

**THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH AS *MISSIO DEI*: AN ASSESSMENT OF  
THE RESPONSE OF UBUNYE FREE METHODIST CHURCH TO  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

By

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**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for  
Masters of Theology Degree (Theology and Development) in the School of  
Religion and Theology of the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

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Prof. Isabel A. Phiri**

**Pietermaritzburg, March 2010**

## DECLARATION

I declare that, unless otherwise specifically indicated through the references, this dissertation is entirely my original work.

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**Date**

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**Innocent IYAKAREMYE**

As supervisor, I agree to the submission of this dissertation

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**Date**

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**Prof. Isabel A. PHIRI**

## DEDICATION

To

*My wife*

Nelly MUKAMPIRANYI

*Our children*

Peace ALLIANCE

Kevine NYAMPINGA

Shamma IRAKOZE

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Prof. Isabel A. Phiri for the guidance and advice. I highly appreciate her zeal, understanding, commitment and patience she has evidenced from the beginning to the end of this dissertation.

My thanks are in addition expressed to Christian Aid and the Rick Turner scholarship foundation for financial support through the School of Religion and Theology, Theology and Development programme and the Scholarship Office of the University of KwaZulu Natal.

I am also grateful to all the lecturers and the staff of the School of Religion and Theology of the University of KwaZulu-Natal for providing academic entry, the framework and environment through which the development of this dissertation has been possible.

I finally give my thanks to the Ubunye Free Methodist church leaders for allowing me to conduct this study within this church, to all the interviewees for the disclosure, the cooperation and the time allocated to this study, and to those who directly or indirectly have contributed to the accomplishment of this work.

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an assessment of the response of Ubunye Free Methodist Church (UFMC) of Pietermaritzburg to domestic violence in light of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. It was undertaken because of the suspicion that the response of this church deals with consequences of domestic violence, but leaves aside its origin and causes, thus providing an incomplete solution to deal with the complex problem. This suspicion was nurtured by my observation of what the church was doing and the knowledge of the theology of the *missio Dei*, one of the current understandings of the mission of the church in the world. With *missio Dei*, the church is understood as not having its mission as such but as participating in God's mission. As the situation to which the church was responding relates to women's oppression, the model of accomplishing God's mission during oppression was drawn from the reaction of the prophets in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament to the injustice and the oppression in the community. With regard to this, prophets' and Jesus' approach displays four main elements: envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, caring for the oppressed, and challenging oppressive structures. Therefore, the question this study sought to answer was: to what extent does the response of UFMC to domestic violence embody the fullness of these elements taken as characterising *missio Dei*? Through empirical research, these four elements have been used as yardsticks to analyse the goal, strategies and activities comprised in the UFMC's response. Finally, the study revealed that this response fulfils three conditions as follows: envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, and caring for the oppressed. It falls short in the area of challenging oppressive structures. From these results, some lessons have been drawn and have served as basis to suggest how this response can be improved so as to reflect the fullness of *missio Dei*.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BSF	: Bible Study Fellowship
CFM	: Couples' Fellowship Ministry
DSD	: Department of Social Development
DR	: Domestic Relationships
DV	: Domestic Violence
FAMSA	: Family and Marriage Society of South Africa
FGM	: Female Genital Mutilation
FMCSA	: Free Methodist Church of Southern Africa
GBV	: Gender-Based Violence
HIV	: Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMC	: International Missionary Council
UCH	: Ubunye Cooperative Housing
UFMC	: Ubunye Free Methodist Church
UNFPA	: United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Fund
YWCA	: Young Women's Christian Association

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction

The present study is an assessment of the response of the Ubunye Free Methodist Church (UFMC) to the problem of domestic violence (DV), enquiring as to whether the mission of this church embodies the fullness of *missio Dei*. The UFMC is based in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, as a local church of the Free Methodist Church of Southern Africa (FMCSA).<sup>1</sup> Concerning its origin, UFMC is one of the churches founded following the model of Wesleyan Methodism. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism was an Anglican priest.<sup>2</sup> Born on June 28, 1703, he lived until March 1791.<sup>3</sup> John Wesley was one of nineteen children born to the high-church rector of Epworth, Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna Annesley Wesley.<sup>4</sup> During his studies, John Wesley was interested in religion and religious practices. He was ordained deacon in the Church of England in 1725 and priest in the same church in 1729.<sup>5</sup>

John Wesley's religious conversion was confirmed on May 24, 1738 when his "heart strangely warmed." His brother, Charles Wesley, also ordained into the Anglican ministry in 1735, had felt similar manifestations at about the same time.<sup>6</sup> These brothers had started working together in 1729 when John joined Charles in the Holy Club at Oxford and had soon assumed leadership among some penitent scholars who sought a closer relationship with God by studying the Bible and other important works.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Whitefield joined the Holy Club and replaced John as chaplain in Georgia in nearly 1738.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Haven, *Articles of the Rights, Power and Functions (The Haven Constitution)* (2008), 2.

<sup>2</sup> William J. Abraham, *Wesley for Armchair Theologians* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 4.

<sup>3</sup> Abraham, *Wesley for Armchair Theologians*, 4; Rupert E. Davies, *Methodism* (London: The Epworth Press, 1963), 30, 103; Nell Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 9.

<sup>6</sup> Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 9.

<sup>7</sup> Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 11.

Whitefield and the Wesleys created a vast revival in religion. But their intention was not to break up the church or to create competing denominations.<sup>9</sup> They wanted to be

a church within the church – *ecclesiola in ecclesia* – with the function of stressing these elements of Christian faith and life which seem to them to have been neglected, and of taking Christianity as a whole with more seriousness, and therefore as incurring more personal cost, than the ordinary rank and file of Christians seem to do.<sup>10</sup>

Their movement did not deny the value of liturgy, sacraments, or ministry of the Church in which they have arisen.<sup>11</sup> They were well organised and followed their programme strictly. Their groups expanded and developed affinities between themselves, and with other great evangelic societies.<sup>12</sup>

The constitution, doctrine and expansion of their ministry were not a problem to the Church of England. Nonetheless, their methods were offensive. John and Charles had inherited a strict discipline, order and determination from their mother who was called by some people “mother of Methodism.”<sup>13</sup> In addition to their predilection to established order, John Wesley “felt himself obliged by the necessity of the Gospel, not only to preach in the open air, but also to do so in other men’s parishes without invitation or permission.”<sup>14</sup> Charles Wesley deplored this bitterly and had sought the separation from the church but John always insisted on staying within.<sup>15</sup> However, soon after John’s death in 1791, the separation was consummated. The problem here was: “Is the work of spreading scriptural holiness assigned by God to the Methodists to be continued, in defiance of the law of the Church of England, at the cost, in the last resort, of separation from her: or are her laws to be kept and separation avoided, at the cost of stopping this work of God?”<sup>16</sup> This was a harsh dilemma but they adopted the first option.

After separation, many of the Methodist Societies were divided. The matter here concerned whether Methodist preachers who were not episcopally ordained should give the Sacrament of Holy Communion to people. Methodist Societies were organising conference meetings each year to debate on this issue. Finally, almost all agreed in 1795 that Societies wishing to

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<sup>9</sup> Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, 14.

<sup>10</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 2-3.

<sup>11</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 97.

<sup>12</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 97.

<sup>13</sup> Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, 9-10.

<sup>14</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 98.

<sup>15</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 103.

<sup>16</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 104

have sacraments from Methodist preachers should receive it if the majority of trustees and the Class Leader, meeting separately, desire it. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Methodist Church had become an organised and permanent church.<sup>17</sup>

However, there came a time when the Methodists developed a practice of renting seats in their churches as a way of collecting financial support from church members. This practice became hard and oppressive to the poor who could not afford the seats.<sup>18</sup> With this concern, B.T. Robert, a Methodist Episcopal minister in New York State, sought the renewal of earnest Christianity in the Methodist Episcopal Church and the commitment to meet the needs of the poor. But, the church resisted and excommunicated him together with other clergy and laypersons in 1860. Thus, this group formed the Free Methodist Church (FMC) with free seats regardless of socio-economic status. Members were free from binding involvements outside the fellowship of Christian believers and enjoyed freedom of Spirit in their worship services.<sup>19</sup>

In 1885, the first group of FMC Missionaries came to South Africa. This consisted of five persons, of whom one couple was installed in Natal Province.<sup>20</sup> However, FMC started in Pietermaritzburg in 1991 at 101 Berg Street by the missionary Dan Sheffield who, together with his wife Kathleen Sheffield, had come for one year to teach at the Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa (EBSEMSA), the current Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa (ESSA).<sup>21</sup> After this time, they returned home, coming back to South Africa as missionaries in 1994 after serving their church's mission in Egypt.<sup>22</sup> Dan Sheffield was appointed senior minister of the local church. Together with other leaders of the church, they started by conducting a survey of the people's needs in the area. From this study, four issues emerged: housing, employment, women's safety and civil co-operation.<sup>23</sup> However, because Sheffield's mandate was to establish a viable church within a period of four years,

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<sup>17</sup> Davies, *Methodism*, 103-104.

<sup>18</sup> Ubunye Cooperative Housing, Annual Report (1999), 4.

<sup>19</sup> Ubunye Cooperative Housing, Annual Report, 2, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Free Methodist World Mission. "About FMWM." Online: Free Methodist World Mission ([http://www.Fmwm.Org/Countries/Africa/South\\_Africa.Php](http://www.Fmwm.Org/Countries/Africa/South_Africa.Php). Accessed August 27, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Martin Harold Le Roux, *The Local Congregations Empowering the Urban Poor with Special Reference to John Wesley's Social Ethic*. PhD Thesis (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 2001), 135; Dan Sheffield and Kathleen Sheffield, "Case Study: Ubunye Church and Community Ministries" in T. Yamamori, B. Myers, and K. Luscombe (eds.) *Serving with the Urban Poor* (Monrovia, CA: MARC Publications, 1998, 1-13), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 135; Sheffield and Sheffield, "Case Study," 2.

<sup>23</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 136.

he decided to begin with establishing a worshipping community before providing social services.<sup>24</sup>

The purpose of FMC in Pietermaritzburg was to create a non-racial congregation within the then white-dominated city.<sup>25</sup> Here, themes contained in Isaiah 58:6-12 served as guide. These comprise to “...responding to the needs of the poor, resisting injustice and oppression, and building a credible reputation in the community.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore, this church had four goals: “...to develop a multicultural, worshipping congregation of earnest Christians and God-seekers; to grow this congregation through Christian presence and ministry that is rooted in the community; to develop and administer social ministries that correspond to the relevant needs of the community; and to aid in developing a sense of neighborhood in [their] geographical home.”<sup>27</sup>

The primary gathering of this church was the Sunday morning service of at least one hour and half. During other days of the week, there were prayer and biblical study groups but limited to a few close neighbours meeting together informally.<sup>28</sup> As the congregation was growing, they sought a large space for worship. This need coincided with that of further involvement in the provision of housing for low-income families and shelter for abused women and children as result of that survey conducted. They therefore started looking for an existing facility in which these services could be combined. Finally, in 1996, they purchased and renovated a building which had been a residential hotel in the inner city at 78 and 80 Pietermaritz Street, where UFMC is based today. In early 1997, they started a housing project in this building with the intention to enable low-income families to hire individual residential properties.<sup>29</sup>

This housing project had four goals: [1] “...to provide clean, safe affordable housing; [2] to provide crisis accommodation for women and their children; [3] to provide space for a

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<sup>24</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 141.

<sup>25</sup> Dan Sheffield, *Sharpening our Social Conscience* (Free Methodist World Missions, 2001), 5; Ezekiel Ntakirutimana, *A Christian Development Appraisal of the Ubunye Cooperative Housing Initiative in Pietermaritzburg*. Masters Thesis (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 2004), 46; Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 135.

<sup>26</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 137.

<sup>27</sup> Sheffield and Sheffield, “Case Study,” 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> Sheffield and Sheffield, “Case Study” 5-6.

<sup>29</sup> Sheffield and Sheffield, “Case Study”, 3-4; Ntakirutimana, *A Christian Development Appraisal*, 46, 54.

crèche or educare programme; and [4] to provide space for a Christian worship centre”.<sup>30</sup> In the framework of pursuing this second goal, The Haven shelter was initiated to receive women and children DV survivors, people who were unable to continue to stay at home with abusers, to accommodate and assist them to respond to their primary needs for a period of six weeks. In 2004, The Haven separated from the Housing project and established its own board and management.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to The Haven shelter, the church has further developed other activities in response to DV. These include using the pulpit;<sup>32</sup> organising workshops for survivors with themes relating to DV;<sup>33</sup> social interaction, and developing partnership with NGOs, social services and government departments for other kinds support to survivors.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, it is this whole response of UFMC to DV which is assessed in this study as detailed in the fourth chapter.

## 1.2. Research Problem and Limitation

I have joined Ubunye Free Methodist Church in 2008 and become member in 2009. I was attending Sunday services in which some programmes of the church were announced. I was also observing some of the activities and the realisations of the church. As theologian having some knowledge on the theology of *missio Dei*, I was in a dilemma about the above response of this church to DV. As it was a reply to the situation of oppression of women in the community, I had tried to compare it with what the prophets in the Old Testament, and Jesus Christ in the New Testament, were doing in reaction to the oppression and injustice but I was perceiving some major differences. In fact, the prophets and Jesus were not only caring for the oppressed; they were also challenging oppressive structures, opposing the status quo and seeking social transformation.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, in my opinion, the response of the church should be similar to that of the prophets and Jesus during such situations. With this

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<sup>30</sup> Sheffield and Sheffield, “Case Study,” 3; Ntakirutimana, *A Christian Development Appraisal*, 54.

<sup>31</sup> Vestine Musabyimana, *A Critical Reflection on Life of Women after Shelters: The Case Study of The Haven Run in Pietermaritzburg*. Honours Dissertation (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 2004), 33-34; Ntakirutimana, *A Christian Development Appraisal*, 60-61; The Haven, *Articles of The Rights*, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Ubunye Free Methodist Church, Sunday service and Sermon on August 10, 2008 (The day following Women’s Day).

<sup>33</sup> Ubunye Free Methodist Church, Workshop of December 13, 2008 (Facilitated by Family and Marriage Society South Africa (FAMSA) in the framework of Sixteen Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children).

<sup>34</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 139.

<sup>35</sup> Jerry Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 70, 71, 79, 95.

understanding, I comply with David Bosch who considers the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*, that is, not the mission of the church as such, but the mission of God in which the church participates and whose particular embodiment was exemplified by prophets and Jesus.<sup>36</sup> This theology of *missio Dei* is detailed in the third chapter of this dissertation.

However, from my observations of the response given to DV, it seemed that UFMC is dealing with the survivors of DV, leaving aside the perpetrators and social structures that endorse violence. Hence, in the present study, I have raised two arguments. Firstly, the response to DV which does not deal with the cause, factors or origin of that violence is not complete. Secondly, the programme of the church which responds to DV without dealing with the cause of violence does not fully reflect *missio Dei*. In other words, the church should not only take care of DV survivors, but also deal with the conditions and structures which cause DV or condone it. Therefore, the question of the present study was: To what extent does the response of UFMC to DV embody the fullness of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*? Likewise, the assumption of the study was that in its efforts of accomplishing God's mission through addressing DV, UFMC was taking care of survivors, but neglecting to follow the fullness of the model of Jesus Christ and the prophets of not only caring for survivors of oppression, but also challenging oppressive structures. In this dissertation, I use the fourth chapter to respond to this question and to take a stand with regard to this assumption.

This study does not explore all the activities of UFMC. Rather, it focuses on activities initiated with the objective of addressing DV. In addition, it sheds lights on the vision, goals, strategies and activities addressing DV, regardless of the administrative structures and functions of the church.

### **1.3. Literature Review and Choice of the Topic**

There is a great deal of literature on domestic violence. This is detailed to some extent in the second chapter, where I speak about the background on DV globally with special reference

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<sup>36</sup> David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1991), 390.

to South Africa. In the present section, I concentrate on ten documents which deal with the role of the church with regard to DV, and I use them to delineate the present study.

This literature begins with the article “Searching the dungeons beneath our religious discourses: the case of violence against women and the “unholy trinity”” by Sarojini Nadar.<sup>37</sup> Nadar explores the relationship between what she calls “unholy trinity,” that is religion, culture, and gender construction.<sup>38</sup> She uses two narratives and a case study to demonstrate how these three forces collaborate to justify, promote and sustain violence against women.<sup>39</sup> Nadar sees the remedy to this violence in the development of cultural strategies and theological solutions that reveal its injustice and heretical nature. She therefore proposes a complex set of counter-strategies. However, she indicates that as members of the society, people are not able to simply separate religion from culture. She recognises that religion and culture constitute significant structures for the lives of both women and men. She therefore proposes to liberate women from within culture and religion, using deconstructive and counter-strategies.<sup>40</sup>

The second document is the article of Karen Buckenham on “Domestic Violence: Women Abuse”<sup>41</sup> On a sheet of four pages, Buckenham presents rich information on domestic violence in South Africa. Specifically, she presents statistics, psalms, and testimonies in relation to domestic violence. She also defines the concept of battering, explains the cycle of violence, informs on common religious beliefs in relation to relationships between spouses, advises on the ways the church can prevent domestic violence, and provides emergency contact addresses which can be helpful in case of domestic violence in South Africa. Buckenham observes that religious faith can constitute both a resource and a roadblock for the woman with regard to domestic violence.

The third document is the study of Isabel A. Phiri, on domestic violence in Christian homes conducted in 2000 in Durban, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.<sup>42</sup> After exploring studies

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<sup>37</sup> Sarojini Nadar, “Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses: The Case of Violence against Women and the “Unholy Trinity,” in *Agenda No. 66 2005: Gender-Based Violence Trilogy* (Volume 1, 1: Domestic Violence, 16-22).

<sup>38</sup> Nadar, “Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses,” 20.

<sup>39</sup> Nadar, “Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses,” 16.

<sup>40</sup> Nadar, “Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses,” 20.

<sup>41</sup> Karen Buckenham, “Domestic Violence. Part 1-Wife abuse” in *PACSA Factsheet* (No. 45 November 1998).

<sup>42</sup> Isabel A. Phiri, “Domestic Violence in Christian Homes: A Durban Case Study” in *Journal of Constructive Theology* (Vol. 6, No.2. 2000, 85-110).

conducted on domestic violence in South Africa, Phiri realized that issues of religion's implications were poorly surveyed. Aware that the majority of South Africans claim to be Christians and that religion can contribute not only to the liberating women but also to oppressing them, she undertook the above study to determine the levels of domestic violence in Christian homes so as to form the basis for the formulation of the church policy on the protection of women against gender based violence.<sup>43</sup> As result, she found that 84% women who participated in the study admitted to having experienced violence in their homes.<sup>44</sup> However, her analysis brought her to state that even the 16% who did not admit to have done so in order to protect their husband's image in the church.<sup>45</sup> In other words, 100% of those women participating in the study have been violated in their Christian homes. Therefore, she suggested that churches have shelters and trained personnel to deal with women abused in their homes. Churches should desire to be in solidarity with all members of Christ's family, adopt teachings which promote the experience of full life in Christ by all members, preach against domestic violence, and equip church leaders with skills of helping domestic violence survivors.<sup>46</sup>

The two following documents speak about domestic violence in Pietermaritzburg. One is the article written in 2002 by Isabel A. Phiri entitled "Why does God allow our husbands to hurt us? Overcoming violence against women."<sup>47</sup> Similarly to her study of 2000 in Durban, women who participated in the present study were living in Christian homes. After realizing that the situation of women of both Durban and Pietermaritzburg was the same, she changed the method of presentation of results so as to better look at women's stories in depth, draw theological insights and suggest the way forward. Therefore, instead of presenting quantitative data, she details the stories of two women out of ten interviewed in Sobantu community.<sup>48</sup> Results of this study confirm that domestic violence occurs in Christian homes due to the struggle with issues of patriarchy. In her conclusion, she also mentions that God is on the side of women and men who are working to transform situations of abuse. Based on the insights of African women's theology of liberation, she suggests that in

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<sup>43</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 87, 88.

<sup>44</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 100.

<sup>45</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 106.

<sup>46</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 108-109.

<sup>47</sup> Isabel A. Phiri, "Why does God allow our husbands to hurt us: overcoming violence against women" in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* (114 November 2002, 19-30).

<sup>48</sup> Phiri, "Why does God allow our husbands to hurt us," 22.



this task shared between women and conscientised men, the former have the primary responsibility.<sup>49</sup>

The other document on domestic violence in Pietermaritzburg is the Masters thesis of Nompumelelo Dlamini on Zulu women, Domestic violence and Christian Faith.<sup>50</sup> After analysing data provided by women from Sweetwaters area, she explains how the Christian faith can hinder and help domestic violence survivors. She realises that these two aspects of Christian faith (help and hindrance) have impact in Pietermaritzburg community.<sup>51</sup> Based on the results of her study, she suggests two strategies to the churches which have willingness to participate in the battle against domestic violence. First, she suggests challenging the negative through working with young men, men and perpetrators; challenging culture, breaking silence and promoting legal education. Secondly, she proposes strengthening the positive using affirming spirituality, counselling, networking, economic empowerment, and training *Manyano* leadership.<sup>52</sup>

Five documents on Ubunye Free Methodist Church and its response to domestic violence were also found. In 1998, Dan and Kathleen Sheffield, initiators of UFMC, wrote an article on the ministry in the urban area that they entitled “Case Study: Ubunye Church and Community Ministries.”<sup>53</sup> In this article, they analyse the impact of the UFMC ministry in the community of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. They explain this impact using a case of a woman who, after being abused by her husband, recovered thanks to Ubunye Cooperative Housing (UCH) and The Haven project.

In 2001, Martin Harold le Roux wrote a PhD thesis entitled the *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor with Special Reference to John Wesley's Social Ethic*.<sup>54</sup> Concerning UFMC, le Roux analyses the UCH project and mentions that the building used would also provide a place of housing for the poor, a shelter for abused women and an enlarged venue for church services. He describes how The Haven shelter started, basic

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<sup>49</sup> Phiri, “Why does God allow our husbands to hurt us,” 28.

<sup>50</sup> Nompumelelo P. Dlamini, *Zulu women, Domestic violence and Christian Faith: Does the church help or hinder the survivor?* Masters thesis (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu Natal, 2005)

<sup>51</sup> Dlamini, *Zulu women, Domestic violence and Christian Faith*, 66-71.

<sup>52</sup> Dlamini, *Zulu women, Domestic violence and Christian Faith*, 73-80.

<sup>53</sup> Sheffield and Sheffield, “Case Study”, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*.

services it provided, monthly statistics concerning women's refuge, and sources of funds used.<sup>55</sup>

In 2003, Ezekiel Ntakirutimana wrote an honours dissertation entitled "A Critical Reflection on "The Haven" Run in Pietermaritzburg Community by Ubunye Methodist Church."<sup>56</sup> Here, he presents the historical background of The Haven, reflects on DV and the role of shelters, identifies key issues for the church with regard to DV and thereby, establishes an agenda for UFMC.

At the beginning of 2004, two other academic studies on UFMC were conducted for Honours and Masters Degrees. Respectively, Vestine Musabyimana has used The Haven project as case study to reflect critically on the life of women after refuge in a shelter.<sup>57</sup> Here, she showed the role of shelters on the life of DV survivors and established the agenda for UFMC. Likewise, Ezekiel Ntakirutimana used the Wesleyan social teaching and pastoral care, and the work of Paulo Freire on "Dialogical Action" to reflect critically on UCH.<sup>58</sup> In the results, he also mentions "The Haven" project as a service of UCH serving as an emergency shelter for the safety and the protection of women and children DV survivors who could no longer stay with abusers. He also spoke about the organisational structure of the project, its challenges, and suggestions for improvement.

With regard to these academic studies, only the two Honours dissertations focused on issues relating to DV while the PhD and Masters theses only mentioned The Haven as one of the services of UCH without deep analysis, for this was not their main concern. In addition, these Honours dissertations have focused on The Haven as a shelter, and used the vision of the shelter as an analytical framework, applying living conditions in the shelter as yardsticks.

The present study differs from these on three main points. The first point concerns the main focus. This study focuses not on the shelter, but on the (whole) response to DV which includes a shelter and a number of other issues such as organisation of workshops, use of

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<sup>55</sup> Le Roux, *The Local Congregation Empowering the Urban Poor*, 135-139.

<sup>56</sup> Ezekiel Ntakirutimana, *A Critical Reflection on The Haven Run in Pietermaritzburg Community by Ubunye Methodist Church*. Honours Dissertation (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 2003).

<sup>57</sup> Musabyimana, *A Critical Reflection on Life of Women after Shelters*.

<sup>58</sup> Ntakirutimana, *A Christian Development Appraisal*.

the pulpit and sermons, and partnership with other institutions. The second point is the framework of analysis. This study does not use the vision of the shelter like previous studies, but the notion of *missio Dei*, taking some of its aspects as a yardstick to determine whether or not UPMC is doing what it is supposed to do as church in God's mission. The third point is the time difference. Previous studies were conducted over six years ago. Therefore, there are new changes that the present study highlights. In light of this, as none of the previous studies has focused on the whole response of UPMC to DV or viewed it through the lens of its very mission in the world as God's mission, the present study covers these gaps and provides updated data.

