

TOWARDS AN ASSESSMENT OF FRESH EXPRESSIONS OF CHURCH IN ACSA (THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA) THROUGH AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE COMMUNITY SUPPER AT ST PETER'S CHURCH IN MOWBRAY, CAPE TOWN

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DISSERTATION PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGY (PRACTICAL THEOLOGY) IN THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH

APRIL 2019

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Fresh Expressions of Church is a growing mission shaped response to the decline of mainline churches in the West. Academic reflection on the Fresh Expressions movement in the UK and the global North has begun to flourish. No such reflection, of any scope, exists in the South African context. This research asks if the Fresh Expressions of Church movement is an appropriate response to decline and church planting initiatives in the Anglican Church in South Africa. It also seeks to ask what an authentic contextual Fresh Expression of Church might look like. Are existing Fresh Expression of Church authentic responses to church planting in a postcolonial and post-*Apartheid* terrain?

Following the work of the ecclesiology and ethnography network the author presents an ethnographic study of The Community Supper at St Peter's Mowbray, Cape Town. The author undertook in depth, immersive observation and semi structured interviews in order to seek out the *lived, concrete* and *messy* experiences of a Fresh Expressions of Church in its 7th year of existence. In this data collection process the idea was to uncover and unearth the experiences of the community growing out of ecclesial liminality into something more mature and sustainable.

The results reveal a community living with a sense of ecclesial 'grace'. The work traces the organic development of the Supper in relation to the questions about Anglican ecclesiology. This ecclesial 'grace' allows for a diverse body of people to gather together once a week and eat a meal followed by a simple eucharist. The results reveal a community practicing being human together, corroding the toxic divides of *Apartheid* and genuinely performing the faith free from religious acquiescence. The results also reveal, at times, the power of eating together, sharing a meal and being a place of welcome and hospitality.

This work potentially opens up questions about the way the Anglican Church in South Africa can respond to haemorrhaging decline in many of its urban centres by starting new contextual churches through the process of listening, serving and growing disciples who help shape liturgy and church structure from 'below'.

OPSOMMING

Die beweging bekend as “Fresh Expressions of Church” (FEoC), wat mens sou kon vertaal met vars uitdrukkings van Kerk-wees, is ‘n groeiende sending geïnformeerde benadering en is ‘n reaksie op die afname van getalle in die hoofstroomkerke van die Weste. Akademies refleksie op die FEoC-beweging in die Verenigde Koninkryke en die globale Noorde het begin om te floreer. Baie min van hierdie refleksie van enige aard in verband met die beweging, bestaan binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks. Hierdie navorsing vra die vraag of die FEoC-beweging ‘n gepaste reaksie is op die afname van getalle en ook of dit die gepaste reaksie op die kerkplanting inisiatiewe van die Anglikaanse Kerk in Suid-Afrika kan wees? Daar word ook gevra hoe behoort ‘n vars kontekstuele uitdrukking van kerk daar uit te sien?

In navolging van die werk van die ekklesiologie en etnografiese netwerk bied die navorser ‘n etnografiese studie van die “Community Supper” wat ‘n vars uitdrukking van kerk-wees van die St Peter’s Mowbray-gemeente in Kaapstad verteenwoordig. Die navorser het ‘n in diepte ondersoek van die gemeenskap gedoen deur deelnemende observasie en semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude om te probeer agterkom wat die geleefde en konkrete alledaagse ervarings van hierdie vars uitdrukking van kerk-wees is, nadat al reeds sewe jaar bestaan. In die data-versamelingsproses was die gedagte om die ervarings van die Community Supper-gemeenskap oop te maak en te begryp. Hierdie gemeenskap het as ‘n kerklik gemarginaliseerde gemeenskap gegroei na ‘n volwasse en volhoubare gemeenskap.

Die resultate het ‘n gemeenskap openbaar wat met ‘n vorm van “kerklike genade” leef. Die navorsing stippel die organiese ontwikkeling van die “Community Supper” uit in verhouding met ‘n aantal vrae wat oor Anglikaanse ekklesiologie gevra word. Die “kerklike genade” laat ruimte vir ‘n diverse liggaam van mense wat een keer ‘n week bymekaar kom en wat gewoonlik ‘n eenvoudige bediening van die nagmaal insluit. Die resultate openbaar verder ‘n gemeenskap wat hulle inoefen in wat die beteken om mens te wees deur die toksiese Apartheids-verlede te dekonstrueer en geloof outentiek opvoer deur godsdienstige toegewendheid. Die resultate openbaar ook die krag wat daarin bestaan om saam te eet, ‘n maaltyd te deel en om ‘n plek vol gasvryheid te wees.

Die werk open verder ‘n aantal vrae oor hoe die Anglikaanse Kerk in Suid-Afrika op die skerp afname in getalle in baie van die stedelike sentrums kan reageer deur nuwe kontekstuele kerke te begin? Laasgenoemde kan volgens die navorser geskied deur nuwe kontekstuele kerke te begin deur prosesse van luister, diens en groeiende dissipelskap wat help vorm gee aan liturgie en kerklike strukture wat “van onder” opgebou word.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to Sharon, Talia, Amelie, Reuben and Esther. They have been gracious enough to allow me to work even when it meant Daddy being shut away in the study. Especially thanks go to my wife Sharon who encouraged me when I felt particularly disheartened or that nobody was interested in the work being undertaken.

Thanks to St John's Parish who supported me financially. Revd Duncan McLea and other ministers of the Parish who encouraged me. The students of the St John's Leadership Academy to whom I presented parts of the research to for sharpening my thinking. Thanks goes to the Provincial Postgraduate Education Fund of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa who gave generous grants to cover fees.

Thanks to my own local congregation of St John's, Wynberg, Cape Town who gave me the space and flexibility to write and think whilst leading. A thanks to my staff team, wardens and pastorate. A special thanks to my PA Sharon Lawrence who helped transcribe interviews. Also, thanks Margie Stewart for diagrams!

Thanks to Revd Dr Mike Moynagh who gave me his time for a few meetings and encouraged me. To the Fresh Expressions South Africa board and local FEAST meetings who cheered me on over the process.

Thanks to Prof Ian Nell who as supervisor gave much intellectual stimulation throughout the whole research process.

Thanks to the Community Supper members themselves who embraced me as part of the team, willingly gave their time and answered by questions. Thanks to those who I shared a meal with.

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A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACSA	The Anglican Church of Southern Africa
AMWPR	Anglican-Methodist Working Party Report
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
FXoC	Fresh Expressions of Church
HUP	Homogeneous Unit Principle
MSC	Mission Shaped Church
MSI	Mission Shaped Intro
MSM	Mission Shaped Ministry
PO	Participant Observation
COTT	College of the Transfiguration
USPG	United Society Partners in the Gospel

A Church which pitches its tents without constantly looking out for new horizons, which does not continually strike camp, is being untrue to its calling (we must) play down our longing for certainty, accept what is risky, and live by improvisation and experiment.¹

Chapter 1 Introduction and Orientation to the Study

1.1.1 Context of Study

‘Ecclesiology is the new rock’n’roll’, records Pete Ward (2017:1), of a conversation with a leading mission agency head in the UK. Certainly, since the publishing of the Church House publishing report *Mission-shaped Church*, ‘there has been a sort of quiet revolution in how we are thinking the word *church* at the moment’ (Williams 2012). In 2004 the report became an unlikely best seller. It has, ‘sold over 30,000 copies, reached an international audience and has been credited with reshaping the Church of England’s ecclesiology’ (Moynagh 2012:52). This thesis is an attempt to explore, through an ethnographic study of the community Supper at St Peters in Mowbray, just how authentic ecclesial communities are being shaped through *mission-shaped* approaches and in turn what impact they may have on ecclesiology and discipleship in the postcolonial and post-*Apartheid* Anglican Church in South Africa.

We live at a point in human history in which unprecedented changes have taken, and are taking, place. One might casually think back to other epochs in history; the collapse of the Roman Empire, the formation of Christendom, the Reformation and Renaissance in the sixteenth century and the Age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth (Warren 1995:41). Thomas Merton has said, ‘We are living in the greatest revolution in history...not a revolution planned and carried out by any particular party, race or nation, but a deep elemental boiling over of all the inner contradictions that have ever been in people, a revolution of chaotic forces inside everybody’ (Quoted in Warren 1995:42).

The church has found herself generally unprepared for these “strange times”, this liminal period where we have exited modernity into a world marked by insecurity, uncertainty and unknowns. Fresh Expressions of Church are an organic mission-shaped response to the wider shifts that have taken place in post Christendom Britain but in a deep way across Western Europe, North America and other nations globally transitioning into an era of vulnerability and uncertainty. FXoC continue to generate enormous amounts of interest. Increasingly there is on-going, deep theological and missiological reflection taking place both online through the Fresh Expressions website and its various offshoots

¹ Hans Kung in Frost and Hirsch (2003:vii).

and virtual nodes and published material in the form of training resources, books, journal articles and unpublished academic work.²

In essence, ‘A fresh expression is a form of church for *our* changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. It will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples; It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the gospel and the enduring marks of the church and for its cultural context’ (Croft 2008:9).

1.1.2 The rise of Fresh Expressions in South Africa

2013 was a significant year for the establishment and growth of Fresh Expressions of Church in Southern Africa, more specifically South Africa. Crowther (2014, 2016) charts something of the early seeds and the ecumenical nature of the movement. There is a sense in the report that what is taking place is both exciting and surprising, indeed that it is a *kairos* moment initiated by God’s Holy Spirit rather than a strategic development plan initiated by a group of people or churches.

Whilst work around Fresh Expressions in South Africa is clearly in an embryonic state there seems to be genuine desire to rediscover the missional impulse of the church in the 21st century context across a range of churchmanship and denominational backgrounds. The study acknowledges that in essence Fresh Expressions is closely aligned to, and connected with, genuine desires for appropriate or authentic contextualization. Stories of what the journey into mission shaped life might look like has significance for the wider church not for being able to produce a blueprint but to reveal a unique path which others may find resonates into their own journey. I situate my thinking on this closely with Swinton and Mowat (2006) who suggest that a shift away from nomothetic truth to ideographic truth allows one to find, ‘meaningful knowledge can be discovered in unique, non-replicable experiences’ (2006:38).

² The Church army based in Sheffield, UK have produced a number of qualitative and quantitative surveys of Fresh Expressions. A significant piece of research is *The Day of Small Things: An analysis of fresh expressions of church in 21 dioceses of the Church of England*. https://www.churcharmy.org/Articles/516318/What_we_do/Research_Unit/Fresh_expressions_of.aspx

1.2 Motivation for Study

1.2.1 Rediscovering narrative - two stories

1.2.1.1 Pietermaritzburg

About 7 years ago, in 2011, whilst still a new priest in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa in the diocese of Natal I was offered an opportunity by the then Bishop to speak off the cuff on Fresh Expressions during a clergy gathering. Although I had never planted a Fresh Expression of Church, I was sympathetic to the movement through what I had read, watched and interacting with leading protagonists in the UK.

On the hoof I tried to give a simple account of the shifts in culture and the church's (non) response whilst explaining the missional impetus of Fresh Expressions of Church and potential in a nation in a place of flux in a post-*Apartheid*, post-colonial, dying embers of Christendom context. I asked if any of the clergy had a response. A senior Zulu priest stood up and said, "This sound like neo-colonialism to me. It's just the import of British ideas."

1.2.1.2 Stellenbosch

Juxtaposed with this story is another from May 2017. I had the opportunity to have a brief conversation with Revd Dr Michael Moynagh after a keynote address at a conference in Stellenbosch. I shared a brief outline of my research and in response Moynagh recalled how he had been to a service the previous Sunday where the minister had railed against colonialism, but the congregation had sung 19th century English hymns. Moynagh mused, 'perhaps the fresh expressions movement can be a post colonising tool here in South Africa?'

1.2.2 Approaches

So, these two vignettes yielded a 5-year reflection on Fresh Expressions of Church that I know have arisen in the complex knotty landscape of post-*Apartheid* in ACSA. How appropriate are they? Are they **authentic**? Are they imported neo-colonialist attempts to disrupt Anglican ecclesiological practice? Or are they to be seen instead as **authentic** expressions of ecclesial life for men, women and children for whom the inherited mainline church no longer speaks or brings meaningful discipleship and life?

Despite the success story of the movement it should be noted that critiques of Fresh Expressions of Church have been polyvalent. Percy (2008:27-39) accuses the movement of being obsessed with 'newness, alternatives and novelty', (2008:29) colluding with pluralism and individualism (2008:32) and therefore consumeristic traits of modern capitalist enterprise (Hull 2006). But perhaps most challengingly from a missiological and practical theological perspective Percy (2008:34) sees the

movement as an incarnation of McGavran's HUP (Homogeneous Unit Principle). McGavran (1980:223) declared that, 'people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers.' In the South African context I would argue, with Davison and Milbank (2010:66), that this type of notion belongs to an outdated imperialistic approach. However, work by Nell and Grobler (2014:747-768) which draws on empirical data suggests quite the opposite is happening in some Fresh Expressions of Church in the UK.

Indeed, one might argue that within the very definition of Fresh Expressions of Church presented above two different paradigms of mission clash. The first an imperialistic and ecclesiocentric approach the second a conversational and dialogic approach which sit in tension with one another. This tension of ecclesiocentric or church shaped mission has been critiqued by Hull (2006), Duraisingh (2010) and Davison and Milbank (2010). In this ongoing work on Fresh Expressions of Church what is truly **authentic** when dealing with a context outside of the West?

I submit that an **authentic** Fresh Expression of Church must be missional, contextual, formational and ecclesial (Nell and Grobler 2014:750, Moynagh 2012, 2017). I describe a provisional understanding of **authentic** below. **Firstly**, I draw on the Church Army's Research Unit report into Fresh Expressions of Church in the Anglican Church (2013:10). The report presents ten parameters for assessing the authenticity of an ecclesial community which I take as fundamental to any assessment in the South African context.

Secondly, I propose that an **authentic Fresh Expression of Church** (following Nell and Grobler 2014) in the South African context should be inviting (:753), accepting (:755) and challenging (:757). It will need to be a sacred space where, as Saayman (2010b) urges, we learn to be human together and practice Ubuntu (Tutu 1999, Dreyer 2015, Mbaya 2011). An **authentic** Fresh Expressions of Church will not collude with the dominant narrative of individualism and consumerism but stand in prophetic defiance and therefore it will offer an alternative community (Bosch 1991) and a community that seeks mystery (Drane 2000:158, Vanier 1978). Out of this I suggest an empirical study where these very attributes might be seen in a local Fresh Expression of Church based in Mowbray, Cape Town.

1.3 Research Question

What can an ethnographic assessment of the Community Supper at St Peters Church in Mowbray, Cape Town reveal about possible authentic emergences of Fresh Expressions of Church in ACSA related to their South African and Anglican contexts?

1.4 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is essentially **four-fold**.

Firstly, the study contributes new knowledge to the Ethnography and Ecclesiology network's circle of scholars.

Secondly, the study brings new perspectives on Fresh Expressions of Church from a South African perspective to the global conversation. It contributes to knowledge being generated in the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Germany, the US and South Africa.

Thirdly, is to bring some empirical data and critical research to the wider church in ACSA around Fresh Expressions of Church that will encourage a reappraisal of the church's current attitude to planting new contextual communities.

Fourthly, the study is offered to the church itself as a reflection and journey on their current ecclesial state. The community knows vulnerability and strain in its own gathered life. The hope is that in the attentiveness to the particular some key learnings will be an encouragement to the church themselves and others attempting to explore authentic contextual church planting.

1.5.1 Positionality of the researcher

Presuppositions are also included in the researcher him or herself. This makes in some ways for elements of auto-ethnography in the work of reflection and interaction. I locate myself in a variety of ways which I map out, provisionally, below. I approach this work in a three-fold manner as missiologist, musicologist and minister. I am a white, foreign, male. Although I am married to a South African I am of British origin having lived outside of the UK for 15 years. As a missiologist I read contexts and texts with a missional hermeneutic. This work is born out of the sense of being a practical missiologist more than a practical theologian. As a musicologist I approach this work as someone interested in improvisation, textures and creation of new sounds, the timbre of a voice, the interplay between winding notes. As a minister I approach this work from a pragmatic and pastoral perspective seeing the process as a compassionate-being-with (Nouwen 1994).

I have been in South Africa for over 9 years and am a permanent resident. This in one sense gives me an ‘outsiders’ view whilst alternatively making me blind to some aspects of social interaction and complexities. This ‘positioning’ is also shaped by 5 years living and working as a church planter with the rural poor of Cambodia under the auspices of Overseas Missionary Fellowship International. This gives me perhaps a bias towards the poor and the marginalised. Firstly, I submit that Labanow’s (2006:137) assessment is useful. He notes that, ‘the interpreter is an inevitable part of the interpretive process. The researcher though carefully aware of personal prejudices and pre-understandings, acknowledges himself as a participating member of the research process and proceeds carefully with this knowledge always in mind.’ Secondly Kaufman (2015) asks how the process and practice of honest and integrated reflexivity can lead to deeper insight. Regarding the issue of positionality, I’m cognisant of Kaufman’s (2015:103) comments that attentive observers are still limited by their own prejudice - the entire research process is shaped by who researchers are. In this research process and resultant thesis I continued to hold an important question, “Am I willing to be disturbed, interrupted, challenged and changed by my research subjects and setting?” Am I willing to be converted? I admit that I am an advocate of FXoC. But I’m a critical advocate and in this research, I am open to having my mind changed on the efficacy of the movement in the Southern African context.

