pg. 39.	-
278	LH	Mapoma	1994	TEEC	Y		Germiston
279	SA	Maqabe	1988	Fedsem	Discontinued – 1996 Died in 2003	Pg 32 of 1996 YB	-
280	DAJ	Maregele	1999	JWC	Y		South Rand
281	BG	Marshall	1995	UNP	Y		Port Elizabeth Central
282	JL	Masa	1990	Fedsem	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB	East Rand
283	VG	Maseti	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Somerset East/ Glen Avon
284	H	Masiza	1989	Fedsem	D. 1999	Received into full Connexion	-
285	JN	Masondo	1994	Fedsem	Y		Uitenhage Kabah
286	HSS	Mate	1999	Ricatla	Y		Matutuini
287	TS	Mathebula	1998	JWC/UNISA	Y		Benoni
288	WM	Mathonsi	1984	UNISA	Y		-
289	MM	Matiwane	1980	Uncertain	D. in 1991	Death recorded in 1991 YB, pg 65	-
290	KA	Matlawe	1999	Rhodes	Y		Umtata/ Ncambediana
291	KE	Matlhaku	1999	JWC	Y		Welkom
292	RA	Matlombe	1998? (1986)	Fedsem	Supernumery		Mavalana
293	MA	Matsane	1996	UP	Seconded -	Received into	Chaplain

294	D	Matsolo	1996	Fedsem/JWC	Chaplaincies	Full Connexion	
295	JR	Matthews	1984	Rhodes	Seconded R. 1994 Now in Canada	- Pg 47 of 1994 YB	-
296	C	Matusse	1983	Fedsem	Y		Quartel Springs
297	WT	Mawela	1980	Fedsem	Super. 2003		-
298	WS	Mayeza	1990	Uncertain	D. Death recorded in 1996 YB, pg 49	Rec. into F. Connexion in 1990.	
299	TB	Mazibuko	1995	JWC	D	Death recorded in 1999 YB, pg 15	-
300	JR	Mazwi	1981	Uncertain	Supernumery		Mphahlele Mount White
301	DM	Mbalo	1999	TEEC	Y	Received into Full Connexion	
302	MW	Mbele	1999	Uncertain	D.?	Received into Full Connexion	-
303	AM	Mbete	1982	Fedsem	Y		Dumisani
304	NM	Mbilini	1985	UNISA	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993 Back in as a Phase One - 2005	Wodehouse Forests
305	MG	Mbono	1992	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Caba
306	MZ	Mbuli	1982	Fedsem	Uncertain		-
307	AS	McAllister	1982	Emeritus candidate	Died - 1990		-
308	JP	McGreath	1980	Uncertain	R. 1989	Ref. pg 24 of 1989 Minutes	-
309	MM	Mchunu	1984	Fedsem	Y		Durban
310	JA	McKaig	1981	UNISA	Seconded		Chaplain
311	FT	McLachlan	1988	UNISA	Resigned		-
312	KS	McLachlan	1991	UNISA	Y		Ladysmith
313	EM	Mdabe	1999	Uncertain	Seconded	Received into Full Connexion	Seconded
314	JM	Mdaka	1990	UNITRA	Bishop	Received into full Connexion	Kimberley, Namibia, Bloemfontein Alberton
315	MM	Mdakane	1997	Fedsem (Rhodes)	Y		Emnceba
316	L	Mdoda	1992	TEEC	Y		Pretoria Central
317	TV	Mdolo	1988	Fedsem	Y		Durban Metro
318	S	Mdolo	1993	Fedsem	Y		Lobatse
319	BS	Medupe	1991	UNISA	Y		MEDIATION
320	CV	Mehana	1989	Rhodes	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB Back in Connexion	
321	IS	Mekoa	1995	Fedsem	Discontinued - 1996 Seconded to UKZN - Durban	Pg 12 of 1996 YB	Seconded
322	ZR	Mcmela-kutu	1995	Natal	Y		Fourways
323	GB	Mercer	1999	Unisa (Bcomm)	Y		South Durban
324	OE	Mere	1996	JWC	Y		Gaborone
325	RW	Meyers	1981	Uncertain	Y		Bongani
326	MN	Mgijima	1990	Fedsem	R. in 1999	Received into full Connexion - 1990 Resigned in 1999 - pg 373 of YB	-
327	LM	Mguli	1990	Fedsem?	D. in 1991	Received into full Connexion Death recorded in 1991 YB, pg 65	
328	JD	Mhlophe	1998	JWC	Y		Lichtenberg
329	AR	Minty	1987	UNISA	Y		Middelberg