#### **1.4. Working Questions and Objectives**

As indicated above, the present study sought to respond to the question: To what extent does the response of UPMC to DV embody the fullness of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*? From this question, five working questions have been asked: First, how has UPMC responded to DV? Second, what theology has inspired UPMC to respond to DV? Third, how does the response of UPMC to DV embody the mission of the church as *missio Dei*? And in what ways does it not? Fourth, what lessons can be learnt from UPMC's experience of accomplishing the *missio Dei* through addressing DV? And fifth, what suggestions can be formulated to make the *missio Dei* relevant in the response of UPMC to DV?

With reference to these questions, six objectives have been formulated: First, to provide an overview of DV globally but with special reference to South Africa; second, to reflect theologically on the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*; third, to identify the theology which has led UPMC to address DV; fourth, to assess the response of UPMC to DV in the light of the *missio Dei*; fifth, to draw lessons from UPMC's experience of embodying the *missio Dei* through addressing DV; and sixth, to suggest a new agenda giving relevance to the *missio Dei* in the response of UPMC to DV. In pursuing these objectives, the above questions have been gradually and respectively answered in the whole dissertation from the second to the fifth chapter.

## 1.5. Theoretical Framework

Four theories have inspired this study from the conception to the finish. The first theory is the “liberation theology” which began in Latin America in the 1960s. Liberation theology was developed by Latin American theologians who had studied in Europe. They found that the theological reflection done in their home countries was not relevant to their context of poverty and military oppression.<sup>59</sup> This oppression resulted from the period of exploitation dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the time of Spanish and Portuguese conquistadors, and the era of military repression.<sup>60</sup> The church was tightly linked to political structures.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, these theologians developed a new interpretation of the method and the content from the perspective of the poor.<sup>62</sup> One of them is Gustavo Gutierrez known as the father of liberation theology.<sup>63</sup> When he read the Bible, he understood that the support or offence to the poor is directed to God. He expresses:

The obligation to care for the poor means that the poor are not persons being punished by God (as the temporal doctrine retribution implicitly asserts), but rather God’s friends. To give to the needy is therefore to give to God: “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord” (Prov. 19:17); and, conversely, “He who oppresses a poor man insults his Master” (Prov. 14: 31; see 15:5). The full implication of this attitude and the full extent of the obligation it imposes will be revealed when Christ identifies himself with the poor of this world (see Matt. 25:31-46).<sup>64</sup>

Such understanding guided liberation theologians in their commitment to the poor and other oppressed. In this regard, in liberation theology, one’s theological commitment is seen by one’s insertion with and commitment to the poor and oppressed. This goes even to the point of shedding one’s blood.<sup>65</sup> When the liberation theology started, many Christians composed of laity, sisters and religious and bishops committed themselves for this end in Latin America. But it was not an easy task since because of that some of them were put under the police surveillance, or imprisoned or murdered.<sup>66</sup> As examples of those who have been victims of this commitment, we can quote Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador who

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<sup>59</sup> Susan Rakoczy, *In Her Name: Women Doing Theology* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004), 5.

<sup>60</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 5.

<sup>61</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*, Translated and edited by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1974), 102-107.

<sup>62</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 5.

<sup>63</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 5.

<sup>64</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*, Translated from the Spanish by Matthew J. O’Connell (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1987), 40.

<sup>65</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 8.

<sup>66</sup> Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 102-107.

was assassinated in 1980 while celebrating Eucharist, four nuns murdered in the same year, and many other people murdered for actions ranging from leading Bible discussion groups to land reform efforts.<sup>67</sup> In the same vein, the present study was conceived and developed with such a commitment to the oppressed in general, and to DV survivors in particular.

Secondly, the study was inspired by the specific approach of “feminist theology.” Feminist theology is one of the branches of feminism. According to Clifford, feminism is “a social vision, rooted in women’s experience of sexually based discrimination and oppression, a movement seeking the liberation of women from all forms of sexism.”<sup>68</sup> From this definition, feminism is a movement having a vision of liberating women from sexually – and sexism-based oppressions. In their history, feminist activists have evolved through three waves claiming political rights in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, civil rights in the 1960s, and the consideration of women’s experience in the 1970s.<sup>69</sup>

Until the third wave, feminism was primarily concerned with Western white middle-class women’s experience relating to gender.<sup>70</sup> Since that time, other women’s experiences were taken into consideration. Feminism has proliferated, hence the birth of feminist theology dealing with women’s oppression by and within religions.<sup>71</sup> In addition, African-American women in the United States identified themselves as womanists and started focusing on issues of race and social classes. The term *mujerista* was also used by some Hispanic women to name the theological reflection of Central and South American women who live in North America. In the same way, Asian, African and women from indigenous culture started defining their theological approaches.<sup>72</sup>

Concerning feminist theology, it was initiated to address the theological and ecclesial problems created by the patriarchal system where women are denigrated, infantilized, constrained, controlled and made dependent. With patriarchy, women are not supposed to live their own lives but are told to live through lives of fathers, husbands and male

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<sup>67</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 8.

<sup>68</sup> Anne M. Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Book, 2005),16.

<sup>69</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 12-13.

<sup>70</sup> Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 21-25.

<sup>71</sup> Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 28-32.

<sup>72</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 13-14; Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 25-28.

children.<sup>73</sup> With this regard, feminist theology begins with women's experience of oppression and seeks the promotion of their full humanity.<sup>74</sup>

Clifford identifies three types of feminist theology: Revolutionary feminist theology which rejects religion since it is dominated by oppressive patriarchy; Reformist Christian feminist theology looking for a more modest change within existing church structures; and Reconstructivist Christian feminist theology seeking a liberating theological core for women within the Christian tradition, while also envisioning a deeper transformation, a true reconstruction, not only of their church structures but also of civil society.<sup>75</sup>

With regard to African women theologians, their main concern is issues of the culture. They analyse the culture from women's perspective.<sup>76</sup> Here, the most visible space for theological analysis is the Circle of Concerned African Women theologians (hereafter Circle) born in Ghana in 1989 with the goal to promote the well-being of African women and all women through theological analysis and the study of the Bible which commits them to social action.<sup>77</sup> In observing the Circle, it seems that it follows the methodological process suggested by "reconstructionist Christian feminist theology." To achieve their objective, "reconstructionist Christian feminist theologians have two tasks: The first is "to deconstruct and critique the male cultural paradigms in theological thought and [the second] to construct and formulate new perspectives."<sup>78</sup> To accomplish these tasks, three interlocking steps are followed: First, "to deconstruct and critique what has been received in the Christian theological tradition," second, "to search for an alternative history and tradition to support the inclusion of women as full human beings," and third, "to reconstruct and reformulate the teaching of Christianity."<sup>79</sup> In the same way, the Circle members write and publish their works. Their analysis is primarily based on women's cultural and religious experiences that

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<sup>73</sup> Kang Namsoon, "The Centrality of Gender Justice in Prophetic Christianity and the Mission of the Church Reconsidered" in *International Review of Mission* (Vol.94, Apr2005, 278-289), 284; Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 28-32.

<sup>74</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 15.

<sup>75</sup> Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 32-33.

<sup>76</sup> In 2006, Isabel A. Phiri and Sarojini Nadar have proposed seven features of African Women's Theologies: (1) Feminist cultural hermeneutics, (2) Narrative theology, (3) Theological and social advocacy, (4) Communal theology, (5) The Bible as main source, (6) Focus on issues of race, class and gender, and (7) Interdisciplinary and multi-faith nature (See Isabel A. Phiri, and Sarojini Nadar, "What's in a Name? Forging a Theoretical Framework for African Women's Theologies," in *Journal of Constructive Theology* (12:2, 2006, 5-24), 10-20). These features seem to detail and to delineate the whole field of African women's theologies.

<sup>77</sup> Musimbi Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 26, 28.

<sup>78</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 15-17.

<sup>79</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 17-18.

they describe, explain, critically analyse, and propose ways forward.<sup>80</sup> Likewise, as mentioned in the fourth and fifth chapters, like feminist theology, the present study begins with women's experience of DV in order to appraise the response of the church to this situation, and to suggest ways of making this response more humanising for women.

Thirdly, the data collection process was inspired by "dialogical action." Viviane Torres da Silva defines the concept "dialogical actions" as "actions that provide the interchange of messages between agents."<sup>81</sup> This concept has been introduced and developed by the Brazilian Paulo Freire (1921-97) in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* where he opposed the "Banking education" to the "problem-posing" or "liberating" education.<sup>82</sup> For Freire, the Banking education considers the learner as a mere receiver from the teacher. It is therefore anti-dialogical. Conversely, in the problem-posing education, taken as dialogical, both the teacher and the learner are jointly subjects in the teaching process. Here, the learner is no longer an object but a subject.

Freire presents two basic dimensions of the dialogical action: reflection and action.<sup>83</sup> He rejects the action without reflection that he considers as activism and the reflection without action that he considers as verbalism.<sup>84</sup> He opts for the formula Action + Reflection = word=work=praxis.<sup>85</sup> This means that "with action and reflection you get praxis which enables transformation to take place."<sup>86</sup> Freire also explains that in a dialogical action, the relationship between the teacher and the learner is not vertical but horizontal.<sup>87</sup> Here, vertical relationship is characterised by arrogance, hopelessness, mistrust, and lack of love, lack of critic and lack of empathy. The horizontal relationship is based on empathy between

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<sup>80</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 28-29.

<sup>81</sup> Viviane Torres da Silva, "Implementing Norms that Govern Non-Dialogical Actions" Online: UCM, Departamento de Sistemas Informáticos y Programación. Madrid (Spain) (<http://maude.sip.ucm.es/~viviane/products.html>. Accessed 21/8/2008).

<sup>82</sup> Steve de Gruchy, "Some preliminary theological reflections on the New African Plan for Development (NEPAD)" in *The Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa*, Double Issue, Vol. 8: 2&3 (April and August. 2002), 67; Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Translated by Ramos Myra Bergman (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 53, 60-61

<sup>83</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 68.

<sup>84</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 68.

<sup>85</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 68.

<sup>86</sup> Rage and Hope, "Freire Paulo: Dialogical Action." Online: perfectfit (<http://www.perfectfit.org/CT/freire4.html> 21/08/2008).

<sup>87</sup> Freire quoted in P. K. Fordjor, "Dialogical Action and Participatory Effort in Rural Development Education at Tsawenu" (Ghana.Legon-Accra: University of Ghana, Institute of Adult Education, Paulo Freire Kooperation, 2000). Online: Freire ([http://freire.de/zeitschrif/dir\\_3/file\\_2.html](http://freire.de/zeitschrif/dir_3/file_2.html). accessed 21/08/2008).

two parties and enables them to engage in a joint research with critic, humility, love, hope, and trust.<sup>88</sup>

Freire distinguishes four characteristics of antidialogical action. The first characteristic is the conquest. This entails a relationship with others with the objective to conquer them increasingly and by every means. This relationship results in paternalism, conqueror and conquered, vanquished and imposer, and housing (colonising) of a person or persons by another or others.<sup>89</sup> The second characteristic is the Divide and Rule relationship. Here, the minority oppressor divides the majority in order to keep the power over them, to subordinate and to dominate them. The oppressor weakens the people, selects some of them for promotion, alienates people and pretends to help them.<sup>90</sup> Thirdly, antidialogical action is characterised by manipulation. The oppressors try conforming masses to their (oppressors) objectives. They keep people from thinking and dialogue. Like division, this is another tool for the conquest.<sup>91</sup> The last characteristic is the invasion of the culture. Here, invaders penetrate the masses' cultural context. They disrespect their potentialities, impose their own and inhibit the other group's creativity.<sup>92</sup>

Freire contrasts these four characteristics of antidialogical action with four characteristics of dialogical action. He expresses that dialogical action is characterised by cooperation. This is a relationship where two subjects cooperate in order to transform the world. This cooperation is made through communication or dialogue. It succeeds when there is mutual trust.<sup>93</sup> Secondly, dialogical action is characterised by unity for liberation. The leaders make efforts for unity between oppressed people, and between leaders and oppressed people in order to achieve liberation.<sup>94</sup> Thirdly, dialogical action is characterised by organisation. Leaders organise people to make the struggle for liberation a common task.<sup>95</sup> Lastly, dialogical action is characterised by cultural synthesis. Instead of disrespect for people's culture, dialogical leaders create a dialectical relationship between the two cultures.<sup>96</sup> For

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<sup>88</sup> Freire quoted in Fordjor, *Dialogical Action and Participatory Effort* (No page number because downloaded from website page).

<sup>89</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 119-122.

<sup>90</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 122-128.

<sup>91</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 128-133.

<sup>92</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 133-148.

<sup>93</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 148-153.

<sup>94</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 153-156.

<sup>95</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 156-160.

<sup>96</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 160-164.



Steve de Gruchy, because the dialogical approach is based on dialogue and respect for the human being, it is taken as a humanizing approach.<sup>97</sup>

The educational context in which “dialogical action” was initially conceived was different from that of the present study which deals with the response of the church to family relationship issues. However, dialogical action has found application in this study during the data collection. Similar to dialogical action, this study has considered all people involved as able to conceive, to understand, to reflect, to describe, to critic and to transform. In this way, instead of conducting research on people, I have conducted research with them. This was materialised during interviews where women survivors of DV, staff of DV programmes, and church leaders of UFMC were all given the opportunity to express their feelings, to assess the programme, and to suggest ways for its improvement. The study has been dialogical and respectful to human beings.

Lastly, the data analysis in this study has used the concept of “*missio Dei*.” The theology of *Missio Dei* considers the mission of the church in the world as participating in the mission of God. In the present study, four aspects of *missio Dei* have been detailed. These are: envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, caring for the oppressed, and challenging oppressive structures. In order to avoid tautology, the theology of *missio Dei* is not discussed in the present section because it is detailed in the third chapter titled “The Mission of the Church in the World as *Missio Dei*.”

## **1.6. Research Methodology**

The present work is an empirical study built on primary data obtained through field research, as well as using secondary data. Therefore, in this section I develop four points on secondary data, field research, ethical issues, and data analysis. In this regard, secondary data was gathered from different documents relating to DV. These documents comprise books, journal articles, and theses from libraries; reports, notebooks and brochures from UFMC and other organisations; and articles from the internet. These data have been used to frame the study, design field data collection tools, and clarify the meaning of results during analysis.

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<sup>97</sup> De Gruchy, "Some preliminary theological reflections," 66.

Secondly, individual interviews were organised to collect qualitative data on the way the response of UFMC to DV embodies the fullness of *missio Dei*. During the selection of informants, purposive sampling was followed. Here, the study targeted three categories of people designed with a particular purpose. These were church leaders selected as conceivers of the vision and the programmes addressing DV; the staff members involved in DV programmes as the first witnesses of the impact of the church's response in the lives of survivors and the attitude of the community; and survivors of DV as the first to experience the pains of oppression and to be restored to full human life. By choosing these groups, the study expected to have views from a range of relevant people involved in the response of that church to DV, so as to base arguments on facts from the relevant and complete resources.

In this regard, five women from those recognised by the staff members as having experienced serious DV were interviewed. Other groups of informants were formed of six interviewees: two staff members, two church leaders and two people who were both staff members and church leaders. Here, church leaders comprised of the appointed senior minister and board members while the staff members comprised of the shelter manager, the shelter mother, a social worker and a volunteer.

As it appears in the interview guides (see appendix 1 and appendix 2), interview questions covered an overall picture of the response of the church to DV at present and in the future. For the church leaders and the staff members, questions related to the church's response only. However, for women survivors of DV, questions mostly related to their personal history and experience before and during UFMC's assistance. These kinds of questions to women were designed to apply "story telling," one of favourite methods used by African women theologians in their efforts to liberate women from oppression. According to Musimbi Kanyoro, story telling allows unearthing factors that dehumanise women, unmasking sins of oppression and injustice, calling all members and structures of the society to repent for unconcerned behaviour toward women's oppression and calling for liberating actions.<sup>98</sup> Similarly, during the interviews, survivors of DV have been given the opportunity to tell stories of their life and oppression. Through their stories, efforts and

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<sup>98</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 24.

weaknesses of individuals, churches, families and the whole society in women's liberation have been revealed. As it appears in the fourth and fifth chapters, the contents of these stories have served as basis for many arguments and suggestions of the way forward.

During the fieldwork, all interviewees have preferred to speak in English. However, an *isiZulu* speaker research assistant was prepared for translation, in case any interviewee would like to use that language. For recording, all the information was written by hand during and directly after each interview.

Thirdly, ethical issues were taken into consideration. Here, I had received legal permission for conducting this research. This permission consisted of an acceptance letter from UFMC, approval of the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu Natal, and a contract with my supervisor.

The study has also respected the autonomy and dignity of the interviewees. At this point, consent papers were signed by interviewees. Interviewees had also the right to refuse to participate in or to withdraw before the end of the interview without any penalty. In addition, the study guaranteed and respected the privacy and confidentiality of each participant during data collection, data analysis, publication, and the use of data. Here, interviews took place in a private area, pseudonyms have been used to designate interviewees when recording, analysing and publishing data, and data have been used for the purpose of this study only. Moreover, it has been agreed that the interview tools are to be destroyed within three months after the submission of the final copy of the dissertation. Respect was likewise given to the availability of interviewees and to the participation of interviewees in choosing the place of interview within UFMC premise.

Another ethical concern was the nonmaleficence. Though the data collection has not provoked any case needing counselling, The Haven had agreed to directly call its professional counsellors, should this need arise during or after interview. In addition, the use of pseudonyms aimed at covering the identity of interviewees.

This study has also identified some benefits for interviewees. On this point, soon after the submission of the final copy of this dissertation, results of this study are to be discussed with the staff members and church leaders so that they can be inspired on how to improve

the response to DV. In this way, DV survivors as beneficiaries of church services, the staff members as professionals and the church leaders as initiators of the programme benefit from this study.

The last ethical issue mentioned here regards justice. This was respected in submitting all the interviewees of the same category to the same questions during the same average timeframe.

The third element discussed in this section regards data analysis. In analysing the response of UFMC to DV vis-à-vis the mission of the church as *missio Dei*, the above four elements taken as main characteristics of *missio Dei* in situations of oppression - namely, envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, caring for the oppressed, and challenging oppressive structures - have been used as yardsticks. As each question of interview guides aimed at exploring some aspects of these elements (see appendix 3), responses to these questions have helped to take a stand concerning the embodiment of *missio Dei* in the response of UFMC to DV. And because of the small number of interviewees, the use of the computer for analysis was not required.

Therefore, the present research is an applied study investigating the way the response of UFMC to DV reflects the fullness of the *missio Dei*. Analysis units are the goals, programmes, strategies and activities aiming at addressing DV. As independent variables, it has the four elements characterising *missio Dei* as defined above while dependent variables are goals, strategies and actions for addressing DV.

### **1.7. Structure of the Dissertation**

The present dissertation is structured in six chapters. The first chapter introduces the dissertation covering the background information on UFMC; the study problem and limitation; literature review and choice of the topic; research questions and objectives; theoretical framework; methodology; and the structure of the dissertation.

The second chapter achieves the first objective of the study. It presents background information on DV specifying its definition, forms, sources, evolution, consequences on women, and the situation in the world and South Africa.

The third chapter serves to reach the second objective. It explains the concept of the mission of the church as *missio Dei*. It starts with reviewing the evolution of the features of the mission of the church from the New Testament era up to the current understanding. Then it details the feature of the mission as *missio Dei* emphasizing its goals, activities, and accomplishments in contexts of injustice. It is from this last point that the four characteristics of the mission used as yardsticks in this study have been drawn. These are: envisioning a just community, standing with oppressed, caring for the oppressed and challenging oppressive structures.

The fourth chapter addresses the third and fourth objectives. It presents the results of field research and data analysis. It is in this chapter that the response of the UFMC is assessed in light of *missio Dei*. This assessment starts with the presentation of three women's stories serving as foretaste for DV survivors' experience. Then, it uses the four characteristics of *missio Dei* as described above and ends with the stand of the study as to whether the response of UFMC to DV embodies the fullness of *missio Dei*.

As a response to the results of the study, the fifth chapter addresses the last two questions and is used to reach last two objectives. This chapter constitutes the contribution of the present study to the improvement of UFMC's response to DV. From lessons drawn through this study, suggestions are formulated to make the UFMC response to DV more reflective of *missio Dei*.

Lastly, the sixth chapter is a conclusion of the whole work. It recalls the motivation, the problem, questions, and objectives of the study, achievement of objectives within different chapters, and the conclusion of the study with regard to its assumption. This chapter ends in recognising weaknesses and limitations of the present study and suggesting topics for future research to cover gaps left by this study.

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GLOBALLY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOUTH AFRICA

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter contains background information on domestic violence. It is conceived as a means to achieving the first objective of this dissertation, which is to provide an overview of DV globally with special reference to South Africa. Therefore, I explore understandings of the meaning of different aspects of DV, and its current situation in the world and in South Africa. Throughout its development, it appears that DV is a reality in the world and an alarming issue in South Africa. Details of this information are structured in six sections which are: definition, forms, sources, and evolution of DV, its consequences on women, and the situation around the world and in South Africa.

#### 2.2. Definition of Domestic Violence

The concept of “domestic violence” has been defined by different peoples in a complementary manner. In their explanation, they present it as one of the forms of “Gender-Based-Violence” (GBV). In this regard, Chineze Onyejekwe considers DV as GBV occurring in the homes - what she calls the private sphere - thus separating it from violence happening within economic, political, and social contexts outside the homes – that she takes as the public sphere.<sup>1</sup> This perspective is almost similar to that of the South African Domestic Violence Act of 1998 which recognizes that DV is committed within domestic relationships (DR).<sup>2</sup> Here, they explain DR as the relationship between:

- People married to each other according to any law, custom or religion;

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<sup>1</sup> Chineze J. Onyejekwe, "The Interrelationship Between Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS in South Africa," in *Journal of International Women's Studies* (Vol. 6 #1 November 2004, 34-40), 34; United Nations, *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women* (Beijing on 4-15 September 1995): A/CONF.177/20 (New York: United Nations, October 1995), Article 35.

<sup>2</sup> Republic of South Africa, “Domestic Violence Act” (Act No. 116, 1998) in *Government Gazette* (Vol. 402. No. 19537, December 2, 1998, 1-20), Preamble.

- People living or who lived together in a relationship in the nature of marriage although they are not or were not married to each other or are not able to be married to each other whether they are of the same or opposite sex;
- Parents of a child or those who have or had parental responsibility for that child;
- Family members related by consanguinity, affinity or adoption;
- People in engagement, dating or customary relationship, including an actual or perceived romantic, intimate or sexual relationship of any duration; and
- People who share or recently shared the same residence.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the South African Law Commission mentions the condition of frequency and result of the act committed. They note that DV is a pervasive and frequently lethal problem, inflicted by one or many people on one or many people in a DR, and resulting in devastating the victim in any form.<sup>4</sup> Women's Net adds a new insight focusing also on the aim of the act. They state that DV is an aggressive behaviour with the purpose of controlling, intimidating, and subjugating the victim, a behaviour whose repetition provokes fear and leads the victim to be an object of control.<sup>5</sup>

Looking at these complementary explanations, I maintain that people in direct and extended families, people in the same household, and people in actual or former intimate relationship are in a domestic relationship. Hence, I take as DV any act of one or many of these people that is directed toward another once or repeatedly, and that results in making one or many of others object(s) of control, intimidation or subjugation. In the next section, I describe the different forms that such acts take.

### **2.3. Forms of Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence takes several forms according to the way it is perpetrated. First, it is a physical act causing harm to the victim such as slapping, punching, kicking, shoving,

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<sup>3</sup> Republic of South Africa, "Domestic Violence Act," 3.

<sup>4</sup> Republic of South Africa, *Research Paper on Domestic Violence* (South African Law Commission, 1999), iii.

<sup>5</sup> Women'sNet, "Domestic Violence in South Africa." Online: Women'sNet. (<http://www.Womensnet.org.za/Pvaw/organisations/domviosa.htm> 27/08/2008. Accessed May 14, 2009).

choking, stabbing and shooting using weapons like guns, knives, forks, sjamboks, knobkerries, hammer or axe.<sup>6</sup>

Secondly, it is sexual conduct which abuses, humiliates, degrades or otherwise violates the sexual integrity of another.<sup>7</sup> Here, it comprises any forced sexual activity, including rape within or out of marriage,<sup>8</sup> forced sterilization, forced abortion, forced use of contraceptives, female infanticide and prenatal sex selection;<sup>9</sup> and harmful traditional practices such as early and forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).<sup>10</sup>

Thirdly, DV takes emotional, verbal or psychological form, expressed in conduct which makes the target person feel useless or not good enough. These forms involve insults; ridicule, name calling; threats to cause emotional pain; exhibition of obsessive possessiveness or jealousy; extreme accusation of having affairs and being unfaithful; lack of trust; preventing the person from leaving the house; constant criticism in private and public areas; mocking the family or close people; swearing or shouting at the person; intimidating with gestures, looks, or smashing things; controlling activities; disrupting routine; deprivation of sleep or food, isolating from family or friends, and stalking.<sup>11</sup>

Fourthly, DV takes an economic form when the abuser uses money or other economic property or activity to undermine the target person. This includes unreasonable deprivation of legally entitled economic resources such as a job or bank account; deprivation of necessities such as household, and mortgage bond repayments or payment of rent in respect of the shared residence; unreasonable removal of household effects or other property in which the victim has an interest;<sup>12</sup> and spending most of the money on oneself while availing a small amount to support the family, expecting the person to do more with it than what that money can buy.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence," 2.