1.5.2 Research Methodology

The methodological approach to this thesis is ethnographic. Ethnography is a branch of anthropology which in recent years has become a popular tool for uncovering, unearthing and revealing the nature of communities, contexts and locales. Ethnography takes seriously the ‘this-ness’ and ‘lived-out-ness’ of a culture (Willis and Trondman 2002:394). Ethnography takes seriously ‘attending to particularity’ (Brittain 2014:5). From a practical theological perspective ethnography has gained much currency in the last 10/15 years especially with the advent of works by Healy (2000), Swinton and Mowat (2006), Scharen (2005, 2015) and Ward (2012, 2014, 2015). I therefore see this research as being very much part of the ethnography and ecclesiology conversation. Ethnography has played an important role in rethinking the nature of church and asking questions about the ‘blueprint’ and often idealised understandings in ecclesiology. Ethnography ‘opens up’ understandings seeking to ‘crack open’ the actual ‘lived’ experience of ecclesial communities. Moschella (2012:225) says, ‘ethnography involves immersing one’s self in the communal and ritual life of a group, in order to gain an understanding of a situation from the inside out.’ Moreover, in practical theology ethnography is used to ‘explore *habitus*, the sum of the unspoken and yet firmly entrenched rules or patterns that govern the way a group of people practice [or as I open up later ‘perform’] their faith’ (Moschella 2012:226).

My plan was to spend 4 months at the community supper on a weekly basis observing and writing intensive reflexive field notes after each gathering. During that period I conducted a number of semi structured interview with both key leaders as well as guests who attend the supper regularly asking ‘Is the supper a place for authentically performing of the faith?’

1.6 Defining authenticity in Fresh Expressions from a South African perspective

As outlined above I submit that an **authentic** Fresh Expression of Church must be missional, contextual, formational and ecclesial (Moynagh 2012 & 2017, Nell and Grobler 2014:750). I describe a provisional understanding of **authentic** below. Firstly, the movement itself has a working definition that still serves adequately (Croft 2008:9).

- A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church.
- It will come into being through the principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples.
- It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the gospel and the enduring marks of the Church and for its cultural context.

Within this definition there appears to be a clash between an imperialistic notion of mission that as we will see later in the discussion is primarily concerned with church-shaped mission (1st and 3rd sentences of the working definition) and more expansive and generous notion embodied by the 2nd sentence. Herein lies one of the fundamental criticisms of FXoC which we will explore in later in the thesis. Percy (2010) and the report of the Anglican Methodist Working Party Report (2012:180) both note that the term fresh expressions of church is potentially misleading. As I submit and hold in this thesis, and an important assumption of practical theology in the ethnography and ecclesiology conversation is that, ‘the church is *never* an abstract theological concept because the body of Christ is always a visible, concrete reality in the world (2012:180). Therefore, the phrase ‘fresh expressions of church’ should be interpreted in such a way that it clearly refers to *the* church.’

More recently, perhaps as a way of side stepping this difficulty inherent in the working definition the movement has used the following diagram (See Figure 1 below also named by Moynagh (2017) as

the *servicing first journey*) to explain the process of how a Fresh Expression unfolds and has used 4 words. Missional - Contextual - Formational - Ecclesial (Moynagh 2012).



[Figure 1]

Secondly, I draw on the Church Army's Research Unit report into Fresh Expressions of Church in the Anglican Church (2013:10). The report presents ten parameters for assessing the authenticity of an ecclesial community which I take as fundamental to any assessment in the South African context. The ten parameters are as follows (2013:10)

1.6.1 Authenticity: What is an Anglican fresh expression of Church?

Ten parameters

1. Was something Christian and communal brought to 'birth' that was new and further, rather than an existing group modified?
2. Has the starting group tried to engage with non-churchgoers? There was intention to create a fresh expression of Church, not begin an outreach project from an existing church. The aim was for the Christians to change, to fit a culture and context, not make the local/indigenous people change, to fit into an existing church context.
3. Does the resultant community meet at least once a month? In cases of monthly meetings further questions about how to deepen community, build commitment and increase discipleship follow.
4. Does it have a name that helps to give it an identity? An active search, not yet yielding a name, is allowed.
5. Is there intention to be Church? This could be from the start, or by discovery on the way. This admits the embryonic fxD (fx of developing community) and cases of fxE (fx of evangelism) and even some fxW (fx of worship). The key is that they are not seen as a bridge back to 'real church'.

6. Is it Anglican, or an Anglican partner in an Ecumenical project? ‘Anglican’ here means the bishop welcomes it as part of the diocesan family,³ not whether it only uses centrally authorised worship texts, or has a legal territory such as a parish.
7. There is some form of leadership recognised within, and also without.
8. At least the majority of members (who are part of the public gathering) see it as their major expression of being church.
9. There is aspiration for the four creedal ‘marks’ of church, or ecclesial relationships: ‘up/holy, in/one, out/apostolic, of/catholic’. We question validity in an absence of ‘mission/out’. (Our Church Army team see the two dominical sacraments as a given consequence of the life of a missional community which follows Jesus, but not the sole or even best measure of being church.)
10. There is intent to become ‘three self’ (self-financing, self-governing and self-reproducing). These factors need contextualisation, but are some marks of advancing maturity. They are not to be interpreted as indicators of congregationalist independency, or breakaway tendencies.

The report (2013:11) notes the following, ‘examples failing to qualify on questions 1-7 were deemed **not** Anglican fresh expressions of Church.’ However, those that fall outside of the criteria were to be affirmed as a significant mission instruments or adding renewal to the missional life of the church. On the face of it, it appears that the Community Supper at St Peter’s does not fall qualify as an FXoC because it falls down in criteria 6 but this needs to be interrogated as part of the data garnered from the semi structured interviews.

Furthermore, since Fresh Expressions is contextual, I propose that an **authentic Fresh Expression of Church** (following Nell and Grobler 2014) in the South African context should be inviting (:753), accepting (:755) and challenging (:757). Although Nell and Grobler’s work is based on loose ethnographic work in at a number of UK based FXoC they are helpful terms that translate to the South African setting. To be inviting is to participate in the God of grace who, ‘invites people into his presence to journey with him’ (2014:755).

It will need to be a sacred space where, as Saayman (2010b) urges, we learn to be **human together** and **practice Ubuntu** (Tutu 1999, Mbaya 2011, Dreyer 2015). An **authentic** Fresh Expressions of Church will not collude with the dominant narrative of individualism and consumerism but stand in prophetic defiance and therefore it will offer an **alternative community**⁴ (Van Wyngaard 2013) and

³ This instinct is early: cf Ignatius, ‘but whatever he (the Bishop) approve, this is also pleasing to God.’ Smyrna. VIII.

⁴ These three notions of **being human** together, practicing **Ubuntu** and being an **alternative community** are all interrelated and in many ways capture some of the key theological concepts in Desmond Tutu’s corpus. Important doctoral work by Tshawane (2009) gives a very helpful overview especially of Tutu’s understanding of community. Curiously Tshawane appears not to link the idea of the Trinity as the starting point for community in the work of Tutu.

a community that seeks mystery (Drane 2000:158, Vanier 1978). Out of this I suggest an empirical study where these very attributes might be seen in a local Fresh Expression of Church based in Mowbray, Cape Town.

Ecclesial authenticity can be considered in a number of ways. I consider authenticity to be deeply related to context in that it must resonate with local culture. As Rowan Williams (2005) has spoken of ‘the constant search for a language and style of worship which are **authentic** in the place where you are. Not something borrowed from another culture, not a second-hand suit of clothes from somewhere else or second-hand words, but the Gospel coming alive in this place, for this culture, in this language. ... I sense that we’re still in the Anglican Communion in a phase of ‘English first’ at the back of the mind; that our liturgies are still, nine times out of ten, translated from English into another language.’ Authentic FXoC in ACSA could well be a methodology for making the church postcolonial and deconstructing and re-contextualising what is essentially a colonial edifice. I explore something of the call to postcolonial strategy in the understanding of practical theology in chapter 2.

1.6.2 Authenticity: Learning to be human together

Given the historical context of South African I argue that being human together is a vital component of ecclesial authenticity. The *Apartheid* era can be described in a number of ways (I explore this partially in Chapter 2) but in essence it manifest itself as a form of dehumanisation whereby one group systematically and categorically dehumanised another but ironically dehumanised itself in the process. As De Gruchy (2006:36) highlights, ‘denying the humanity of others inevitably leads to a denying of one’s own humanity; that dehumanizing others dehumanizes oneself.’ Thus ‘it is tragic that some people lose the ability to recognise others as human’ (De Gruchy 2006:36). Indeed Saayman (2010:1) asks the question that despite our country being rich in resources of human history. ‘Why then is it also that our country characterised by so much violent and indeed inhuman crime. May the cause perhaps be that we, the great variety of human beings who settled in this land, have not yet learnt to be human together?’ Saymaan (:11) helpfully notes, ‘The goal of our human journey through the world in community with God, others and the created universe, is therefore to become a human being as the Creator meant us to be, in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth.’ I believe Saymaan (:11) is right to point out that this, “encompassing dimension of Christian mission has so far been neglected in South Africa.” In order to navigate the ruptured and still open wounds of *Apartheid* past it is imperative to learn again to be human together.

1.6.3 Authenticity: Practicing Ubuntu

Practicing Ubuntu is a concept that is related to, but distinct from, the idea of being human together. Both Mbaya (2011) and Dreyer (2015) have explored the notion of Ubuntu firstly in the realm of social capital and secondly from Dreyer from a practical theological vantage point. Mbaya (2011:3) notes, “in South Africa, the concept of Ubuntu carries its own regional perspective. For instance, Desmond Tutu (1999), Anglican Archbishop Emeritus defines Ubuntu as:

A person is a person through other persons.’ I would not know how to be a human being at all except (that) I learned this from other human beings. We are made for a delicate network of relationships, of interdependence. We are meant to complement each other. All kinds of things go horribly wrong when we break that fundamental Law of our being. Not even the most powerful nation can be completely self-sufficient.

Mbaya (2011:4) further develops the idea suggesting, “unlike the Western concept that stresses individualism, Ubuntu entails the person’s identity and fulfilment within rather than versus the community. These relationships are the lifeline of the society – as the persons not only derive their identity but also find fulfilment in these links.’

Ubuntu, however, is a concept that has been especially important in the rhetoric of *post-Apartheid* landscape of South Africa, “Ubuntu rhetoric was thus often used in political discourses to further nation building, reconciliation, and to restore the dignity of those people who were regarded as second-class citizens under *Apartheid*’ (Dreyer 2015:194).

1.6.4 Authenticity: Being an alternative community

The idea of alternative community speaks of the thirst for community in the modern, globalised consumer orientated world. Authentic examples of ecclesial life in the FXoC movement will need to display the hallmarks of genuine community that act as an antidote to the globalising tendencies which diminish the local and the humanity of individuals regardless of social status, race and Again the idea of community is closely linked to the idea of Ubuntu.

According to Van Wyngaard (2013:7) Bosch (1977a:11) believes the alternative community should, ‘be marked by radically transformed membership rules where the distinctions between “in-group” and “out-group”, no longer exist.

Drane (2000:158) speaks of the notion of community and mystery. He says, ‘people...are desperately searching for a place where they can belong and be valued. In a world of dysfunctional relationships in which people are hurting and constantly being put down by other individuals or by the more impersonal operations of the system in general will begin and end when they find a safe space where they can be themselves and be affirmed and lifted up in the struggle to be human.’ Or as Vanier

(1978:6) posits, ‘community is the place where we can be ourselves without fear or constraint. Community life deepens through mutual trust among its members.’

In terms of community and mystery Drane (2000) suggests that the community ultimately finds its life in the Triune God. ‘The Trinity provides a model for both community and mystery within the church.’ (:159) What Moltmann (2000) calls ‘a community in communion.’ In the eternal relationships of the godhead giving and receiving in a radical outpouring towards one another shapes a model for selfless kenotic relationships. Moreover in African culture, ‘communality, relationship and fundamental interconnection underlie the African mode of seeing and being in the world’ (Tschawane 2009:69).

The alternative community also opens spaces for each person’s gifts to be recognised and fulfilled. Vanier (1978:181-19) speaks of the gifts that each member of the community has to offer. ‘If we are not faithful to our gifts we are harming the community and each of its members’ (Vanier 1978:7).

Lastly alternative **community** will push against homogeneity in worship acts, embracing the vernacular, allowing a plurality of voices, acts and symbols. ‘Worship with integrity will assume a multiplicity of forms’ (Drane 2000:163). ‘Many of the church’s problems over how to contextualise worship is this new situation arise from the way in which we have allowed literate culture to be absolutised as if it were the only way of doing things.’ ‘where worship has been constrained by the values of white, western middle-class tastes’ (:169). ‘given the cultural context of today’s world, the overall trend will certainly need to be away from genteel good taste in favour of worship that is embodied’ (:170). The alternative community will allow a genuine contextual growth of a liturgy ‘from below’ (MSC 2004).

1.7 Conclusion

In this first chapter I have tried to open up the conversation of Fresh Expressions of Church in South Africa and the need to assess the validity of the movement in a non-Western context. I also have outlined my researcher positionality reminding the reader, ‘that gone are the days when academics aspired to the narrative voice of the ‘disembodied universal’ ...recognizing ‘where we sit affects what we see’ (Gay 2011:xvi). I have also outlined my understanding of authenticity. The notions of authenticity act as a set of sub questions which are connected to my central research question. It is my intension to show that notions of authenticity in the South African context are more than simply a check list of 10 parametres to test Anglican ecclesial legitimacy. I show how authenticity speaks to important qualities of human relationships in a complex and wounded society.

In chapter 2 I outline my understanding of practical theology from a South African perspective as being firstly, performative and improvisatory drawing on the work of Begbie (2000) and asking the

question, ‘how do new ecclesial communities perform the faith?’ Secondly, I suggest that practical theology in the South Africa be a postcolonial task taking serious opportunities to listen to and value the voices and of those previously subjugated and dehumanised by *Apartheid*. Thirdly, I posit that South African practical theology should be transformational in that it values the narratives of changed lives in communities. Finally, I argue that practical theology needs, as Swinton and Mowat (2006:27) suggest to finds its operational centre in the *missio Dei*.

Chapter 3, as a literature review, attends to the theoretical frameworks of FXoC and uses Bevan’s (2002) *Models of Contextual Theology* as a way of navigating the criticisms of the movement. I also chart something of the recent history of FXoC in South Africa and conclude with some thoughts around normativity and blueprint ecclesiology.

In chapter 4 I outline the relationship between practical theology and qualitative research setting out some general understandings of the relationship between qualitative data and its relationship to practical theology. I then move on to introduce ethnography and as methodology and how it relates to ecclesiology. I then discuss methods used and triangulation of data before finally outlining my approaches to the context with regards to ethical clearance, time frames and sampling.

In chapter 5 I explore my data analysis process explaining how I followed a recursive process after LeCompt and Schensul (2013) which is both an inductive and deductive process that is both tedious and exhilarating. I reveal how I used Atlas.ti as a data analysis tool. I suggest that, ‘analysis reduces data to a story ethnographers can tell; interpretation tells readers what the story means’ (LeCompt and Schensul 2013:2). I conclude the chapter with a brief description of the macro and micro context of St Peters Church in Mowbray, Cape Town.

In chapter 6 I outline my analysis and interpretation coming up with 4 key domains. 1. Testing ecclesiality 2. Probing pathologies of power 3. Recognising reciprocal relationships and community 4. Fathoming food in the Kingdom emerged.

I will say I was surprised at the domains that emerged around food and power. I was so busy asking questions of an ecclesial nature and about relationships that the issue of power, always lurking beneath the surface cropped up in some of my settings not so often by words but by what I observed on a weekly basis over 5 months. Secondly I was surprised by how important the idea of food, eating together and finding a place at the table was because my questions didn’t deal with food in any way.

In testing ecclesiality I have sought to show that the supper had grown up organically along the lines of the FXoC serving first journey as well as seeing that Moynagh’s emergent framework for innovation in process. I was surprised by the divergent views on whether the supper was church or

not. I hope show that a traumatic event like the death of an early leader could in fact be a catalyst for a liturgical flow that honoured the people gathered and begun to develop a liturgy from below.

In probing pathologies of power I drew on my observations and particular interviews to reflect on whether we can create FXoC in post-*Apartheid*, postcolonial South Africa knowing the weight of history is always heavy upon us? I suggest that the supper is a Power and their pathologies cannot be ignored in the South African context especially where there is a high potential for re-enacting client-benefactor relationships (as seen above) or perpetuating *Apartheid* era power structures however unseen or hidden they may be. Those of us who are young, white, middle class (usually male) continue to be ignorant of the way their very presence in settings can be divisive. Yet despite these very real problems supper seems to be a place whether sawubona was practiced in a genuine way.

In recognising reciprocal relationships I seek to undercover something of the quality of relationships of the community gathered. I saw a movement of people away from ‘community for myself’, to ‘community for others’, a transition from egoism to love.

Finally, in fathoming food in the Kingdom I explore something of the importance of sitting at a table and eating a meal together. I explore notions of table fellowship and food. As one community supper guest revealed to me, *‘for one hour I have dignity. I sit at a table. I’m not sitting on the pavement, on the street and having a meal. I’m having a meal made with love. It’s not scrap that I’m eating.’*

In conclude in chapter 7 with 6 needs that shape a consideration for authentic FXoC. I finish with some suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2. Towards an authentic South African Practical Theology

2. Chapter overview

In this second chapter I initially seek to outline my understanding of practical theology as it pertains to theories of practice as well as outlining some approaches. I also submit my understanding of practical theology in the South African perspective in four ways. I see practical theology in South Africa as needing to be performative/improvisational, postcolonial, transformational and mission shaped.