330	IR	Misselhorn	1984	UNISA	Y		Durban metro
331	MM	Mjiqiza	1990	Fedsem/ UNISA	Y		Queenstown & Lesseyton
332	MS	Mkhize	1994	Fedsem	Y		?
333	FS	Mkhwanazi	1991	UDW (BA)	Y		Vaal North
334	DSZ	Mkula	1995	Uncertain	D	Death recorded in 1996 YB, p49	-
335	BL	Mlamla	1990	UNISA	Seconded	Received into full Connexion	-
336	MJA	Mlangeni	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Kangwane
337	NJ	Mlotana	1997	Rhodes/ Fort Hare	Y		Hlabati
338	MV	Mnaba	1999	Rhodes	Y		Bothaville
339	AN	Mnaba	1980	Fedsem	Bishop		Clarkebury
340	HM	Mngadi	1984	Fedsem	Y		PMB & Howick
341	LS	Mngomezulu	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Kwangwanase
342	TV	Mntambo	1986	Fedsem	Y		Table Bay
343	M	Mnyandu	1988	JWC	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
344	LP	Moalusi	1988	Fedsem	Y		Senekal
345	XN	Moeketsi	1995	Rhodes	Seconded		-
346	JT	Moephuli	1992	Fedsem	R. 1997	See pg 270 of 1997 YB Back in ministry	Kuruman
347	TJ	Moerane	1994	JWC	Seconded		Chaplain
348	JM	Mogoregi	1996	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Without Appointment
349	MJ	Mohala	1987	Fedsem	Y		-
350	MS	Mohale	1989	Fedsem	Y		Mphahlele
351	DA	Mohale	1994	Fedsem	Y		Without App.
352	JT	Mohitlhi	1997	JWC	Y		Lindley & Frankfort
353	RS	Mokgothu	1993	Rhodes	Seconded		-
354	JDM	Mokone	1991	Fedsem	Y		Mabieskraal
355	DDP	Mokonyane	1997	Rhodes/ UNISA	Seconded		Chaplain – Police
356	AR	Molatji	1996	Rhodes	Y		Worcester
357	JM	Molefe	1991	Fedsem	Seconded		Chaplain
358	EM	Molise	1995	JWC	Y		Seth Mokitmi
359	MW	Molo	1997	Rhodes	Y		Alexandra/ JHB
360	ME	Moloi	1992	Rhodes	Y		JHB North
361	CM	Molokwane	1988	Hons (Unisa) Fedsem?	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB Back in Ministry	South Rand
362	GJ	Molver	1998	UNISA	Y		Coalfields
363	A	Molyneux	1997	UNISA	Y		Nahoon River
364	GJ	Mona	1990	Fedsem?	Supernumery	Received into full Connexion	Mt Hargreaves
365	LP	Monageng	1993	Fedsem	Seconded	Chaplain	Chaplain
366	MP	Monyaki	1996	JWC	Y		Diamond fields
367	PD	Moodley	1994	UNISA	Y		PMB Metro
368	CG	Moolman	1993	UNISA	Resigned in 2002		
369	C	Morgan	1992	UNISA	Y		Port Elizabeth West
370	DW	Morgan	1996	UNISA	Y		Lowveld
371	RWL	Morgan	1996	UNISA	Supern - 1998	Supern in 1998 – pg 258 of YB	Durban Metro
372	WM	Morokane	1996	Rhodes	Supern in 1997	See pg 269 of 1997 YB	Thaba Nchu
373	KJ	Mosai	1998	JWC	R. 2002		-
374	LJ	Mosala	1980	Fedsem	Seconded	University of Techikon	-
375	M	Moses	1999	UNISA	Y		Connexional Youth