<sup>7</sup> Republic of South Africa, "Domestic Violence Act," 4.

<sup>8</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence," 2.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations, *The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace: Platform for Action* (Beijing China - September 1995).

<sup>10</sup> United Nations, *Ending Violence against Women: from Words to Action: Study of The Secretary-General* (United Nations, 2006), 2.

<sup>11</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence," 2; Republic of South Africa, "Domestic Violence Act," 3, 4.

<sup>12</sup> Republic of South Africa, "Domestic Violence Act," 3.

<sup>13</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence," 2; UNFPA and World YWCA, *Empowering Young Women to Lead Change: A Training Manual* (World YWCA 2006), 112.



Fifthly, DV of women takes a spiritual form when their faith is used to retain them in an abusive situation. This form encompasses telling them to make sure that they do not do anything to upset their husbands, making them believe that the abuse is their fault, and that if they leave or divorce they will be condemned by God. Here, some biblical texts are quoted literally and out of context to support this violence.<sup>14</sup>

The last form of DV identified in this section is harassment, a pattern of conduct which induces the fear of harm to the victim. It consists of repeatedly watching or loitering outside of or near the residence, work, or business places; repeated phone-calling or inducing another person to call; repeatedly sending, delivering or causing the delivery of messages using letters, telegrams, packages, facsimile, electronic mail or other means of communication to the victim.<sup>15</sup> In observing all these forms, it seems that DV embraces all aspects of human life. It is necessary to ask where DV originates from. Therefore, the next section tries to respond to this concern by discussing sources of DV.

#### **2.4. Sources of Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence originates from patriarchy. Etymologically, patriarchy is based on the Latin word for father, *pater*, which literally means the rule of a father or fathers.<sup>16</sup> In a patriarchal system, female human beings are considered as inferior in all aspects of life and inherently of lesser value than male. Consequently, the control and domination of the male over the female and other family members is legitimated and mostly practiced violently.<sup>17</sup> Patriarchy has other related systems such as androcentrism, kyriarchy, and neo-classical economic theory.<sup>18</sup> Together with these systems, patriarchy has developed and nurtured the impression and assumption of superiority of men to women.

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<sup>14</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 95; Buckenham, "Domestic Violence," 2.

<sup>15</sup> Republic of South Africa, "Domestic Violence Act", 4.

<sup>16</sup> The United Church of Canada (UCC), *Gender Justice and Partnership Guidelines* (Ontario: UCC, The Division of World Outreach (DWO), 1998), 10.

<sup>17</sup> The United Church of Canada, *Gender Justice and Partnership Guideline*, 10.

<sup>18</sup> Androcentrism is an understanding which supposes that the male is the norm of human life and that to be truly human is to be male. Here, women are taken as inferior, deficient, and probably a divine mistake (Susan Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 11). Kyriarchy signifies a "socio-political system of domination in which elite educated propertied men hold power over women and other men" (Fiorenza, quoted in Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 11). Neo-classical economic theory explains gender difference in employment in terms of differences in human capital, where women are disadvantaged and receive low wages because they are considered as lower in production and are less professionally marketable (Janet Henshall Momsen, *Gender and Development* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis group, 2004), 174, 176.

A number of tools have been developed to construct and nurture patriarchal systems. First, anthropological philosophy has developed the male-female mind-body dualism according to which women and men are constructed as polar opposites and women's characteristics are passive and less important.<sup>19</sup> The second tool is the cultural socialisation through which some cultures teach boys from their early age to repress feelings of fear and pain and to channel all their emotions into anger.<sup>20</sup> Here, societies have also established male norms as leaders and authority figures, independent, strong, aggressive, sexually assertive and successful, ambitious, and competitive. In contrast females are cast as followers, obedient, dependent, weak and passive, chaste, gentle, nice and kind.<sup>21</sup> The third tool is a set of customs, traditions, and taboos which, for example, allow men to beat their wives for different reasons - such as transgression of women's culturally prescribed role or being disobedient.<sup>22</sup> The last tool mentioned here is the gendered role division through which men are always the final decision-makers and are assigned public, formal and best paid activities while women have to remain obedient and to carry out private, informal, less paid and time-consuming activities.<sup>23</sup>

Besides these norms, I learnt that oppressive systems are built into both secular and religious spheres. To express this, Kanyoro mentions that "...culture and religion are not distinct from each other...they embrace all areas of one's total life."<sup>24</sup> In Christianity, builders of oppressive systems select dehumanising teachings from some church fathers such as Tertullian, John Chrysostom (349-407), John Damascene (646-750), and Cyril of

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<sup>19</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 3, 48.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Kaufman, "The Seven P's of Men's Violence" (Article for White Ribbon Campaign) (Toronto, Canada: White Ribbon Campaign, October 1999), 3.

<sup>21</sup> Rakoczy quoted in Sarojini Nadar, "Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses: The Case of Violence Against Women and the "Unholy Trinity," in *Agenda No. 66 2005: Gender-Based Violence Trilogy* (Volume 1, 1: Domestic Violence, 16-22), 19-20.

<sup>22</sup> Shahana Rasool Bassadien and Tessa Hochfeld, "Across the Public/Private Boundaries: Contextualizing Domestic Violence in South Africa," in *Agenda No. 66 2005: Gender-Based Violence Trilogy* (Volume 1, 1: Domestic Violence, 4-15), 9.

<sup>23</sup> Thoko Mpumlwana, "My Perspective on Women and Their Role in Church and Society" in Denise Ackermann, Jonathan A. Draper and Emma Mashinini, (eds), *Women Hold up Half Sky: Women in the Church in Southern Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publication, 1991, 369-385), 378; Momsen, *Gender and Development*, 67, 48, 68, 68, 116, 40, 141, 143, 152, 224; Jessica Hawkinson, "Introduction" in United Nations, *Addendum for Commission on The Status of Women Fifty-Third Session (SCW-53): On the Theme "The Equal Sharing of Responsibilities Between Women And Men, Including Care Giving in The Context of HIV/AIDS"* (New York: United Nations, Economic & Social Council, 2009), 2; Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflection on Christianity in Africa* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1986), 123; Anne Nasiyimu-Wasike, "Christology and an African Woman's Experience" in J. Robert, CPPS Schreiter (eds), *Faces of Jesus in Africa* (Maryknoll, New York: SCM Press, 1991, 70-79), 71.

<sup>24</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 14.

Alexandria (d444) who respectively define women as devil's gateway,<sup>25</sup> harmful than a most harmful savage beast;<sup>26</sup> hideous tapeworm and the advance post of hell;<sup>27</sup> and blush for shame.<sup>28</sup> Another religious tool is the patriarchal interpretation of the Scriptures. With example of the Hebrew Bible, some texts such as Genesis 2:18-25 have been used to insist that woman is lower because she was created "second."<sup>29</sup> Closely to the interpretation of scripture stands the religious socialization where teachings about forgiveness, submissiveness, sacrifice and inseparability of marriage are taught to women, and not to men.<sup>30</sup> To close this reflection, I maintain that DV originates from patriarchy which legitimates men's domination and control over women and is nurtured by philosophical, cultural, and religious teachings and practices. Let me now use the next section to explore how it evolves.

## 2.5. Evolution of Domestic Violence

The evolution of DV against women is presented here in the framework of two patterns. The first pattern is seen in the "life cycle of violence against women" which couples human development phases with particular types of violence. Therefore, in the pre-birth phase, the violence is manifested in sex-selection abortion which tends to focus on females, rather preserving male foetuses. In infancy, it is perpetrated through female infanticide, and physical, sexual and psychological abuse of small girls. During childhood, girls are violated through child marriage; FGM; physical, sexual and psychological abuse; incest; child prostitution and pornography. With adolescence and adulthood, violence is perpetrated in the context of dating and courtship; through economically coerced sex; incest; sexual abuse in the work place; rape; sexual harassment; forced prostitution; pornography; trafficking; partner violence; marital rape; dowry abuse and murder; partner homicide; psychological abuse; abuse of women having disability; and forced pregnancy. The last phase occurs during the elderly age and includes forced suicide or homicide of a widow for economic reasons; sexual, physical and psychological abuse.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> De Cultu Fem 1, 1, quoted in Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 30-31.

<sup>26</sup> Discourse 2 On Genesis quoted in Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 31.

<sup>27</sup> Apocalypse of Moses IX.2, quoted in Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 31.

<sup>28</sup> Ruether and Jerome quoted in Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 31.

<sup>29</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 42.

<sup>30</sup> Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*, 134.

<sup>31</sup> UNFPA and World YWCA, *Empowering Young Women to Lead Change*, 113.

The second pattern describes the “cycle of DV” between intimate partners.<sup>32</sup> This is composed of three cycling phases. First, after the honeymoon period, violence appears as “tension building”. This phase is characterized by verbal or emotional attack using insults, put-down or accusations and minor physical violence such as battering. The woman tries to be calm, to anticipate wishes or to please the man but the abuses grow more and more in frequency and intensity. She becomes more passive, the man more oppressive, and the tension more unbearable. This stage can last from minutes to months.

Secondly, there is the “abuse” or “explosion” phase, where the situation erupts into violence. Here, the man loses control and goes forward degrading the woman by beating, sexually assaulting, injuring or killing her. This episode can last between few minutes to few days.

The last phase is the “calm,” “honey moon” or “forgive me” stage. Now, the man can apologize; become very sorry, loving and kind; seek to be forgiven; promise not to abuse her again; and offer gifts as sign of self-correction. This behaviour confuses the woman, who wonders and tries to understand how her lover can treat her in such a way. She starts doubting whether the violence occurred or begins minimizing its severity. Finally, she forgives, drops, and forgets the case. However, after little time, small battering or other small incidents appear again and the cycle keeps turning.

From these patterns, I observe that DV against females starts before the birth and carries on until elder years, changing form according to the human developmental phases. While the whole society participates in this violence, the male partner becomes the principal abuser within intimate relationships. Within this relationship, DV takes the form of a cycle with three events: tension, abuse and calm. The consequences of domestic violence are myriad and devastating. I look at these in the next section.

## **2.6. Consequences of Domestic Violence on Women**

The consequences of domestic violence on women are observed on physical, social, sexual, emotional, financial, professional, and spiritual levels. Physically, violence results in death,

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<sup>32</sup> Buckenham, “Domestic Violence,” 2-3; PACSA, Gender, Violence & HIV & AIDS: A PACSA Workbook for Churches & Communities (Brochure) (Place and date not indicated).

injuries, pain, and problems of walking and carrying out daily activities. It also causes cardiovascular, neurological, pulmonary, musculoskeletal, dermatology, gastrointestinal, and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) problems.<sup>33</sup>

Socially, DV makes an abused woman a prisoner in her own house, where she suffers of loss of friends, family and human dignity.<sup>34</sup>

On sexual and reproductive levels, DV causes traumatic gynaecologic fistula, an injury resulting from severe tearing of the vaginal tissues, rendering the woman incontinent and socially undesirable. It also facilitates the high prevalence of HIV and AIDS resulting from the inability to negotiate safer sex, and/or the inability to refuse unwanted sex. Sometimes, DV also causes unwanted abortion when abuse occurs during pregnancy.<sup>35</sup>

Emotionally and psychologically, DV leads to personality and mood disorders; memory loss; anxiety; psychosis; posttraumatic stress disorder; mental distress expressed in crying easily, inability to enjoy life, fatigue, dizziness and thoughts of suicide, substance abuse, and use of medication. DV also causes depressive problems through despair, fear, self-blame, grief, loss of sense of self, loss of self-confidence and self-esteem, feelings of helplessness, anger, and powerlessness.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Adverse Health Conditions and Health Risk Behaviors Associated with Intimate Partner Violence — United States, 2005" in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (February 8, 2008 / Vol. 57 / No. 5, 113-140), 113; The Government of Western Australia, "The Impact of Domestic Violence" in *Freedom From Fear: Campaign against Domestic Violence* (Government of Western Australia, Department for Community Development, Family and Domestic Violence Unit, May 2005, 1-4), 2; World Health Organization (WHO), *WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women's Responses; Summary Report* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2005), 25; April A. Gerlock, *Health Impact of Domestic Violence* (Tacoma: Taylor and Francis, 1999), 8; and Brain Injury Association of Virginia, *Domestic Violence & Traumatic Brain Injury* (Pamphlet), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Dlamini, *Zulu Women, Domestic Violence and Christian Faith*, 23.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations, *Unite to End Violence against Women: United Nations Secretary General's Campaign. Fact Sheet: DPI/2498* (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 2008), 2; World Health Organization (WHO), *WHO Multi-Country Study*, 26-27.

<sup>36</sup> Carole Warshaw and Holly Barnes, *Domestic Violence, Mental Health and Trauma: Research Highlights* (Chicago: Chicago State (USA), The Domestic Violence and Mental Health Policy Initiative, April 2003), 6; Gerlock, *Health Impact of Domestic Violence*, 10; World Health Organization (WHO), *WHO Multi-Country Study*, 26; Jacquelyn Kub, Joan E. Campbell, and Linda Rose, "Depression in Battered Women" in *JAMWA* (Vol. 51, No. 3. May/July 1996, 106-110; Baltimore: John Hopkins University, School of Nursing), 4; Dlamini, *Zulu Women, Domestic Violence and Christian Faith*, 23; Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes", 85.

Financially, consequences of DV range from the denial of access to resources to pressure to incur debts in the abuser's name. Here, there is a problem with women's prospects of securing their own income from employment for many are forced to leave paid work.<sup>37</sup> Likewise, women who leave their homes to re-establish themselves in a new place experience difficulties resulting from limited resources because they are forced to leave essentials or are left with very little. Out of the violent relationship, women also experience difficulties in dealing with financial institutions, ranging from being unable to provide a PO Box at a refuge as an address for the purposes of opening a bank account, to unsympathetic treatment from creditors.<sup>38</sup> Here, the situation becomes worse when women are paying debts incurred as result of financial abuse within the relationship, or when they have to maintain children and pay their school fees with very limited resources.<sup>39</sup>

Lastly spiritual consequences of DV inflicted against women appear in two ways. On the one hand, abused women are forced to believe that their abuse is God's will. In some Christian families, the letter of Paul to Ephesians is used to compel wives to unquestionably submit to their husbands as to the Lord. Here, only the husband's points of view and practices regarding financial, spiritual, social, and sexual aspects are considered as legitimate and God's inspiration.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, women who happen to perceive this patriarchal and "anti-women" abuse and dare to question it are tempted to leave their religions and churches.<sup>41</sup>

Before I close this point, I want to remark that women are not the only sufferers of DV though they are the most targeted. Other groups such as children, teenagers, men, and the whole community endure its consequences. However, DV's consequences on these groups will not be detailed in this study whose main target group is women.<sup>42</sup> The question now is

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37 Kate Bell and Claire Kober, *The Financial Impact of Domestic Violence* (London: Family Welfare Association and One Parent Families|Gingerbread, 2008), 4-5.

38 Bell and Kober, *The Financial Impact of Domestic Violence*, 4.

39 Bell and Kober, *The Financial Impact of Domestic Violence*, 5.

40 Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 99-100.

41 Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 32-33.

42 For the impact of DV on children, read Beverly J. Wilkins, *Impact of Domestic Violence on Children* (September 24, 2008), 3; Dlamini, *Zulu Women, Domestic Violence and Christian Faith*, 20-22; Sue Sherbrooke, *Through Their Eyes: Domestic Violence and its Impact on Children* (King County, Snohomish County: YWCA of Seattle, 2007), 11-14; Kimberley Powell, "The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children" (Mar 12, 2009). Online: Abuse. ([Http://Abuse.Suite101.Com/Article.Cfm](http://Abuse.Suite101.Com/Article.Cfm), Accessed June 28, 2009); and UNICEF and The Body Shop International, *Behind Closed Doors: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children* (Global Stop Violence in the Home Campaign) (Watersmead, Littlehampton, West Sussex (United Kingdom): The Body Shop International, 2006), 6. For impact on teenagers and adolescents, see Wilkins,

to know what the situation of DV in the world is. Is DV a worldwide problem or a local issue? The next sections provide important information in responses to these questions.

## 2.7. Situation of Domestic Violence around the World

Domestic violence appears as the most frequent type of violence against women globally. According to the United Nations, "...violence against women is a severe and pervasive human rights violation throughout the world, with devastating effects on the health and well-being of women and children."<sup>43</sup> The United Nations also informs that one in five women is victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime and this regards every specific culture, region, country, and group of society.<sup>44</sup> Concerning DV, data around the world suggest that girls and women are at greater risk of violence in their homes than anywhere else.<sup>45</sup>

In this regard, some figures show that more than 130 million women and girls alive today have undergone FGM, the traditional cutting operations performed on women and girls' sexual parts, with two million girls at risk of mutilation annually in Africa and some Middle Eastern countries.<sup>46</sup> In Northern Africa, proportions of mutilated women range from 62.1% to 96.4% between 10 and 14 years old and from 71.3% and 95.6% between 15 and 49 years old.<sup>47</sup> However, "The common form of violence experienced by women globally is intimate

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*Impact of Domestic Violence on Children*, 4 and Sally Leiderman and Cari Almo, *Interpersonal Violence and Adolescent Pregnancy Adolescent Pregnancy: Prevalence and Implications for Practice and Policy* (Washington: Center for Assessment and Policy Development (CAPD) and Healthy Teen Network, 2006), 9. Concerning impact on men, see Gerlock, *Health Impact of Domestic Violence*, 7-8; and Kim C. Lim, John Rioux, and Ellen Ridley, *Impact of Domestic Violence Offenders on Occupational Safety & Health: A Pilot Study* (Augusta: State of Main, Department of Labor, 2004), 20. For the impact on the whole community, see Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 85; Connecticut Coalition against Domestic Violence (CCADV), *Impact on Community* (CCADV, 2009); Carol B. Berz and Lauren Howard, *The Impact of Domestic Violence* (Tennessee Economic Council of Women), 1, 3-4; Lim, Rioux and Ridley, *Impact of Domestic Violence Offenders*, 11-16; United Nations, *Unite to End Violence against Women*, 1-2; and Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, *The Impact of Domestic Violence on The Workplace* (Brochure) (Place and date not indicated), 2.

<sup>43</sup> United Nations, *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence Against Women: Report of the Secretary-General* (New York: United Nations, 2006), 56.

<sup>44</sup> United Nations, *Unite to End Violence Against Women*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Women'sNet, *Domestic Violence in South Africa*.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations, *Unite to End Violence Against Women*, 1.

<sup>47</sup> Data for women aged between 10 and 14 year old are: Egypt/2005 (96.4%), Mali/2001 (91.2%), Guinea/2005 (89.3%), North Sudan/1990 (86.8%), Eritrea/2002 (78.3%), Mauritania/2001 (65.9%), Burkina Faso/2003 (65%), and Ethiopia/2005 (62.1%). For those aged between 15 and 49, Data are: North Sudan/1990 (89.2%), Eritrea/2002 (88.7%), Ethiopia/2005 (74.3%), Mali/2001 (91.6%), Guinea/2005 (95.6%), Mauritania/2001 (71.3%), and Burkina/2003 (76.6%). Stanley K. Yoder and Shane Khan, *Numbers of Women*

partner violence.”<sup>48</sup> Here, estimates suggest that at least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime by her intimate partner<sup>49</sup> and that half of all women who die from homicide are killed by their current or former husbands or partners.<sup>50</sup> In the United Kingdom, thirty per cent of women are physically abused by partners or ex-partners. This figure is fifty-two per cent in the West Bank, twenty-one percent in Nicaragua, twenty-nine percent in Canada, and twenty-two per cent in the United States. In one study conducted in São Paulo, Brazil, thirteen percent of deaths of women of reproductive age were homicides, of which sixty per cent were committed by the victims' partners.<sup>51</sup> And in Colombia, one woman is reportedly killed by her partner or former partner every six days.<sup>52</sup> It is now time to ask what the situation in South Africa is. Is South Africa also concerned with this problem? The next section offers glimpses of responses to this question.

## **2.8. Situation of Domestic Violence in South Africa**

A specified national situation of domestic violence in South Africa is unknown but available data note its high prevalence. In this regard, there are no official statistics which distinguish DV from other assaults because no systematic research has been conducted to assess its extent.<sup>53</sup> Another problem faced by this assessment is that most victims and their families usually do not report the matter to the police because of fear of embarrassment, fear of further abuse, or social and cultural taboos.<sup>54</sup> We can however note here that there has been an increased rate of reporting about violence against women since South Africa became a democratic country in 1994. Nonetheless, some women still do not want to talk about it because in doing so they would be destroying the image of their husbands, their

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*Circumcised in Africa: The Production of a Total (Demographic Health Research)* (Calverton: USAID, 2008),17.

<sup>48</sup> United Nations, *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence Against Women*, 37.

<sup>49</sup> United Nations, *Unite to End Violence against Women*, 1.

<sup>50</sup> UNFPA and World YWCA, *Empowering Young Women To Lead Change*, 107.

<sup>51</sup> UNFPA and World YWCA, *Empowering Young Women To Lead Change*, 107.

<sup>52</sup> United Nations, *Unite to End Violence against Women*, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Buckenham, “Domestic Violence,” 1.

<sup>54</sup> Onyejekwe, “The Interrelationship between Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS”, 35; Women'sNet, Domestic Violence in South Africa.



families and their businesses or they would be worsening the situation because of the stigma or pressure from the abusers.<sup>55</sup>

Despite these problems, Amnesty International accounts that "In the nine months prior to March 2008 there were 20,282 reported rapes of women, 16,068 reported rapes of children under 18, and 6,127 reported cases of indecent assault."<sup>56</sup> Here, the police estimate that only around 8 per cent of rape cases were brought to the court during this period.<sup>57</sup> Concerning DV, in August 2008, the Acting Commissioner of South African Police reported to the Parliament 50,497 cases in six months, that is, between July and December 2007.<sup>58</sup> The Commissioner also specifies that "...only a quarter led to criminal cases, because victims were reluctant to pursue charges because they were economically dependent on the perpetrators."<sup>59</sup>

Beside these rare cases reported today to the police and the court, studies conducted several years ago focusing on particular regions provide other useful information.<sup>60</sup> From their data, South Africa is said to be the most violent country and to have the highest statistics of GBV in the world.<sup>61</sup> These studies also estimate that every fourth woman lives in an abusive relationship.<sup>62</sup> In Durban and Gauteng, one in six women is regularly assaulted by her partners and in Durban one in four of these women is forced to flee her home. In Soweto, one in three women was abused and forty-three percent of 159 married women surveyed by Human Science Research Council (HSRC) in Cape Town Metropolitan area were subject to marital rape or assault in 1994. During October of that year, more than 60% of South African women were regularly battered by boyfriends or husbands.<sup>63</sup> It was also specified that cases of violence occur in all races, social groups and income levels.<sup>64</sup>

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55 Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 85, 96; Amnesty International, "Amnesty International Report 2009: South Africa (2009)." Online: Amnesty International. ([Http://thereport.amnesty.org/En/Regions/Africa/South-Africa](http://thereport.amnesty.org/En/Regions/Africa/South-Africa) Accessed December 14, 2009).

<sup>56</sup> Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.

<sup>57</sup> Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.

<sup>58</sup> Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.

<sup>59</sup> Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.

<sup>60</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence", 1.

<sup>61</sup> Republic of South Africa, Research Paper on Domestic Violence, 1; Onyejekwe, "The Interrelationship between Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS," 34.

<sup>62</sup> PACSA, *Gender, Violence & HIV & AIDS*", 6.

<sup>63</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence", 1.

<sup>64</sup> Buckenham, "Domestic Violence", 1.

With this same objective, the study conducted by Phiri among married women from Christian couples in Durban in 2000 reports very high incidences of violence.<sup>65</sup> From a sample of twenty-five women, eighty-four percent admitted having experienced violence in their homes. After the analysis of results, she concluded that all of them (100%) had experienced DV but that the sixteen percent who did not admit to it had done so in order to protect their husbands' image in the church. Trying to identify the types of violence experienced, she reports that seventy-six percent had experienced spiritual violence, sixty-seven percent physical, emotional, or economic violence, and sixteen percent had experienced sexual violence.

We can also acknowledge the existence of murder among intimate partners in South Africa. In 1999, a woman was killed by her spouse every six days.<sup>66</sup> In 2004, at least four women were killed every day by intimate partners.<sup>67</sup> In 2008, South Africa was counted among countries in which forty to seventy percent of female murder victims are killed by their partners. Here, United Nations explains that dowry murder in South Africa appears as a main cause of the murder cases. This is a brutal practice where a woman is killed by her husband or in-laws because her family cannot meet their demands for dowry, that is, a payment made to a woman's in-laws upon her marriage as a gift to her new family.<sup>68</sup> At this point, I suppose that United Nations speaks about South African Indian communities where the woman pays her husband's family.

Before I leave this point, I also want to show the situation of DV in Pietermaritzburg, the city in which the present study was conducted. Actually, one study in Sobantu community has revealed that estimates of the proportions are similar to those found in Christian couples in Durban by Phiri's study of 2000.<sup>69</sup> All these data above confirm that DV is a shocking issue in South Africa, especially in Pietermaritzburg. They also confirm the necessity of conducting studies on this matter so as to trace a way of rescuing the target people. It is here that the present study finds again reason for being conducted.