2.1 Practical Theology: Introduction and a short historical overview

Practical theology is a discipline that has morphed and transformed over the last 40 years or so. A discipline that has been, and continues to be, in a state of flux (Hendriks and Macallan 2012:194). A discipline for whom the *Quo Vadis* question continues to be flagged (Nell 2009:69). It has sought dialogue and relied on interdisciplinary cross over, has borrowed from, and wrestled with, the social sciences, much to the chagrin of more traditional theological categories like systematics and Biblical studies. Therefore, practical theology as a discipline has a somewhat cinderella nature about her (Ballard and Pritchard 1996:1). She is a discipline that continues to exist on the margins acting, as Ballard and Pritchard (1996:33) remind us as, a ‘court jester, free and almost irresponsible crossing the given boundaries and asking challenging questions.’

Importantly in this thesis Ballard and Pritchard (1996:31) remind us that, ‘practical theology is trying to get others to cross boundaries and listen to **strange voices**.’ Those **strange voices** are the voices that were consistently and categorically suppressed in the past but now must have an opportunity to ‘sing out.’

Historically practical theology found its emergence in the organisation of theology in the academy. Schleiermacher’s attempt in the 19th century to organise theological inquiry into 3 basic categories of philosophical theology, historical theology and practical theology and seeing them as roots, trunk and crown of a tree of theological knowledge was severely criticised by his opponents (Stevenson-Moessner 2008:2). Tragically this led to the discipline, as both Ballard and Pritchard (1996:13) and Forrester (1983:455) point out, having an almost, ‘exclusive concern with the matters of ministerial formation, as its traditional component studies - homiletics, liturgiology, catechetics or Christian education, and pastoral theology - suggest. Sometimes it became little more than hints and tips for budding parsons.’ Past attempt to compartmentalise theology, a typical imperative of modernity (compartmentalise, analyse and rationalise) put practical theology as a university level training programme for future ministers, chaplains and pastors. But Ward (2008:33) rightly acknowledges that practical theology is concerned with finding ways to reconcile practice and theory.’

In her introduction to the Wiley Blackwell companion to Practical Theology Bonnie J. Miller McLemore (2012:1) outlines the shifts that took place in the 1950s and 1960s when ‘scholars in the study of theology and religion began to challenge a structure of theological knowing particular to modernity that restricted practical theology to the application of doctrine to pastoral situations.’ She notes that within the social sciences there was a renewed interest in practice (2012:2). This was the beginning of a fundamental shift in practical theology’s self-understanding as a critical theological reflexive practice; one that continues today.

2.2 Why practice matters: Approaches and examining the turn to Practice

Before homing in on practical theology and my exploration of Bourdieu in relation to ethnography and ecclesiology I turn to generally to practice. As noted above in Miller McLemore (2012:1) the turn to culture in academic circles was not the pursuit of theology alone nor was it singular or simplistic. As Smith (2012:242) reminds us, ‘the cultural turn is not a single phenomenon with many aspects but a bundle of disparate phenomena that overlap in significant ways.’ The turn to culture has been important for practical theologians as they draw on various ‘accounts of practice’ (Smith 2012:246). Smith (2012:247-250) highlights three sources that have been particularly important for practical theology. The hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer, the moral philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre and the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu. These three do not account for the totality of theories of practice but they are helpful as key approaches that have shaped practical theology particularly outlined by Smith (2012) and help situate the present work.

Firstly, the work of Gadamer has molded Browning’s influential work in practical theology that helped reshape the topography of theology away from ministerial formation to reflection on actual practice. ‘Gadamer’s development of Aristotle’s account of *phronesis* to stress significance of practical concerns...emerges not as a second task to be undertaken after theoretical knowledge has been secured but as an integral part of the process of coming to understanding’ (Smith 2012:246). Gadamer (along with many other thinkers turning to practice) draws on the notions of knowledge from Aristotle who makes the distinction of three ways of knowing. *Episteme*, *Techne* and *Phronesis*. Rather simply stated *Episteme* can be seen as scientific knowledge, *Techne* relates to knowledge in the sphere of craft, art and creative skills. Lastly *phronesis* is the category Gadamer, and later Browning, use to speak of a type of knowledge best described as practical wisdom. Osmer (2008:84) describes this as ‘practical reasoning about action about things that change. It involves discerning the right course of action in particular circumstances, through understanding the circumstances rightly.’ Gadamer (2004:54) takes this Aristotelian notion and calls it ‘knowledge directed towards a concrete situation. Thus, it must grasp the “circumstances” in their infinite variety.’

Secondly, MacIntyre's view of practice according to Smith (2012) is, 'that we live among the ruins of once coherent moral traditions' (:246). These ruins we are free to pick and choose and therefore, 'moral philosophy is reduced to individual taste.' Practices for MacIntyre have no need of metaphysical founding. They are institutions humans have made together over time (:247). Since modernity has led to the destruction of moral traditions MacIntyre looks to Aristotle again, as Gadamer had done, appropriating Aristotelian virtue. He says that 'practices are activities that are achieved in the course of excellent performance of practice' (:247). MacIntyre seems to move away from metaphysics and base a theory of practice of performative aspects developing a notion of performing that particular practice over time.

Thirdly, the work of Bourdieu which I will unpack below a little more thoroughly. Bourdieu attempts to build a theory of practice that 'overcomes the antinomy between 'subjective' and 'objective' (Smith 2012:248). His theory depends on the notion of *habitus*. Objectivist accounts might suggest that *habitus* is shaped by context of class, race, gender, nationality, faith commitment etc. This however is a deterministic evaluation and does not account for what Bourdieu calls 'regulated improvisation.' Smith (:249) suggests that according to Bourdieu, '*habitus* do not simply and smoothly reproduce class relations that produced them, as if they were algorithms spinning out fresh copies of themselves in endless loops.' 'They are caught up in more than they can bring to consciousness and live more in the body than in consciousness.'

Whilst these varying turns to practice are of fundamental importance for the landscape of practical theology there are words of caution from Miller-McLemore (2016:1) who suggests that practical theologians, 'have been optimistic about the ease with which practice can be incorporated into theology' when in fact the relationship between theory and practice is more complex. Miller McLemore (2016:5) asks if theory should not 'play a different role,' noting that, 'theory does not emerge from thinking alone but also out of pain and struggle'⁵ (:5).

In this thesis I draw partially on the work of Bourdieu as I think there is scope for appropriating some of his language and reflections in ecclesial spaces as Ward (2008) and Scharen (2014) have sought to show and I explore below in more detail. Smith's overview of Bourdieu's transversal of the subjective and objective, or what he calls 'overcoming the antinomy of 'subjective' and 'objective' (Smith 2012:248) is important. According to Smith (:248) 'Bourdieu describes a dialectic of these subjective and objective elements' eschewing a subjective account associated with Sartre and his existentialism

⁵ Perhaps reminiscent of Louw's (2011) practical theology of the intestines.

which to all intents and purposes advocates for the idea of ‘monstrous freedom’. But also rejecting objective accounts that suggest ‘social structures’ capacity to reproduce themselves.’

Whilst attempting to bring some cohesion to the field these ‘focal concerns’ do not highlight the very real differences in other areas of approach amongst practical theologians. Firstly, meta-theoretical, secondly posture, thirdly methodological and finally incorporation of theories of practice.

2.3 Appropriating Bourdieu

This renewed interest in practice and particularly the work of Bourdieu has been significant for practical theologians like Ward (2008), Scharen (2014) and Hearlson (2014).⁶ Bourdieu as both philosopher and anthropologist rooted his work in the ‘actual’ or ‘lived’ through a number of ethnographic studies most based in Algeria. Since this research is rooted in ethnography, ecclesiology and missiology understanding something of the meta-theoretical framework of theories of practice I believe is important. Before wrestling with Bourdieu’s thinking (which is generally difficult to read with its sinewy syntax) I ask a more historical question about what has led to the split between theory and practice that still has ramifications in our post-modern context.

In the history of philosophy Rene Descartes is regarded at the Father of modern philosophy (Collinson 1987:52) Descartes’ objective was to create a new indubitable starting point for philosophy. Descartes began with the pursuit of what could be actually known with absolute certainty by asking thorough questions about what he perceived. Through his systematic thinking in his *meditations* he subjected his memory, his own sense experience, the existence of the world around him and his own body to interrogation and comes to the conclusion that he cannot, with any certainty, extract indubitable knowledge from these spaces. What he cannot doubt, however, is that he is thinking. His famous *cogito* “I think therefore I am” Collinson (1987:53) says, “is the certainty that he is a *thinking thing* and gives Descartes the basis he requires for constructing his edifice of knowledge.”

In that process of a newly claimed axiom for the construction of knowledge there was a highly dualistic tendency to split theory from practice to make assumptions about the validity of knowledge gained from concrete experience. Descartes’ work paved the way for the rise of scientific rationalism as a more appropriate way of understanding the world. As Scharen (2014:35) notes, “Descartes influence on generations of scientists was enormous especially in relationship between two areas epistemology and scientific method.”

⁶ These first two scholars have shaped the current ethnography and ecclesiology conversation considerably.

The rise in theories of practice comes on the back of the epistemic turn in which philosophers and social scientists rejected the notion of the meta-narrative (Lyotard, Foucault and others) and previous ways in which knowledge was generated and curated as naive. This in turn began to erode the idea that indubitable knowledge could be construed from objective approaches because the notion of objectivity was ultimately false.

Bourdieu played a vital role in shaping sociological and anthropological theory he is essentially a philosopher dealing in philosophical categories. Bourdieu is ultimately interested in dealing with being-in-the-world or asking questions about the economy of social being. How do we deploy being? How do we accumulate being? Being for Bourdieu is a ‘how much question?’ He saw that there was a economy of being (i.e the accumulation and distribution of being) there was gross maldistribution. Ultimately, he asks how we can actualise being in order to live a fulfilling life.

As Scharen (2014) has shown Bourdieu was also (like us all) shaped by the period of history he lived in. As a French intellectual he was trying to navigate a way through the structuralism of Levi Strauss and the phenomenology of Sartre. This essentially was an attempt to collapse dualisms of the subject/object divide. Bourdieu, not wishing to reject objectivism outright, Scharen (2014:18) reminds us, was seeking to find, “a middle ground between objectivism and subjectivism.” In the opening of his *Outline of a theory of Practice* Bourdieu (1977:1-4) speaks of the objective limits of objectivism. Part of Bourdieu’s complex analysis of objectivist theories of knowledge is outlined below.

This questioning of objectivism is liable to be understood at first as a rehabilitation of subjectivism and to be merged with the critique that naive humanism levels at scientific objectification in the name of "lived experience" and the rights of "subjectivity". In reality, the theory of practice and of the practical mode of knowledge inherent in all practice which is the precondition for a rigorous science of practices carries out a new reversal of the problematic which objectivism has to construct in order to constitute the social world as a system of objective relations independent of individual consciousnesses and wills. (Bourdieu 1977:4)

In building a theory of practice Bourdieu constructs an equation that we shall unpack. Hearlson (2014:12) says that this Bourdieu’s way of “exposing the complex relationship between agency and structure.” There is a symbiotic relationship between human agency and institutional structures which Hearlson (2014:12) calls “the dance of a never-ending cultural tango” The equation in question for Bourdieu is summed up as “**(habitus + capital) x field = practice**” (Ward 2008:169, Hearlson 2014:12, Scharen 2014:15). It needs to be noted that there is a degree of ambiguity in Bourdieu’s concepts and in the vein of good French narcissistic intellectuals being difficult to read and generally obtuse is a sign of

2.3.1 Habitus

These terms are important, so I will unpack them. Firstly Bourdieu (1977:73) says, ‘the habitus is the source of these series of moves which are objectively organized as strategies without being the product of a genuine strategic intention’

The habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus. (Bourdieu 1977:78)

Scharen (2014:15) describes this idea of habitus using Sartrean category of mode-of-being or more simply the way in which “we practically navigate day to day life.” The word *habitus* in Latin means the general constitution of something. Bourdieu in typical French intellectual obscurity means to endow this term with new meaning. *Habitus* is more than Scharen’s simplistic the ‘practical way in which we navigate everyday life.’ *Habitus* relates to the internal embodiment of external social structures acquired over the course of a life time or as Hearlson (2014:12) expands, ‘*habitus* is the set of bodily disposition and actions handed down to the actor (agent) by history, structuring the present and influencing the future sets of practice.’ As a social constructivist Bourdieu’s premise is what is real is relational. *Habitus* “links the individual and the social by positing that whilst the content of the life of any individual is unique the social structure that she inhabits is shared. I particularly like Bourdieu’s sentence *the habitus is the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations* (1977:78). By this I think Bourdieu means that habitus impacts upon the agent to generate creative, improvised responses to the field. Bourdieu seeks to break down the false dualisms that often pervade our understanding in this regard. As Scharen (2014:12) notes, ‘it is a false dilemma to say one’s choices are either determined by a dominant social structure or totally free to one’s conscious intention.’ Therefore, Bourdieu wants to set up a dialogue between the objective and subjective in a non-Cartesian epistemology. His *habitus* concept should not be seen as deterministic (Scharen 2014:18) since the habitus has within it improvisatory and generative potential. As Ganzevoort and Roeland (2014:93) note in regard to Bourdieu that his notion of practice, then, ‘refers to human capacity for invention, rebellion, distancing and improvisation with respect to broader social and cultural order.’

2.3.2 Capital

‘Capital is that which can be exchanged in order to achieve the interest of the actor. Social networks, past accomplishments, and particular skills are valuable capital in the right context.’ (Hearlson

2014:13) or as Ward (2008:170) submits, “capital refers to what is required to in order to play in particular fields.” For Bourdieu there are a number of ways of classifying capital. It can be social, educational or cultural. Cultural capital is used by Bourdieu to expand the theory of power relations to cultural activities (Ward 2008:170).

2.3.3 Field

The bounded space in which the habitus and capital intersect, and dialogue might be called field. As Hearlson (2014:13) notes, ‘Bourdieu’s conception of field provides a framework for observing the dynamics of a particular context.’ Moreover, ‘actors (or agents) use the available strategies afforded to them by their habitus to gain their individual interests within a specific field’ (2014:13).

2.4 Moving to practical theology

Both Ward (2008) and Scharen (2014) explore Bourdieu and attempt to use the categories above to help move into speaking meaningfully about actual practice. Ward (2008:169) suggests using Bourdieu’s categories in the following way. “The church is a field; within the field individuals are shaped, they embody the *habitus*. To operate and manoeuvre within, and through, the field of the Christian community it is necessary to acquire and make use of cultural capital.” Whilst this is provisional and appears as a way of using terms in the concluding chapter of Ward’s book I want to suggest that the usage of these terms is perhaps a little more ambiguous and complex than we might care to admit.

I am particularly interested in exploring the notion of *habitus* more closely and asking what it might really mean in ethnographic and ecclesial research. I am also interested in Bourdieu suggesting that *habitus* is not deterministic since it has not only generative but improvisatory capacity. Again, the relationship between *habitus* and capital doesn’t appear as clear but to me in Bourdieu as some commentators make out. But theories of practice certainly have value in the journey of historically situating practical theology. In the rest of this chapter I outline some of my understanding of practical theology as it pertains to the context of South Africa.

2.4.1 Practical theology in South Africa

There are a multiplicity of approaches in practical theology. One of the problems facing anyone wishing to delineate, categorise or create some type of taxonomy is the overlapping, multi-layered multi-disciplinary nature of the subject which means there is little in the way of unanimity. It is not in the scope of this work to detail approaches in any significant way but rather to outline some of these approaches especially locating ourselves in the South African context. Dreyer (2012:505-514)

has outlined the development of practical theology in South Africa. Dreyer (2012:506) notes how practical theology in South Africa has been shaped by theological contours of the Netherlands and other western European centres and despite the cultural, linguistic and economic diversity and complexity of the nation, that has not been readily reflected in the academic spheres of higher education. The older paradigm of practical theology as a clerical or ministerial formation space was perpetuated by the form of Christian nationalism and church state relationships that was embodied by *Apartheid*. Recently those preoccupations with ecclesial and clerical paradigms have shifted but Dreyer (2012:513) concludes that there is still a need for practical theologians to be ‘more representative of the South African context in terms of race, gender, and religious affiliation.’ Dreyer (2012) also concludes that the relationship between practical theology in South Africa and with the rest of the continent in terms of scholarly relations is lacking. That however is being slowly remedied with a renewed commitment to decolonising the curriculum and engagement with African practical theologians.⁷

From an international perspective Osmer (2011) attempts to sketch an overview that divides approaches to practical theology into two distinct categories (although doubtless there are significant overlaps). Firstly, what he calls the level of pastoral and ecclesial practice and secondly the meta-theoretical level of research and theory construction. Omer (2011:3) asserts that whilst there is much commonality to pastoral and ecclesial practice within the pastoral cycle or hermeneutical circle⁸ there is great disparity as to, ‘how practical theologians conceptualise and carry out these tasks... which are determined by decisions at a meta-theoretical level.’ Cahalan & Mikoski (2014:1) too, have attempted to outline what they call, ‘the focal concerns characteristic of the field of practical theology (that) tend to overlap, imply each other, and interlock.’ Five aspects I pick out here as being pertinent to this context. **Firstly**, being attentive to theory-practice complexity (as we have noted above via Smith (2012) and Miller-McLemore (2016). **Secondly**, practice and performance orientated as we will

⁷ A recent paper at the South African Practical Theological Society conference on decolonising Practical Theology from the faculty members of UP (University of Pretoria)

⁸ The pastoral cycle continues to be one of the most recognised and accepted forms of theological reflection in practical theology. It’s most basic form can be spelt out as “See, Judge, Act” which was developed by Cardinal Cardijn (Ballard and Pritchard 1996:74). Ballard and Pritchard (1996), Swinton and Mowat (2006) and Osmer (2008) all employ essentially the same process of experience, exploration, reflection and action. Importantly to note in the South African context the work of Cochrane, de Grouchy and Petersen (1991) substantially altered and refined the pastoral cycle (:3) by adding a prior commitment (Faith), an ecclesial analysis and spiritual formation as vital elements of the hermeneutical circle. These are still important even in a post-*Apartheid* context. More recently the expansion on the work of Cochrane, de Grouchy and Petersen by the missiology department of UNISA has been notable in the South African context. Kritzinger and Saayman (2011), following extensive reflection on Bosch, have expanded the framework and used a sevenfold matrix which provides a theoretical framework for analysing mission, the sevenfold steps of the ‘matrix’ are Agency, Spirituality, Contextual Understanding, Ecclesial Scrutiny, Interpreting the tradition, Discernment for Action and Reflexivity. (Kritzinger and Saayman 2011:129-198)

explore in the following section. **Thirdly**, oriented to multidimensional dynamics of social context and embodiment. **Fourthly**, interdisciplinary and **fifthly**, open-ended, flexible and porous. The shifts in practical theology over the past 30 years Graham (2017:1) says go, ‘from applied theology to theological reflection on practice; from a clerical paradigm to the study of the religious practices of everyday life; from theology as propositional knowledge to practical wisdom.’