376	Y	Moses	1993	BTH (Hons) (RU)	Y		Helderberg
377	SZ	Mosiako	1998	JWC	Y		Bloemfontein

378	NM	Motebele	1991	Fedsem	Y		Enyanisweni
379	LI	Mothibi	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Upington
380	KW	Motsamai	1986	Fedsem	Y		South Rand
381	AM	Motswenyane	1992	Fedsem	Y		Welkom
382	TE	Motswenyane	1996	Fedsem/JWC	Chaplain – Police		Chaplain
383	TA	Moult	1980	UNISA	Y		Cape West
384	HN	Mpateni	1990	Uncertain	D	Received into full Connexion 1990.	-
						Death recorded in 1995 YB, pg 73	
385	H	Mpepo	1991	Uncertain	D	Death recorded in 1999 YB, pg 31	-
386	SG	Mqomo	1997	Rhodes	Y		Colana
387	SJ	Msotyana	1993	Fedsem	Y		Etyeni
388	A	Mtembu	1985	Fedsem	Supernumery		Lower Tugela
389	PB	Mtimkulu	1981	UFS	Y		Mount Arthur
390	KE	Mtimkulu	1999	Rhodes	Y		South Rand
391	ZA	Mtshali	1980	Uncertain	Y		Port Shepstone
392	GZ	Mtshiza	1997	JWC	Y		Zola
393	DM	Mtuzula	1996	St Bede's?	R. 2003	Received into Full Connexion	-
394	RE	Muchavi	1988	UNISA	Supern - 1998	Supern in 1998 – pg 258 of YB	Limpopo
395	WD	Mullally	1998	JWC	R. 2000	Transfer to Ireland.	B.C
396	CP	Muller	1984	Rhodes	R. 1997	See pg 270 of 1997 YB	-
397	BA	Muller	1993	JWC	Supern in 1997	See pg 269 of 1997 YB	Outeniqua
398	BD	Murray	1988	UNISA	Supern in 1991	Pg 63 of YB, 1991	Fish Hoek
399	ET	Myers	1997	UNISA	B.C – UK		-
400	BA	Nagel	1990	Rhodes	Y		Helderberg
401	TL	Naidoo	1995	Uncertain	BC - Australia		-
402	PA	Naude	1987	UNISA	Seconded		Seconded
403	EM	Neusane	1991	Fedsem JWC	Died. 2004		-
404	G	Ndamase	1990	Uncertain	Y	Received into full Connexion	Ngqeleni
405	GV	Ndamase	1998	Rhodes	Y	Resigned	-
406	EM	Ndlaku	1999	TEEC	Y	Received into Full Connexion	Elukholweni/samaria
407	IS	Ndlovu	1986	Fedsem	Y		Bulwer
408	NE	Ndlovu	1997	JWC	Y		Nongoma
409	KG	Needham	1991	(BA-Social Work)	Y		Wynberg
410	CC	Neethling	1983	Uncertain	D.	Death recorded in 1998 YB, pg. 39.	-
411	C	Nel	1999	JWC	Y		Namibia South
412	DT	Nelson	1988	Fedsem	Y		Bethlehem
413	D	Newby	1989	UNISA	R. 2001		-
414	DA	Newton	1982	Rhodes	Y		Bellville
415	SE	Ngcobo	1990	Fedsem	Y		Indaleni
416	SM	Ngema	1986	Fedsem	Y		Central Swaziland
417	JGM	Ngomana	1989	St Bede's?	Supcr. 2000	R. into full Connexion	-
418	LM	Ngqoyiya	1992	Fedsem	D	Death recorded in 1996 YB, pg 49.	-
419	DV	Ngum	1986	Ordained in 1964 initially	D	Rec. into Full C. in 1986. Death recorded in 1999 YB, pg 29	-
420	MS	Ngwandala	1991	UDW	Chaplain		Chaplain



421	VR	Ngxabi	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		East Rand