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<sup>65</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 89, 96-99.

<sup>66</sup> Jane Standley, "South Africa Targets Domestic Violence," Online: BBC News (Wednesday, 15 December, 1999, 13:17 GMT). (<http://News.Bbc.Co.Uk/1/Hi/World/Africa/566160.Stm> 27/08/2008. Accessed May 14, 2009).

<sup>67</sup> BBC, "Is Domestic Violence a Silent Killer?" Online: BBC NEWS / AFRICA, (Tuesday, 15 June, 2004, 07:38 GMT 08:38 UK ). (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3798873.stm>. Accessed June 22, 2009).

<sup>68</sup> United Nations, *Unite to End Violence against Women*, 1.

<sup>69</sup> Isabel A. Phiri, "Why Does God Allow Our Husbands to Hurt Us," 22.

## 2.9. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to provide background information on domestic violence so as to achieve the first objective of this dissertation. It has presented complementary explanations of the concept of DV; different forms of DV; its generating system and nurturing tools; its evolution within the community and intimate partnership; its consequences on women, and the situation in the world and in South Africa.

Findings have shown that any act by members of the same direct or extended family, household, former or actual intimate relationship, aimed at another person either once or repeatedly, that results in making people object(s) of control, intimidation or subjugation is understood as DV. We also realised that DV is generated by the system of patriarchy which is nurtured by philosophical, cultural, and religious teachings and practices. Forms and consequences of DV embrace almost all aspects of the life of the target person, that is, physical, sexual, emotional, verbal or psychological, economic, professional, and spiritual levels. Moreover, DV against female human beings begins before their birth and goes on through their developmental stages until their death. Here, the whole society participates. However, during intimate relationships, the man becomes the most active figure. The violence takes a form of cycle of three phases: tension, abuse and calm. Finally, it is apparent that DV is a worldwide issue, a very serious problem in South Africa and particularly in Pietermaritzburg. From this analysis, I observe that the first objective of the present study is achieved in this chapter.

These findings demonstrate the necessity for the entire community to combine efforts in order to rescue women and establish gender justice. Otherwise, the whole society will continue losing people and strengths. With this regard, the concern now is to know how to locate the church in this battle. Does the church have any position or guidelines with regard to the injustice occurring in the community? How is the church supposed to behave before DV occurs within the community? In the next chapter, I reflect theologically on the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei* and try to find answers to these questions.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD AS *MISSIO DEI*

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. It is a preliminary response to the questions that seek to know how the church is supposed to behave before injustice such as domestic violence occurring within the community, as raised in the previous chapter. This chapter also constitutes a way to achieve the second objective of this dissertation which is to reflect theologically on the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. The aim of this chapter is to provide a model for the church to follow God's mission with regard to dealing with injustice within the community.

The reflection throughout the chapter shows that the perception of the mission of the church has constantly changed throughout centuries since its inception during the New Testament era. Today, new features have emerged with tendency to ecumenism. Among these new features, the mission as *missio Dei* has been detailed as a main concern of this dissertation. To illustrate this latter perception, the work of the prophets in the Old Testament and of Jesus in the New Testament was taken as pattern of accomplishing that mission. This pattern has four key elements defining how to be the church in God's mission during times of injustice and oppression. These elements are: envisioning a just community, standing with oppressed, caring for oppressed and challenging oppressive structures. The presentation of these findings in this chapter is structured in four main points: evolution of the perception of the church's mission, the mission of the church as *missio Dei*, goal and activities of the mission, and accomplishment of God's mission in situations of oppression, injustice and violence.

#### 3.2. Historical Features of the Church's Mission

The perception of the mission of the church has constantly changed throughout the centuries since its inception during the New Testament era. To describe its different features, Bosch

uses the six subdivisions of the history of Christianity suggested by Hans Küng.<sup>1</sup> The first feature of the mission appears in “*the New Testament era.*” During this time, the mission was accomplished by Jesus and his disciples. Like John the Baptist his predecessor, Jesus was concerned about the repentance and the salvation of Israel. However, his mission was inclusive. It was open to all the categories of people in Israel and outside of it. He socialized with tax collectors. He announced the Good News to the poor. He preached love for enemies. He made a Samaritan – a foreigner – a hero in the parable. And he advocated for the honour, the respect and the dignity of women and children.<sup>2</sup>

The mission of Jesus has shown new ingredients in the Jewish and Greco-Roman context. He announced the arrival of the (strange) “Reign of God.” Though he did not present himself as a politician, his ministry had political implications such as rejection of Greek and Roman gods, and being Himself called Lord of the lords, a title superior to that reserved to emperors. He brought a sociological innovation that combined all categories of people into one new community – Gentiles, slaves, free, rich, poor, and elites – which seemed impossible to others of his time. He was talking about the reign of God but was not imposing it. He also accepted hostile reaction as part of his mission and could not approve of any violent support toward him.<sup>3</sup>

However, though it is admitted that there is one mission in the New Testament, it looks different when described by different people. Matthew presents it as a “Disciple-Making” mission (Matthew 28:18-20). Luke illustrates it as “Practicing forgiveness and solidarity with the poor” while transcending class and ethnicity (Luke 4:18-19). But in the seven letters known as Paul’s hand, the mission is portrayed as an invitation for people to join the eschatological community.<sup>4</sup> To explain the reason for these different views, Bosch observes that the describers were contextualising the mission to the socio-historical and political situation of their audiences.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 181-182.

<sup>2</sup> Stan, Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission: A Concise, Accessible Companion to David Bosch’s Classic Book* (Maryknoll New York: Orbis Books, 2005), 14, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 123.

<sup>5</sup> Letters indisputably known as Paul’s hand are: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon. (See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 123).

<sup>6</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 27.

The second feature of mission emerges from early second century to the sixth century (AD 100-600) in Eastern orthodoxy. During this period, Christianity was separated from Judaism and Hellenic pagan religions. It was also threatened and banned by the Roman Empire. But gradually, it happened to win elites and integrated pagan rituals. In the early fourth century, it was accepted by the leadership of the empire who required all populations to become Christians.<sup>7</sup>

Christians of that time developed the message of life and love from John 3:16. Hence, their mission was named “*Good Ideas of Life and Love mission.*” They preached that because of love, God has sent Christ to save the people and has entrusted the church to spread this message to the whole community, which also participates in this love.<sup>8</sup> The gathered church was taken to be the kingdom of God. Christians had to call on the non-Christians so that they could share in the water of life in the church. Any other activity outside the context of the church was viewed as a simple humanism or psychological enthusiasm.<sup>9</sup>

During the persecution, Christians had to defend their faith and even to die for it as martyrs. They also had to enlarge the church by filling it by believers. They treasured the liturgy of light which symbolised the illumination to those still living in the darkness of paganism. When Christianity became the official religion at the end of the persecution, many monks were sent to foreign territories as bishops’ ambassadors and holders of the message of love and life.<sup>10</sup>

Thirdly, the other feature is the “*Medieval Catholic Mission*” that surfaced around the sixth century until the fifteenth century (AD 600-1500). This mission was shaped by the theology of Augustine of Hippo (354-430) developed a long time before. After his conversion to Christianity, Augustine took Paul’s teaching of justification by faith seriously.<sup>11</sup> For Augustine, “Our sinful condition is so perilous that only God can change it, without any contribution from us. We are, in this, totally powerless, delivered into Satan's hands, until we are ransomed from his dominion.”<sup>12</sup> In 410 while Augustine was bishop, Rome fell to the non-Christian Goths. With the intention to encourage the Christians shaken by the

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<sup>7</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 49-50; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 190-194.

<sup>8</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 49; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 208.

<sup>9</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 51; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 207.

<sup>10</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 51; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 207.

<sup>11</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 55-57.

<sup>12</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 216.

events, Augustine developed a theology dividing the reality into two levels, the spiritual level and the earthly level, with the spiritual being superior. He asserted that the church has authority on a spiritual level and that this authority “(supposedly) could not be challenged by any earthly power,” meaning that “Rome had fallen but the “city of God” had not, and it never could.”<sup>13</sup> Here, the “city of God” was composed of a spiritual society and all who live under God’s reign. Other people were considered as living in the “city of this world.”<sup>14</sup>

During the Middle Ages, the mission inspired by Augustine’s theology was enhanced in the Roman Catholic Church. They used the message from Luke 14:23 of filling the master’s house. In this verse, the parable says that the master sent his servants out to gather people for his banquet. Therefore, the mission of the “city of God” was “to bring its own citizens into God’s eternal salvation and to provide in God’s name the guidance needed by the “city of this world.””<sup>15</sup>

Three strategies were used in this mission. The first strategy was the mission via political control within Christendom. Here, the leadership in Christian territories had to protect people from anything that might prevent them from pursuing the way towards eternal salvation. Christian rulers were allowed to discipline with fines, imprisonment, torture or execution, any citizen straying from the church’s teaching.<sup>16</sup> The second strategy was the mission via war and colonisation. As the church and the state were collaborating closely, the use of violence outside the church became acceptable. This was first used indirectly when Christian rulers were subduing pagans as a way of opening doors for missionary work among their communities. Then the conversion of pagans was abandoned and violence seemed to only destroy unbelievers, especially during the European Crusades into Palestine where the intention was not to convert Muslims. But finally, indirect missionary war reappeared in the late fifteenth century with Spain’s and Portugal’s global colonisation. Though they also aimed at establishing political control over non-Christian people, they believed that military power could rather make conquered territories a safe area for missionaries’ work where people would not be forced but preached for conversion and baptism.<sup>17</sup> The third strategy was the mission via model citizens of the “city of God” or

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<sup>13</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 57.

<sup>14</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 57.

<sup>15</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 57.

<sup>16</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 58; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 220.

<sup>17</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 58; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 222-225.

monasticism. This was a non-violent mission developed by a monastic movement composed initially of the Celts and the Benedictines. This movement was using modelling and persuasion and was sending monks around the world. Monks were poor and worked very hard. Therefore, from the fifth century, the monastery comprised not only the centre of culture and civilization but also the mission. It became the place on the earth where the “city of God” could be observed.

The fourth feature of mission is the “*Protestant Reformation*” that existed from 1500 to 1800. The message during this period was justification by faith, found in Romans 1:16-17.<sup>18</sup> This was a Luther’s new interpretation of the Pauline Justification by faith after Augustine. Augustine, in the fifth century, was pessimistic and had put emphasis on grace as the only hope for sinful humanity. Eleven centuries after him, this was not – for Luther – the world of hopelessness but the door for the discovery of a new human hope. Luther believed that “God’s righteousness did not mean God’s righteous punishment and wrath, but his [sic] gift of grace and mercy, which the individual may appropriate in faith”<sup>19</sup> This means that God does not crush people for falling short of the righteous standard. God is justifier, missionary, pro-active in love and grace. God does not wait until the end of the history to react on what has been done within God’s perfect system.<sup>20</sup>

Apart from these teachings, some theologians have asserted that no missionary theology was developed by protestant reformists. For the Roman Catholic Church, this lack of outreach mission was a clear evidence that reformers were heretics. However, recent theologians have qualified these critics as misunderstanding the basic drive of reformers’ theology and ministry.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, after Luther, some reformers have tried to develop a clear vision of mission. One of them is the Lutheran Philip Nicolai in the book *Commentary on the Kingdom of Christ* (1957). But more influential has been the Calvinist Voetius, who developed three stair-step aims; the conversion of the nations, the planting of the church, and the glory of divine grace made visible. He developed a theology of the missionary God from whom the mission flows, which has been the basis of the ecumenism in the twentieth century<sup>22</sup> and of the theology of *missio Dei*, as we will see later in this section.

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<sup>18</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 62.

<sup>19</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 63; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 240.

<sup>20</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 63; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 240.

<sup>21</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 62; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 244.

<sup>22</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 64-65; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 256.



During the era of the protestant reformation, three groups developed particular ways of doing mission in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries respectively. The groups included the Anabaptist, the Puritans, and the Pietists. Anabaptists, contemporaries of Luther and Calvin, detached themselves from Lutheran and Calvinist churches to form separate congregations. They denied the validity of priesthood in Protestant and Catholic churches. They also denied the baptism of children as they (children) can not exercise personal faith. For this reason, European churches were considered as non-Christians, and Europe a field for mission. They also rejected any cooperation between the church and the state. After Anabaptists, Pietists in the Lutheran Church and Puritans in the Reformed Church appeared, but they did not separate from the church. Puritan theology of mission focused on seven themes: predestination, the glory of God, the grace and love of God, colonies as theocracies, the optimistic theology of history, the superiority of Western culture, and very little explicit emphasis on the Great Commission.<sup>23</sup> Pietists had the same emphases as Anabaptists but they did not attack the doctrine of the church. They found a new meaning for concepts such as repentance, conversion, new birth, and sanctification. They also developed the theology of “a disciplined life rather than sound doctrine, subjective experience on the individual rather than ecclesiastical authority, practice rather than theory.”<sup>24</sup>

The fifth feature of mission is a “*Fragmented Missionary*” that started during the Enlightenment period (AD 1800-2000). On the one hand, the religious faith was attacked. However, on the other hand, the theology of mission was developed. Therefore, five threads came out during this period. First, human reason was regarded as nature's gift to each human being. Nature was understood as all that can be perceived through eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and skin. Reason would be limited to processing data obtained through these organs. Other sources of data were ignored.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, human beings found that by means of reason, they were able to study nature or other human beings, thus able to detach themselves theoretically from nature. Therefore, nature ceased to be people’s teacher, but the object of analysis.<sup>26</sup> Thirdly, through their analysis of nature, people assumed that it

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<sup>23</sup> In this study, the “Great Commission” is the commission of making all the nations his disciples that Jesus gave to his disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).

<sup>24</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide To Transforming Mission*, 65-67; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 246-252.

<sup>25</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide To Transforming Mission*, 71.

<sup>26</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide To Transforming Mission*, 72.

entirely operates by cause and effect and that what is needed to transform the world is the knowledge of all laws of cause and effect. Now, the human mind became master.<sup>27</sup> Fourthly, people understood that nature exists and has existed before human beings and (religious and political) institutions which also came after human beings. Therefore, the knowledge of nature became “*factual, value-free, and neutral.*” This means that human beings do not have to question whether or not nature exists. They have to see and experience it because it exists out of human awareness and will.<sup>28</sup> Lastly, people had a central creed of “*faith in humankind.*” They believed that “Since all humans had received from nature the gift of reason, it followed that all humans were naturally reasonable people. They could be expected to do reasonably well in life... [People] were convinced that they had both the ability and the will to remake the world in their own image.”<sup>29</sup>

These threads have had a negative impact on the Christian faith. From the Enlightenment perspective, “The Christian faith is severely questioned, contemptuously repudiated, or studiously ignored.”<sup>30</sup> The Enlightenment had not only limited non-Christians from joining Christianity. It also affected Christians’ view of their faith and mission. Some of them even tried to oppose it.<sup>31</sup> However, not all Christians were discouraged. Some of them were rather motivated by the Enlightenment’s idea of progress. They therefore took the Christian message around the world. This action grew like wildfire in many parts of the Two-Thirds World, especially in Africa where the Enlightenment had less influence.<sup>32</sup>

People who spread the Word during the Enlightenment had nine motives that Bosch divides into three categories. The first category comprises four theological motives. The first motive in this category was the “*Glory of God*” where these Christians wanted to bring the world under the control of the sovereign God instead of the human mind or the nature.<sup>33</sup> There was also the motive of “*Jesus’ Love*” where Christians who were touched by the great Awakening, had developed a sense of gratitude for what they had received from God.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 72.

<sup>28</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 72.

<sup>29</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 72.

<sup>30</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 72-73.

<sup>32</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 74.

<sup>33</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 74.

<sup>34</sup> Historians account two Great Awakenings: (1) A series of revivals in American colonies between 1726 and 1760, and (2) the second movement which occurred from approximately 1786 to 1825 called *Evangelical*

They therefore wanted to share these religious and material blessings with others in their homes and abroad.<sup>35</sup> The third element here is the “*Millennium*” motive. This is the biblical vision of a final golden age within history with reference to Revelation 20. *Premillennialists* thought that Christ’s return would come before the golden age and that human effort can never be involved in this process. *Postmillennialists* thought that God’s providence would make God’s chosen people take the world into a golden age and that Christ would return later to put an end to the age in glory. For *Amillennialists*, the thousand-year golden age and the return of Jesus are both mythical concepts that will not happen literally. It is therefore not necessary to debate on these issues. These concerns should rather inspire people to work to establish the kingdom of God on the earth.<sup>36</sup> The fourth element in theological motives of mission during the Enlightenment was the “*Obedience to the Great Commission*.” Various biblical texts in different places were used to define the great mission. These included Acts 16:9 on Paul’s vision of a Macedonian man who begged him to come for help, Matthew 24:14 on the necessity to preach before the end comes, John 10:10 on abundant life, and Matthew 28:18-20 on making all nations Jesus’ disciples. But the text mainly used was Matthew 28:18-20.<sup>37</sup>

The second category of mission’s motives during the Enlightenment period consists of three “*Western Imperialistic Motives*.” The first in this category was the “*Gospel as part of Western culture*.” During the Enlightenment, the Age of Reason led into the age of Science. Western countries had many more advantages than the rest of the world. This created a feeling of superiority in Western countries in all aspects of life, including the culture and the religion. It was also accepted that their superior cultures and religion were to be expanded over the world.<sup>38</sup> The second Western Imperialist motive was the “*Manifest Destiny*.” This was the “obvious” and “unquestionable” conviction that “God, in his [sic] providence, had chosen the Western nations, because of their unique qualities, to be the standard-bearers of his cause even to the uttermost ends of the world.”<sup>39</sup> The third motive here was “*Colonisation*.” Similar to “*manifest destiny*,” modern mission originated from Western colonialism. I want to clarify here that not all the missionaries have collaborated with

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revival in England and *Second Great Awakening* in USA. These movements have profoundly influenced the mission (See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 277).

<sup>35</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 75.

<sup>36</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 75-76.

<sup>37</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 78.

<sup>38</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 78.

<sup>39</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 79.

colonial powers in the process of colonisation. While some were using religion to convince local people to tolerate colonisation, others were defending the rights of the oppressed.<sup>40</sup>

The last category of motives in the Enlightenment is composed of two anthropological motives. One is the “*Voluntarism*” marked by the formation of missionary societies inside and outside denominational structures. In the beginning, volunteers missionaries focused on “personal conversion” (*Conversion gentium*) and “soul saving.”<sup>41</sup> This focus was revised by Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson in the mid-nineteenth century. They suggested the “three-self formula” composed of three new focuses for missionaries within local churches. The new focuses were: self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. But latter, the imperial age of mission arrived. Every denomination began to create “young” churches in the image of “old churches” though they did not stop speaking about that three-self formula.<sup>42</sup> The other anthropological motive was the “*Missionary Fervour, Optimism, and Pragmatism.*” This was a zeal brought by the emerging Student Volunteer Movement in 1889. They had the principle of evangelising the world in their generation. They travelled around the world, especially in Protestant missions. As result, the International Missionary Conference of Edinburgh in 1910 reported on more missionaries, more places and more successes than ever before.<sup>43</sup>

The last feature of the church’s mission is the one which is being developed currently. The Enlightenment’s view of life has become questionable. In particular, the two World Wars in the twentieth century have been a challenge to the prevailing worldview.<sup>44</sup> On the religious side, things have changed also. New challenges have been raised. As the task of church-planting advanced in all six continents, it was rapidly becoming obsolete as a missionary goal. For this reason, during the political independence era, local churches also sought autonomy.<sup>45</sup> The “church centric pattern of mission’s work did not fully reflect the biblical witness about Christian mission as found in the New Testament.”<sup>46</sup> During the church-

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<sup>40</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 79-80.

<sup>41</sup> James A. Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and *Missio Dei*: Lutheran and Orthodox Correctives to Recent Ecumenical Mission Theology” in Charles Van Engen, Dean S. Gilliland, and Paul Pierson (eds), *The Good News Of the Kingdom: Mission Theology for the Third Millennium* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1993, 82-88), 82.

<sup>42</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 79-80.

<sup>43</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 82.

<sup>44</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide To Transforming Mission*, 89.

<sup>45</sup> Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and Mission Dei, 84.

<sup>46</sup> Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and Mission Dei, 84.

planting period and three-self formula, missionaries became “silent about Jesus' love for the poor and his identification with the marginal and the oppressed. Such persons were rather viewed more as candidates for missionary charity than as potential church members.”<sup>47</sup> The church-centred model possessed no clear eschatological perspective. Here, the new churches planted were only the outpost of foreign religious agencies and had no real vision.<sup>48</sup> The Christian church has also lost its position of privilege in society. It has begun to accept and to dialogue with other religions.<sup>49</sup> Because of all these changes, new visions of mission have also emerged. In this regard, Bosch presents thirteen current Emerging Ecumenical Missionary Paradigms. These are: mission as Church-With-Others, mission as *Missio Dei*, mission as Mediating Salvation, mission as Quest for Justice, mission as Evangelism, mission as Contextualisation, mission as Liberation, mission as Inculturation, mission as Common Witness, mission as Ministry by the whole people of God, mission as Witness to people of Other Living Faiths, mission as Theology, and mission as Action in hope.<sup>50</sup> From this list, it comes out that all faiths – not only Christianity – are considered as role players in the accomplishment of God’s mission. This inclusiveness gives to the current mission a feature of ecumenism. However, in the following part of this section, not all of these paradigms will be discussed. I will only focus on *missio Dei* which is the main concern of the present study.

It was in the 1930s that Karl Barth suggested that “...the missionary activity must be justified in a profoundly theological way, as emanating from the Father, thereby becoming the activity of the triune God rather than the doing of the church.”<sup>51</sup> At the Brandenburg Missionary Conference in 1932, he articulated the mission “as an activity of God himself[sic]” and this argument was sustained by Karl Hartenstein in 1933.<sup>52</sup>

Until the time of International Missionary Council (IMC) of Tambaran in 1938, local churches were the primarily important instruments for evangelism. That time, mission agencies were called to support them for their growth and missionary outreach.<sup>53</sup> At

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<sup>47</sup> Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and Mission Dei, 84.

<sup>48</sup> Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and Mission Dei, 84.

<sup>49</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 364.

<sup>50</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 368-510.

<sup>51</sup> Eugen Lutz Robert Meyer, *The Pentecostal Movement as Represented in Breakthrough International an Expression of MISSIO DEI? A Contribution to an Experiential Pneumatology of Mission*. PhD Thesis (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal, 2004), 194.

<sup>52</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

<sup>53</sup> Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and Mission Dei, 83.

Tambaran IMC, participants discussed the relationship between church and mission as well as between “older” and “young” churches in a more theological manner. For the first time, the church and the mission, belonging together indissolubly, “...began to dawn in a way that could no longer be overlooked.”<sup>54</sup> The ideas considering the mission as God’s mission continued to emerge at Tambaran. A testament was confessed there by the German delegation that only “...through a creative act of God His Kingdom will be consummated in the final establishment of a New Heaven and a New Earth.” These people were convinced that only “...this eschatological attitude can prevent the church from becoming secularised.”<sup>55</sup>

Under Barthian influence, Willingen IMC of 1952 challenged the church-centred perspective of mission. It started a new model where the church is not a sender but the one sent to carry out God’s work to the end of the earth, to all nations, and to the end of time.<sup>56</sup> Here, the idea of *missio Dei* or the mission of the church as God’s mission appears clearly for the first time.<sup>57</sup> With Willingen, “...the mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God” and was “...put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology.”<sup>58</sup> In this perspective, Aagaard comments that “...as far as missionary thinking was concerned, this linking with the doctrine of the Trinity constituted an important innovation.”<sup>59</sup> Since Willingen, the mission as *missio Dei* was understood by all Christians, first by conciliar Protestantism, then by other ecclesial groups such as Eastern Orthodox and many evangelicals and finally endorsed by Catholic Council as it appear in some of the documents of Second Vatican Council.<sup>60</sup> Today, the church’s mission is still understood as *missio Dei*. This concept is further explained in the next section.

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<sup>54</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 369-370.

<sup>55</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

<sup>56</sup> Scherer, “Church, Kingdom, and Mission Dei, 83; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

<sup>57</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 370; Meyer, *The Pentecostal Movement as Represented in Breakthrough International*, 196.

<sup>58</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

<sup>60</sup> Schumacher, Snijders, Fries and Gomez quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390-391

### 3.3. The Mission of the Church as *Missio Dei*

The current understanding of the mission of the church as *missio Dei* has been explained by different writers. In this respect, Bosch states that "...mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God." Bosch specifies that the mission belonged to and came from God first. Then God entrusted it to Jesus. Then Jesus and God entrusted it to the Holy Spirit. Finally, God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit entrusted it to the church.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, God is seen as missionary God, the mission as a movement from God to the world and the church as an instrument for that mission. This means that the church does not have its own mission to fulfil in the world out of God's mission. Instead, "...it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church."<sup>62</sup> For Aagaard, "...there is church because there is mission, not vice versa" and "...to participate in this mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love."<sup>63</sup> With regard to this origin of the mission as God, the Lutheran World Federation observes that the mission of God is larger than the mission of the church.<sup>64</sup>

To be more specific, the concepts of "mission(s)" in singular and plural have also been differentiated. For Davies, Hoekendijk and Rütli, "...the first [singular] refers primarily to the mission of God, that is, God's self-revelation as the One who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate."<sup>65</sup> The second, also called the "*missiones ecclesiae*" or the missionary ventures of the church, refers to particular forms, related to specific times, places, or needs, of participation in the mission of God.<sup>66</sup> In reaction, Bosch considers that "Mission" in singular remains primary and that "missions" in plural constitute a derivative.<sup>67</sup> Here, he agrees with Neill that "...missionary activities are only authentic insofar as they reflect participation in the mission of God."<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390; Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide To Transforming Mission*, 95.