2.5 Practical Theology as performative and improvisatory

Having explored something of the historic milieu of practical theology and practice theory I move into opening up a metaphor following Swinton and Mowat (2006) I hold to an understanding of practical theology as essentially performative. This notion of practical theology I find particularly helpful as a former musicologist and musician and I use as a central metaphor in the reflexive process of this thesis. Actors are governed by a script and musicians have a score. Within these *texts* there is great scope for interpretation, innovation and improvisation whilst remaining faithful to the author or composer’s original intensions. Each performance brings a new set of nuances and undiscovered interpretive elements that add to the historical ‘reading’ or ‘playing’. A practical theology that holds this metaphor as central understands the reciprocal relationship between what is given and what may be explored upon.

Swinton and Mowat (2006) and Healy (2000) have used the idea of 'performing' the faith to open up new categories of language for explaining how faith communities 'act out' the gospel. I want to take that metaphor in a slightly different musical direction. Following practical theologian Stevenson-Moessner (2008:1) I argue that ‘theology is the music of religious inquiry.’ The metaphor of performance can be further refined and developed. As a musician/musicologist and one time composer I like the notion of performing. Performance has a variety of modes. It's not in the scope of this work to investigate them all. I give two examples here.

The first in contemporary classical music. Put simply there are performances of works already composed; thoroughly composed works. For example Boulez' 1st piano Sonata is a piece of total serialism. Every note has been precisely calculated and positioned. With this example of a highly composed piece of music there is virtually no interpretive scope in one sense. Dynamics, timbre, duration, pitch, register and attack have all been predetermined. In this mode of performance the score is the 'given' musical text which is then interpreted by the players/musicians/performers. This 'given' already existing material can be interpreted in a number of ways but the parameters are constrained by the composers original intentions sometimes in extreme ways as is the case with Boulez (Bach's preludes and fugues are a different type of 'given' with more space for the interpretive). Performances

are all unique but constrained. All sorts of nuanced and subtle variations can occur of course but to a large extent the 'performance' appears to be much the same to the untrained listener. On one way there is a rigidity, inflexibility and solidness to these performances.

The second notion of performance we might use as a helpful analogy or metaphor is the idea of a contemporary Jazz trio or quartet playing a jazz standard. Standards are usually a single page of manuscript with a melodic line and chord changes written above. This 'given' is then interpreted and improvised upon by any group of instruments. Improvisation is embedded into the DNA of Jazz. In all its variety of descriptors perhaps the idea of the entrepreneurial, making-it-up as you go along aspects of improvisation set it aside from other types of music and therefore performance. This 'given' material is much more flexible and malleable. It is loose jointed. The number of permutations are infinitesimal. No musical possibility is closed. Every part of the improvisation process has an infinite number of decisions that can bring a faithful yet unusual or perhaps disturbing rendering of the original 'given' material.

This second notion of performance rooted in improvisation is, I think, helpful for practical theology. Following work by Begbie (2000) around improvisation and human freedom I suggest that the notion of improvisation can be used as a way of thinking about how new ecclesial communities perform the gospel in their context. Begbie writes as a theologian and a classically trained musician, 'to show that music can enable theology to do its job better' (2000:271). One area he wants to examine is how the idea of exchange in improvisation can act as a way of addressing ecclesiology (2000:180) 'One of the things which characterise much musical improvisation is a relatively high degree of unpreparedness compared to many other forms of music, and hence the heightened sense of contingency, especially for the performers. As with any music, improvisation is bound by constraints. What is typical of much improvisation, and, arguably a key to the pleasure it affords, is a strong *contrast* between what is the contingent and the non-negotiable 'given' constraints, between order and non-order' (Begbie 2000:185).

I would like to argue that this idea of improvisation is a distinctive of the Holy Spirit at work in the book of Acts. The work of the Spirit in the book of Acts might be seen on one level as *adventures in ecclesial improvisation*. In genuine improvisation, 'an improviser testifies to the fact that borrowed musical material can expose an extensive range of fresh, unconsidered possibilities in the improvising context and in the material itself, sometimes especially when the music seems distinctly at odds with the present context' (Begbie 2000:220).

In dealing with FXoC or new contextual churches (Moynagh 2012, 2017) this metaphor of improvisation helps counters ideas of commodification, replication and consumption which are

dominant factors in capitalist modern western culture and often, unwittingly, of the mainline church. (Drane 2000) Improvisation moves us away from standardization, predictability, quantifying and rationality which Drane (2000) laments has often shaped the ecclesial landscape. Improvisation applauds moments of spontaneity, often looks accidental and rejoices in unpredictable combinations. Again Begbie (2000:200) says, ‘a constraint may in fact be rejected in improvisation: for instance, a musical convention may be spurned in order to pursue something that is felt to be more promising.’

Therefore, I see practical theology as attending to the particular ways in which Christian communities attempt to improvise the gospel faithfully and authentically in their unique context. The improvising on the theme of the gospel is done in various locales being cognisant of scripture, tradition and reason in a given setting. As Swinton and Mowat (2006:5) remind us, ‘Practical Theology therefore finds itself located within the uneasy but critical tension between the script of revelation given to us in Christ and formulated historically within scripture, doctrine and tradition.’ In this study my aim is to see what type of innovative performances of the gospel narrative are taking place at the margins of the Anglican church in South Africa in the form of FXoC.

Practical theology should be a **critical** enterprise. Swinton and Mowat (2006:6) suggest that this reading of practical theology is, ‘in opposition to models that view practical theology as applied theology, wherein its task is to apply doctrine worked out by other theological disciplines.’ In essence ‘the questions that emerge in the light of human experience of God are often different from those which emerge from the solitude of the academic’s office.’ (2006:7) In this case I would argue that practical theology is contextual theology. I concur with Bevans (1992:3) that ‘there is no such thing as “theology” there is only *contextual theology*.’ Even the doctrinaire notion of systematic theology is done in a given context which shapes fundamentally how its systems are presented and engaged with. In this mode practical theology is concerned with orthopraxis over and, often against, orthodoxy. Therefore, practical theology tends not to be a unified or systematic discipline. It offers fragments, themes and patterns and draws us into divine mystery and drama (Swinton and Mowat 2006:12). Again Bonnie J. Miller McLemore (2012:14) posits, ‘practical theology is seldom a systematic enterprise, aimed at the ordering of beliefs about God, the church, or classic texts. More often it is an open-ended, contingent, unfinished grasp or analysis of faith in action. It focuses on the tangible, the local, the concrete, and the embodied.’

Practical theology then, like liberation theology, takes as its starting point context rather than text. but the context and text need to be in critical dialogue with one another. Swinton and Mowat (2006:5) caution against a misunderstanding of this axiom. They say, I think rightly, that taking human experience seriously does not imply that experience is a source of revelation. Moreover practical

theology attempts to engage in the aspect of human experience where communities and individuals encounter the numinous. Where the activities of human beings in relation to God are unearthed and critiqued.

Since practical theology is contextual theology it will take macro and micro context seriously. In fact practical theology that starts with human experience shaped by an encounter with God seeks to, ‘critically *complexify* and explore *situations*’ (Swinton and Mowat 2006:13). Critical reflection allows us to uncover what on the face of it can seem simple and straight forward.

Following Dames (2013) I argue that the context of South Africa is complex with polyvalent influences. In a sense South Africa is culturally bi-polar in that it holds within its cultural life seemingly paradoxical positions. It is at once conservative and liberal, politically and religiously. It embraces elements of modernity and post-modernity. It is a contested postcolonial space, a post *Apartheid* realm. In this confluence of labels practical theology in the African context Dames (2013:1) says must face, ‘an individualised, pluralistic world and tendencies of discontinuity, uncertainty, violence and destruction’ that shape the topography. Dames (2013:5) suggests that, ‘practical theology has developed from a *monodisciplinary* to an *interdisciplinary approach* in reciprocity with the social sciences.’ Moreover, ‘practical theology has shifted away from ecclesial and clerical models’ (2013:5). Dames (2013:1) calls for an effective methodology that can deal with the pluralistic undulations of the knotty South African landscape. An authentic Practical Theology for South Africa will also need to take seriously its call to be prophetic.

Cilliers (2009:18) in Nel (2011) helpfully suggests a provisionality about practical theology in South Africa. ‘It will by nature always be in a process of reconstruction, will remain provisional and experimental and exists within the creative tensions of empirical research and theological conceptualisation.’ This I think sits happily with the kind of language and grammar that Swinton and Mowat make use of in their work. Therefore, I would argue that practical theology in a critical realist mode of engagement holds suspicion towards all meta-narratives. Instead it engages with the heuristic notion of fragment, pattern and mosaic in dialogue with one another. Given Bevans (1992:3) statement that all theology is contextual I argue in this thesis that we must speak of a South African practical theology as taking precedence over other theologies. This is not exclusionary in any way as I will draw on the work of Ward (2008), Ballard and Pritchard (1996), Stevenson-Moessner (2008) and others in the course of writing but there is a primacy in grounding a practical theology that takes many of its cues from Southern African and African sources.

2.6 South African practical theology as postcolonial

The idea of the postcolonial is complex. It is a difficult and contested word. Maluleke (2010:157) reminds us ‘there are as many definitions of postcolonial as there are postcolonialists.’ On one level it is impossible to talk of postcolonialism in a general sense as McLeod (2000:1-5) points out it might make more sense to speak of postcolonialisms since colonialism had unique manifestations in different parts of the globe. Young (2003:7) argues that, indeed, postcolonialism as a term should not be seen as, ‘a single set of ideas or a single practice.’

One might ask *Is it even possible to use such a term given the contested nature of it’s use in the South African context?* (Lalu 2008:267ff) Is South Africa really postcolonial? The ANC use of the idea of colonialism of a special type (Butler 2012:92) based on an analysis of the internal colonialism that has in some senses continued to dominate South Africa even in the post *Apartheid* era is an important one. Nolan (1988:70ff) sketches this internal colonialism. Nolan (1988:72) points out, ‘colonialism is a form of exploitation and oppression that has been excised by imperialist nations for thousands of years.’ However, the internal colonialism of South Africa was unique in that the colonisers and colonised lived side by side. This meant that in order to continue the subjugation of one people over another laws were created to divide people in every conceivable way. Moreover the need to create vast cheap labour resources (mostly for the mining industry) for on going propping up of the colonial system meant the task of dehumanising black people. As Nolan (1988:72) highlights the ‘system of internal colonialism is at its roots a system of forced labour.’ This, in turn, causes the estrangement of people from one another in the perhaps one of the most barbaric forms of social engineering in 20th century history. ‘We have seen how ruthlessly and systematically black people have been treated at mere labour units, as things that are needed in the process of producing things and making money. Black workers have been stripped of everything that could make life even marginally human’ (Nolan 1988:80).

This internal colonialism has permeated all spheres of life in South Africa and is often surprisingly well rendered in the literary fiction of South African writers. Brink, in his 1978 *Rumours of Rain*, paints a grim picture of the protagonist’s son Louis returning from the futility of war in Angola being overwhelmed by, ‘all the ordinary stupidity, the inhumanity fossilised in the system, all the ritual cruelty, the bloody vulgarity and callousness’ (1978:364).

However for Biko (1978) the notion of internal colonialism is rather to be expressed as essentially white racism. ‘After generations of exploitation, white people on the whole have come to believe in the inferiority of the black man, so much so that whilst the race problem started as an off shoot of economic greed exhibited by white people, it is now a serious problem on its own. White people now

despise black people' (Biko 1978:97). The internal colonialism of South Africa was built, and tragically continues to exist, because of deep ingrained racialism.

The recent events in South Africa in 2016 with the #Rhodesmustfall and #feesmustfall hashtag have, as Reggie Nel (2015:1) suggests made, 'the struggle to overcome colonial racism amongst [South African] students remain as crucial as ever.' I would argue that this struggle to overcome the ongoing colonial narrative is paramount in wider society not just amongst those in the higher education sector.

From a theological perspective there certainly has been an increase in the missiological and theological engagement with the postcolonial question. Works from Ingleby (2010) and Grau (2011) in missiology and Sugirtharajah (2003) in biblical studies have begun the process of engaging with a vital topic. Lartey's (2013) *Postcolonialising God* begins a move for a practical theology that is grounded in the African context. Importantly McGarrah Sharp (2012:423) points out that, 'practical theology as a discipline has not grappled adequately with postcolonial theory or realities.' This is in part because of a discomfort of practical theologians appropriating critical theory in a field still dominated by white males and secondly because of the ambiguity of terms. As Young (2003:7) reminds us, 'many don't like the term postcolonial because it disturbs the order of the world. It threatens privilege and power.'

However, I do follow the elucidation of the term via Sugirtharajah (2003) and Stevenson-Moessner (2008) for their theological insight. Sugirtharajah (2003:4) points out three ways in which the term generates meanings. Firstly, the historical meaning. 'It encapsulates the social, political and cultural conditions of the current world order' because of the colonial past. Secondly as a 'critical discursive practice, postcolonial criticism has initiated arresting analyses of texts and societies. It provides openings for oppositional readings and uncovers suppressed voices.' Thirdly Sugirtharajah (2003:4) suggests the term speaks of implying, 'a political and ideological stance of an interpreter who is engaged in anti-colonial theory and praxis.'

These second and third meanings are of paramount importance to the practical theological discourse in the South African context. Stevenson-Moessner (2008:19) helpfully posits, 'a postcolonial practical theology finds its interpretive centre among the formerly 'colonised' who become the locus of a new kind of power and perspective.' Stevenson-Moessner's heuristic move towards a new locus resonates profoundly with an important term in postcolonial circles from Spivak (1993), that of the subaltern. Provisionally I understand the subaltern as those subordinated by hegemony and excluded from any meaningful role in the regime of power. On a note of caution I do follow Lartey (2013:xiv) who points out that much of the postcolonial conversation has been dominated by voices from the

Indian subcontinent like Spivak and Bhabha and therefore have chosen to engage predominantly with Larty (2013), Biko (1978), Boesak (1979) and Nolan (1988).

If the interpretive centre is among the former colonised as Stevenson-Moessner suggests then in resonance with this postcolonializing activities must be *polyvocal*. Many voices are needed. A myriad perspectives **must** be entertained. Lartey (2013:xviii) notes that, ‘other voices, especially submerged, ignored or rejected voices are invited to articulate their own **authentic** voice. Subjugated voices with despised knowledge are given room at the postcolonial table.’ Postcolonial strategies, then, resist the colonial narrative and seek an opening up of voices - to sing, wail, howl, scat and **improvise** their way out of colonial objectification. A postcolonial stance sees below the surface and looks for complex, messy responses to 'otherness' by the colonizer. The alienation and dehumanisation that internal colonialism injected into the system can be counteracted however. Biko (1978:101) notes that, ‘freedom is the ability to define oneself with one’s possibilities held back not by the power of other people but only by one’s relationship with God and his natural surroundings. At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realisation by blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. If one is free at heart, no man made chains can bind one to servitude.’ Interestingly Nel (2011) says that, ‘for Biko then this struggle is one for mental emancipation, for a new mentality, for a new humanity.’ and ‘The key challenge then for intellectuals is unearthing the history of the people as a cultural and psychological liberation, but also developing a new culture, not simply based on a fixated, precolonial past, or on colonialist constructions, but struggling against neocolonialism in the present reality.’

Secondly Lartey (2013:xviii) speaks of the postcolonializing activities that are *creative*. I reject Lartey’s idea of creativity that moves beyond improvisation which he seems to think implies the left overs of the colonial project. Postcolonial readings subvert the dominant narrative and attempt to give ‘voice’ to those subjugated by hegemony. The colonizers construct the identity of the "other", of the subaltern. Under the apartheid dispensation this was obvious in very crude political ways such as the population registration act of 1950.

I see decolonisation as throughly connected to the postcolonial question and being an overlap of it. For me it is ‘a political and ideological stance of an interpreter who is engaged in anti-colonial theory and praxis.’ Therefore as Mgqwashu (2016:1) says, ‘decolonisation is not a project over which one racial group can claim sole custodianship. South Africans, as a people, must agree that colonialism and apartheid robbed the country of ideas, skills, creativity, originality, talent and knowledge. These attributes got lost through legislated discrimination of black people, most of whom could have enriched the country even further. But some people who have benefited directly from the ills of

colonialism and apartheid still struggle to accept this fact. They have developed a false need to defend a system that maimed, dehumanised, oppressed and stripped generation after generation of the South African majority. These groups should be the first to be genuinely repentant and to openly acknowledge what's become a common lie.'