422	PG	Ngxola	1986	TEEC	Supernumery		East Rand
423	SM	Nhlapo	1990	Fedsem	Y		Mafikeng
424	PPN	Nhlebelo	1995	Fedsem	Y		-
425	BM	Nhleko	1996	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Lowveld
426	JM	Nicholson	1988	UNISA	Y		Edenvale/ Kempton Park
427	LT	Njozela	1992	St.Bede's?	D. 2003	Received into Full Connexion	-
428	LAD	Nkhumise	1989	Fedsem?	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB Back in Ministry	Central Methodist Mission - JHB
429	D	Nkomo	1988	Fedsem	Y		St Stithians
430	SK	Nkomonde	1996	Rhodes	Y		Jabavu
431	S	Noge	1981	Uncertain	Supernumery		Vereeniging
432	PM	Noqayi	1993	Fedsem/Natal	Bishop		Mount Coke
433	B	Norman	1988	UNISA	R in 1993	R. into F. C in 1988 Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
434	NM	Noto	1995	Fedsem	Chaplain		Chaplain
435	ML	Nqaba	1998	JWC	Y		Highveld Ridge
436	B	Nsimbi	1986	Uncertain	Supernumery	Received into full Connexion	Umzinto
437	LG	Ntelekoa	1992	Fedsem	Y		Vereeniging
438	LTD	Ntsamai	1989	Fedsem	R in 1995	Pg. 46 of 1995 YB Reinstatement	-
439	ZM	Ntshalaba	1995	JWC	Y		Marubeni
440	ON	Ntshanyana	1989	Rhodes/ UNISA	BC		Beyond Connexion
441	TA	Ntshuntshe	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Supern in 1997	See pg 269 of 1997 YB	Bela-Bela
442	T	Nyakane	1985	Fedsem	Y		Coalfields
443	KB	Nyameka	1994	Fedsem	Y		Springs
444	GL	Nyangane	1984	Fedsem?	Y		Palmerton
445	N	Nyembenya	1990	Uncertain	Y	Received into full Connexion	Kamatong
446	ES	Nyembezi	1993	Rhodes	Transfer to UK	Pg. 372 of 1999 YB Back in RSA	Port Elizabeth Central
447	VG	Nyobole	1981	Potch	Y		Vaal North
448	DS	Nzimande	1985	Fedsem	Bishop		Natal West
449	RAJ	Olivier	1985	UNISA	BC - USA		Beyond Connexion
450	A	Olivier	1992	UNISA?	Y		Cradock and Fish River
451	BJ	Olivier	1994	Uncertain	Supern - 1999	See YB 1999, pg 373	South Coast Renishaw
452	NT	Oosthuizen	1989	Rhodes	Y		JHB North
453	NN	Padoa	1982	UNISA	Resigned in 1985?		-
454	PH	Palmer	1994	Uncertain	Supernum.		South Coast Renishaw
455	CL	Panaino	1980	Rhodes	Y		Upper South Coast
456	AD	Pantland	1991	UNISA	Y	BC	Beyond Connexion
457	WWJ	Parker	1995	UNISA	Y		Kei Circuit
458	J	Pause	1985	UNISA	Supernum.		South Durban
459	DJ	Pederson	1981	UNISA/ Rhodes	Resigned in 1984- 5?		-
460	RR	Pedro	1999	JWC	Y		De Aar/Colesberg
461	KA	Peega	1986	Rhodes/ Chaplain Institution	Secondment		Chaplain
462	HM	Penduka	1990	Uncertain		Received into full Connexion. Supern. in 1994 - pg 79.	-
					Died - Death recorded in 1997 YB, pg. 39.		