<sup>62</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide To Transforming Mission*, 95.

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 392.

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

<sup>66</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

<sup>67</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

<sup>68</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 391.

Moreover, the mission is considered as God's "yes" to the world. In this regard, Schütz explains that "God's yes to the world reveals itself...in the church's missionary engagement in respect of the realities of injustice, oppression, poverty, discrimination, and violence."<sup>69</sup> He realises that today "...the rich get richer and the poor poorer, and violence and oppression...are escalating" on the one hand and that "...the pattern of the church ... is political through and through" on the other.<sup>70</sup> He then argues that "the church-in-mission cannot possibly close its eyes to these realities."<sup>71</sup> Similarly, Moltmann claims the existence of mission as God's "no". For him, this means an expression of opposition to and engagement with the world.<sup>72</sup> Within these two ideas, I observe that God's "yes" and "no" describe one reality doubly expressed, for the "yes" calls the church to engage in the world's reality while the "no" rejects the insensibility to that reality. Therefore, I understand that God wants the church to be involved in the world's life. However, once the mission does not belong to the church but to God and that church has to participate, there is a question to know what the agenda of the church is. With intention to clarify this issue, I use the next section to provide the goal and the activities of God's mission which involves the church.

### **3.4. Goal and Activities of the Mission**

The goal of God's mission is conceived as a saved and just universe.<sup>73</sup> This conception was inspired by two explanatory models of mission. The understanding underlying these models is that the church itself is generated through mission, both through the Covenant and the Law given to Israel through Moses at Sinai, and, since the coming of Jesus the Messiah, through evangelism and contextualization.<sup>74</sup>

With regard to this, one model is the traditional Christian evangelical focus on individual conversion (saved soul) and church growth. For this model, the goal of mission is to get as many saved people as possible as soon as possible. For this reason, the main activity of the mission is evangelism, announcing the good news of Jesus Christ and his saving sacrifice. Proponents of this model recognise the activity of justice within the community but put it at

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<sup>69</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

<sup>71</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

<sup>72</sup> Quoted in Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 11.

<sup>73</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide to Transforming Mission*, 92, 98-99.

<sup>74</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide to Transforming Mission*, 93.



a secondary level, viewing it as contributing little toward the real goal of mission. They consider that “other faiths and isms” and “history and culture” have human and/or demonic origins and that God has not much influence on them. The relation between the church and these other faiths, isms, history and culture is seen in terms of conflict against the church.<sup>7576</sup>

The other model is a liberationist or ecumenical prophetic emphasis. According to Bosch, the goal of the mission in this model is a just world. Its proponents focus on social transformation and consider that salvation in a religious or individual sense is not a significant issue. Instead, God’s mission is to move the world toward justice using historical processes, especially social, economic, political, and scientific processes. In this sense, the main bearer of mission is history and cultures. The church, other faiths and isms are a side stream towards the same goal as historical process. The church sometimes harbours or promotes injustice and thus, in the later case, deserves being rejected by the world so as to allow God’s mission to move ahead. Many liberationists fear that a belief in Jesus’ literal return to earth may prevent people from working for justice here and now.<sup>77</sup>

These models have influenced the conception of activities of the church in the world to a great extent. Evangelicals have developed evangelism aiming at delivering people from slavery to the world and its powers, embracing Christ as Saviour and Lord, becoming a living member of Christ’s community (the church), being enlisted into his service of reconciliation, peace, and justice on earth, and being committed to God’s purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ.<sup>78</sup>

Conversely, liberationists contextualise the mission claiming that “...the proper quest of theology is not the quest for universal truth that floats ideally above history” but “...the

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<sup>75</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 99.

<sup>76</sup> Other isms here represent all the ideologies developed by secular people such as socialism and capitalism. As example of an ism in conflicting with evangelism, we can take the Marxism and its theory of alienation. In explaining the works of Marx, Inger Furseth says: “Marx argues that religion represents a false picture of reality, that religion is an illusion which asserts that neither individuals nor collectives have control of their own conditions, but are subject to forces they do not understand, forces that are interpreted in different ways in religions.” Here, taking religion as a false picture of the reality and an illusion is a threat and seemingly an attack to the evangelicals (See Inger Furseth and Pal Repstad, *An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion: Classical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006), 30.

<sup>77</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 99.

<sup>78</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 107.

quest for acting properly in a real, local situation that is infested by evil in particular way.”<sup>79</sup> They recognise the importance of Jesus Christ’s cross, God’s presence and power, individual salvation, as well as the Bible as the word of God.<sup>80</sup> However, instead of starting with a theoretical question such as “what is God like”, they start by a practical commitment to the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed. With this commitment, they search for the way a Christian should act to get rid of the oppressive evil in that situation. It is this movement which has given birth to contextual theologies such as liberation theology,<sup>81</sup> black theology,<sup>82</sup> and feminist theology<sup>83</sup> developed from social and cultural perspectives.<sup>84</sup>

With regard to this, it is interesting to notice that the salvation and the social justice are recognized within both models. The only difference lies in the priority given to each element. This leads me to agree with Bosch who considers that justice and salvation are intertwined parts of one reality and that none is a substitute of the other; neither is meant to stand on its own.<sup>85</sup> Likewise, the present study is not biased to any of these models. Rather, it holds that salvation and social justice are equal components of the goal of God’s mission. However, as the present study concerns DV, a socially oppressive and unjust fact, this study will focus on the social justice aspect of mission. It is now crucial to reflect on how the church, as it participates in God’s mission, should act to ascertain justice within the community.

### **3.5. Accomplishment of God’s Mission during Oppression, Injustice and Violence**

The accomplishment of God’s mission in contexts of oppression, injustice, and violence is found in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. In the Old Testament, it is primarily demonstrated in the work of prophets. Likewise, in the New Testament, it is exemplified by the approach of Jesus Christ, God’s messenger to establish God’s reign on

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<sup>79</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 108.

<sup>80</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 111.

<sup>81</sup> See the explanation of liberation theology in Section 1.5.: Theoretical Framework.

<sup>82</sup> According to Archbishop Desmond Tutu, “Black Theology and African Theology - Soulmates or Antagonists?” in John Parratt (ed), *A Reader in African Christian Theology* (London: S.P.C.K., 1997, 36-44), 42, black theology arose in a context of black suffering at the hands of rampant white racism in South Africa. It is much concerned to make sense theologically out of the black experience whose main ingredient is the suffering in the light of God’s revelation in the man, Jesus Christ. It is also concerned with the significance of black existence, liberation, the meaning of reconciliation, humanisation and forgiveness.

<sup>83</sup> See the explanation of feminist theology in section 1.5.: Theoretical Framework.

<sup>84</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 108.

<sup>85</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 93.

the earth. The prophets and Jesus dealt with the situations of injustice, oppression and violence within the community. Therefore, their response to such situations will be taken here as the model that the church should follow. From their responses, the present dissertation has drawn four elements that it considers as main components of the accomplishment of God's mission in the midst of injustice and oppression.

Firstly, they envision a just world. Here, Johannes Verkuyl suggests that "The heart of the passage of the Old and Testament is that God, the creator of the universe and all earthy life, is actively engaged in the reestablishment of His[sic] liberating dominion over the cosmos and all of the humankind." Here, he specifies that in Egypt, God began the exodus, not with the intention of inflicting suffering on this country, but of confronting Pharaoh with the demand that the oppressed be liberated.<sup>86</sup> For Jerry Folk, the prophets reinforced and intensified Israel's exodus-based understanding of God as liberator and proponent of justice.<sup>87</sup>

The vision of a just world is also found in the illustration of alternatives provided by prophets for the social order. Folk views the poems of the prophet Isaiah as an expression of that vision – the coming age of Shalom -, where "...the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child lead them..." (Isaiah 9:5-6).<sup>88</sup> Also associated with this vision is the prophet Amos's warning that Yahweh will act again to put an end to the oppression, and his claims for letting justice flow like water and integrity like unfailing stream.<sup>89</sup>

In the New Testament, the vision of a just world is perceived in Jesus' preaching, life, death, and resurrection. For Verkuyl, Jesus' preaching divulges the riches and treasures of God's kingdom - that is, reconciliation, forgiveness of sins, and victory over demonic powers. Verkuyl also considers that in Jesus' life, death and resurrection, the kingdom of God has come, is present, and is coming in an absolutely unique way and with exceptional clarity.<sup>90</sup> In the same vein, Folk continues his thought, suggesting that the effect of Jesus'

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<sup>86</sup> Johannes Verkuyl, "The Biblical Notion of Kingdom: Test of Validity for Theology of Religion" in Charles Van Engen, Dean S. Gilliland, and Paul Pierson (eds), *The Good News of The Kingdom: Mission Theology for the Third Millennium* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1993, 71-81), 72.

<sup>87</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 75-76.

<sup>88</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 84.

<sup>89</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 71, 76.

<sup>90</sup> Verkuyl, "The Biblical Notion of Kingdom, 72.

life, death, and resurrection was to put an end to enmity, alienation and all forms of tribalism and to create one new humanity.<sup>91</sup> In advocating for the poor, Folk understands that Jesus suggests that people “renounce all efforts to accumulate worldly goods and embrace a life-style based on the values of simplicity and solidarity.”<sup>92</sup>

With these explanations, I understand that a just world characterised by equality, liberty, justice, love, peace, friendship, integrity, forgiveness, and sharing is the will of God. These are essential components of God’s mission in the midst of oppression, injustice and violence.

Secondly, God, the prophets and Jesus stand with the oppressed. At this point, Folk points out that the Old Testament presents Yahweh as God whose ears and heart are open to the cries of the oppressed, who intervenes in their behalf and liberates them.<sup>93</sup> Walter Brueggemann also remarks that God “...intervenes in the very midst of abandonment and dereliction” and that “...divine revelation begins with the liberation of the most oppressed and tortured people who thereby move prophetically from oppression to liberation.”<sup>94</sup>

To exemplify God’s stand with the oppressed, Folk emphasises that for Israelite people in the midst slavery of Egypt, God was saying to Pharaoh “let my people go.”<sup>95</sup> Folk sees that through the prophets, God continually reminded the freed people of Israel of the crucial action of delivering them from Egypt. Folk also observes that even the Ten Commandments commence with a reminder: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”<sup>96</sup> In addition, Israel had other laws which can be seen as details that complete the Ten Commandments. These include the gleaning law, the Sabbath year law, the jubilee year law, and laws on loans and other laws protecting the weak and compelling the community to take care of them.<sup>97</sup> These laws are detailed below.

In the New Testament, God’s stand with the oppressed is expressed by Luke. He presents Jesus’ ministry as beginning with a sermon based on Isaiah 61 which is considered by some

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<sup>91</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 110.

<sup>92</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 102.

<sup>93</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 70.

<sup>94</sup> Brueggemann quoted in Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 70-71.

<sup>95</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 71.

<sup>96</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 72.

<sup>97</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 73-74.

commentators as the proclamation of the jubilee year. Likewise, Jesus' ministry in Matthew starts with the "Sermon on the Mount" declaring blessings for the oppressed and woe for the oppressors. For Segundo, Jesus' vision of the kingdom is good news for the poor and all oppressed and marginalized groups.<sup>98</sup> In his ministry, Jesus was always on the side of the oppressed. For the women, He was challenging the mores and taboos regarding the place of women and the relationship between men and women. He was also challenging the hierarchical patriarchal world order with the objective of replacing it with the order of the kingdom based on mutuality between men and women and open to full participation of women.<sup>99</sup> From this discussion, I understand that in the midst of oppression, God the bearer of the mission and Jesus the God's messenger who came to the earth to establish the Kingdom of His Father, are not neutral, nor are they on the side of the oppressor. Rather, they defend and plead for those whose rights are violated.

Thirdly, God, prophets and Jesus cared for the oppressed. In this regard, we saw above that Israel had additional laws which completed or detailed the Ten Commandments. In fact, these laws aimed at caring for the poor, marginalised and others weak people. Namely, the gleaning law stipulated that those who own fields were not to harvest the fields to their borders or to go over the fields a second time. They were not to pick up the grapes that were falling to the ground or strip their vineyards or olive trees bare. The grain at the borders of the fields and the gleanings after the harvest as well as the unharvested and fallen grapes and olives belonged to the poor. According to the Sabbath year law, every seventh year, all fields were to lay fallow, all Israelite slaves to be freed and the debt of all fellow Israelites to be cancelled. During that year, whatever grows on the field, vines and trees belonged to the poor and the wild beasts. In addition, the freed slaves were provided with livestock, grain and wine. The jubilee year law was observed every forty-nine years and prescribed the same measures as the Sabbath year law plus the obligation of returning properties to their original owners. Other laws were forbidding the charging of interest on loans of money or goods to a fellow Israelite and were invoking the community to protect and care for the widow, the fatherless and the sojourners.<sup>100</sup> These laws allowed the poor to be fed and other excluded people to be integrated into the community. They also figured that, among other things, the prophets were watching nearby to ensure the structure of the community

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<sup>98</sup> Quoted in Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 101, 102.

<sup>99</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 102.

<sup>100</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 73-74.

according to the canons of God's justice<sup>101</sup>

With Jesus' ministry, people marginalised and excluded by the society were being received, honoured, comforted, fed, and healed. Here, Folk speaks about the crippled woman who was healed by Jesus in the synagogue on the Sabbath. He explains how Jesus was attacked by the rulers of the synagogue and comments that this attack was reinforced by the sexism of the time. To justify his action, Jesus called them "hypocrites," challenging them about being able to water their ox or donkeys on the Sabbath but not able to acknowledge the healing of the "daughter of Abraham" whom Satan held bound for eighteen years. For this same case, Swidler emphasizes that the fact of recognizing her as "daughter of Abraham" is itself comforting for such an excluded woman, because that honoured title was normally used only for males who were called "sons of Abraham."<sup>102</sup> Jesus' many acts of healing and feeding people especially included women and other people excluded or neglected by the society.<sup>103</sup> This shows that Jesus was concerned about the life of the oppressed and cared for them as a means of establishing the kingdom of God on the earth.

Lastly, prophets and Jesus were challenging oppressive structures. Folk mentions how the prophets accused Israel of the fundamental sins of idolatry, injustice and violence. As an example, he reminds that Amos continually referred to the exodus, claiming that Israel has become like Egypt because of the injustice and oppression in its midst.<sup>104</sup> Kang Namsoon also talks about the counter-current of prophetic faith in the Bible and throughout Jewish and Christian history. She observes that prophetic faith sees a God of justice and mercy. Here, she explains that this faith "...denounces social injustice and calls for a conversion of both the heart and the social system to ensure that God's will is truly done on earth in order to bring about a world free of war, slavery and oppression."<sup>105</sup> Further, she also states that the Word of God spoken by the prophets "...calls on oppressive elites to repent and do justice, or be overthrown by a revolutionary intervention of God in history."<sup>106</sup>

Jesus also was challenging oppressive structures during his ministry. Folk highlights this when he explains that God "...does not legitimize existing property or power relationships

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<sup>101</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 75.

<sup>102</sup> Quoted in Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 104.

<sup>103</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 104-107.

<sup>104</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 71, 76, 81.

<sup>105</sup> Namsoon, "The Centrality of Gender Justice, 283.

<sup>106</sup> Namsoon, "The Centrality of Gender Justice , 283.

or sanctify the social status quo but overthrows unjust social orders and liberates the oppressed.”<sup>107</sup> Moreover, he also observes that the reign of God “...is breaking forth here and now, overthrowing oppressive religious and political oligarchies and social orders and establishing a new community of mutuality and solidarity in the midst of the old.”<sup>108</sup>

For the majority of liberationists, challenging oppressive structures does not necessarily mean becoming violent against them.<sup>109</sup> The goal of these liberationists is the reconciliation of the oppressor (rich) and the oppressed (poor) which involves a conversion of both rather than an overpowering of one by the other. One such liberationist is Segundo. Segundo has embraced the social theology of Paul who considers human beings as more than political animals and believes that the problems of humanity are in the human heart rather than in the political structures.<sup>110</sup> In his letter to Romans, he cares about the institution of slavery. He realises that slaves have limited options for their liberation. He also estimates that the cost can be too high for them if they concentrate all their energies into civil liberation. He therefore tries to humanise them from within. He advises them to remain faithful to their masters because he believes that “Everything works together for the good of those who love God (Romans 8:28).”<sup>111</sup> For Paul, “Christians can and should transcend their oppression by triumphing over their circumstances, “even where circumstances do not change, even where liberation does not come.”<sup>112</sup> This theology seems not to be applicable today where different conventions on human rights have been adopted and are respected by countries that are members of the United Nations. However, in using this theology, Segundo does not consign the oppressed (poor) to their fate. Rather, he digs deep into Paul’s teachings to find a spirituality which enables the oppressed not to become the oppressor once their oppression is over.<sup>113</sup> In this regard, the attitude of these liberationists is a reminder that challenging oppressive structures does not necessarily mean a physical fight.

From this literature, we realise that in challenging oppressive structures, the prophets and Jesus were acting as watchdogs of community’s justice and integrity and its loyalty to God. They were denouncing evil, criticising unfair decisions, and condemning unjust practices.

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<sup>107</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 70.

<sup>108</sup> Folk, *Doing Theology, Doing Justice*, 95.

<sup>109</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 110.

<sup>110</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 111.

<sup>111</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 445-446.

<sup>112</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 111-112.

<sup>113</sup> Nussbaum, *A Reader’s Guide to Transforming Mission*, 112.

They were not silent about the suffering unjustly induced on people by community leadership. Therefore, as we take them in this study as models for Christians for the accomplishment of *missio Dei*, their attitudes inspire current Christian churches and all Christians with the attitudes to adopt before any kind of injustice committed by community structures and leadership. For the present study on domestic violence, attitudes of the prophets and Jesus bring us to understand that UFGC, as a Christian church, should not keep silent before such oppression perpetrated in its community.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

This chapter aimed at reflecting theologically on the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*, with special focus on how the church is supposed to behave in the midst of the community in which injustice occurs. According to this reflection, the perception of the mission of the church has changed throughout centuries since the New Testament era. Today, there are a number of new features that include the mission as *missio Dei*. Mission as *missio Dei* means that the church does not have its own mission in the world, but participates in God's mission aimed at a saved and just universe. The pattern of accomplishing this mission in the midst of injustice and oppression was drawn from the work of the prophets in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Their approach comprises four main elements: envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, caring for the oppressed, and challenging oppressive structures. Therefore, I consider that any organisation or people who claim to be in God's mission should follow this model otherwise they would be accomplishing an incomplete mission. In this way, this chapter addressed the second objective of the present study as defined in the introduction.

As the whole study aims at assessing the response of UFGC church to the injustice and oppression experienced by women in their homes, it is time to see how this church is accomplishing God's mission. To what extent does the response of UFGC to DV embody the fullness of the *missio Dei*? The next chapter attempts to assess this response and to take a stand concerning its fullness with regard to the above four elements characterising the prophets' and Jesus' reactions before oppression.



## CHAPTER 4

### ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE OF UBUNYE FREE METHODIST CHURCH TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter is an assessment of the response of Ubunye Free Methodist Church to domestic violence with regard to the mission of the church as *missio Dei*. It seeks to answer the question raised in the previous chapter as to whether or not the response of UFMC to DV embodies the fullness of the *missio Dei*. At the same time, it responds to the three first questions of this dissertation. As discussed in the introduction, these questions ask how the UFMC has responded to DV, what theology has inspired it to respond to DV, and how do its responses embody (or does not embody) the fullness of the mission of the church as *missio Dei*. By responding to these questions, this chapter serves as means to achieve the third and fourth objectives of the present study: to identify the theology which has led UFMC to address DV and to assess the response of UFMC to DV in light of the *missio Dei*. Hence, at the end of this chapter, I take a stand as to whether or not the response of UFMC to DV embodies the fullness of *missio Dei*. In the results, the assumption of this study, as presented in the introduction, was confirmed.

Therefore, as already indicated in the introduction, the assessment in this chapter results from the analysis and interpretation of data collected through interviews with eleven informants. This sample was formed of five women DV survivors, two church leaders, two DV programme staff and two church leaders and DV programme staff at the same time. The study has used as a yardstick the four elements found in the previous chapter as main characteristics of the prophets' and Jesus' approach to responding to the oppression and injustice within the community. These elements are: envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, caring for the oppressed, and challenging oppressive structures. They are the conditions against which any action is measured as reflecting *missio Dei*. In this regard, after exploring the whole work of UFMC in response to DV, it appears that this response fulfils the first three conditions and falls short the fourth one. Details of these results are presented in the following text organised in five points. The first point contains three stories giving an idea of what is happening in women's lives. The other four points

concern a systematic analysis of the response of UFMC to such situations. These points correspond to the four elements taken as yardstick as already mentioned above. In each point, two steps of analysis are taken. First, I report back the responses to my interview questions. Then, these responses are discussed, and where necessary, other resources are used in deepening the arguments on some issues. Finally, these arguments are gathered together to generate the stand of the study concerning the extent to which the response of UFMC to DV reflects the fullness of the *missio Dei*.

## **4.2. Women's Stories**

### **Story 1: Seraphina, a Handicapped Girl Abused by her Father<sup>1</sup>**

Seraphina is twenty-eight years old. She went to school up to Standard 5. At the time of interview, she had no income-generating activity. She was born physically handicapped and all the limbs of her body are weak. She uses a wheelchair for mobility. Her mother died when she was six years old and her father is still alive. In their family, they were eight children, all of whom are single. One week before the interview, one of her brothers was found dead while he was drunk.

In their home, the father was beating everyone. He was taking their clothes and throwing them outside. He took Seraphina out of school, and she could not continue studying. He did not want to take her to the hospital. He claimed and wasted her grant from the government, neglecting to treat her properly. He also called her shameful names and traumatised her psychologically. For example, he called her "dog", told her "you are not working", "you are dead", "I only want your money [her grant] not you."

However, all the children in this family had problems with their father. Those who managed to find jobs left their home and went to live on their own, because it was impossible to stay with him. He wanted their money and was claiming this violently.

Three times, Seraphina tried to commit suicide with the intention to leave her father, but she failed. At the first suicidal attempt, she wanted to use her brother's (soldier) gun but her arm

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<sup>1</sup> Seraphina, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

was weak and she could not find the strength to hold it up to her head. For the second attempt, she tried to burn herself in the bed and blanket. Unfortunately [or fortunately], her young sister came and put the fire out. The third time, she was planning to swallow insecticide but the social worker referred her, and helped her to come to The Haven before the implementation of that plan.

Her mother was a second wife of her father. The first wife, the stepmother, had divorced him because of his violence. The father was hitting his first wife with wooden sticks. When Seraphina's mother joined him, she was also beaten. Finally, the mother started drinking alcohol as a way of reducing or forgetting her pain. The mother also hit Seraphina, regarding her as a source of her problems with her husband. But in 1987, when she was drunk, she fell down, was injured in the head and died.

At the time of the interview, Seraphina had spent three months and one week in The Haven shelter. She came there to hide from her father. She said that she hates him and does not want anything from him. In The Haven, Seraphina was accommodated and fed. She was regularly meeting her counsellor and getting medical assistance. At the time of the interview, she said she had started to forget the abusive life of her family and was happy. The only problem was that she was not able to go to church because of the stairs which constituted an obstacle for her wheelchair. With assistance of the social worker from Department of Social Development (DSD), Seraphina was planning to get her own accommodation outside The Haven and to continue studying. She envisions eventually majoring in psychology at University. With this vision, she intends to use the salary of the job that she expected soon in a handcraft workshop under the assistance of the counsellor from Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA) and the money from the government's grant. She was happy with the assistance of UFMC as she had found there a secure life and an opportunity to think again about her future.

## **STORY 2: Nadina, Abused by her Boyfriend<sup>2</sup>**

Nadina is twenty-nine years old and a holder of secondary school diploma (Matric). She is employed as a cashier in a commercial business and is taking instruction in learning how to drive.

Nadina was born in a very abusive family. The parents were always quarrelling, they were irresponsible for their children, and could not educate them. For that reason, the social worker took all the children from this family and placed them in children's centres. Nadina was taken at six year old and she stayed in the children's centre until her secondary school diploma. After she turned eighteen, she was no longer allowed to stay there. Even though her parents are still alive, she could not join them because of the abusive environment. With this dilemma, she was also jobless. Trying to survive, she started wandering in town, becoming a drunkard, and committed a couple of immoral acts. Finally, she joined and stayed together with a young boy with whom she used to share beer at the bar, in the previous seven months.

Nadina has lived in partnership with this boy for eight years. During their life together, she has undergone a number of abuses. However, she could not leave because she depended on him economically. Abuse experienced include:

- Physical abuse: she was beaten with a belt or slapped. At a certain time, her boyfriend wanted to damage her feet so that she could not walk and leave his house.
- Emotional abuse and intimidation: she was insulted, named and called with abusive names, and told humiliating and intimidating words such as "do not try to go. Only mountains cannot meet, but people always meet. So wherever you go I will find you." Her boyfriend could also not let her meet her friends. As she was always controlled, she had no freedom.
- Sexual abuse: After beating her, he wanted to have sex. When she tried to complain, he could not listen and he forced her.