There is important overlap or convergence around epistemic issues in postcolonialism and practical theology. As we shall see in authentic practical theology human experience and practice is a valid source for the construction of knowledge. Theory can arise from the 'lived'. In postcolonialism there is push toward building alternative constructs of knowledge from the experience of the colonised. As Young (2003:20) reminds us, 'postcolonialism is a name for these insurgent knowledges that come from the subaltern, the dispossessed, and seek to change the terms and values under which they live.' This research seeks to uncover the voices that during the apartheid era were marginalised, constricted, brutalised and often annihilated. It is sensitive to those who identify themselves as the colonised and disenfranchised; in short those who live with a subalternity about them. However a note of caution needs to be sounded here according to Sherry (2008:652) which puts a white male researcher in a dichotomous state, 'Spivak argues that the subaltern cannot speak; that is, she argues that any attempt by Western scholars to represent or articulate subaltern experience is problematic because it runs the risk of speaking on behalf of the people being studied (which is a similar dynamic to colonialism itself).'

The use of the idea of insurgent knowledge is interesting. May there be another way of thinking about such knowledge or renaming it? Pre-colonial knowledge systems are an uncovering of relational forms of knowledge that are inherent to African indigenous epistemology. Airoboman and Asekhauno (2012:13-17) ask if there is an African epistemology? Highlighting the work of Senghor, among others, they argue that African epistemology is peculiar (2012:14). In an African mode of knowing there is 'no dualism between the object and subject of knowledge but it thrives on symbiotic and mutual interaction between the two.' Thus Senghor's (2012:14) 'holistic understanding of reality which is put simply as: *I feel, I dance the other, I am* in contradistinction to Cartesian cogito: *I think, therefore I am,*' This roots modes of knowing in the African context as communal and puts suspicion on individualist claims of knowledge. Might a more reflective African epistemology that is communal and bodily be helpful decolonising or postcolonial tool?

Essentially Sugirtharajah (2003:15) again highlights that, 'Postcolonialism is a active confrontation with the dominant system of thought, its lopsidedness and its inadequacies, and underlies its unsuitability for us. Hence it is a process of cultural and discursive emancipation from all dominant structures whether they be political, linguistic or ideological.' Biko (1978:101) says, 'Black

Consciousness is an attitude of mind and a way of life, the most positive call to emanate from the black world for a long time. Its essence is the realisation by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression - the blackness of their skin - and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude.’

2.7 South African practical theology as transformative

Swinton and Mowat (2006:7) suggest that practical theology should help **create and enable faithful practices**. In essence South African practical theology must be transformative. This transformation is both within the ecclesial setting and in the world. Practical theology is in the **service of the church and Christians** but it cannot only speak to, or be of value for what Bosch (1991:391) calls the ‘*missiones ecclesiae*’. Swinton and Mowat (2006:7) caution that practical theology is not confined to the narrow predilections of the Church and Christians. It seeks to explore *both* the witness of the Church and Christians to the living reality of God at work in their midst - the dramatic rendering of his presence in communities *and* His pioneering activity in the world. ‘all human beings, implicitly or explicitly, participate in the unfolding historical narrative of God.’ (2006:8) However Swinton and Mowat do recognise a radical dissimilarity. ‘The difference between the Church and the world lies in the fact that the Church recognises who Jesus is and seeks to live its life in the light of this revelation, and the world does not’ (2006:8).

A practical theology that is transformational will seek *shalom* not shackled and curated ecclesially but for the good of wider society. Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen’s study, now 25 years old, still ‘remains crucial today for a *new moral and social transformative pastoral praxis*.’ (Dames 2013:7). Cochrane, DeGruchy and Petersen (1991:2) describe social transformation as, ‘in some ways intuitive, but it is clear that it must mean a dismantling of the edifice of apartheid and the reconstruction of a society built upon wholly different principles than that of division and domination.’ Given my perspectival stance as an open evangelical I start with a section of the 1983 Wheaton statement as an important milestone in evangelical thinking.

‘We have come to see that the goal of transformation is best described by the biblical vision of the kingdom of God. This **new way of being human** in submission to the Lord of all has many facets. In particular, it means striving to bring peace among individuals, races and nations by overcoming prejudices, fears, and preconceived ideas about others.’⁹

⁹ Paragraph II section 13

‘Social structures that exploit and dehumanise constitute a pervasive sin which is not confronted adequately by the church. Many churches, mission societies, and Christian relief and development agencies support the sociopolitical status quo, and by silence give their tacit support.’¹⁰ Ganiel (2007:3) suggests that transformation in the post-*Apartheid* context might be described as ‘the process whereby a post-conflict society undergoes radical changes that mitigate or eliminate causes of the conflict. This involves changing relationships between previously antagonistic groups, and dismantling unequal socio-economic structures.’ The goal of practical theology’s dialogue with other fields is ‘to contribute to social transformation that alleviates this suffering’ (Osmer 2008:167).

2.8 South African practical theology as mission-shaped

This research is, in essence, an exploration of the outworking of mission shaped theology in the South African Anglican context. I agree with Swinton and Mowat’s definition that practical theology must find its operational centre in the *missio Dei*. I hold to an understanding of practical theology that is undergirded by a missional hermeneutic following Osmer (2011:5), Dames (2013:3) and Swinton and Mowat (2006:27). As Swinton and Mowat spell out, ‘practical theology is a fundamentally missiological discipline.’ This sets questions that practical theology seeks to ask in the light of the *missio Dei* and make solutions and suggestions for more adequate practice subservient to prophetic listening in local settings. Swinton and Mowat (2006:27) again posit, ‘the dominant question for practical theology is not “what difference will this make in the pulpit or pew?” but rather “who is God and how does one know more fully his truth?”’ I would add to that understanding a question ‘How do we join God in his pioneering activity in the world through faithful partnership with Him?’ In the past missiology as an academic subject was subsumed under practical theology. I shall argue that this needs to be reassessed and that in fact the missiological imperative of the *missio Dei* invites us to reframe theological constructs and reflection as a missiological exercise.

¹⁰ Paragraph IV section 23

2.8.1 Missional or mission shaped?

As with all theological categories the taxonomy of missional is a contested one. It is certainly a term that has been misused and misappropriated as Hirsch¹¹ (2008:1) points out. Frost and Hirsch (2003:229) use the following description, ‘a missional church is one whose primary commitment is to the missionary calling of the people of God. As such, it is one that aligns itself with God’s missionary purposes in the world. The missional church is a sent church.’ This term has however generated, and rightly so, varied responses. Saayman (2010:6) questions whether the term is, ‘simply a matter of new “branding” or does the new term imply a change in meaning?’ Saayman (2010) struggles to find clear distinctions between *missional* and *missionary* in etymological and syntactical terms. There are questions around the term *missionary* for me as a term deeply implicated in the colonial project that does not necessarily reflect the *missio Dei*. Reggie Nel (2011:5) notes,

the violent imperialistic penetration of the so-called “new worlds”, in the expansion of commerce and the slave trade, went hand in hand with what became known for the first time as “mission”, carried out by the agents of the ecclesial imperium, the “missionaries” (Bosch 1991:227-228). Bosch states: “The new word ‘mission’ is historically linked indissolubly with the colonial era and with the idea of a magisterial commissioning” (Bosch 1991:228).

This is a complex issue in ACSA too where, as Kgabe points out ‘the Anglican Church is still seen by many in South Africa as an English Church, a missionary Church, a Church of “well-to-do persons”, and not *yet* rooted in its local context.’ (Kgabe 2018) These complexities noted, and the general North American flavour of the term *missional*, and the fact that the notion of *mission-shaped* is important for the FXoC movement I have opted to use the term *mission-shaped* in this thesis.

2.8.1.1 Anglican contours in *missio Dei*¹²

I’m cognizant of developing a mission-shaped practical theology that is based on the Anglican understanding of *missio Dei* following Nazir-Ali (1991), Douglas (2000), Corrie (2009), Moynagh (2012) and Kings (2016). Corrie (2008) gives a very helpful definition of the the *missio Dei* from an Evangelical Anglican perspective. ‘The *missio Dei* is the total vision for the transformation of the whole of reality, which defines the eschatological goal of mission as bringing back the whole universe

¹¹ It has become increasingly difficult to open a ministry book or attend a church conference and not be accosted by the word *missional*. A quick search on Google uncovers the presence of "missional communities," "missional leaders," "missional worship," even "missional seating," and "missional coffee." Today, everyone wants to be missional. (Hirsch 2008)

¹² I recognise that the work of Bosch (1991,1995) and Newbigin (1989,1995) became the theological and missiological starting points for much of the emerging missional movement with the development of the Gospel and Our Culture Network (GOCN) led by George Hunsberger in North American and with the likes of Guder (1998), Van Gelder (2000), Frost and Hirsch (2003) but given the myriad publications with missional in the title I have tried to navigate another path and look at the *missio Dei* from an Anglican context given my own tradition and the subsequent term *mission shaped*.

into reconciled relationship with God.’ Increasingly the statements released at Lambeth as the Bishops of the communion meet together have been shaped by a renewed commitment to the *missio Dei*.¹³ An expansive, and I think well negotiated, understanding from an Anglican global perspective is laid out by Kings.

Mission begins with God and ends with God. Before time, in time and beyond time, God's very being is outward moving, in generation and procession. In time, the Father sends the Son into creation to set people free: the Embedded for the embittered. The Father sends the Spirit into the lives of his people: the Irrigator for the parched. This interweaving of the Holy Trinity is not so much incoherent as 'co-inherent'. We are drawn into this astonishing movement from God and towards God. In turn, we are sent by him to embody and to share his good news. So mission is not so much what we do, as following in the wake of what God is already doing: discerning his surprising purposes and joining in. As a boat sailing in the water creates a 'v' shape behind it, so we are drawn behind his movement into his own creation for liberation. Mission is an umbrella word, which covers all God sends us in his world to do with him. Included under it, is the interweaving of evangelism, development and justice, locally and throughout the world (Kings 2016:1).

2.8.2 A mission-shaped posture is one of sentness

In Jesus' first encounter with his disciples after his resurrection in John 20 he articulates this own sentness and throughout the gospel he refers to his Father repeatedly as, 'the One who sent me.'¹⁴ The *missio Dei* is of course the essence of sentness. Moynagh (2012:121) says, 'at the core of the *missio Dei* is the idea of sending.' The Father sends the son, the Father and the Son send the Spirit. In the trinitarian Godhead is a set of dynamic, selfless, ever giving, dance filled relationships - being sent has ontological primacy for God. Out of that Wright (2010:201ff) argues God's people are defined by their very sentness.

¹³ There has been a discernible shift in focusing the life and witness of the Anglican communion through the hermeneutic of mission since in the 1980's. Lambeth conference resolutions of 1988 (resolution 44, 45 and 48) give somewhat vague principles of commitment to Evangelism, Mission and Youth but Nazir -Ali (1991:65) notes that "*Mission and Ministry*" section was the conference's longest report. Moreover, there was demand for, 'a massive shift to a mission orientation throughout the communion.' By 1998 there was, again, notable shift in tone of the resolutions. Section 2.1 recognises that 'mission springs from the action and self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ and that without this foundation, we can give no form or content to our proclamation and can expect no transforming effect from it.' In the most recent Lambeth gathering of 2008 the published resolutions clearly show a commitment to the *missio Dei* in fuller form. Paragraph 22 of the reflections reads, 'Mission belongs to God and we are called to engage in this mission so that God's will of salvation for all may be fulfilled. In this sense, mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. The Church exists as an instrument for that mission. There is church because there is mission, and not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is the fountain of sending love.' This has been wholly obvious in the UK context as Gittoes, Green and Heard (2013:1) rightfully claim, 'over the last decade, mission has claimed the top spot on the agenda of the Anglican church at national and local level.' However, the explicit commitment to mission shaped principles is not as clear in other provinces including ACSA.

¹⁴ John 1:33,3:34,4:34,5:36,6:29,6:38,6:44,7:16,7:28,7:33,8:16,9:4,10:36,11:24,12:45,13:20,14:24,16:5,17:25.

2.8.3 A mission-shaped posture is Trinitarian¹⁵

Both Newbigin (1995:19-29) and Bosch (1991:389), as perhaps the most influential post war missiologists, sought to articulate the trinitarian nature of the *missio Dei*; the Trinity as a community in communion. For Ward (2008:28), ‘the Trinitarian dance is participatory and invitational. In the trinitarian concept of the *missio Dei* we are invited to join in what God **in community** is doing in the world.’ The divine Trinity is ‘open’ not because it is imperfect, but by virtue of the graciously overflowing love open for all beloved creatures (Moltmann 2000:118). My understanding is that the Triune Community overflows and outflows with love for the other. The *missio Dei* reminds us that the church is the church for others: Kenotic, selfless, outpouring. We are invited into the life of the Godhead. Using the *mission as improvisation* opened up by David Ford earlier, we might say the trumpet player or saxophonist may step into the circle of the trio to be embraced and enjoined in a series of musical fissures and crackles. The Trio supports, gives, enables, challenges, provoke new melodic horizons.’ The Father, Son and Spirit are a community in communion.

As we will explore in chapter 3 MSC 2004 report takes the trinitarian idea of mission seriously. Goodhew, Roberts and Volland (2012:24-39) suggest that, ‘the trinity is God the pioneer’ (:33) each person with in the Godhead is at work in pioneering activity. God by the creation of the cosmos, pioneers a new form of reality’ (:25). Jesus the son pioneers, ‘innovating by who he is (incarnation), by what he does (ministry), by how he dies (cross) and rises again.’ (:27). Likewise, the Spirit pioneers in the world by casting a particular light on the son and leading God’s people in ever depending self-sacrificial acts of incarnate love. Additionally, Fiddes (2012:16-17) says ‘if we think of the relational movement in God that is like a Father sending out a son, expressed from with our beginning in “eternal generation,” and subsequently sent on mission into the created world, then this shapes all the movements of mission in the church as it gives itself generously for the love of society around.’

2.8.4 A mission-shaped posture is incarnational

Douglas (2000:459), in arguing for a fresh interpretation of Anglican identity at the beginning of a new millennium, suggests that Anglicanism is the ‘**embrace** of celebration of apostolic catholicity in the vernacular moment.’ That embrace begins with the incarnation. Importantly the reality of the incarnate one amongst us can only be experienced contextually. God in Christ Jesus moved into the neighbourhood and pitched his tent in our midst.¹⁶ or ‘the eternal word only speaks dialect’ (Cray 2010:66).

¹⁵ This theme of Trinitarian missiology continues to be explored for example by Daugherty (2007), Dodds (2011) and others.

¹⁶ John 1:14 ‘The word became flesh and tabernacled amongst us.’ is a more literal translation.

Nazir-Ali (1991:55-56) reminds us that the incarnational principle in Anglican theology has meant a strong commitment to pastoral presence but that this version of incarnational has often been criticised as support for the status quo rather than a prophetic and subversive siding with the marginalised and voiceless. As the MSC report (which we analysis in chapter 3) (2004:87) states, ‘Jesus belonged to his own culture and yet was prophetically critical of it.’

Again, the MSC report (2004) reminds us that, ‘Western Anglicans tend to emphasize only one dynamic of the Son’s incarnation.’ The radical cost to the Son is downplayed. The kenotic notion in the incarnational approach speaks of the outpouring that Christ underwent. The idea that, ‘He made himself nothing taking on the very nature of a slave’¹⁷ is a vital in showing the self-identification with the poorest, most vulnerable and by extension the radical cost it will be for the those sent. As Bosch (1991:513) states, ‘the human Jesus of Nazareth who wearily trod the dusty roads of Palestine is a Christ who agonizes and sweats and bleeds with victims of oppression.’¹⁸ The self-identification of the kenotic is expressed interestingly in Biko’s (1978:22) work as a call to white South Africans in identification with those oppressed under apartheid.

The question often comes up "what can I do?". If you ask him to do something like stopping to use segregated facilities or dropping out of varsity to work at menial jobs like all blacks or defying and denouncing all provisions that make him privileged, you always get the answer "but that's unrealistic!". While this may be true, it only serves to illustrate the fact that no matter what a white man does, the colour of his skin his passport to privilege will always put him miles ahead of the black man.

2.8.5 A mission-shaped posture is not exclusively ecclesiocentric.

Bosch (1991:391) reminds us that, ‘the primary purpose of the *missiones ecclesiae* can therefore not simply be the planting of churches or the saving of souls; rather, it has to be service to the *missio Dei*, representing God in and over against the world, pointing to God, holding the God-child before the eyes of the world in ceaseless celebration of the feast of Epiphany.’ In essence that, ‘God’s own mission is larger than the mission of the church.’ (1991:391) This has also been a significant criticism from Duraisingh (2010:7), Hull (2006) and others which will be explore in chapter 3. That the Fresh

¹⁷ Philippians 2:7 loose translation.

¹⁸ It should be noted that ACSA (The Anglican Church in Southern Africa) is very much shaped by the Anglo-Catholic theology of incarnation from the Oxford Movement and in the form of SPG missionaries. Lewis (2007:32) notes that this Anglo-Catholic approach erases the sacred - secular divide. ‘Everything is sacred because it is redeemed by the fact of Jesus’ taking on human flesh and living among mortals. A consequence of this basic Christian truth is that there is no arena into which the church cannot legitimately enter.’ An evangelical critique of this approach needs to be mentioned. Christ’s kenotic incarnation would certainly have a panentheistic leanings but Christ’s taking on of flesh does not automatically account for the redemption of all things. Everything has the potential for redemption and in the coming kingdom there will be the complete renewal of all things but we live in the ‘now’ and ‘not yet’ of the kingdom.

Expressions movement has essentially replaced mission-shaped with church shaped mission is not to be overlooked.

2.9 Conclusion

In this 3rd chapter I have tried to outline a contemporary contextual South African practical theology by tracing the turn to practice and then drawing on the metaphor of performance and improvisation. Secondly, I have attempted to see practical theology in this context as needing to engage with the idea of the postcolonial and to be prepared to take seriously previously despised forms of knowledge as well as being aware of South Africa's internal colonialism that still lingers structurally and relationally. Thirdly, I have advocated for a practical theology that is transformative and lastly one that is mission-shaped.