463	AM	Pepeta	1989	Fedsem	Y	Received into full Connexion	Rode
464	M	Phatlane	1993	Fedsem	Y		Archbell & Tweespruit
465	SS	Pheto	1999	JWC	Y		Vryburg
466	KE	Phokontsi	1998	Unisa	Y		Onale Rona
467	LI	Phokontsi	1987	Fedsem	Secondment		Chaplain - Military
468	KM	Phukuntsi	1998	JWC	Y		Viljoenskroon
469	SW	Pienaar	1988	Unisa?	Y		Benoni
470	CL	Pilkington	1997	UNISA	R. in 1998	Pg 258 of 1998 YB	-
471	TJ	Pimpi	1999	JWC	Y		Butterworth
472	SS	Pitso	1986	Fedsem	R in 1992	Pg 52 of YB, 1992	-
473	RM	Pitts	1984	Rhodes	Y		Clerpine
474	DB	Plint	1992	Ordained 1976 originally	Y	Received into Full Connexion in 1992	East London
475	SCHB	Poole	1998	B Dental Sci -(1993)	Y		Lower Tugela
476	JT	Potgieter	1994	JWC	Supernum.		-
477	G	Presence	1986	Fedsem	Y		Breede River
478	G	Preston	1994	UNISA	Super. 2003		Cape West Coast
479	JM	Pretorious	1991	UNISA	R. 2001		-
480	C	Pretorius	1994	TEEC	Super. 2004		Port Shepstone
481	G	Preuss	1992	UNISA	R. 2000		-
482	J	Pritchard	1985 (1992)	Transfer in from Dutch Reformed Church	D. 2004	Received into Full Connexion in 1992	-
483	RM	Pupuma	1995	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Ukhahlamba
484	MKO	Radebe	1997	Rhodes	Secondment		Chaplaincy
485	VJ	Radebe	1999	JWC	Y		Brook's Nek
486	J	Rademan	1991	Rhodes	R. 1999		-
487	J	Ramage	1991	UNISA	Y		Pretoria
488	RM	Ramsay	1996	UNISA	Y		Kearnsy College
489	D	Rantle	1990	Fedsem	R. 2006		-
490	NM	Raphahlela	1993	Fedsem	Secondment		Chaplaincy
491	WGH	Rayne	1982	UNISA?	R. 1994		?
492	MJ	Rees	1986	UNISA	Y		Port Shepstone
493	CA	Rhodes	1990	Rhodes	Y		South Rand
494	C	Richards	1980	UNISA?	Supern. in 1992	Pg 78 of YB, 1992	Dumasani
495	TJ	Rist	1992	Rhodes	Y		Kingswood
496	AC	Roberts	1982	Uncertain	Supern in 1993	Pg 78 of 1993 YB	Outeniqua
497	RJ	Robertson	1981	Rhodes	Y		Edenvale/ Kempton Park
498	GR	Rogers	1988	Rhodes	R. 1997	See pg 270 of 1997 YB	Alberton Mission
499	R	Roodt	1993	Rhodes	R. 1996		-
500	DD	Ross	1993	Fedsem	Y		Stellenbosch
501	T	Ruthenberg	1981	Rhodes	Y		Tygerberg
502	CN	Rweqana	1988	Fedsem	R. 1994 1995 - Seconded	Pg 47 of 1994 YB Pg 47 of 1995 YB	Chaplaincy
503	JN	Ryan	1981	Rhodes	Resigned		-
504	JJ	Samdaan	1989	Fedsem	Y		Seconded
505	SZ	Sangweni	1986	Fedsem/UDW	Y		Umgeni
506	WM	Sanqela	1980	Fedsem	Supernum.		Mogale
507	RJ	Scholtz	1996	Rhodes	Y		South Durban
508	W	Schroeder	1995	Unisa?	D.	Death recorded in 1998 YB, pg. 39.	-
509	HD	Serooby	1983	Unisa/ Rhodes	Y		Upper South Coast
510	VB	Seethal	1981	Fedsem	Y		South Durban