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<sup>2</sup> Nadina, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

- Economic abuse: the time she left him, she had got a good job. But she was tired of the abuse. She therefore opted to leave the job, the boyfriend and the town in which she lived, to come to Pietermaritzburg.

When Nadina was with that boyfriend, she took the case to the police. She got a protection order. That time, the boyfriend recognized his fault and asked for forgiveness. However, this kindness lasted only seven months. He then started beating her again. When she tried to hide somewhere in the town, he searched for her among all their friends and neighbors until he found her. Finally, all the friends refused to welcome her again because the boyfriend was always pursuing her. This is why, with assistance of a social worker, she was obliged to leave all her friends and come to The Haven.

Nadina has been at The Haven shelter for 18.5 months. On the eve of the interview, she had found and moved to her own accommodation. She had enjoyed her time in The Haven where she could satisfy her survival needs and dialogue with women who have undergone the same abusive experience. She had also enjoyed some workshops organized by FAMSA who gathered women together. She was grateful for some counselling sessions and comforting spaces created by the church through prayers and Bible studies. However she remembers feeling traumatized when after six weeks in the shelter, she was told that she had to leave while she had nowhere to go.

### **Story 3: Nola, a Woman Abused by her Husband<sup>3</sup>**

Nola is a thirty-six years old woman and mother of two girls. While she was in The Haven shelter, her children were left with their grandmother (her mother). She had studied up to Standard 10. But at the moment of the interview, she was attending professional training.

Born in a family of eight children, four boys and four girls, Nola was the third born. She stayed with her mother at home while the father was working in another town, ten hours driving from home. Although the father was working, family members were suffering too much. If the mother asked him for money, he would send about twenty rand. He also used to come home once in three years, bringing some clothes and “some coins of money.” It

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<sup>3</sup> Nola, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

was therefore too hard for them to survive. They used to go to work so that they could get food. When they got two rand, they used that for food. In the other town, the father had a second wife. He had stolen the marriage certificate of Nola's mother in order to use it with his second woman. However, there came a time when he lost his job. Then, the second woman chased him out of her home. He therefore rejoined his miserable former family without bringing anything. That time, Nola, her brothers and mother were still working for their food. They were building and cleaning people's houses inside as well as outside in exchange for meals. Nola fell pregnant with her first child during that difficult time.

Emerging from the difficult life with her parents, Nola got married. However, she did not get much happiness in her marriage because her husband had affairs with other women, just like her father. In addition, her husband was working but would not give her money. He would buy food, and that was all. When she asked him what he does with the money, she was told that his money was none of her concern. The husband also used to take loans. When he was asked why, the answer was the same “this is not your problem; you don't need to be involved in my money.”

In addition to the emotional and economic abuse, her husband also tried to kill her using his hands. He accused her of having an affair with another man. This pushed Nola into running away and coming to The Haven. This interview took place one week after her arrival.

Nola was happy with how she was assisted in The Haven shelter. In particular, she was surprised that she was provided with accommodation, hot water for bathing, breakfast, lunch, supper and clothes, linen, and sponge. She had not thought things would be like that. However, at the time of the interview, she had no idea of where she would go when the six week period she was allowed to stay at The Haven shelter elapsed. She was fasting and praying so that her husband might change his mind. And in her plan, she never thought of separating or divorcing him because she believed that “the first marriage is the only marriage that can open the gates of heaven.” She also believed that her husband is her lord and that she can only go to heaven with him. So she kept praying for him to change.

These three stories illustrate both what is happening in the community, and the dynamics around domestic violence that were discussed in chapter two. The UFMC is confronting this complex situation. It seems that these women have been abused from childhood to

adulthood by different persons who include parents, husbands, and boyfriends. As the following section attempts to analyse the church's response to such situations, these stories help in anticipating the appropriate response of the church. Attention is paid to the whole response of the church to DV, including the above cases. And as stated earlier, yardsticks used in this assessment include the four elements characterising *missio Dei*, that is, envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed, caring for the oppressed and challenging oppressive structures.

### 4.3. Envisioning a Just Community

This section aims at assessing whether the response of UFMC to DV envisions a just community as one of its conditions to reflect *missio Dei*. This assessment entails analysis of the doctrine that has led UFMC to respond to DV, and the motivation of this church in such actions. Therefore, responses given to the first two questions of the interview guide for staff members and church leaders (see appendix 1) constitute the basis of this section.

Starting with the doctrine which has led UFMC to address DV, church leaders suggest that initiators of this action were led by the Wesleyan churches' doctrine of "social holiness" developed by John Wesley, the founder of Methodist Church.<sup>4</sup> Seeking to understand this doctrine, I learnt that the idea of "social holiness" defines "how Christian community should practice its faith and engage in relationship to society."<sup>5</sup> George R. Eli explains that this idea draws the Christian community in concrete ways, leading into social concern and actions. However, he remarks that it must not be confused with humanitarian social work, the difference being that social holiness "...is the manifest presence of God, in and through God's servant people."<sup>6</sup> In other words, social holiness is seen as a process of transformation of the society in God's Kingdom through the Christian community's actions.

Therefore, for John Wesley, social holiness is not a personal issue. Rather, it uses the shared behaviour of the Christian community to speak to the society. It offers both criticism and constructive support to the society without making any political claim or

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<sup>4</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009); Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>5</sup> George R. Eli, *Social Holiness: John Wesley's Thinking on Christian Community and its Relationship to Social Order* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1993), 2.

<sup>6</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 3.

acknowledgement.<sup>7</sup> In this way, social holiness has two dimensions. The first concerns the structure and function of the church as an institution in which Christian life is nurtured and grows to maturity. The second dimension relates the Christian community to the social order during the church's mission of transforming the world.<sup>8</sup>

To explain this interaction between the Christian community and the world, John Wesley employs the metaphors of light, salt, and leaven borrowed from the New Testament. As light, the Christian community, in its mission of sharing the gospel of the Kingdom of God, has to act as model, exemplar, illuminator, revealer, and identifier. But this light which makes the Christian community a demonstrator of character and behaviour also highlights the evil, thus witnessing to the critical and prophetic function of the church.<sup>9</sup> As salt and leaven, Christian community must influence the society and transform it through love, justice and good works. In these works, Christian community exalts servanthood while caring for people, seeking to enter into all aspects of human needs, and accepting the vulnerability that this entails. In this way, the Christian community demonstrates that the transformation of the priorities and the agenda of the social order is possible.<sup>10</sup>

Eli specifies that "...social holiness enables spiritual revolution through acts that have distinct and concrete socio-political consequences."<sup>11</sup> He also considers that the Christian community which practices social holiness does not condone violence and is neither hesitant, nor reticent when it may be necessary to identify and address oppressive and exploitative situations. For him, the ideal of social holiness is that the Christian community "...must challenge institutional oppression, criticize the status quo, and demonstrate and offer constructive possibilities for human well being."<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, from all of these explanations, I conclude that social holiness delineates the conception of John Wesley concerning how a Christian community or the church should interact with the society. It therefore appears that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and as witness of God's power and presence, this community is to transform the world into God's Kingdom through being a model - doing good works, challenging institutional

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<sup>7</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 3.

<sup>8</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 6.

<sup>10</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 107.

<sup>11</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 108.

<sup>12</sup> Eli, *Social Holiness*, 108-109.



oppression, criticizing the status quo, and offering constructive support. I argue that this doctrine of social holiness shares the same four characteristics of the concept of *missio Dei* as identified in the previous chapter.

In addition to this doctrine which has guided UFMC to address DV, interviewees have also reflected on factors motivating the church to initiate this action. They have tried to identify the community's situation, and what it was that struck initiators of this endeavour and brought them to decide to establish activities and programmes in response to DV. In this respect, different complementary observations have been done. One staff member observed that this programme was initiated because the majority of women were being abused, killed, and were homeless.<sup>13</sup> Another staff member repeated this but specified the desire of the initiators to have a direct specific response to that deplorable situation. She said "The founders, Mr Dan Sheffield and his wife, Mrs Cathleen Sheffield have realized a need for a house like The Haven to assist women abused in their homes as temporary accommodation."<sup>14</sup>

Observations of church leaders take a wider view, for they not only describe the situation of women and the possible solutions, but also integrate this situation into the socio-political context. In this regard, one of them said:

The idea was brought by the Canadian pastor who came to South Africa. He first thought of the house for people who asked him for shelter in his house. He also was participating in the meetings of the municipality and happened to know the situation of poverty in the town. He started with the housing project. His wife found it necessary to resolve the problem of abused women by assisting them for a short time of emergency before they go back to their homes.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, another church leader specifies that Dan Sheffield, the initiator, wanted to respond to the needs found in the area because after the independence of the country, nothing was available to respond to the crying needs of women abused in the community. Here, the interviewee indicated that the culture was mistreating women. It was not recognising them as equal to men, and it did not give them real human value as it was doing for men.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Pauline, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>16</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

Taking into account these observations and referring to the content of the first section of the introduction of this dissertation, I realise that the initiators of UFMC's response to DV were motivated by the fact that women were not living in the same conditions as men, and at the same time were being oppressed and unjustly mistreated. Thus the intervention of the church came to respond to this injustice by starting actions aiming at restoring human dignity to these women. Considering also that the doctrine of social holiness which guides the church in this attempt seeks to transform the society into a non-oppressive community, and that the foundation of the Pietermaritzburg local church aimed at creating a multiracial congregation in a white dominated city as seen in the introduction, I observe that this response envisions a just community as defined in the previous chapter. Therefore, I argue that the response of UFMC to DV fulfils the first condition to reflecting *missio Dei*, that is, envisioning a just community. However, the vision of a just community can be implemented in different ways, depending on the ideological orientation. This is why still in our assessment of this response as reflecting aspects of *missio Dei*, the next section on "standing with the oppressed" analyses the theological commitment of the church in this enterprise.

#### **4.4. Standing with the Oppressed**

This section assesses whether, in responding to DV, UFMC stands with the oppressed as a second condition to reflecting *missio Dei*. Therefore, it analyses the theological commitment of this church on this venture. Within the fieldwork results, this commitment was found in the answers to the questions 3, 4 and 5 of the interview guide for the staff members and church leaders. These questions asked them to speak about the goals of the response of UFMC to DV; the position of UFMC with regard to the injustice and exclusion committed against some people in the community; and the attitude of UFMC with regard to the oppression of women by men in their homes (see appendix 1). While some of these answers were also valuable in the previous section on a just community, I have preferred to develop them under the present section, as they directly show how oppressed people are targeted by UFMC's rescuing actions.

With regard to the goals of the church's response to DV, four intentions came out from interview results. First, the church wanted women who are desperate, beaten, in danger of being killed, or in any other community danger to have a place of refuge. It is for this reason

that The Haven shelter was created. In the view of church leaders and staff members, this shelter aimed at addressing the many and complex needs of vulnerable women. It allows women who had to run away because of the danger in the community to have a place to rest. This enables them to calmly think about their lives, explore possible alternatives for reorientation, find people who can help or advise them in their psychosocial problems, and connect with people and organisations who can accompany them in their struggle to find solution to their problems.<sup>17</sup>

Secondly, the church wanted to break the dependency of women on men. Here, church leaders explain that dependency of women on men contributes to permanent abuse of women in their homes. As they do not own anything in their homes, these women cannot voice out their protest to the abuse. Therefore, the church intended to provide them with a space where they can eat, sleep, meet their counsellors, and plan their life appropriately without being threatened by anyone.<sup>18</sup> Besides, there was an idea of empowering them and helping them rehabilitate their lives, and have their own places.<sup>19</sup>

Thirdly, the church wanted to provide these women with knowledge of their rights. These women were being beaten and oppressed day after day. They had become like objects of pleasure or distraction for men. Nonetheless, they were staying in abusive homes or leaving for a while and coming back. They had no idea of their rights as human beings. They were thinking that this was their fate, not the abuse. So, the church saw a need to connect them with people who could give them knowledge about their rights so that they could assert themselves when resolving their problems.<sup>20</sup>

Lastly, the church wanted to break the cycle of violence in women's homes. On this point, some church leaders mentioned that by helping women to know their rights and by empowering them, the church also wanted them to know their responsibilities and to assert themselves when taking decisions on alternatives. This includes resistance or separation.<sup>21</sup> It

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<sup>17</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>18</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>20</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

therefore appears that all these intentions defined as goals of UFMC in addressing DV target the oppressed people, the women, and envisage putting end to their oppression.

Concerning the UFMC's position with regard to the injustice and exclusion of some people in the community, interviewees stated that in this church, the only references are biblical teachings that discourage violence and encourage love to everyone, including enemies. In this regard, one church leader stated:

I think, the church's position is based on the Bible....The Bible has never encouraged us to do violence for the sake of violence. And especially the Bible has never encouraged us to do violence within the context of marriage and the context of the church. Rather the Bible encourages us to treat our neighbors as ourselves and it even encourages us to love our enemies. .... So the church's authoritative position would be no to violence. We are not pro violence but we are against violence.<sup>22</sup>

From this statement, I understand that UFMC is against violence. I also realise that though the church has to fight violence, it does not do this with the objective of oppressing the identified oppressor, but to prevent him/her from oppressing people.

The last question used to explore the theological commitment of UFMC in addressing DV sought to know the attitude of this church with regard to the oppression of women by men in their homes. Here also, interviewees reiterated that the church despises and fights against injustice everywhere, including within the homes. They said that for the church, the man and woman should live and stay together in peace and security and educate their children. To help the church members in this, the church uses chapters relating to couples' life in the discipline manual. On this point, personal opinions have also been given. One interviewee stated that "...if the abusive couple is counselled and does not happen to heal, there is no reason to continue insisting on staying together while it is impossible; it would be killing consciously."<sup>23</sup>

Two issues emerge from the discussion in this section. First, the four intentions defined as goals of UFMC's response to DV – creating a refuge to oppressed women, breaking dependency of women to men, providing oppressed women with knowledge of their rights, and breaking the cycle of women's violence – seem to envisage putting an end to women's oppression. Secondly, the church displays an anti-violence attitude with regard to the life in

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<sup>22</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>23</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

the community and in the homes. From these observations, I take that in its response to DV, UFMC stands with oppressed people. Therefore, this brings me to suggest that the response of UFMC to DV fulfils also the second requirement of the characteristics of *missio Dei* as stated in the previous chapter. The next two sections on “caring for oppressed” and “challenging oppressive structures” analyze strategies used and activities carried out.

#### **4.5. Caring for the Oppressed**

This section assesses whether the package of the UFMC’s response to DV comprises care for oppressed – the third requirement to reflecting *missio Dei*. This assessment consists of an analysis of all strategies used and activities conducted by the church in response to DV. Therefore, responses to questions 4 to 14 of the interview guide for women and 6 to 24 of interview guide for staff members and church leaders are explored here (see appendix 1 and appendix 2). From the responses to those questions, five strategies have emerged. The first strategy is the creation of The Haven shelter. The Haven shelter consists of accommodation for women and children running away from abusive homes. It has three bedrooms with four to six beds in each. In total, this shelter has the capacity of accommodating twenty people per day. According to the statistics from that shelter, it has received a daily average of seven women and six children during the second half of 2006, seven women and five children in 2007, eight women and eight children in 2008, and seven women and eight children during the first half of 2009.<sup>24</sup> People received in this shelter are assisted with free bed and all necessary linen and food. During their stay, women are also provided with all hygienic and toilet materials and, following individual needs, with clothes. As emergency shelter, this shelter requires not to exceed six weeks of stay. During this period, women resolve their problems with their abusers or find other ways of living on their own outside the shelter.<sup>25</sup>

At the time of the interview, The Haven was proud of having been in existence for twelve years. For the future, church leaders intend to extend the shelter to increase the reception

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<sup>24</sup> Calculated Using Figures From The Haven’s Register 2006-2009.

<sup>25</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Nadina, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Nola, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Seraphina, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Amy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Sarah, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Pauline, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Nicholas, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

capacity because the demand is now becoming higher. They have also started processes for extending the period of stay in the shelter, as six weeks are not enough for all the requirements for women to address their problems and arrange their lives. These arrangements can include appealing to the police or to the court, applying for identity cards, undergoing counselling sessions, applying for jobs, and finding self-support and accommodation outside the shelter. The Haven shelter provides care services which are still scarce in Pietermaritzburg.<sup>26</sup>

The second strategy consists of the church's teaching programmes that serve as spiritual counselling. Such programmes include Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) gathering people from different denominations on Sundays from 17:30 to 18:30 at UFMC. They also include Bible study and prayer meetings that gather UFMC members respectively on Wednesdays and Thursdays at the same time as BSF. Other programmes are sermons and children's Sunday School happening on Sunday morning, pastoral counselling, celebration of women's events, and pastoral visits in The Haven shelter.<sup>27</sup>

Thanks to these programmes, women are comforted, and strengthened emotionally and spiritually. Some of them decide to be baptized; others become born again and continue to attend this church even after the period of The Haven's assistance. However, these teachings have known a number of challenges. One of them consists of the culture of boyfriend-girlfriend partnership not recognized by the church, while clients in The Haven mostly come from such relationships. In such cases, the church tries to save the life of the women only, but never attempts to help them explore how to reconcile with the abusive partners.<sup>28</sup> The other challenge regards religious teachings. Here, Nola's faith can serve as an illustration. As mentioned in the third woman's story, Nola believes that the first marriage is the only marriage that can open the gates of heaven, that her husband is her lord and that she can go to heaven with/through him. She therefore has the task of praying for him to change and she can never think of the alternative of divorce.<sup>29</sup> I suppose that this

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<sup>26</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>27</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); UFMC, Children Ministry, Attendances Notebook (2008-2009).; Pauline, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009); Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>28</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>29</sup> Nola, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

conviction was not received from the UFMC because the interview took place during her first week in The Haven and that as mentioned above, some church leaders value the alternative of divorce when it is question of saving people's lives. However, this means that spiritual violence as defined in the second chapter can be developed through religious teachings, such as in Nola's case. Therefore, the UFMC has to be careful and avoid such additional burdens on DV survivors.

The third strategy is the development of partnerships with individuals and institutions that support the church in its endeavour of restoring human dignity to DV survivors. In this regard, funds used are provided by the FMCSA, Free Methodist Church USA, DSD, and Montgomery Church (All Saints Church). Montgomery Church, Community Chest, and Feed Bake also provide some in-kind food and bread. Clothes, blankets and nappies for children are donated by Community Care Project, Community Chest, and Montgomery Church. FAMSA and Life Line refer abused women to The Haven. Esther House (at Gateway, Pietermaritzburg) receive some women who, after six weeks in The Haven, still need accommodation assistance. Social workers from FAMSA, Life Line, and DSD do counselling, give advices about HIV and AIDS, organise workshops, and arrange meetings and reconciliation sessions between DV survivors and their abusers. Likewise, the church collaborates with the police and the court to obtain DV survivors' protection order, Children's lawyer for children's social grant, and the Departments of Social Welfare and Home Affairs for women's identity cards. Health institutions also provide free medical assistance to DV survivors. In leadership and administration, the church receives technical support from the DSD and FMCSA. Lastly, the church is assisted by some individuals who volunteer in some activities, such as training women in baking, knitting, and cooking.<sup>30</sup>

This partnership has produced positive results. Women receive support in terms of different expertise and materials which cannot be rendered by the church alone. As an example, thanks to this partnership, Seraphina expects to return to school and get a job in the near future.<sup>31</sup> In addition, some women were helped to get identity cards and their children now receive the child grant from the government. In the past, there was also a woman who was

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<sup>30</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Pauline, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Nicholas, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>31</sup> Seraphina, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

assisted to divorce her abusive husband.<sup>32</sup> However, some negative consequences have also been registered. One of them is the frustration of the church in depending on DSD's funds for the functioning of The Haven. Because of this dependency, the church cannot solve some urgent problems before the end of the year, when DSD adjusts the annual budget. Another frustration comes from the dependency on volunteers' assistance. As they are not paid, volunteers are irregular and the church has no authority over them. Therefore, it is difficult to count on their support. To try to resolve these problems, the church envisions creating a network of "Friends of The Haven" composed of people interested in supporting The Haven financially, materially and in advocacy on a regular basis.<sup>33</sup>

The fourth strategy is the empowerment of DV survivors. This strategy was motivated by the fact that after six weeks in the shelter, DV survivors still seemed unable to cope with life. Not only were they still struggling with their cases, but in addition, they were disconnected from all financial resources such as jobs, husbands/boyfriends' and parents' assistance and personal businesses. Some of them had no basic skills to run their own business or to compete for jobs while they were staying idle on the premises of the church. For those reasons, the church thought about women's trainings in sewing/tailoring, knitting, crafting, computer, painting, literacy, and catering. Other kinds of training that are planned concern life skills including knowledge about HIV and AIDS and decision making.<sup>34</sup> Given that such training necessitates much time, the church has asked the DSD to extend the period of stay in The Haven shelter up to six months.<sup>35</sup>

Still within the framework of empowering women, the church also encourages DV survivors to search for jobs. It assists them in contacting employers by phone, writing their curricula vitae, and finding job advertisements.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg : UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>33</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>34</sup> The Haven, The Haven Fundraising Proposal (2006), 5; The Haven, Report of The Management Committee (To the Board of Directors of Light And Life Health and Social Welfare Company) (January 12, 2009), 2; Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>35</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>36</sup> Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).



The last effort to mention in DV survivors' empowerment regards providing them with jobs. If there is any job opportunity that opens in The Haven, priority is given to qualified DV survivors in this shelter. Following this principle, the current House Mother and Childcare Social Worker have been recruited from this group.<sup>37</sup> Through the strategy of empowering women, the church is trying to break their dependency on the abusive men in their lives.

Thanks to this empowerment, about ten DV survivors have been employed. However, the church has had financial problems in running the training programmes. Among all training activities planned, only the knitting activities that were started and this by a volunteer. And there are still problems related to voluntarism as presented above. Another problem is that DSD has not yet officially accepted to extend the period of stay in the shelter. Though women are not directly chased away after six weeks, the church always has to explain why this period is exceeded for some women.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, in spite of these problems, church leaders still hope for success.<sup>39</sup>

The last strategy identified here regards reaching the community. Because the aim of the present section is to assess whether the response of the UFMC to DV comprises the care of the oppressed, that is, actions concerning the well-being of DV survivors directly, I will develop this last strategy in the following sections, under the subtitle "challenging oppressive structures." It deals with relationship between the church and the community in which the violence occurs.

However, before I close the current section, I want to observe that these four strategies - creating The Haven shelter for DV survivors, organising teachings that serve as spiritual counselling, developing partnership with individuals and institutions, and empowering women through various activities – comprise care for these women. Therefore, I find that the response of the UFMC to DV fulfils the third condition of embodying *missio Dei*, as "caring for the oppressed." The next section assesses the last condition of "challenging oppressive structures" and will complete our assessment whether or not the response of the UFMC to DV embodies the fullness of *missio Dei*.

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<sup>37</sup> The Haven, Report of Proceedings: Management Committee Meeting (October 30, 2009), 2.

<sup>38</sup> Emily, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>39</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

#### 4.6. Challenging Oppressive Structures

This section assesses whether in responding to DV, UFMC challenges oppressive structures as the fourth and last condition to reflecting *missio Dei*. Similar to the previous section, the present section analyses elements drawn from responses to questions relating to strategies developed and activities conducted by UFMC in the initiative of addressing DV. Here, I look at strategies and activities initiated by the Church with the objective of influencing attitudes of the community with regard to DV.

In responding to DV, UFMC has developed five kinds of activities that aim to influence the community. First, UFMC uses the Couples' Fellowship Ministry (CFM). CFM gathers people from different denominations to discuss issues of a biblical portrait of marriage and relationships between spouses. It uses different books from which one couple prepares a particular chapter, presents it and leads discussions. As example, from February 2008 to October 2009, they explored the book entitled "*The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate*" by Dr Gary Chapman. These languages are: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of services, and physical touch.<sup>40</sup> During discussions, they explored how the author's vision of a couple's life can be applied within the participants' contexts and what lessons can be learnt from it. CFM takes place once every two weeks. Normally people meet at the UFMC. However, after each meeting, participants invite the whole group to gather in their homes for the next session. Therefore, CFM is mobile.<sup>41</sup>

Secondly, the church uses church teaching programmes, as already discussed. In fact, these teachings are open not only to DV survivors but to every community member and they have already started producing some positive effects. For example, the themes of BSF are chosen according to the needs of participants. Consequently, three months from February to April in 2009 were reserved to "the biblical understanding of the role of the man within the

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<sup>40</sup> Gary Chapman, *The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate* (Chicago, Ill: Northfield, 1995).