I now move on in chapter 3 to examine the theological and missiological underpinnings of the FXoC movement asking important questions about where the movement has sprung from, dealing with John Hull's insightful critique of the early Church House Report from 2004 as well as probing the disapproval of Percy (2008, 2010) and Davidson and Milbank (2010). I also use the work of Bevans (2002) and his helpful set of contextual theologies to help frame those criticisms. I conclude the chapter by giving a current assessment of FXoC in South Africa out of the 2016 International conference.

Chapter 3

How can we sing when we're in a strange land? Fresh Expressions of Church as improvisation in context

This third chapter explores the phenomenon of FXoC beginning with a short historic overview of the movement and various modes of ecclesial expression that have grown up in the last 14 years since the initial church house publication. **I argue that FXoC are attempts at ecclesial improvisation in context.** Essentially, I see the original MSC report and the subsequent flourishing of new ecclesial communities as a commitment to contextual theology. Therefore, in this chapter I also use Bevan's 2002 work on models of contextual theology as a way of framing the various positions both FXoC proponents and critics use.

It's my sense that FXoC mission-shaped, contextual core and identity is sometimes missed by its main detractors. The work of Moynagh (2012, 2017) is explored as well as literature in opposition to the movement both theological and ecclesial from Davison & Milbank (2010), Percy (2008, 2010), Hull (2006) and others. The chapter concludes with the recent history and complexities of Fresh Expressions in South Africa and the most recent reflections on the international conference held in February 2016 and some further comments on FXoC normativity and blueprint ecclesiology.

Before exploring the criticisms of FXoC I outline a rationale for FXoC using the Chicago-Lambeth quadrilateral as a foundational statement of the Communion. There is no scope to investigate the origins of the Chicago-Lambeth quadrilateral in this context suffice to say that Avis (2000:56) notes that the CLQ, 'clearly has particular relevance to ecclesiology.' Truth be told 'Anglicanism since its beginnings has been forged on the anvil of ecclesiological controversy.' (Avis 2000:9) This has led to times of negotiation, manipulation and open dispute but as Moynagh (2012:443) reminds us in the FXoC debate, 'Christians will have to live sometimes painfully with their differences.'

The Chicago-Lambeth quadrilateral is stated thus

- 1 The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God.
- 2 The Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith.
- 3 The two Sacraments – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
- 4 The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.

Continuing the metaphor of improvisation and performance we developed in the practical theology chapter (chapter 2) following Begbie (2000) and Bailey (1991) we start with Phil Potter's¹⁹ (2016) Fresh Expressions International conference keynote address which took place in Cape Town in February 2016.²⁰ Potter (2016:17ff) says 'future church will need to be more into improvising than orchestrating. Jazz...is different. Yes everybody's playing in the same key, and off the same page, but instead of somebody with a baton saying this is how you must play, you've now got a group of people with a certain gift mix, different talents and a degree of trust, together now from the same page, they begin to improvise and see where the music takes them.' In the light of this I submit that FXoC are ecclesial improvisations in context. The notion of performance and improvisation is both a challenge to sometimes brittle or calcified understandings of church and mission in Anglicanism in the 21st century especially in ACSA. However, this is also a faithful call to re-imagine in the light of historical forms of mission shaped ministry as both Tilby (2008:83ff) and Moynagh (2012:28-30) have sought to show. Whether those arising out of monastic life (Tilby 2008:85, Moynagh 2012:34-37) to the Wesleyan movement (Moynagh 2012:42-45) there have always been attempts (faithful and not so) to create a 'mixed economy'. As Moynagh (2012:433) says, 'we know in the past existing churches have not been very good at accommodating the new, the CofE had no room for the Methodists.'

Additionally, I would argue that FXoC find themselves growing out of (loosely defined) several historical collieries. The first colliery is evangelical Anglican missiology which itself might start from Henry Venn, Roland Allen, Max Warren, John V Taylor, John Corrie and Timothy Yates and so forth into contemporaries Graham Cray, Stephen Croft, Michael Moynagh and Jonny Baker. But there is another historic colliery that has shaped it; the patriarchs of the missional movement from most notably David Bosch and Lesslie Newbigin (Powell 2013:53-59). A third historic colliery might be mentioned as the 1970s Charismatic movement with the influence of John Wimber on the evangelicals of the Church of England including, but not exclusive to, David Watson, Sandy Miller, Nicky Gumble and the subsequent New Wine movement (Percy 2008).

However, Moynagh's understanding of the historical collieries of FXoC are simply put down to evangelical pragmatism. Moynagh (2018) suggests three ways in which evangelical missional pragmatism has been important. Firstly, an almost reflex commitment to evangelism, which over the past 40 years has expanded into mission more broadly understood. This has bred an attitude of - almost - 'evangelism at any cost.' Secondly, an experience of endless movements - from various shades of charismatic renewal, to church growth, to cell church etc, none of which have worked

¹⁹ Phil Potter is the Archbishop of Canterbury's missionary and team leader of Fresh Expressions in the UK.

²⁰ The Fresh Expressions international gathering to take place outside of the United Kingdom.

evangelistically. This has fuelled a search for something that does work. Thirdly, a low church approach to worship coupled with a pragmatic ecclesiology. This is in contrast, say, to an Anglo-Catholic ecclesiology, which is so tied to a specific liturgical form that it becomes much harder to imagine being church in a different way. However, the most in-depth work on the historic collieries comes from Powell (2013:49ff) who traces a clear genealogy both ecclesiological and missiologically in his PhD work on MSC. Essentially Powell (2013:49) believes ‘MSC largely deduces its own pool of literature from which it develops its particular ecclesiological and missiological direction.’

However sensitive these figures have been to the forces of colonialism and the dynamics therein I am deeply aware of the white European bias from which these authors write however unintentionally. In order to interrogate FXoC these collieries, in this context, need to be in critical dialogue with the largely western based missiologies since the reality is that the majority of critical academic and practitioner reflection on FXoC comes from the UK.

The chapter also seeks to open up pertinent questions that can reinforce initial thoughts related to authenticity in the South African context. In order to shape this chapter, I use John Hull’s excellent little book from 2006 entitled *Mission-Shaped Church: A Theological Response* as a way of framing the most important criticisms of MSC and FXoC. Hull (2006) is critical in the best sense of the term. He acknowledges that, ‘the recommendations of the report are timely and that no one with the interests of the church at heart could fail to approve of the general policy’ (2006:ix). But cautions that his, ‘general approval of the practical recommendations of the report (should not) obscure his theological reservations’ (2006:x).

3.1 Introduction

The Church house publication *Mission-Shaped Church* prepared for the Archbishop’s council in 2004 has become an unlikely best seller. It has, ‘sold over 30,000 copies, reached an international audience and has been credited with reshaping the Church of England’s ecclesiology’ (Moynagh 2012:52, Percy 2010:67) subsequently it has also spawned a number of mission shaped publications including, but not limited to, *Mission-shaped children* (Withers 2010), *Mission-shaped youth* (Sudworth 2007), *Mission-shaped spirituality* (Hope 2006) and *Mission shaped and rural* (Gaze 2008) all setting a theology of mission at the centre of the church life (Cray 2006:61-74). These have been supplemented by introductory works aimed at practitioners from Shier-Jones (2009), Goodhew, Roberts & Volland (2012) as well as volumes of essays hoping to draw those outside the evangelical stable entitled *Ancient Faith Future Mission* aimed at the Anglo Catholic tradition (Croft & Mobsby 2009) and contemplative neo monasticism (Cray, Mobsby and Kennedy 2010). In addition, there has been

extensive discussion around the relationship between the traditional Parish model and new models of church (Croft 2006, Bayes and Sledge 2009, Davison and Milbank 2010). I am also cognizant of the contested nature of Fresh Expressions of Church as normative, from an ecclesial perspective, and bring into the critical dialogue the work of Davison and Milbank (2010), Hull (2006), Percy (2008), Milbank (2008), King (2011) and Duraisingh (2010). There are currently no academic studies of Fresh Expressions from a South African perspective apart from Nell and Grobler (2014) and Nell and Mellors (2017) both of which, somewhat disappointingly, are based on observations from UK Fresh Expressions of church rather than indigenous Southern African expressions.

As is the nature of movements in the early part of the 21st century the Fresh Expression of Church has flourished in part because of its commitment to online material, the sharing of stories and resources via the website,²¹ the preparation of, and rewriting of training materials like MSM (Mission shaped ministry) and MSI (Mission shaped Intro) and it's clever and subtle use of media and communication through artfully capturing the stories of some of the most authentic and therefore disciple making communities.

3.2 Dealing with the original report

The original 2004 report sought to locate itself as successor to the 1994 *Breaking New Ground: church planting in the Church of England*²² arguing that 'the nature of community has so changed that no one strategy will be adequate to fulfil the Anglican incarnational principle in Britain today' (2004:xi). But fundamentally it argues that the 'existing parochial system *alone* [my italics] is no longer able to fully deliver its underlying mission purpose' (:xi). and that the 'changing nature of our missionary context requires a new inculturation of the gospel within our society' (:xii).

The report opens with a significant chapter on changing contexts outlining the social shifts apparent in the last 30 years. It also suggested a fragmented society, a slide towards a 'network society'²³ where 'networks have replaced neighbourhood. A typical town will have an array of networks' (:4-5). This shift from neighbourhoods to networks, greater mobility and freedom of choice leading to what report calls a 'drastic decline in social capital' (:7). The many fresh expressions of church the report identifies and highlights are 'connecting with people through the networks in which they live, rather than through the where they live' (:7). In its contextual approach the report also notes that consumer culture means 'the core value of society has moved from progress to choice' (:9), indeed 'the world will be organised around giving people the sense, or perhaps the illusion, that they can

²¹ www.freshexpressions.org

²² John Hull (2006:34) suggests it would have been better for the report to see itself as a '40 year follow up to the famous report *The Missionary Structure of the Congregation* (World Council of Churches, 1964.) This makes similar suggestions about local variety but sees it in a more satisfactory theological vision.'

²³ Drawing on the work of Manuel Castells.

have whatever they want' (:9). Finally, the report in its contextual analysis posits the demise of Christendom (:11). Christendom is not defined in the report but might be best understood historically as the period from the edict of Milan in the 4th century where the church became the *religio licitare* and occupied a position of power and prestige. 'The demise of Christendom and arrival of post-Christendom mean Christian identity is no longer conferred on the population by the culture and its values are no longer normative' (Lings and Hopkins 2004:8).

Chapters 2 & 3 of the report (2004:16-42) attempt to locate the work in the slip stream of the 1994 Breaking New Ground report and then advocate for continued and contextual church planting that is Anglican by affirming being faithful to Anglican tradition, Anglican calling, Anglican diversity and Anglican history (2004:34-36).

The following chapters (4 and 5) set out to describe a Fresh Expression of Church by taking note of the variety and diversity of new ecclesial communities that had grown up. This is an important point. The report was significant in that it was merely describing the early pioneering of FXoC already in existence at the time of publication (Lings and Hopkins 2004:3). The report (2004:43) identified common features of a FXoC including, but not exclusive to;

- small groups for discipleship and relational mission
- not meeting on a Sunday morning
- relating to a particular network of people
- post denominational
- connections to resource churches

These common threads led in turn to the report's (2004:44-76) identification of 12 varieties of FXoC. (Croft 2008:3) These were alternative worship congregations, base ecclesial communities, cafe church, cell church, churches arising out of community initiatives, multiple and midweek congregations, network focused churches, school based and school linked congregations and churches, seeker church, traditional church plants, traditional forms of church inspiring new interest and youth congregations. But this list sought to help readers grasp the variety of ecclesial responses to the *missio dei*. Therefore, they are best seen as descriptive rather than prescriptive. The Community Supper falls into the 5th listed category of *churches arising out of community initiatives*.

3.2.1 A definition of Fresh Expressions of Church

Two years after the report an attempt to formalise a definition was necessary. Croft (2008:9) says it was important to present, 'a reasonably robust definition of a fresh expressions of church,' since the

MSC report didn't provide a definition but, 'preserved an intentional ambiguity' (:8). By May 2006 a working definition was presented.

- A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church.
- It will come into being through the principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples.
- It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the gospel and the enduring marks of the Church and for its cultural context.

Within this definition there appears to be a clash between an imperialistic notion of mission that as we will see later in the discussion is primarily concerned with church-shaped mission (1st and 3rd sentences of the working definition) and more expansive and generous notion embodied by the 2nd sentence. Herein lies one of the fundamental criticisms of FXoC which we will explore in later in this chapter. Percy (2010) and the report of the Anglican Methodist working party (2012:180) both note that the term fresh expressions of church is potentially misleading. As I submit and hold in this thesis, and an important assumption of practical theology in the ethnography and ecclesiology conversation is that, 'the church is *never* an abstract theological concept because the body of Christ is always a visible, concrete reality in the world (2012:180). Therefore, the phrase 'fresh expressions of church' should be interpreted in such a way that it clearly refers to *the* church.'

More recently, perhaps as a way of side stepping this difficulty inherent in the working definition the movement has used the following diagram (See Figure 1 page) to explain the process of how a Fresh Expression unfolds and has used 4 words. Missional - Contextual - Formational - Ecclesial (Goodhew, Roberts and Volland 2012:76, AMWPR 2012:40). This looser definition enables a more fluid less prescriptive approach.

In recent discussions around this model Moynagh (2017:143ff) has spoken about the gift nature of each element in the diagram. If each dimension of the diagram is seen as, in and of itself, a 'missional gift' then the need to move to the next circle is tempered. It does not become a race along the mission shaped flow travelling to the 'evolving worship' circle as quickly as possible. Rather each element is a gift in itself. 'As part of God's outflowing generosity, new ecclesial communities are divine gifts. But when the church offers what it has to others, it invites recipients to enter into a reciprocal relationship.' (:148-149) Moynagh (2017:150) remarks for example that the gift of 'listening' (which underpins Figure 1) in the reciprocal relationship can be, 'a contemporary expression of empty

handedness.’ Thereby seeking to listen to a community without presuming to know the answer in advance.

3.2.2 A comment on the theological chapter of MSC

In this chapter I attempt to wrestle with some of the key criticisms of the FXoC movement by exploring John Hull’s little book written in 2006. To date the most significant exploration of the MSC report has been undertaken in the doctoral work of Powell (2013) who systematically attempts to open up the genealogy of the report through the 18th-20th centuries in order understand the ecclesiological and missiological underpinnings. It might be argued that the theological chapter in MSC is too thin, being a mere 19 pages (2004:84-103). Powell (2013:22) notes that, ‘in this chapter (5) the report makes much more explicit its radical New Testament hermeneutic that simply bypasses the role of the Christian and Anglican tradition in this interpretive process. Elements of the missiologists Bosch and Allen appear to be influential here.’ Powell’s concern, in a similar vein to Davison and Milbank (2010) and Hull (2006), is that the traditional ecclesiology of the Anglican church is bypassed and the missiology of Bosch, Newbigin and Murray (all from outside the Anglican tradition it might be added) takes precedence. Secondly, Powell (2013:24) asks whether, ‘the communities it describes are shaping the theological agenda and outcomes of the report itself rather than being a basis for reflection.’ This is an important question. The report was attempting to describe the various FXoC that had emerged from below. Whilst chapter 4 outlines the variety of ecclesial communities with many specific examples included and narrated into the text there is very little, if any, reflection on the ecclesial legitimacy of these new contextual churches. They are often taken as is. Thirdly, Powell (2013:24) points out that the language of the report can give the impression that, ‘the need for churches to practice baptism and eucharist, or the need to be in communion with the local Bishop, as merely legal requirements, as something to be observed rather than something that expresses a theological conviction.’ As we will see in the analysis and interpretation of data in chapter 6 of this thesis there is a tension between the notion of legal requirement and theological conviction. Often legal requirement is favoured over and against theological conviction. Finally, Powell (2013:25) says that, ‘reading *MSC* also raises the question as to whether the ecclesiology of the report represents a capitulation to the logic of the capitalist market. It seems to understand salvation as a marketable product.’ This, as we will see, is a considerable problem from the perspective of Percy (2008) and Milbank (2010) who believe that FXoC is merely in cahoots with the capitalist market economy. Whilst this is an important point, I explore in 3.4.3 some counter arguments to this idea mostly through the evidence of actual FXoC who do not conform to the patterns of consumer captivity suggested. In essence Powell (2013:27) asks whether, ‘*MSC* raises important questions as to whether it has subverted traditional received Anglican theology and ecclesiology to its own missiological agenda?’

3.3 Introducing the models of contextual theology as a way of navigating the criticisms of FXoC

In his 2002 book *Models of Contextual Theology* Bevans reminds us that, ‘the contextualisation of theology is really a theological imperative’ (:3). Contextualisation as a way of doing theology was seldom dealt with in classical theology but with the turn to the subjective there is a new attentiveness to experience, social location, culture and social change (:16).

Bevans suggests that there are basically two key ways of orientating oneself in theological outlook. ‘One can work out of a theology that is basically creation centred, or one can do theology from a fundamentally redemption-centred perspective’ (2002:21). From a **creation-centred** orientation the conviction exists that human experience, and so context is generally good’ (:21). This perspective sees the world as sacramental. God reveals Godself in ‘daily life, ordinary words, through ordinary people.’ In antithetical positioning comes the **redemption-centred** perspective. This perspective is characterised by the idea that culture and human experience is in need of radical transformation or complete replacement (:21). Bevans (2002:22) notes that from this vantage point, ‘rather than being a vehicle for God’s presence, the world distorts God’s reality and rebels against it. Rather than a culture being already holy with the presence of God, Christ must be brought to a culture for that culture to have any saving meaning whatsoever.’²⁴

Working with this basic assumption in mind Bevans devises 6 models that cover the whole spectrum from creation centred to redemption centred contextual theologies. The models in the book are what Bevans calls, ‘theoretical models of an inclusive or descriptive type’ (:31). Bevans notes that whilst each model is distinct, they can be used in conjunction with each other.