				MTH (UDW)-1993			
511	VS	Seheri	1996	JWC	D. 2004		-
512	LJ	Sempene	1994	Fedsem	Y		OFS Goldfields
513	J	Senekal	1994	Rhodes	Y		Ukhahlamba
514	SJ	Sephapho	1989	Fedsem	Y		Pimville
515	BM	Sethsedi	1986	Fedsem	Secondment		Chaplaincy
516	RG	Seymour	1990	Fedsem/ UNISA	Y		Port Shepstone
517	CN	Shabalala	1990	Fedsem	Y		?
518	BS	Shabanc	1992	Fedsem	D. 2001		-
519	PAJ	Sharpe	1992	Rhodes	Y		PMB Metro
520	NH	Shaw	1984	TEEC	Y		South Durban
521	FCZ	Shenxani	1983	Fedsem	R in 1987	Pg 16 of 1987 minutes	-
522	MA	Sibeko	1990	Fedsem/ Natal	Y		EMMU
523	K	Sibhidla	1996	Fedsem/ JWC	Y		Mvuzi
524	TS	Sibi	1987	Fedsem	Y		Rand West
525	A	Sieborger	1986	Rhodes	Y		Cape West Coast
526	MB	Sifile	1992	Fedsem	Y		Charles Wesley
527	AL	Sigaba	1999	Natal	Y		Clerpine
528	WT	Sigabi	1989	Fedsem?	Y		Kei
529	D	Sikhakhana	1991	Overseas	Y		Evansdale
530	PT	Sikotoyi	1993	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Tsomo
531	RJ	Sim	1993	JWC	Y		South Coast
532	GWJ	Sincock	1999	JWC	Y		Renishaw
533	Z	Siphunzi	1993	Fedsem/JWC	Y		East London
534	MJ	Sithole	1995	JWC	Y		Kat Valley
535	ZD	Siwa	1991	Rhodes	Bishop		Bojane
536	DP	Slabber	1992	TEEC	Y		Grahamstown - Bishop
537	LG	Smith	1983	UNISA	Y		Heathfield
538	BD	Smith	1990	Rhodes	R. 1997	See pg 270 of 1997 YB	South Durban
539	VJ	Smith	1994	UCT	Resigned - 2005		Benoni
540	AA	Smith	1999	JWC	Discontinued		-
541	MC	Smulders	1988	UNISA	Y		Pretoria Central
542	MN	Sogcwayi	1989	Fedsem?	Y		Mount Frere
543	AC	Solms	1981	Rhodes	Y		Letaba
544	DS	Somngesi	1991	Fedsem	Y		Bongani
545	SM	Sondlo	1990	Ordained 1960	Died in 2002	Received back into full Connexion 1990	-
546	MDD	Songelwa	1989	UP	Y		Healdtown
547	S	Sotu	1991	Fedsem	Y		Ebenezer
548	RG	Southern	1993	Rhodes?	Y		Fish Hoek
549	CR	Sparks	1989	Fedsem	Y		Stellenbosch
550	KD	Sprong	1982	RU	R. in 1998	Pg 258 of 1998 YB	Clerpine
551	JK	Stack	1989	UNISA	Y		Alberton Mission
552	A	Stein	1987	UNISA	Supernum.		Maun
553	MH	Stephenson	1980	MA (UCT)	Y		Salty Print
554	JE	Stewe	1993	Fedsem/JWC	Y		Cape West Coast
555	ML	Stone	1990	UNISA	Y		PMB Metro
556	AP	Storey	1996	Rhodes	Y		Alexandra/JHB
557	WM	Stuma	1995	TEEC	B.C		Beyond Connexion
558	BL	Sundberg	1988	UNISA	Y		East London
559	AO'B	Sutton	1988	Rhodes?	Y		Port Elizabeth West
560	BBM	Swartbooi	1988	Actually ordained in 1979 @ Fedsem	R. 2000	Received into Church again in 1992	?
561	HG	Swindon	1990	Rhodes	B.C		Beyond Connexion
562	MS	Tau	1998	JWC	Y		Soshanguve
563	DW	Taylor	1997	Rhodes?	Y		Hennops River
564	Z	Tena	1996	Rhodes	Y		Mdantsane North
565	MS	Thabalaka	1985	Fedsem	Secondment		Chaplaincy
566	JX	Thibane	1998	JWC	Y		Wolmaransstad
567	JH	Thomas	1984	Rhodes	Leave of absence	Pg 25 of 1989	-

					1989. R in 1990	minutes. Pg 37 of 1990 minutes Pg 73 of 1995 YB	-
568	S	Thomas	1990	None – honorary after years of service.	Supernum. 1995		