<sup>41</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Nicholas, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

family” as a result of participants’ suggestion.<sup>42</sup> During and after this period, some testimonies of improvement of a couple’s life have been heard.<sup>43</sup>

Thirdly, the staff members of The Haven sometimes participate in community meetings and workshops where they inform people about the existence of the shelter and distribute pamphlets from the police entitled “Stop Abuse”.<sup>44</sup>

The fourth kind of activity that influences the community consists of participating in demonstrations and marches organised by different institutions in reaction to the violence. Occasions of such marches include the South African Women’s Day on August 9, International Women’s Day on March 8, and the Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender Violence from November 25 to December 10.<sup>45 46</sup>

The last activity is also conducted with the staff members of The Haven. Together with survivors of DV, they sometimes go to the police jail to talk to people detained as result of DV. The objective of this visit is to sensitise detained people to non-violence.<sup>47</sup>

All these activities aim at influencing the attitude of the community with regard to DV. However, following the goal of this section, we need to see whether or not UFMC ever challenges oppressive structures. What are those oppressive structures and how do they operate? As already seen in the second chapter, oppressive structures operate under patriarchal systems in which female human beings are considered as inferior in all aspects and are controlled by males. Patriarchy is nurtured by some tools such as cultural socialisation where boys are trained to repress all feelings into anger, males are established as authority figures and decision-makers, male norms include aggression, males are allowed

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<sup>42</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>43</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>44</sup> Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>45</sup> Gemima, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009); Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>46</sup> 16 days of activism against gender violence is an international campaign carried out from November 25 to December 10. These dates have been chosen to link November 25, International Day against Violence Against Women and December 10, International Human Rights Day, with intention to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence (Women’sNet, “16-Days-Activism-Against-Gender-Violence.” Online: Women’sNet. <http://www.Womensnet.Org.Za/Campaign/16-Days-Activism-Against-Gender-Violence>. Accessed 2 January 2009).

<sup>47</sup> Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

and encouraged to beat their wives, and males appropriate public and best paid activities while females are expected to remain obedient, dependent, and silent. Most of the time, this culture is also taught and practiced through religions.

With regard to South Africa, such patriarchal norms are common. I have already mentioned in the second chapter how in Durban and Sobantu Community in Pietermaritzburg, one hundred percent of the women from Christian homes reported having experienced DV. In addition to these figures, a study conducted in Sweetwaters in Pietermaritzburg has also revealed that the *lobola* system in which a man transfers some properties to his wife's family as part of process for marriage, constitutes a source of DV. The man often takes this exchange as licence for abusing that wife. Nompumelelo Dlamini who conducted this study reports it in these terms: "Since men pay this *lobolo*, they consider their wives as property and not their equals ... there are more domestic violence incidences where *lobolo* is involved."<sup>48</sup> It is at this point that I want also to mention how, because of the patriarchal system within the church and the community, Reverend Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa, a member of the United Congregation Church in Southern Africa, was finally ordained at her third application for ordination, forty-six years after her calling. In her story, Mbanjwa also specifies that when her father died the government gave everything to her brothers because as female, she was not allowed to own anything.<sup>49</sup>

As stated in the previous chapter, it is such institutionalised oppressive systems that the prophets and Jesus were always watching, criticising, and trying to overthrow during their accomplishment of *missio Dei*. Such an engagement, as seen in the present chapter, complies with the Wesleyan doctrine of social holiness which, according to the results of the present study, has served UFMC as theological reference in responding to DV. How then is UFMC criticising, watching and overthrowing the status quo, as in *mission Dei* (and social holiness)? Referring to the UFMC-community relationship as discussed in the present section, CFM only looks at ways in which to integrate the vision from the book discussed within the context of participants. For the church's teachings, UFMC concentrates on exploring the Bible and identifying portraits of marriage to duplicate, or biblical teachings

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<sup>48</sup> Dlamini, *Zulu Women, Domestic Violence and Christian Faith*, 61.

<sup>49</sup> Isabel Apawo Phiri, "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregation Church in Southern Africa" in Isabel Apawo Phiri, Betty Govinden and Sarojini Nadar, (Eds). *Her-Story: The History of Women of Faith in Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2002, Pp119-137), 128.

to follow. At this level, two problems arise. First, this biblical portrait of marriage depends on the one doing the analysis because, in some cases, biblical teachings are used to oppressing women. An example of this is Nola's story and what she believes concerning the husband-wife relationship. The second problem is that neither the CFM, nor the church's teachings do any cultural analysis so as to challenge oppressive practices. Other methods used by The Haven's staff members to influence the community also reveal the UPMC's lack of awareness on issues of challenging oppressive structures. While they participate in the demonstrations, marches, community meetings and workshops when they are invited there, they never initiate such activities. In addition, pamphlets that they sometimes distribute to the community are not their production, rather they are provided by the police. In my opinion, the fact of going to target detained people at the police station and trying to sensitise them there also seems to serve rather as an attack toward the perpetrators than a means to positively influence them. I think that they should rather organise such visits in the community and not to people who are arrested.

Based on these observations, I propose that the response of the UPMC to DV does not fulfil the fourth condition of reflecting *missio Dei*, that is, challenging oppressive structures. This failure to challenge oppressive structures is also a failure to adhere to the doctrine of social holiness that guides Methodist churches. Therefore, the response of the UPMC to DV fulfils the three first conditions in reflecting *missio Dei*. These conditions are: envisioning a just community, standing with the oppressed and caring for the oppressed. However, it does not fulfil the fourth condition of challenging oppressive structures. Hence, as conclusion on findings of the present study, I observe that while the response of UPMC to DV constitutes an encouraging and great effort in participating in women's liberation, it does not embody the fullness of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. This conclusion also brings me to confirm the assumption of the present study formulated as follows: "in its effort of accomplishing God's mission in the world through addressing DV, UPMC is taking care of survivors, but neglecting to follow the fullness of the model of Jesus Christ and the prophets of not only caring for survivors of oppression, but also challenging oppressive structures." If I reflect on the possible reasons for this significant omission, I refer to the early definition given to The Haven Shelter as an "emergency shelter". In fact, religious institutions have the tendency to limit their interventions to addressing emergency and short-term needs, leaving aside long-term solutions. This is what David Korten calls

first generation strategies (amongst four) of development, or “relief and welfare.”<sup>50</sup> Though such intervention is very important, especially during emergency situations such as floods, earthquakes or war, it never resolves the problem if it is not accompanied by a long-term programme.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, in calling The Haven an emergency shelter, UFMC would have followed this limited model of development. Hence, as this model is not adequate for individuals’ sustainable development, I argue that it is time for UFMC to review and improve the way it helps DV survivors to find long-term solutions to their problem. For this reason, I use the fifth chapter to contribute to formulating possible responses to DV, enabling UFMC’s initiative to be more durable and thus to more fully reflect *missio Dei*.

#### 4.7. Conclusion

This chapter aimed at assessing the response of UFMC to DV with regard to the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. It addressed the first three questions and was a means to achieving the third and fourth objectives of the present study. The intention is to end the chapter with a stand about whether or not the response of UFMC to DV embodies the fullness of *missio Dei*.

The assessment itself starts with the presentation of three stories of DV survivors. These are examples of women’s situations UFMC is confronted with and responds to. In other sections, yardsticks and thus conditions of reflecting *missio Dei* were the four elements defined in the previous chapter as characterising *missio Dei*.

The first condition of envisioning a just community was assessed through the response to the first two questions of the interview guide for the staff members and church leaders. This concerned the doctrine that has led UFMC to respond to DV, and the motivation of this church in such actions. During the assessment, I learnt that the Wesleyan doctrine of social holiness motivated the church to restore human dignity to women unjustly oppressed in the community. This brought me to recognize that the response of UFMC envisions a just community and that it fulfils the first condition of reflecting *missio Dei*.

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<sup>50</sup> David Korten, *Getting to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda* (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1990), 115.

<sup>51</sup> Korten, *Getting to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 115-118.

The second condition of standing with the oppressed was assessed using responses to questions 3, 4 and 5 of interview guide for the staff members and church leaders. These questions sought to know the goals of the response of UFMC to DV, UFMC's position with regard to the injustice committed within the community, and its attitude with regard to the oppression of women in their homes. Goals identified include ending women's oppression by creating a refuge for oppressed women, breaking their dependency on men, providing them with knowledge of their rights, and breaking the cycle of the violence against them. Regarding attitudes, I found that the church stands against violence in the community, including in the homes. Based on these findings, I observed that in its response to DV, UFMC stands with oppressed and the response fulfils the second condition of reflecting *missio Dei*.

The assessment of care for the oppressed - the third condition - was based on responses to questions 4 to 14 of interview guide for DV survivors and 6 to 24 of the interview guide for the staff members and church leaders. This concerned strategies and activities of UFMC in responding to DV. During the analysis, I realised that UFMC has developed myriad caring strategies and activities. These include creating The Haven shelter for DV survivors, organising teachings focusing on marriage and relationships between spouses, developing partnerships with individuals and institutions in order to address DV survivors' primary needs, and empowering these women. As all of these strategies and activities aim at improving the well-being of DV survivors, I argue that the response of UFMC entails care for oppressed and thus fulfils the third condition of reflecting *missio Dei*.

Challenging oppressive structures - the fourth and last condition - was also assessed using responses to questions on strategies and activities of UFMC in response to DV. But here, the focus was on those aiming at influencing attitudes of the community in the way exemplified by prophets and Jesus Christ as described in the previous chapter. The results demonstrate how UFMC has initiated CFM and shares Church teachings, but it does not analyse culture in order to challenge practices and norms underlying the oppression of women. The staff members are sometimes invited to participate in the demonstrations, marches, community meetings and workshops but they never initiate such activities. They sometimes distribute pamphlets to "stop violence" but not on a regular basis and not on their own initiative. Given that UFMC does not have such a programme aiming at influencing and challenging the attitude of community with regard to DV, my interpretation

is that it is poorly active on issues of challenging oppressive structures. Nevertheless, the Wesleyan doctrine of social holiness which has motivated UFMC to address DV supposes the church's engagement in challenging oppressive structures as seen above. This means that by not engaging in challenging oppressive structures, UFMC fails to comply with the doctrine of social holiness taught in Methodist churches. Therefore, I observe that UFMC's response to DV does not fulfil the fourth condition of reflecting *missio Dei*.

In conclusion of this chapter, I stated that the response of UFMC to DV fulfils the first three conditions but falls short the fourth one and therefore does not embody the fullness of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. From this conclusion, the assumption of the present study as it appears in the introduction of this dissertation has been confirmed: "in its effort of accomplishing God's mission in the world through addressing DV, UFMC is taking care for survivors, but neglecting to follow the model of Jesus Christ and the prophets of not only caring for survivors of oppression, but also challenging oppressive structures." The Wesleyan doctrine of social holiness is the theology that underpins UFMC's motivation to address DV. As it shares the same four characteristics with the concept of *missio Dei*, I finally argue that the first three questions of this study have been responded to, and the third and fourth objectives are achieved in this chapter. It is now time to think about lessons that can be learnt from UFMC's experience of addressing DV and to define ways forward. This is the matter in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 5

### TOWARDS A RESPONSE THAT EMBODIES THE FULLNESS OF *MISSIO DEI*

#### 5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has revealed that the response of Ubunye Free Methodist Church to domestic violence does not embody the fullness of *missio Dei*. Based on this report, the present chapter aims at reflecting on how the gap identified can be removed. Therefore, this chapter attempts to answer the two last questions of this study: what lessons can be learnt from UFMC's experience of accomplishing the *missio Dei* through addressing DV, and what suggestions can be formulated to make the *missio Dei* relevant in the response of UFMC to DV. In this way, it constitutes a means to achieving the two last objectives of the present study, defined in the introduction as follows: "to draw lessons from UFMC's experience of embodying the *missio Dei* through addressing DV," and "to suggest a new agenda giving relevance to the *missio Dei* in the response of UFMC to DV." This chapter constitutes suggestions from this study, with the aim to contribute to UFMC formulating a fuller response to DV that reflects the fullness of *missio Dei*. Lessons have been drawn from the results of the study, and related sets of suggestions have been formulated.

#### 5.2. Lessons Learnt

Seven lessons have been drawn from UFMC's way of responding to DV. The first lesson concerns the importance of the shelter as an emergency refuge for DV survivors. As seen above, interviewees have observed that since its foundation in 1997, The Haven has always received women and children. The demand for its services remains high. Through sheltering women, the church has saved lives of people who were in danger. This finding is in line with the conclusion of Isabel Apawo Phiri's research where she proposed that "each church must have a shelter and trained personnel to deal with women from abused homes."<sup>1</sup> With this observation, I learnt that such a response is extremely important and needed in contexts of high levels of DV.

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<sup>1</sup> Phiri, "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes," 108.

The second lesson regards the weakness of the short-term and emergency assistance. This was observed where, after six weeks in the shelter, women start struggling again because they do not have any other solution to their problem. As already indicated in the previous chapter, this is a criticism directed towards almost all religious institutions, as they have a tendency to only help people with direct delivery of in-kind services to meet immediate needs without helping them to become responsible for their own problems. I therefore understood that it is important for UFMC to avoid falling into the same trap.

The third lesson relates to the weakness of dealing with consequences of a problem while closing eyes to its causes. This was learnt from the way UFMC is dealing with DV survivors but staying very far from abusers and structures that promote or condone violence. Because of this attitude, abusive culture and community structures are neither challenged nor transformed. Consequently, some women from The Haven shelter, instead of returning to the community, are being transferred to other DV survivors' shelters such as Esther House at Gateway. After a certain time, they come back to UFMC and this has become like a game of coming, going, and coming again. As mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, closing one's eyes to the cause of the problem never solves it.

The fourth lesson identifies church and cultural teachings and their role in both promoting and addressing DV. As discussed in the second chapter, DV is promoted through the patriarchal system, constructed through cultural and religious socialisation. But, it is within the culture and religion that solutions are also found. At this point, as seen in the first chapter, Dlamini observes that though Christian faith can hinder the liberation of women from DV, there are strategies that Christian churches can use to liberate them. She suggests two of these strategies. First, she proposes working with young men, men, and perpetrators to challenge the evil. She also advocates for breaking the silence and promoting legal education. Secondly, she suggests using affirming spirituality, counselling, networking, economic empowerment, and training of women's groups (*Manyano*) leadership to strengthen life-giving attitudes.<sup>2</sup>

Likewise, we have seen in the first chapter that Nadar also provides strategies to counteract the collaborative forces of "unholy trinity" - religion, culture, and gender construction – that

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<sup>2</sup> Dlamini, *Zulu women, Domestic violence and Christian Faith*, 73-80.

justify, promote, and sustain violence against women. Nadar is convinced that religion and culture constitute significant structures for the lives of both women and men.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, according to her, liberating strategies would be developed through culture and theology and would reveal injustice.<sup>4</sup> In the Christian context, Nadar sees these strategies to include counteracting both the *abuse* and *use* of the Bible and other Christian teachings and practices which justify and perpetuate women's oppression. The example of teachings to be deconstructed is the theology of the cross which compels women to follow the model of Jesus in enduring suffering, thus compelling them to accept their oppression as God-given.<sup>5</sup> She therefore posits Jesus' practices as an alternative theology which can be used to reconstruct a Christian life-giving teaching.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly to Dlamini and Nadar, Kanyoro also engages the Christian church in liberating women from cultural and religious violence. In addition, she insists on the need to analyse the culture because she believes that "African culture is perceived to be the thread which strings the community beliefs and social set-up together"<sup>7</sup> and that "there are elements in these cultures which are very veins through which the solidarity of communities is nurtured."<sup>8</sup> She therefore proposes gender-sensitive cultural hermeneutics as a liberating strategy that addresses issues of culture, while being critical of that culture from a gender perspective.<sup>9</sup>

Results of the present study also display how the culture and the religion can be both the obstacle and the way to the liberation of women from DV. Because of religious teachings received, Nola in the third woman's story has clung to praying for her abusive husband, believing that, as her lord, he is her only way to heaven. For this reason, she can never think about the alternative of divorce. Here, her religious belief has become an obstacle to her liberation from the patriarchal-based violence. However, though this religious belief is participating in her suffering, she has found refuge in a shelter founded by the church with the intention to empower survivors of DV and to help them reintegrate into the community. And because of the family (cultural) support, she is now attending professional training

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<sup>3</sup> Nadar, "Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses," 16.

<sup>4</sup> Nadar, "Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses," 20.

<sup>5</sup> Nadar, "Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses," 20-21.

<sup>6</sup> Nadar, "Searching the Dungeons beneath our Religious Discourses," 21.

<sup>7</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 14.

<sup>8</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 14.

which will help her to reduce her financial dependency on her husband. In this case, violence developed within the culture and religious belief is addressed using cultural and religious strategies. This leads me to observe that solutions to DV can be developed from within the same abusive structures, that is, culture and religion. For this to happen, it will require analysis of these structures, and promotion of elements that are conducive to women's liberation. As example, on religious side, one can use sermons to promote the biblical interpretation that both women and men are created in God's image and that there are equal. On cultural side, the example of element to promote can be the respect of human rights and governmental instruments for human rights such as Domestic Violence Act<sup>10</sup> (see the section on references).

The fifth lesson relates to the frustration generated by dependency. This was expressed by one church leader who remarked that because of the dependency on DSD's funds, as well as non-controlled volunteers' services, and external counsellors, several difficulties arise. The church is not able to resolve problem's emerging in the middle of the year, it cannot decide on the number of people to accommodate and the period of stay in the shelter. Furthermore, it does not know the progress of women's situations in their homes, and cannot count on volunteers' work.<sup>11</sup> This suggests that though partnership is important, dependency on others prevents UFMC from being able to act decisively and with confidence, and implementing a long-term vision.

The sixth lesson pertains to the view of the high level of DV in South Africa as a legacy of apartheid. During the interviews, one informant observed that the economic system during apartheid destroyed the family as an institution. Husbands were being employed very far from their homes, and because of a small income, they could not go with their wives and children and could not find means and time to visit them before the end of the year. As a result, these men were satisfying their emotional needs, including sexual needs, from prostitutes found in their working area. At the same time, their wives were doing the same with some men left in the rural area.<sup>12</sup> This observation concurs with Phiri who, in addition to the disintegration of family life, has seen the consequences of migrant labour to include

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<sup>10</sup> Republic of South Africa, "Domestic Violence Act."

<sup>11</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

unprotected sex and high rates of HIV infection in the whole Southern Africa.<sup>13</sup> As a consequence of their separation, spouses were divided and their children could not benefit from education and nurturance from an intact family unit that included both parents. After the independence of the country, the government did not take family construction as priority. Therefore, today, spouses still struggle with the transition from being alone and independent, to staying with partners with whom they have to share everything.<sup>14</sup> This was illustrated in the case of Nola in our third woman's story. Thus, dealing with DV today, means that we are also dealing with the aftermath of apartheid.

The last lesson identified here regards the children as victim of their parents' abusive relationships. For example, Seraphina, in our first woman's story, was handicapped from birth, and was being abused and oppressed by her father. Her mother, who was not in good terms with Seraphina's father, was also abusing her as she considered her to be the cause of her abusive marriage. Likewise, in the second story of Nadina, because of the quarrels between her parents, she was not cared for in their family. She had to be taken to a children's centre. After completing secondary school, she was obliged to opt for street life without any support though her parents were and are alive. With no options, this resulted in her joining an abusive boyfriend. This demonstrates how abusive relationships of parents are a major threat to the life of children, as they grow up and in the future. What can then be way forward with regard to these very sensitive lessons? In the next section, I propose some solutions to this question.

### **5.3. The Way Forward**

Following the results of the present study and these lessons above in particular, some ways forward have been suggested to make the response of the UFMC to DV reflect the fullness of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. In this regard, I first encourage the UFMC to continue saving lives of DV survivors through emergency assistance as they are doing now.

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<sup>13</sup> Isabel A. Phiri, "African Women of Faith Speak out in an HIV/AIDS Era" in Isabel A. Phiri, Beverley Haddad, and Madipoane Masenya (Ngwana' Mphahlele), *African Women, HIV and AIDS and Faith Communities* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003, 3-20), 12-13.

<sup>14</sup> Emmanuel, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

Secondly, I advise that the church attempts to escape the trap of remaining with emergency assistance only. This requires it to think deeply about and develop long-term programmes. These can include the actual ideas about extending the period for women's stay in the shelter which would go together with women's empowerment, especially through training and assistance in writing curricula vitae and finding jobs. This would also comprise assistance in finding identity cards and other requirements for a citizen. Still in this category, I also propose that the UFMC assist DV survivors to find affordable permanent accommodation after their time in the shelter. Here, the church can find a house and keep it for this end or help them integrate into UCH. The last proposition here is to create a network of exchange for women who have been assisted by UFMC. This would help with the process of the follow up of all cases, and the assessment of the impact of the efforts done so far.

The third set of suggestions aim at encouraging the church to not only deal with consequences of DV but also to address its causes by challenging and influencing the attitude of the community with regard to DV. This can include consolidating CFM by including cultural and religious sources of oppression within the family on the list of topics to be discussed, and in widely advertising CFM so that many people may know and attend it. I also advise the church to organise seminars and workshops in the community to discuss issues of DV. Here, target groups, areas, methodology, and particular topics can be determined when the decision to undertake these meetings is taken. I suggest that the church produce and distribute its own pamphlets, and organise marches, demonstrations and competitions, in the framework of challenging and influencing the attitude of the community with regard to DV. As UFMC leaders already have the idea of creating a network of the "Friends of The Haven" composed of people who would like to support the shelter in several ways, I suggest that the task of this network be extended to social transformation and the name of the group be "Friends of Non-Violence" which entails a wider field of operation.

The fourth suggestion intends to help the church to avoid developing oppressive religious teachings and practices. In this way, I propose that a sexism-free manual for biblical teachings about domestic relationships be produced, edited, and used during related meetings. I also suggest the church to carefully monitor the content and the process of the sermons, worship services, prayer meetings, and all other activities of the church so that the

pulpit may be used as a gender empowering source. This gender empowerment may include avoiding portraying God as male with all the weaknesses, selfishness, and culturally determined norms and rights for the human male which constitute the source of women's oppression. Rather, God may be explained as Yahweh who transcends all human imagination as being male or female and who gives life, strengths, and dignity to both male, female, and the whole universe. In the same way, gender empowerment may also include using inclusive language when speaking of God. With regard to the division of roles in the church, I advise the church not to use the gender of Jesus to exclude women from participation or from occupying important posts. At this point, I want to highlight that for some Christians, "the gender of Jesus has been taken to be the mode or paradigm of what it means to be a human."<sup>15</sup> These Christians understand Jesus' maleness as revealing God as male. In addition, Jesus' male identity, together with the fatherhood of God has been used to justify patriarchy.<sup>16</sup> However, theologically, Jesus' incarnation brings all creation to be complete in the divine glory<sup>17</sup> and the maleness of Jesus Christ after resurrection is explained as life-giving Spirit to everyone.<sup>18</sup> This is the inclusive significant that UFMC should consider. In the whole life of the church, the humanity of women should be embraced. I believe that if these suggestions are followed from an empowering position, they can lead to a healthy relationship between women and men, not only in the church but also in their homes.

The fifth suggestion relates to the way of reducing the consequences of financial dependence. Here, in addition to the grant provided by the DSD, I counsel the church to develop other income-generating activities that can constitute financial resources for the church and for DV survivors such as a bistro, internet café or other businesses of this kind.

The sixth suggestion consists of a way of reducing the effects of apartheid on family relationships. At this point, I advise the church to do engendered cultural hermeneutics. According to Kanyoro, there is a need in Africa to analyse the culture as a strategy to liberate women. As shown in the second chapter of this study, Kanyoro observes that this analysis should refer to the people who maintain the culture and whom the culture impacts.

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<sup>15</sup> Johnson and Rakoczy quoted in Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 99.

<sup>16</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 99.

<sup>17</sup> Dorothy Lee, *Flesh and glory: Symbolism, gender and theology in the gospel of John* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2002), 233, 234, 236.

<sup>18</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name*, 108.

She therefore proposes the “engendered cultural hermeneutics” or a gender-sensitive analysis of culture.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, UFMC should analyse the culture of the people who seek help at their shelter in order to identify, expose, and critique practices and factors promoting or condoning women’s oppression, and propose ways forward. This analysis can be done through different occasions such as during sermons, Couples’ Fellowship Ministry’s meetings, prayer groups, and seminars. Once this analysis is done, it will also shed light on ways to address the problem of high rate of murders of women by their husbands because of dowry, as observed in the second chapter.

The seventh suggestion responds to the problem of child DV survivors. Here, the story of Nadina provides a path. Nadina was taken from her abusive family to be reared in a children’s centre. Because of this, she achieved a secondary school diploma that is helping her today. I therefore propose that UFMC create a centre for unaccompanied child survivors of DV, to help them grow up in a human environment.

The last suggestion invites UFMC to criticize the unjust social order existing in the South African governmental services with regard to DV. At this point, it seems that the government has already established a legal and judicial framework composed of instruments and structures for addressing the problem of rape and DV. These include the new Constitution guaranteeing equality of all persons, non-racism, and non-sexism; "Domestic Violence Act" of October 20, 1998 (No. 116 of 1998); The Witness protection Act (Act 112 of 1998); The National Policy Guideline for Victims of Sexual Offences (1998); and the Rape Courts.<sup>20</sup>

However, in spite of this framework, women are still facing oppression and inequality, and lack of help. In this regard, Colleen Lowe Morna observes that police sexual offences figures are increased by numbers relating to sex workers arrested, while rapists remain free. She also remarks that “While police now have a tick box for domestic violence - a plea long made by activists - these statistics are neither presented nor analysed in the report, hiding behind such categories as “common assault” and “assault with intent to cause grievous

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<sup>19</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 18.