What is especially important as we approach criticisms of the FXoC movement is to see how on a fundamental level there is often a clash between the different types of contextual approaches. There is a general admission amongst both advocates and critics of the need to be a mission shaped Church in the 21st century but the actual approaches can be starkly different because of the theological presuppositions often assumed but not discussed. In many ways the FXoC movement has largely

²⁴ From a missiological perspective Bosch (1981:3-18) includes an insightful reflection on the creation centred and redemption centred perspectives via major mission conferences in Melbourne (May 1980) and Pattaya (June 1980). This essentially highlighted the gulf between the WWC commission for World Mission and Evangelism, which is generally ecumenical, over and against the Lausanne Committee which was vehemently evangelical.

Melbourne

Hears the cry of the poor and oppressed
 Considers man from the perspective of creation
 Judges the world positively
 No clear boundaries between church and world
 Regards the world as the main arena of God’s activity

Pattaya

Hears the cry of the lost
 Considers man from the perspective of the fall
 Judges the world negatively
 The boundaries between church and world clear
 Regards the church as the main arena of God’s activity

been shaped by those advocating the counter-cultural or translational models from Bevens (2002). For example, Newbigin, one of the Fathers of the missional movement, Bevan's (2002:117ff) places in realm of countercultural model. According to Newbigin (1986:5-6), 'if it is truly the communication of the gospel it will call radically into question that way of understanding embodied in the language it uses. If it is truly revelation, it will involve contradiction, and call conversion, for radical *metanoia*, a U-turn of the mind.' But it also needs to be noted that the MCS report also draws on the work of Catholic theologian Vincent Donovan (MSC report 2004:92) who Bevens places on the other end of the contextual models scale in the anthropological model.

I use these models to help unpack some of the polarised positions in the *Mission-shaped Church* debate.

3.4 Wrestling with criticism of the movement

Fresh Expressions have often been seen as something of a *Lusus naturae*²⁵ in their ecclesiology by their detractors; that FXoC are essentially an ecclesiological aberration. In this section I deal with a number of criticisms that the movement has faced and continues to face. Disentangling the genuine critiques from the sometimes sour and disingenuous tone they are delivered in is not always straight forward.²⁶ Many of the criticisms are in fact helpful, apt and significant and go a long way as acting as a corrective to weaknesses in the movement. It's interesting to note that the majority of the critiques often fail to engage missiologically with the movement and if they do so they tend to be weakened by their piece meal approach. In reading the literature and critiques of FXoC one is struck by the almost seemingly irreconcilable difference in starting points between advocates and critics. That difference by and large is highlighted by Bevens' approach. On one side the FXoC literature tends to be written by pioneers, missiologists²⁷ and those engaging with cultural theory and contextual theology in a loosely protestant, reformed and evangelical vein. The majority of criticism comes from the liberal catholic stream of the church and are largely written from a systematic theological, ecclesiological and philosophical background.²⁸ This often leads to a lack of true interface where opponents are missing each other. Secondly, it's important to note that many of the criticisms of FXoC are in fact (especially in dealing with Hull, Davidson and Milbank) criticisms of the initial

²⁵ Freak of nature.

²⁶ Brutus Green (2013:96) speaks of the mean-spirited side that come out in the critics of FXoC out of its desire for the permanence of a world that has all but disappeared.

²⁷ Graham Cray often presents himself as a missiologist 'I approach this subject as a missiologist, not as a liturgist, although I have taught some liturgy. I wish to address common worship in relation to common mission' (Cray 2012:7).

²⁸ This type of mismatch is seen most markedly in Davison and Milbank's *For the Parish* which starts its fundamental refutation of Fresh Expressions theology with an appeal to the philosophy of Wittgenstein. This in itself is not a problem but in doing so Davison and Milbank fail to actually wrestle with some of the primary assertions in *Mission-Shaped Church* which are in fact contextual and missiological. One has to ask where is their interaction with Bevens, Newbigin, Bosch, Guder or even more Anglican missiological writing of Allen, Taylor, Corrie and King?

Church House report which was never meant to be a theological treatise but an internal Anglican report.

Hull's criticisms laid out in his little book can be listed under the headings; **tacit imperialism, lack of diversity, complicit with consumerism and one dimensional inculturation**. There are others but these seem to be the most pertinent. Lastly, I would add that criticisms from Davidson and Milbank (2010) and Milbank (2008) focus on the idea of **denigrating the local Parish church**.

3.4.1 The Church, Mission and the Kingdom: Does the confusion between Kingdom and Church Matter? [Tacit imperialism?]

Hull's first (2006:1-9) concerns with MSC report is around the usage and interplay of terms church, mission and Kingdom and that one of the reports fundamental weaknesses was, 'it's failure to distinguish clearly between the church and the mission of God' And, 'whether the church is the object of mission or whether on the other hand, the church is better regarded as a servant or instrument of the mission?' Hull's observation is an important one and the issue has been taken up by Duraisingh (2010:7-28), Moynagh (2012) and recently Gittoes (2013:98-119). At the bottom of this observation I see an underlying issue at the heart of the Anglican communion; evangelical vs liberal catholic understandings of authority, sacraments and ecclesiology.

The MSC report however **does** attempt to distinguish between the two concepts of kingdom and church at various points especially the theology section but does not do so in any serious systematical way. 'The Kingdom is a divine activity whereas the Church is a human community. Kingdom agendas and values are often more radical than church readily allows' (MSC 2004:86). Although there is some degree of ambiguity in these concepts it doesn't appear to that the report knowingly allows itself to collapse kingdom into church. But Hull (2006:5-9) suggests that there is a tendency towards what might be viewed as imperialism in the MSC report. Hull (2006:5) maintains that the 'missiology of the report blurs and confuses these distinctions, although the report maintains that the church does not have a mission; rather the mission has a church, at other times the expansion of the church is the mission.' He notes, that in chapter 5 of the report, 'the ultimate destiny of the church, implies that 'growth, by reproduction, will be vital to fill the earth' (MSC 2004:95). This might be interpreted to mean the vision of a church filling the earth is exclusionary and imperialistic; perhaps a global colonising church? Hull (2006:6) asks how a follower of Islam might read this element in the report? Might one regard it as 'the announcement of an imperialism which acknowledges no diversity, tolerates no rivals and is bent on world domination' (:6). Hull also attempts to point out that report's focus on an exclusionary bias as the 'church of the nation' (:7) and that the Anglican church in essence

believes itself to have territorial privilege through the parochial system. (:8) Whilst there may be hints of this thinking in the report this simply doesn't hold up. The subsequent flowing of ecumenical partnerships in the UK (and here in the South African context) in running the MSM course, in sharing resources at national level mean that the ambiguity in the report is largely a moot point.

However, it does seem that Hull's contextual theology and vision of the *Missio dei* flows from a creation centred approach which in turn sees the work of God not just confined to salvation history but into global/political history. This is a point is confirmed by Duraisingh (2010:11) who says, 'God's already up and running presence and work in the world, there can be no transformation from church-shaped mission to mission-shaped church.' Indeed, by drawing on Asian theologians (he includes himself) Duraisingh (:17) notes the, 'conviction about God's movement in the history of all peoples in judgement and grace leads many Asian theologians to critique a narrow understanding of salvation history which identifies God's saving presence *only* [my italics] within the history of Israel and later the church.' And again 'therefore the entire world is placed under God's creative and redemptive activity and God has been active directly among all peoples in their histories' (Duraisingh 2010:17).

Is it not that perhaps the reason for sometimes collapsing of kingdom into the church or the church's over emphasis on occasions in the MSC report comes from the type of influence Newbigin has? In his prophetic book *The Household of God* Newbigin (1953:187) clearly points out. 'In other words, just as we must insist that a church that has ceased to be a mission has lost the essential character of church, so we must also say that a mission that is not at the same time truly a church not a true expression of the divine apostolate. An unchurchly mission is as much a monstrosity as an unmissionary church.'²⁹ Yet as Percy has argued above the use of the word church when speaking

²⁹ A missiological reading of this seemingly inherent tension between church and kingdom is well captured by Lesslie Newbigin in his 1964 unpublished booklet *The Mission of the Triune God*. 'At Edinburgh in 1910 the sense of the world as a whole, of its ripeness for evangelisation and of the imminence of the coming of the Kingdom of God, was uppermost. Both at the beginning and at the end the mysterious word of our Lord was quoted: "There be some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Kingdom of God come with power!" In the closing moments of the conference, Mott quoted the words, "The work which centuries might have done must crowd the hour of setting sun." Nothing less than the evangelisation of the world now and the coming of the Kingdom of God was the key-note of Edinburgh's climatic utterances. At Jerusalem 1928 the concern was still with the Kingdom of God, but it was thought of in a different way. "The end is nothing less than the production of Christ-like character in individuals and societies and nations, through faith in and fellowship with Christ and the living Saviour, and through corporate sharing of life in a divine society." The meeting was profoundly concerned with what was going on in the world and with the attempt to understand it from a Christian point of view. It devoted much attention to the rise of secularism and to its meaning for Christians. It reflected much of the same thinking which was later to lead to the Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State. Its closing words were of "hope and expectation of His glorious Kingdom", though perhaps the whole context leads one to infer that for many of the delegates this kingdom was conceived rather in terms of "a Christ-like world" than in terms of "new heavens and a new earth". By contrast the Tambaram Meeting 1938 was much more concerned with the Church. Its theme was "The World Mission of the Church". "Notice", said Dr Mott in his opening address, "it is the Church which is to be at the centre of our thinking and resolving these creative days – the Divine Society founded by Christ and His apostles to accomplish His will in the world." And so, it was to prove. The Tambaram Meeting marked the beginning of an exceedingly necessary and fruitful period during which missionary thinking was, to use the oft repeated phrase, church-

of Fresh Expressions has an ambiguity about it. At times it is dropped and at other times it is given focus and attention depending on the audience. In Southern Africa it seems that ‘of Church/of church’ gets dropped from the official website. It states, ‘The **Kingdom of God is at the foreground**, and not the church. FE is not church centered, and is not first of all aimed at increasing the numbers, well-being or influence of the church as such, but to participate in the mission of God.’ “*The Church is the fruit of God’s mission, and that as such it exists to serve and to participate in the ongoing mission.*”³⁰ or ‘Fresh Expressions are **signs of the Kingdom of God** and must lead to the rule and presence of God in this world. Transformation of communities and society is the logic outcome and purpose of being church in the world.’³¹

Both Hull (2006) and Duraisingh (2010) very much find their theological operational centre in the anthropological model identified by Bevans (2002) when wrestling with the notions of church and kingdom and this comes into conflict with a more redemption centred/counter cultural model that can be found in the initial report. What undoubtedly has happened since the publishing of the MSC report in 2004 is that the movement has become theologically and missiologically broader as there has been both critical dialogue between Evangelicals and Catholics. Moreover the stories, certainly from the UK, draw on both evangelical/charismatic approaches as well as obviously Anglo Catholic examples of contextual theology.

The notion of imperialism that is occasionally hinted at in the report is concerning from a African and Anglican perspective. Goba (1979:6) as far back as the late seventies could write, ‘Protestant Churches from the West have ruthlessly imposed a kind of Christianity which denies the authenticity of our Africanness as well as our cultural heritage.’ Ten years later Pato (1989:160) continued to asked whether, ‘African Christians pray with borrowed words, think by proxy, and operate by way of Rome, Paris, London and other European capitals?’ Given the obvious colonial and imperial history of the birth of the Anglican church in South Africa any movement that even hints at neo-colonialism is to be rejected. The idea of imperialism might take much more subtle forms in FXoC movement. Could it be that the harnessing of resources such as sophisticated websites, slick documentary style stories of UK FXoC on DVD, well honed, structured and thought out training material like MSM and MSI, whilst being excellent on one level, can also feel like another prepackaged ‘it worked here so it will work there’ form of imperialism? FXoC UK leaders felt it

centric. It is to the practical developments which arose out of the Tambaram meeting that we are largely indebted for that “consensus” about mission and unity with which this essay began and which the Willingen meeting of 1952 also helped to develop. But at Willingen there was also strong criticism of the exclusively “church-centric” understanding of missions. The meeting wrestled with the question of the relation between God’s work in the mission of his Church and His work in secular history, but was not able to come to a common mind.’

³⁰ <http://freshexpressions.co.za/general-information/>

³¹ <http://freshexpressions.co.za/general-information/>

necessary to state in the international agreement signed in February 2013 with the local South African FXoC contingent that MSM material was not to be changed for three years but was then to be contextualised. Even that hints at an imperialistic undertone. The UK also demanded a fee from every participant who undertook the course to be paid over to FX UK. When a new movement arises the notion of looking to the north can smack again of paternalism³² even if that is not intended. By November 2017 there had been a shift from Fresh Expressions UK in its agreement with Fresh Expressions Southern Africa allowing it to truly contextualise all the MSM and MSI material and no longer asking for the fee per candidate to run the course.

3.4.2. The Problem of Diversity: MSC understandings of Diversity [lack of diversity?]

Hull's (2006:10-16) short chapter on issues relating to diversity for MSC report notes that, 'diversity is a recurrent theme throughout the report,' yet he argues that the notion of diversity is not well thought through. Although Hull himself does not approach the issue of the mixed economy here I think it's helpful to include it under this heading. Hull (2006) approaches the notion of diversity in the report from two principal perspectives.

3.4.3 The Problem of Diversity: Homogeneous Unit Principle

There have been criticisms from Hull (2006:10-16), Percy (2008:38), Davison and Milbank (2010:65-73) and Walker (2014:35-39) that FXoC are often out workings of Donald McGavran's Homogeneous Unit Principle. The essence of the argument is simply that the movement has appropriated church planting and growth models and theory from Donald McGavran. McGavran's work may be, somewhat aphoristically, summed up in his own words as 'people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers' (1980:223). His infamous Homogeneous Unity Principle posits that, 'the most effective way to numerically grow groups of Christians was to adopt his homogeneous unit principle - a section of society (or subculture) in which all members of have much in common' (Percy 2008:38). Although Percy readily admits that many practitioners in the Fresh Expressions movement have doubtless not readily drawn on McGavran's work.

Davison and Milbank (2010:64ff) devote the initial part of chapter 4 in their stinging critique of fresh expressions over to what they call *The flight to segregation*. Following similar arguments as Percy (2008) they reiterate that the MSC report is a recipe for segregated Christian congregations. 'Far from breaking down the dividing wall Fresh expressions builds walls up' (2010:64). Davison and Milbank state that whilst the motivations behind HUP are noble and commendable (:65) from a missiological

³² Goedhal's (1989) essay on the shift from Paternalism to Partnership in ACSA over the last 150 years is worth remembering.

perspective they encourage segregation. They argue, finely, to the heterogeneity of the early church as a place, ‘perhaps the only place in the Roman Empire where slaves mixed equally with the freeborn, men with women, the poor with the rich. The Church took a stand against divisions by race, religious background, gender, age, education, and status as slave and free’ (:66). This is important and valuable point. Especially as Moynagh (2012:169-173) says that in contexts where there is a history of culturally distinct churches such as our own in *Apartheid* South Africa there is more need for caution in methodology or theory that affirms homogeneity. What is problematic, however, is that Davison and Milbank (2010) have a rather romanticised view of what local Parish churches look like in comparison to FXoC (Moynagh 2012:170). The reality of most local parish congregations is that whilst on the surface they appear to be heterogeneous underneath there are ‘certain cultural traits that draw the community together’ (:170). These maybe theological, or social whilst on the outer surface there is an apparent diversity in terms of age, race or economic status. Helpfully Moynagh (2012:168ff) in chapter 9 of his book *Church for Every Context* outlines the actual complexity of the McGavran’s work by suggesting three views. Those of *A missional goal*, *a missional first step*, or *a missional no-go*.

Firstly, *A missional goal* (:168). As sited above a missional goal means that, ‘homogeneous congregations appear to be the mission priority.’ Secondly, in the *missional first step* approach. Drawing on Newbigin’s work Moynagh argued that, ‘The existence of separate congregations in the same geographical area on the basis of language and culture may have to be accepted as necessary, but provisional.’ ‘culturally based congregations are regrettable because they are potentially divisive.’ However, in later writing Moynagh (2017:248) says that, ‘in our flawed world, some people may find mixing with others who are quite different quite challenging. Yet by joining a people who are similar to themselves, they can start a journey towards the embrace of difference.’ This *first step* approach moves in the right direction out of the homogeneity, ‘when the group takes time and the trouble to share the gospel with another group, at whatever cost, it starts to bear the cross of Jesus.’ (Moynagh 2012:176) Finally, the *missional no-go* concept which rejects any hint of HUP in an ecclesial context. Unsurprisingly Percy (2008:38) and Davison and Milbank (2010:65-73) fall into the final taxonomy. But might it be more nuanced in the complexity of postcolonial, post-*Apartheid* context of South Africa? Given the dehumanising effects of the *Apartheid* system and its continued over spill in to every area of life in contemporary South Africa **any** appropriation of McGavran’s methodology in our context is to be rejected even in Moynagh’s (2012:168) attempt to navigate a way through the complexity. However recently Moynagh has come back to the contentious yet fertile area of HUP and unity in diversity and offers a possible way forward. (Moynagh 2017:234-252). Moynagh argues for a focused and connected church approach (2012:171-180; which gives licence to ‘culturally focused churches that met together as the “whole” church from time to time.’ (Moynagh 2012:171).

Interestingly Walker (2014:35-39) seems to reject Moynagh and the Church house report's focus on HUP. He argues that, 'a theology of the incarnation of the gospel that requires not segregation but a serious commitment to inclusion, empowerment and celebration of diversity within a multicultural faith community, and that requires a challenge to dominant cultures, not the segregation of disempowered ones' (:35).