569	WA	Thompson	1982	UNISA	Y		Winterhoek
570	RD	Thomson	1993	Rhodes	R in 1999	See pg 373 of YB	-
571	D	Thornberry	1992	JWC	R in 1999	See pg 373 of YB	-
572	SM	Tivane	1983	Uncertain	D	Death recorded in 1999 YB, pg 15	-
573	JR	Tlhagale	1991	Fedsem	Secondment		Chaplaincy
574	AJ	Tlhakanye	1997	JWC	Y		Klerksdorp
575	JV	Tooke	1993	BA.MA(Miss)	Supernum.		Paarl Valley Circuit
576	ASS	Toolo	1994	Fedsem	Y		Mount Cooke
577	AJ	Treu	1988	B.Sc Hons (UCT)	Secondment		Chaplaincy
578	JKMS	Tshabadira	1999	JWC/Rhodes	Y		St Stithians
579	MH	Tshabalala	1980	Fedsem	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB	Zebediela
580	IM	Tshabalala	1996	JWC	Y		Zebediela
581	VQ	Tshangela	1990	Rhodes/ UNISA MTH (UDW)	Y		Grahamstown
582	PVY	Tshume	1991	Fedsem BA Hons (UDW)	Y		-
583	D	Tsoaela	1991	Fedsem	Y		Kroonstad
584	MSB	Tsosane	1991	Fedsem	Y		Bloemfontein
585	DV	Twala	1990	Fedsem	Y		Piñanesberg
586	M	Vacu	1990	St. Bede's?	Y	Received into full Connexion	Idutywa
587	T	Van Aardt	1998	JWC	R. 2002		-
588	AC	Van breda	1991	UNISA	Y		Namaqualand
589	PG	Van den Heever	1985	UNISA or Rhodes?	R. 1994	Pg 47 of 1994 YB	-
590	JAJ	Van der Avoort	1987	UNISA	Supern in 1993	Pg 78 of 1993 YB	Newcastle
591	JW	Van der Laar	1999	RU	Y		Seconded
592	RB	Van der Velde	1998	JWC	R in 1999	See pg 373 of YB	-
593	N	Van der Walt	1984	UNISA	Transfer out	Pg 53 of 1992 YB	-
594	DA	Van Doorene	1996	RU	R. in 1998	Pg 258 of 1998 YB	St Stithians
595	GP	Van Heerden	1997	Rhodes	Y		Nahoon River
596	BJ	Van Helsdingen	1992	UNISA	Secondment		Chaplaincy
597	O	Van Niekerk	1990	UNISA	Y		Johannesburg East
598	CH	Van Staden	1996	UNISA	Transfer to UK	Pg. 372 of 1999 YB	Beyond Connexion Kempton Park
599	DF	Van Staden	1998	JWC	Y		-
600	JWZN	Van Waveren	1985	UNISA	R in 1988	Pg. 27 of 1988 minutes	-
601	I	Van Wyk	1996	Unisa/Tecc?	Y		Victoria
602	S	Vava	1993	Fedsem/JWC	Secondment		Chaplaincy
603	AD	Venter	1992	UNISA	R. 2000		-
604	KR	Vermeulen	1989	Fedsem	Y		Seconded
605	BD	Verwey	1984	TEEC	Y		Malihambe Mission
606	PJ	Veysie	1991	UNISA	R in 1993	Pg 47 of YB, 1993	-
607	GG	Vika	1989 (1986)	Rhodes	Y	R. into full Connexion	Mission Unit
608	M	Vikilahle	1990	Ordained in 1988	D. 2001	Received into full Connexion in 1990	-
609	PR	Viljoen	1987	UNISA	D	Death recorded in 1996 YB, pg 49	-

610	GB	Vimbela	1982	Fedsem/JWC	D	Death recorded in 1996 YB, pg 49	-
611	RM	Vithi	1984	BA Hons (UCT)	Y		Bougani
612	M	Vorster	1986	Rhodes/ Unisa	Transfer to Irish Confer.	Pg 37 of 1990 minutes	Umgeni
613	TM	Vundisa	1994	Ordained in 1986	Supernum.	Received into full Connexion 1994	Blikana
614	JN	Waldegrave	1998	JWC	R. 2002		-
615	DS	Wallace	1994	UNISA	Y		East Rand
616	RK	Watson	1986	UNISA	R. in 1991	Pg 45 of YB, 1991	-
617	R	Watson	1990	UNISA	Y		Port Elizabeth West
618	RL	Watson	1995	JWC	Y		Aliwal North