<sup>20</sup> Onyejekwe, "The Interrelationship Between Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS," 36; Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.



bodily harm." This hiding makes it impossible to accurately plan for DV survivors' shelters.<sup>21</sup>

Like Morna, Amnesty International emphasizes the gap in training for police, health workers, and provincial social services officials for the implementation of the new Sexual Offences Act. As a consequence, "...some health care providers and police risked [until 2008] the health of rape survivors by insisting that they first lodge a criminal complaint before they could have access to emergency treatment including post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to reduce the risk of HIV transmission."<sup>22</sup> Amnesty International also mentions the restriction of the women's access to legal remedies and protection, by the lack of political commitment and poor referral system. Amnesty International continues by noting that many police stations fail to assist women to open a case or to execute arrest warrants.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to these observations from Morna and Amnesty International, a staff member of The Haven has highlighted how some men who complain of being violated by women are shamed by the police. According to the police, such men "are not real men," meaning that they should have put these women in their places.<sup>24</sup> All these observations indicate the weakness of the government in helping women and men in danger and insinuate tacit approval for the men to oppress women. I encourage UFMC, as a prophetic church in God's mission and inspired by Wesleyan social holiness, to criticize the status quo and to offer constructive support to the government. Some suggested approaches for the church to enable it to play this role can include: meeting authorities and government's agents at their services, organising seminars and discussions where government agents are invited, participating in the meetings summoned by government's services, producing pamphlets containing related messages, and organising demonstrations such as marches and competitions through which the church's views on the response to DV are expressed. In all its initiatives relating to addressing DV, UFMC should consult, engage, and work in partnership with other churches and Faith-Based Organisations so as to make its ideas widely known and sustained.

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<sup>21</sup> Colleen Lowe Morna, "Like HIV and AIDS, Government Needs to Lead on Gender Violence" (SADC Gender Protocol) (05 December 09), Online: Gender link ([Http://www.Genderlinks.Org.Za/Article/Like-Hiv-And-Aids-Government-Needs-To-Lead-On-Gender-Violence-2009-12-06](http://www.Genderlinks.Org.Za/Article/Like-Hiv-And-Aids-Government-Needs-To-Lead-On-Gender-Violence-2009-12-06) Accessed December 14, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.

<sup>23</sup> Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2009*.

<sup>24</sup> Tracy, Interview (Pietermaritzburg: UFMC, November 2009).

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

This chapter constitutes the contribution of the present study toward enabling the response of UFMC to reflect the fullness of *missio Dei*. It comprises lessons drawn from the UFMC's experience in addressing DV and suggestions to help the church's response to reflect the *missio Dei* more fully. This chapter responded to the two last questions of this study and addressed its two last objectives: to draw lessons from UFMC's experience of embodying the *missio Dei* through addressing DV, and to suggest a new agenda to relate the *missio Dei* to the response of UFMC to DV. Suggestions formulated relate to the lessons identified. These include affirming UFMC as it continues saving the lives of DV survivors through emergency assistance. In addition it is suggested that UFMC strongly think about and develop long-term programmes; to not only deal with consequences of DV but to also integrate its causes; to avoid developing oppressive religious teachings; to reduce effects of financial dependence; to reduce effects of apartheid on the family relationships; to carefully respond to the problem of child DV survivors; and to criticize the status quo and unjust social order in the government's services. The questions this chapter addressed have found responses, and the objectives it was following have been achieved. However, I recognise that these suggestions are not dogmas. Rather, I consider them as ideas to be discussed, challenged, completed, and improved.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

The study on “The mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*: An assessment on UFMC to DV” was motivated by my suspicion that the response of UFMC to DV does not embody the fullness of *missio Dei* as exemplified by the prophets in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Here, my assumption was that in its endeavour, this church was primarily caring for oppressed women while falling short to challenge oppressive structures. I argued that solutions that deal with the consequences of a situation but close eyes to its causes do not provide a complete remedy. Therefore, the main question of this study sought to know to what extent the response of UFMC embodies the fullness of the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*. This question was divided into five working questions that sought to understand how the UFMC has responded to DV, the theology that has inspired it to respond to DV, how its response embodies (or does not embody) the fullness of the mission of the church as *missio Dei*, the lessons that can be drawn from its experience of addressing DV with regard to *missio Dei*; and the suggestions that can be formulated to make *missio Dei* relevant in its response to DV.

To answer these questions, six objectives have been defined. The first is to provide an overview of DV globally with special reference to South Africa; the second, to reflect theologically on the mission of the church in the world as *missio Dei*; the third, to identify the theology which has led UFMC to address DV; the fourth, to assess the response of UFMC to DV in light of the *missio Dei*; the fifth, to draw lessons from UFMC’s experience of embodying the *missio Dei* through addressing DV; and the sixth, to suggest a new agenda giving relevance to the *missio Dei* in the response of UFMC to DV.

The first objective has been achieved through the second chapter which comprises the background of DV, thus giving an understanding of the meaning of different aspects of DV and its current situation in the world and in South Africa. This chapter has revealed that DV is a global concern and an alarming issue in South Africa.

At the end of the second chapter, the question on the role the church amidst injustice was raised. This question was addressed in the third chapter on the mission of the church in the

world as *missio Dei*. In fact, the concept of *missio Dei* emphasizes that the church does not have its own mission but participates in accomplishing God's mission in the world. The prophets' and Jesus Christ's approach in responding to injustice provides a model for the church to reflect *missio Dei* in the context of injustice and oppression in the world. This is composed of four key elements: envisioning a just community, standing with oppressed, caring for oppressed and challenging oppressive structures. In this way, the second objective has been also attained in the third chapter.

Following these findings, I asked whether the response of the UFMF, as bearer of God's mission, was reflecting the fullness of *missio Dei*. This question summarises the concern in the first three working questions of the present study. To respond to these questions, an empirical study was conducted using interviews with DV survivors assisted by the UFMF, staff members involved in the UFMF's response to DV, and the UFMF leaders. Information collected was analysed using the main four elements characterizing *missio Dei* as yardsticks. As shown in the fourth chapter, results of this analysis illustrate that UFMF's response to DV fulfils three conditions - envisioning a just community, standing with oppressed, and caring for oppressed. It falls short one of "challenging oppressive structures" despite the doctrine of social holiness that shares the vision with the theology of *missio Dei* and guides Methodist churches.

This brought me to confirm the assumption of this study formulated as follow: "in its effort to accomplish God's mission in the world through addressing DV, UFMF is primarily caring for survivors, but neglecting to follow the fullness of the model of Jesus Christ and the prophets of not only caring for survivors of oppression, but also challenging oppressive structures." I also used this opportunity to take stand about whether or not the UFMF's response to DV embodies the fullness of the *missio Dei*. The stand is "No, the UFMF's response to DV does not embody the fullness of *missio Dei*." Additionally, as the theology that has led the UFMF to address DV was also identified in this fourth chapter as the Wesleyan doctrine of social holiness, the third and fourth objectives have been addressed here.

Reflecting on the possible reasons of the neglect of UFMF to make its response reflect the fullness of *missio Dei*, I suspected that the early definition given to The Haven Shelter as "emergency shelter" and the already discussed tendency of religious institutions to limit

their intervention to addressing emergency and short-term needs, leave aside attention to long-term solutions. The present study then aimed to contribute to suggesting ways the response of the UFMC to DV can reflect the fullness of *missio Dei*. This contribution was at the same time an attempt to respond to the two last questions and to achieve the two last objectives of the present study. In the sixth chapter, lessons have been drawn from the study's results. Related sets of suggestions were formulated for the UFMC to more comprehensively reflect the fullness of *missio Dei* in its response to DV.

As I conclude this work, the questions of this study have been responded to, and my objectives achieved. However, I do not pretend to have exhaustively addressed the issue of domestic violence or the many theological questions that arise in relation to the mission of the church and its response to oppression of women. I recognise that there is a great deal of information that could have been included here. Unfortunately, this was not possible within the academic and financial limits of a Masters thesis. For this reason other studies are required to cover the gap left. Future studies can focus on topics such as:

- Relevance/irrelevance of the church's dilemma with regard to recognising boyfriend/girlfriend partnerships;
- Assessment of the church's response to HIV and AIDS in times of DV;
- Sexism-free Biblical teachings in times of DV;
- Partnership between [any] culture and religious teachings in promoting DV; and
- Being Christian within an abusive partnership.

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## **Events**

Ubunye Free Methodist Church, Sunday service and sermon on August 10, 2008 (the day following Women's Day).

Ubunye Free Methodist Church, workshop of December 13, 2008 (facilitated by Family and Marriage Society South Africa (FAMSA) in the framework of the Sixteen Days of Activism).



## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Interview with church leaders and staff members

Position of the participant in the church (church leaders)

Position of the participant in the programme addressing domestic violence (staff)

Questions	Leader	staff
1. What has motivated UFMC to address domestic violence: what was the problem? What was the interest of UFMC in addressing this problem? (Q.1)	x	x
2. What theology, belief or doctrine has inspired UFMC to address domestic violence? (Q.2)	x	
3. What are the goals (long-term vision) and objectives of the response of UFMC to domestic violence? (Q.3)	x	x
4. What is the position of UFMC with regard to the injustice and exclusion sometimes committed in the community to some people such as poor, children, women, handicapped... how things should be? (Q.4)	x	
5. What is the attitude of UFMC with regard to the oppression of women by men in their homes? (Q.5)	x	
6. What strategies are used by UFMC to address domestic violence? (Q.6)	x	x
7. What are the activities undertaken by UFMC to address domestic violence? (Q.7)	x	x
8. How long does UFMC assist each domestic violence survivor? (Q.8)	x	x
9. What assistance does UFMC provide to domestic violence survivors (quantity and quality of assistance and some specific examples)? (Q.9)	x	x
10. What kind of assistance does FMF provide to domestic violence survivors which prepares them to return within the community?(Q.10)	x	x
11. What kind of assistance does UFMC provide to domestic violence survivors after the period of shelter? (Q.11)	x	x
12. What actions has UFMC initiated to deal with women's abusers in the framework of addressing domestic violence? (Q.12)	x	x
13. What actions has UFMC initiated to deal with the community in the framework of addressing domestic violence? (Q.13)	x	x
14. What are the achievements of UFMC in addressing domestic violence? (Q.14)	x	x
15. What has been the impact of the response of UFMC in the lives of domestic violence survivors (quantity and quality of impact and some specific examples)? (Q.15)	x	x
16. How has UFMC impacted on the attitudes and behaviour of men abusers with regard to domestic violence? (Q.16)	x	x
17. How has UFMC impacted on the attitudes and behaviours of the community with regard to domestic violence? (Q.17)	x	x
18. What are the strengths of UFMC which have played a positive role	x	x

Questions	Leader	staff
in addressing domestic violence? (Q.18)		
19. What are the external opportunities have played role in running the programme or in reaching achievements registered and how? (Q.19)	x	x
20. What challenges and difficulties have been registered within the initiative of addressing domestic violence? (Q.20)	x	x
21. What are the weaknesses of UFMC which have negative impact on the way it responds to domestic violence? (Q.21)	x	x
22. How does UFMC envision improving its response to domestic violence? (Q.22)	x	x
23. What is the plan for the future in relation to addressing domestic violence: will UFMC continue the same activities or will it make changes? Why; how? (Q.23)	x	x
24. What other information can you provide which can help understand the response of UFMC to domestic violence? (Q.24)	x	x

## Appendix 2: Interview with women survivors of DV

### Demographic data:

Age

Marital status

Education level

Profession

Number of children (at UFMC shelter; at home),

### Questions:

1. What kind of abuse have you experienced? (Q.1)
2. How long have you been abused, who were the abusers and what happened? (Q.2)
3. What was the pretext of abusers for abusing you; what motivated them to abuse you? What supports do abusers have from family, community or elsewhere which motivated them to abuse you? (Q.3)
4. How and where did you try to get assistance and what happened? (Q.4)
5. When did you come to seek assistance in UFMC? (Q.5)
6. What have you appreciated at UFMC which has motivated you to seek its assistance instead of going to other institutions? (Q.6)
7. What assistance has UFMC provided to you (quantity and quality of assistance)? (Q.7)
8. What contact has UFMC had with abusers to deal with your case? (Q.8)
9. What contact has UFMC had with the community to deal with your case? (Q.9)
10. What improvement have you registered so far (in personal physical or psychological life, in family, legal services, community)? (Q.10)
11. How do you appreciate the service provided by UFMC? Are you satisfied or not, why? (Q.11)
12. What are the services needed but not provided by UFMC (Q.12)
13. Where do you plan to go after the period during which you are allowed to stay in the UFMC shelter? Why? How will you manage to cope with life? (Q.13)
14. What can you suggest for the improvement of the response of UFMC to domestic violence? (Q.14)

**Note:** For every type of informants, probing questions has been used to better explore the situation, especially in light of the theology of *missio Dei*.

**Appendix 3: Correspondence between elements to analyze, *missio Dei* and interview guides**

Elements to analyze	<i>Missio Dei</i> as framework of analysis (elements serving as yardstick)	INFORMANTS AND INTERVIEW GUIDES		
		CHURCH LEADERS	STAFF	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS
Motivation and goal of the response & Theological commitment	Envisioning a just community & Standing with the oppressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has motivated UFMC to address domestic violence: what was the problem? What was the interest of UFMC in addressing this problem? (Q.1)</li> <li>• What are goals (long-term vision) and objectives of the response of UFMC to domestic violence? (Q.3)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How and where did you try to get assistance and what happened? (Q.4)</li> <li>• What have you appreciated at UFMC which has motivated you to seek its assistance instead of going to other institutions? (Q.6)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What theology, belief or doctrine have inspired UFMC to address domestic violence? (Q.2)</li> <li>• What is the position of UFMC with regard to the injustice and exclusion sometimes committed in the community to some people such as poor, children, women, handicapped, ...; how things should be? (Q.4)</li> <li>• What is the attitude of UFMC with regard to the oppression of women by men in their homes? (Q.5)</li> </ul>		
Strategies used and activities conducted	Caring for the oppressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long does UFMC assist each domestic violence survivor? (Q.8)</li> <li>• What assistance does UFMC provide to domestic violence survivors (quantity and quality of assistance and some specific examples)? (Q.9)</li> <li>• What kind of assistance does FMF provide to domestic violence survivors which prepares them to return within the community? (Q.10)</li> <li>• What kind of assistance does UFMC provide to domestic violence survivors after the period of shelter? (Q.11)</li> <li>• What has been the impact of the response of UFMC in the lives of domestic violence survivors (quantity and quality of impact and some specific examples)? (Q.15)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When did you come to seek assistance in UFMC? (Q.5)</li> <li>• What assistance has UFMC provided to you (quantity and quality of assistance)? (Q.7)</li> </ul>
	Challenging oppressive structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What actions has UFMC initiated to deal with women's abusers in the framework of addressing domestic violence? (Q.12)</li> <li>• What actions has UFMC initiated to deal with the community in the framework of addressing domestic violence? (Q.13)</li> <li>• How has UFMC impacted the attitudes and behaviour of men abusers with regard to domestic violence? (Q.16)</li> <li>• How has UFMC impacted the attitudes and behaviours of the community with regard to domestic violence? (Q.17)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What contact has UFMC had with abusers to deal with your case? (Q.8)</li> <li>• What contact has UFMC had with the community to deal with your case? (Q.9)</li> </ul>

Elements to analyze	Missio Dei as framework of analysis (elements serving as yardstick)	INFORMANTS AND INTERVIEW GUIDES		
		CHURCH LEADERS	STAFF	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS
	Caring for the oppressed & Challenging oppressive structures at the same time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies are used by UFMC to address domestic violence? (Q.6)</li> <li>• What are the activities undertaken by UFMC to address domestic violence? (Q.7)</li> <li>• What are the achievements of UFMC in addressing domestic violence? (Q.14)</li> <li>• What are the strengths of UFMC which have played a positive role in addressing domestic violence? (Q.18)</li> <li>• What challenges and difficulties have been registered within the initiative of addressing domestic violence? (Q.20)</li> <li>• What are weaknesses UFMC which have negative impact on the way it responds to domestic violence? (Q.21)</li> <li>• How does UFMC envision improving its response to domestic violence? (Q.22)</li> <li>• What is the plan for the future in relation to addressing domestic violence: will UFMC continue the same activities or will it make changes? Why; how? (Q.23)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What improvement have you registered so far (in personal physical or psychological life, in family, legal services, community)? (Q.10)</li> <li>• How do you appreciate the service provided by UFMC? Are you satisfied or not, why? (Q.11)</li> <li>• What are the services needed but not provided by UFMC (Q.12)</li> <li>• Where do you plan to go after the period during which you are allowed to stay in the UFMC shelter? Why? How will you manage to cope with life? (Q.13)</li> </ul>
Others		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the external opportunities have played role in running the programme or in reaching achievements registered and how? (Q.19)</li> <li>• What other information can you provide which can help understand the response of UFMC to domestic violence? (Q.24)</li> </ul>	Position of the participant in the church	<p><b>Demographic data:</b> Age, Marital status, Education level, Profession, Number of children (at UFMC shelter; at home),</p> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of abuse have you experienced? (Q.1)</li> <li>• How long have you been abused, who were the abusers and what happened? (Q.2)</li> <li>• What was the pretext of abusers for abusing you; what motivated them to abuse you? What supports do abusers have from family, community or elsewhere which motivated them to abuse you? (Q.3)</li> <li>• What can you suggest for the improvement of the response of UFMC to domestic violence? (Q.14)</li> </ul>
			Position of the participant in the programme addressing domestic violence	

## Appendix 4: Introduction letter

Dear Participant,

I am **Innocent Iyakaremye**, a student at University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), studying for a Masters in Theology degree in the Theology and Development Programme. The accomplishment of this programme requires conducting a study whose results are used for the improvement of the well-being in the community. Therefore, in agreement with my school, I chose to conduct the study on "**The response of UFMC to domestic violence**", hoping that the results of this study will contribute to the improvement of the efforts of the church to set oppressed people free.

The title of my study is "***The Mission of the Church as missio Dei: an Assessment of the response of Ubunye Free Methodist Church (UFMC) to domestic violence.***" The aim of the study is to explore the way this initiative of the church reflects the mission of the church of participating in the creation of a just community and restoring life to oppressed people.

I have chosen you [**as appointed minister at Ubunye church / member of board committee / staff involved in activities addressing domestic violence/ survivor of domestic violence**]. I hope to learn more about UFMC's way of addressing domestic violence, and this will help me to make useful suggestions for improvement.

Please understand that your participation is voluntary and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not is yours alone. If you agree to participate, you may stop at any time and discontinue your participation. If you refuse to participate or withdraw, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. However, I would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with me.

I will not record your name anywhere on the questionnaire, and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researcher will have access to the unlinked information. All individual information will remain confidential and will be destroyed within three months after the submission of the study report.

The interview will last about 40 minutes. I will be asking you a few questions and request that you be as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature. You may choose not to answer these questions. I will also be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. I know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to these questions, but I ask you to try to think about them. When it comes to answering these questions, there are no right and wrong answers.

[=>**For women**] If I ask you a question which makes you feel sad or upset, we can stop and talk about it. There are also the counsellors who are willing and available to assist you with those things that upset you if you need any assistance later.

If possible, I intend to share results of the study with the staff and church leaders without revealing your identity. If you have a complaint about any aspect of this study, you may also contact my supervisor at **+27 33 260 6132**.

### Details of the researcher

Innocent Iyakaremye; Student in Masters in Theology Degree; Theology and Development Programme; School of Religion and Theology; University of Kwa Zulu Natal  
P.O.Box 3209 Pietermaritzburg; South Africa  
Tel. +27720741892; E-mail: iyakin2@gmail.com

### Details of the Project Supervisor

Professor Isabel Apawo Phiri; Coordinator: African Theology programme; School of Religion and Theology; University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Private Bag X01; Scottsville; 3209; Pietermaritzburg; South Africa  
Tel: 27 33 260 6132 (w); 27 33 3462920 (h); 27 724239134(c);  
Fax 27 33 260 5858; E-mail: phirii@ukzn.ac.za

### Appendix 5: Consent

I hereby agree to participate in the research on "***The Mission of the Church as missio Dei: An Assessment of the response on UPMC to domestic violence***" I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively. The purpose of the study has been explained to me, and I understand what is expected of my participation.

I know the person to contact should I need to speak about any issues that may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix 6: Acceptance letter from UFMC**



*The Haven*

An Emergency Shelter for Women and their Children

P.O. Box 111  
Dorpssp  
3:

March 31, 2009

**Mr. Iyakaremye Innocent**

75 Christie Road, Pelham  
3201 Pietermaritzburg, RSA  
Cell: (+27) 720 741 892  
Email: [iyakin2@gmail.com](mailto:iyakin2@gmail.com)

Dear Iyakaremye,

**Re: Your research at The Haven**

Your application for research of February 28, 2009 refers.

I am hereby writing to inform you that your application for research at The Haven as part of your Masters Degree requirement has been accepted. You are therefore asked to meet with the Manager of The Haven to organise a timetable for your research.

It is our hope that your research at The Haven will be enjoyable and that the results of your project will be an objective assessment of our ministry and help us improve the quality of our services.

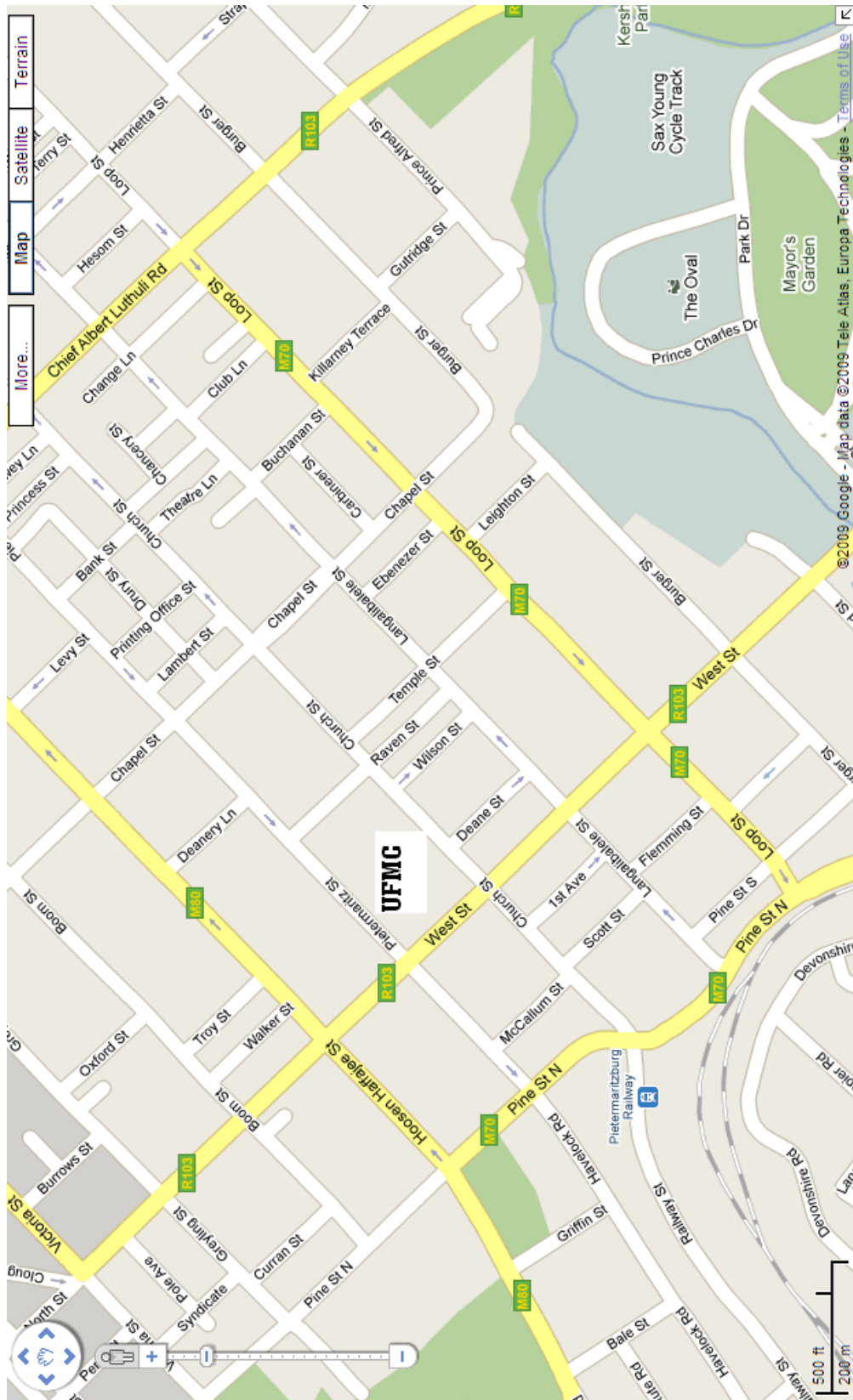
Yours sincerely,

**For The Haven Management Committee**

**Rev. Philippe J. L. Emedi,**  
Chairman  
P.O. Box 11046  
Dorpspruit 3206, RSA  
Cell: (+27) 72 043 2230



**Appendix 7: Location of UFMC in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa**



**Source:** <http://maps.google.co.uk>; **Key words:** 1 George MacFarlane Ln, Pietermaritzburg 3201, South Africa