619	ID	Webster	1981	Rhodes	R. in 1989	See pg. 24 of 1989 Minutes	-
620	JD	Wessels	1994	Rhodes	Y		Kraaifontein
621	JH	Wessels	1996	UNISA	Y		Eshowe
622	BM	Wesson	1991	UNISA	Y		Diamond Fields
623	GN	West	1986	Rhodes?	Transfer Out	Pg 25 of 1989 minutes	-
624	BJ	Weza	1989	Fedsem	Y		Qwa Qwa
625	RA	White	1989	Uncertain	Supern. in 1994	Pg 79 of YB, 1994	Port Elizabeth
626	WR	Whitehead	1987	UNISA	Y		PMB Metro
627	MR	Wiemers	1990	Rhodes	Leave of Absence R in 1992	1991 minutes – pg. 45 Pg 52 of YB, 1992 Reinstated in 1998	Wynberg/ Claremont
628	BD	Wilkinson	1982	UNISA	Y		Salem
629	KF	Williams	1982	Rhodes	Resigned		-
630	DB	Wilson	1990	UNISA	Y		East Rand
631	PM	Witbooi	1983	Fedsem	Y		JHB Metro
632	PJ	Woods	1987	UNISA	Y		Port Elizabeth West
633	C	Xaba	1990	Unisa			Umtshezi
634	WM	Xazana	1989	Ordained in 1979		Received into full Connexion 1989	Mandileni
635	MZ	Zihle	1982	Fedsem/JWC	Supern.	Supern	Springs C.
636	J	Zihle	1998	Rhodes	Y	B.C.	Beyond Connexion
637	SM	Ziquibu	1999	UWC	Y	Received into Full Connexion	Mogale C.
638	HM	Zongo	1990	Ordained in 1987 TEEC	Y	Received into full Connexion in 1990	Umtata
639	LK	Zulu	1995	JWC	Y		Moreleta C.
640	NM	Zwane	1985	Fedsem	Y		Edendale C.
641	JH	Zwane	1989	Fedsem?	Y		Deyi C.
642	WC	Zweni	1986	Ordained in 1971	Supern - 1998	Received into full Connexion – 1986 Supern in 1998 – pg 258 of YB	-

Please note the following:

- I. I am indebted to the Reverends Grassow, Massey and Morgan for their assistance in compiling these records. I would also like to thank the staff at the Methodist Connexional Office for their assistance.
- II. Although this database states the number of ministers to be 642, the correct number is actually 640 as the details of two women ministers have been repeated. They have been recorded under both their maiden surnames and their married names.
- III. Included in this number are a few ministers who were ordained prior to 1980, but who resigned and then returned to the Methodist Church.
- IV. There are a number of ministers whose academic records are marked as “Uncertain.” In the training of Methodist ministers there was a time when ministers with previous qualifications served their years of probation without studying towards Theological degrees. They were enrolled in ‘In Service Training’ (IST) programs around the country. There are also a number of ministers (largely black ministers) who transferred in from other Churches. There are not accurate records for these ministers.
- V. Further information was also taken from the list of John Wesley College (Kilnerton) graduates as recorded in the document “The History of Kilnerton (1886 – 2004) and the development of John Wesley College (Kilnerton) (1999-2004)”, edited by Olivia Le Roux and Joan Millard.