Helpfully Hull (2006:15) points out that McGavran's original work issues concerned with 'primal societies where conversion is to take place on the part of a whole people rather than isolated individuals extracted from their native community.' Therefore, the use of HUP needs to be seen in its original incarnation. Commenting on McGavran's church growth theories in his *Transforming Mission* Bosch (1991:414) posits, 'a talk-alike, think-alike, look-alike congregation (Armstrong 1981:26) may reflect the prevailing culture and be a club for religious folklore rather than an alternative community in a hostile or compromised environment.'

3.4.4 The Problem of Diversity: The mixed Economy

In his address to the 2003 General Synod Rowan Williams, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, used the term 'mixed economy'³³ for the first time in speaking about the way in which new contextual churches or Fresh Expressions of church could sit alongside, and have a symbiotic relationship with, the inherited church. He posed a question, 'we have to ask whether we are capable of moving towards a more 'mixed economy' - recognising church where it appears and having the willingness and the skill to work with it? Mission, it's been said, is finding out what God is doing and joining in.' (Williams 2003) Or further, 'can we live with this and make it work? This is where the unexpected growth happens, where the unlikely contacts are often made; where the Church is renewed (as it so often is) from the edges, not the centre' (Williams 2003).

In this section we examine and explore the notion of mixed economy. There are a number of initial theological starting points before going on to narrate some of the practical problems that the mixed economy mode of existence presents. The mixed economy is a way of speaking about a new kind of ecclesial diversity in the Anglican Church whereby the inherited solid parish church model has a partner in the *missio Dei*; a liquid, supple and edgy church. Whilst the work of the parish model continues the need for new ways of contextualising the gospel was seen to be paramount. The mixed economy speaks of coterminous relationship between the two; a reciprocity.

Firstly, the mixed economy reflects something of the diversity that exists in the Trinitarian Godhead. 'The Father, Son and Holy Spirit have their own identities. They are distinct persons. But they are

³³ This term was actually first used when Rowan Williams was still Bishop of Monmouth in Wales (Croft 2008:5)

also totally involved with each other and mutually dependent on one another - so much so that they are a single entity.’ There is a distinction yet an outpouring of reciprocal love and selflessness intrinsic to the life of the Father, Son and Spirit. In a similar way churches operating in ‘inherited mode’ and those seeking Fresh contextual approaches recognise their differences whilst respecting, honouring and loving one another with their resources.

Secondly, there is a diversity structured in creation that mirrors a need for churches to accept the diversity within their midst. ‘We will hold to a vision of one transcendent united church, but positively welcome a rich variety of expressions of church locally, nationally and across the world.’

Thirdly, there is a picture of mixed economy in the eucharistic meal. ‘In the breaking of the bread at Holy Communion, we are invited to behold the Christ who died for us. Just as the pieces of broken bread - in their different shapes and sizes - belong to the one loaf, we see that in all our diversity we belong to each other because we each belong to the one body of Christ.’

Finally, Moynagh (2012:180) explores some of the biblical-theological justification for the mixed economy approach to mission and ministry. Firstly, it concretises the idea of unity in the body. Since all are baptised into Christ and share in his mission there will be a myriad expression of that. Baptism being worked out in the world. Moynagh (2012:181) reminds us that the churches of Acts were diverse and reflected something of the tension between ‘inherited modes’ and Fresh Expressions. ‘The Jerusalem church had parallels with inherited churches today. It had a ‘you come to us’ mindset.’ (:181) Its fundamentally attractional posture meant that it was essentially a Jewish church that saw some fruit amongst gentiles with the expectation that those gentile converts would adopt much Jewish cultural baggage. The Antioch church on the other hand had a more incarnational approach. Moynagh (2012:181) says, ‘rather than waiting for potential converts to come to Antioch, it sent out Paul and Barnabas to plant churches across Asia minor.’ This resulted in a more eclectic group of disciples. Communities of people (ethne) who were overlooked and ignored by the Jerusalem church. Again, Moynagh reminds us that ‘Antioch church created new theology’ (:182) and began the process of clarifying and refining just what it meant to a follower of the risen Lord Jesus at that juncture in the life of the early church. What is vital in this description of these church communities is the fact that there was an independence yet a mutuality about them. There was a reciprocity between them. ‘The Jerusalem church had the spiritual insight to recognise God at work and gave Paul their support.’ (:181) and released Barnabas to assist him. Later in the genesis of these churches Paul was able to bring a financial gift from the church in Antioch to the Jerusalem church that had fallen upon hard times. This mutuality or symbiotic relationship is a model for the inherited mode and Fresh Expressions of church joining God in his mission to the world. Moynagh however seems to paint a

little bit of a rosy picture of the relationship between these two churches. As the Guide helps us ‘Despite fierce disagreements at times, Jerusalem and Antioch retained close ties, and there was mutual respect and support. They recognised that Peter was called to mission among the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles, and that one was not better than the other: God was blessing both.’³⁴

But there are other ways of speaking about the mixed economy. Morisy (2006:125ff) helpfully attempts to map the notion of mixed economy by suggesting three domains in the topography. The explicate domain where much of our church practice resides, organised around formularies of faith, public worship, confession, creeds. However, Morisy (2006:126) posits, ‘our ‘inherited mode’ of being church is so complex and inaccessible that people are anxious about crossing that threshold.’ The inherited church (the explicate domain) remains in the centre of the map.

Lastly, I find Tilby’s (2008:83) subtle criticism of term ‘mixed economy’ useful and worth pursuing in this work as again another counter narrative to the sometimes-consumeristic undertones of FXoC, which we explore next. It can be, at times, that FXoC feels a little a-historic. Tilby points out that history is full of, ‘examples of different kinds of ecclesial community living alongside one another.’ She submits a better term of ‘mixed ecology’, ‘as it does at least suggest that new movements might be a manifestation of the work of the creator rather than a spiritual counterpart to the enterprise culture’ (2008:83).

3.4.3 Christendom

Hull (2006:17ff) seeks to elucidate the relationship between the report and Christendom. Asking whether there is actually a far subtler way of approaching Christendom than the report suggests. Hull (2006:19) notes that there is, ‘no interest shown in the study of British society for its own sake but only in so far as it *creates a problem* (my italics) for typical Sunday worship.’ Or ‘British society is discussed as a culture of consumption.’ From Hull’s perspective the report simply holds to a position of acquiescence regarding the nature of consumer society.

There have been a number of criticisms of Fresh Expressions of Church as pandering to the consumerist mentality largely shaping post Christendom culture. As Lings and Hopkins (2004:7) point out, ‘some have questioned whether MSC is too consumerist driven.’ Davie (2006:33-45) observes the shift from obligation to consumption in patterns of religion Northern Europe. Critics of the Fresh Expressions movement suggest that rather than acting as a counter narrative to those patterns Fresh Expressions has an attitude of acquiescence towards consumerist culture. The original report (2004:9-10) certainly takes the context of consumerist culture seriously. ‘Where previous

³⁴ <https://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/guide/about/mixedeconomy>

generations found their identity in what they produced, we now find identity in what we consume. The core value of society has moved from ‘progress’ to ‘choice’ - the absolute right of freedom to choose’ (2004:9).

The report does suggest that, ‘in one sense there is no alternative to a consumer society. That is what we are and that is where we are and that is where we must be church and embody the gospel.’ Unfortunately in appropriating this quote Hull (2006:19) fails to continue the quotation that affirms ‘being a church ‘in’ a consumer society but not ‘of’ it’ (2004:10). Cray (the chairman of the report) has written extensively in other settings on Christ and consumerism.³⁵ Hull (2006:19) suggests that the report should have led to call for a prophetic role for the church. It is true that there is a limited section on consumerist culture in the report (merely two pages) but again the report is an internal church document. The fact that it became a best seller was unlikely. Lamenting the fact that it is limited in its scope is not always helpful. Hull’s (2006) critique specifically towards the report means that it is more constructive than the commentaries from Percy (2008) and Davison and Milbank (2010). Both Davison and Milbank (2010) and Percy (2008:33-34) largely aim their criticisms at the Fresh Expressions movement rather than the original report. However, in doing so they often resort to soft targets and overlook Fresh Expressions of church that have been built on genuine incarnational principles. Percy (2008:33) notes that there is an element in ‘brandscaping’ in the Fresh Expressions movement which plays into the consumerist malaise rather than acting as a prophetic critique of it. He notes, ‘the brand creates the sense of ‘fresh’ starts, horizons, and newness: just one ‘expression’ of something existential and grounded. Almost anything can be a fresh expression..they have a new ‘brand’ that offers hope - it is a pure but subtle form of consumerism’ (2008:33). Percy (2008:34) also notes what he calls the ‘curiously bourgeois phenomena’ that is Fresh Expressions which is essentially a series of ‘meals, walks, days out, art galleries, exploration and journeys’ (2008:34). No mention of death, old people, images of decay or hardship he surmises. Certainly, on one level, Percy’s critique is valid. As Cottrell (2009:68) sums up, ‘the worst bit of fresh expressions has been the rebranding of every parent and toddler group in the country as a fresh expressions of church.’ However the caricatures of middle class self absorption and ‘brandscaping’ rather than building his argument tend to diminish it. Within the fresh expressions movement there are a number of initiatives that work amongst the forgotten people and places of the United Kingdom. A large proportion of fresh expressions have been planted amongst areas of considerable deprivation examples being the Lighthouse in Hartcliffe and Withywood in South Bristol, Zac’s place³⁶ in Swansea and I would argue The community supper in Mowbray, Cape Town. Each is a far cry from the bourgeois middle-classness that Percy seems to believe shapes the ecclesial core of most FXoC.

³⁵Cray, G. 2007. *Disciples and Citizens: A vision for distinctive living*, Nottingham: IVP Press. Cray draws extensively on the work of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman in critiquing consumerist society and ideology.

³⁶ <http://www.zacsplace.org>

A more constructive, and therefore, ultimately lasting argument should pit examples of genuine missional incarnation (as above) with examples that clearly leave something to be desired. Arguments from Tilby (2008:78-89) and Urwin (2008:29-41) that seek a less acerbic tone and are couched in a humbler manner build bridges and allow genuine criticisms to be heard and acted upon. Tilby (2008:86) asks whether it is right to, ‘discern in fresh expressions thinking an itchy restlessness which itself may be a product of our media saturated consumerist culture?’ Yet she concedes that fresh expressions are a gift to the church whilst still wondering if fresh expressions practitioners, ‘read too well and uncritically the concern for comfort, gratification and instant comprehension that our culture endorses’ (:87).

In response to the suggestion that FX is too consumerist Hopkins and Lings (2004:7) argue that, ‘the Church as community has the same function and goes through a similar process. It is formed in and for a culture; then by its reading of the gospel and the convicting ministry of the Spirit, that community becomes progressively shaped around the values of its Lord and Founder. It will find itself becoming more counter-cultural and its inner communal life should both demonstrate and bolster the counter-cultural values it claims.’

Milbank’s (2008) rather sour evaluation on the FXoC movement paints it as thoroughly captivated by management techniques and language. Seeing that, ‘from the outset not only reciprocally linked – especially in England – with nascent capitalism’ (2008:118). It is Milbank’s assertion that Protestant, moreover evangelical, forms of Christianity, are simply bedfellows with consumerist culture. He continues,

Christianity is reduced to a readily graspable product: the promise of a mysterious relationship with Jesus, the absolute authority of a printed book, the reduction of complex doctrine to formulas about atonement, a single punctual act of faith which is like an absolute banknote, redeemable in eternity. the point is that as many people as possible should buy this product (Milbank 2008:120).

Milbank’s critique of evangelical Church of England obsession with management speak and consumer values is shared by others like Hunt (2008:161-174) who makes similar observations about the commodification of the Alpha course and Ward (2005) on selling worship. Commodifying, packaging and selling an evangelical product is for Milbank and others not only distasteful but counters the authenticity of the Gospel.

‘The ‘saved’ individual has an infinite abstract redeemable value. Without this religious overlay, the capitalist machine is palpably unjust, nihilistic and ecologically destructive.’ (Milbank 2008:121) The

trouble in presenting this argument Milbank has to rely on caricature rather than ‘lived’ actual church context. This caricaturing only weakens the parts of his critic which are actually valid and important. Certainly, there are sectors of the church that have been infected by the consumerist traits of the globalised economy but surely almost every church lives in a paradoxical space of being anaesthetised by the consumerist, to an extent narcissistic vision of the world, and acting in prophetic defiance of it.

Milbank (2008:123) goes on to argue that ‘this is because Anglicanism is now dominated by a tense partition or sometimes an uneasy alliance between old liberalism and the new ‘mass’ Protestantism. Conservative evangelical currents have little interest in this establishment, nor in its inherited parish system, nor in prescribed liturgical worship, all of which they even tend to regard as inimical to the way in which they understand the process of mission.’

If globalisation is the handmaiden of consumerism African theologian’s reflections on the damage it can cause must be taken seriously. Heaney (2017:3) points out that for Mugambi, ‘just as missionaries in the past justified colonialism so today Christians justify globalisation.’ Additionally, imperialist projects are now enmeshed in projects of globalisation. Whilst Hopkins and Lings (2004:7) can argue that authentic FXoC’s must be on a journey away from being captivated by consumeristic thinking of empire into self-sacrificing community some starting points can often looked quite homogenous and consumer orientated. On one level this **missional first step** as Moynagh calls it is appropriate but if it does not move beyond that and is allowed to be inward looking and self-referential it becomes problematic.

3.4.6 Inculturation³⁷

Hull (2006:24-27) says that ‘inculturation is a significant aspect of contemporary missiology’ (:24), and notes that the MSC report’s favourite model for in the inculturation process is that of incarnation. The MSC report (2004:xiii) states, ‘it is the incarnation of the gospel, within a dominant consumer culture, that provides the Church of England with its major missionary challenge.’ or extended, (:20) election and incarnation reveal God daring to be culturally specific in diverse contexts.’

Hull moves on to describe what he calls two features of inculturation that are noticeably missing in the report. Firstly, he says, ‘is the thought that the Gospel is already present in the receiving culture prior to the arrival of explicit faith’ (Hull 2006:26). Hull says there is, ‘no trace in MSC of the methodology of seeking in surrounding culture for rumours of angels or signals of transcendence.’

³⁷ For an excellent article on Inculturation in the UK context see Nigel Rooms (2005) *Inculturation Comes Home: Lessons from the Worldwide Church*

Again, Hull seems to be operating out of the anthropological model suggested by Bevans (2002:54-69). Moynagh too (2017:154) notes that one of the problems of the MSC Report is that, ‘when discussing inculturation, the focus is on the church rather than engaging with people’s everyday concerns. The underlying assumption is that the church is God’s community with a divine mandate to reproduce.’ This means that ‘inculturation is made an instrument of church planting rather than serving the world’ (:154). However I would argue that whilst the MSC Report does not offer a methodology it is not at odds with the notion of seeking traces of the transcendent within a community. The importance of Vincent Donovan is not to be overlooked in this regard. Yet as the AMWPR of 2012 reminds us. ‘the doctrine of the incarnation provides a valuable corrective to any possible tendency in inculturation to compromise the integrity of the Gospel’ (:58).

Secondly, Hull (:26) suggests that has the Report deals with the implementation of mission but not with the inculturation of theology. Hull (2006:27) explains ‘the report makes use of the concept of inculturation to justify and promote the idea of diverse forms of church, but although it speaks a great deal of the sacrificial death involved in this adaptation, the sacrifice involved is always merely structural, never conceptual, never theological, never a matter of the nature of faith itself.’ Hull seems to be asking for a more radical notion of inculturation which challenges the very core of faith, that in inculturation there is a possibility of conversion by the barer of the gospel as much as the recipient.

Heard (2013:61-77) I think offers a way through the impasse. In seeking to find a way through the disconnect between *For the Parish* and the *MSC report*. Heard (:61) says that ‘inculturation expresses a generous ecclesiology.’ It will involve the, ‘necessary tension between fidelity to the past *and* responding creatively to the cultural context’ (:62). Three helpful points. **Firstly**, the active role of the Holy Spirit in inculturation is not really highlighted by MSC report or Hull but helpfully Heard points out that, ‘it helps to think of the Holy Spirit much more personally and creatively as an artist whose subject is the son and is concerned to paint countless portraits of that subject on countless human canvases. This challenges the notion of a pure gospel that is effectively *a-cultural* and *trans-cultural*.’ (:63) **Secondly**, following Bevans and Schroeder Heard reminds us that inculturation is dialogical and this will involve the process of listening and discerning. **Thirdly**, the church has to be open to learning things about its own identity in the same way Peter was challenged by his experience with Cornelius in Acts 10. The issue of inculturation is vitally important in the African context and has been widely discussed. It is not in the scope of this present work to set the various approaches to inculturation³⁸ but I do draw on Mugambi (2010:143-44) who uses the idea of contextualisation to

³⁸ Inculturation is a term that has a relationship with acculturation and contextualisation. I use contextualisation throughout this work as it has less links to the colonial project. Heaney (2017:4) suggests Mugambi’s idea of acculturation is, ‘the process through which a subject people assimilates the values of the dominating culture through colonial education,

suggest a similar way forward. ‘Any process of contextualisation will yield results dependent on the approach chosen.’

3.4.7 Denigrating the local Parish Church

The central argument from Davidson and Milbank in their book *For the Parish* is that FXoC are undermining, side lining and ultimately destroying the local Parish church of the UK. But Milbank (2008:124) also believes that FXoC that,

perfectly viable parishes, especially in the countryside or the semi-countryside, are increasingly deprived of clergy who are seconded to dubious administrative tasks or else to various modes of ‘alternative ministry’ such as ‘ministry to sportspeople’ or ‘ministry to youth’. In all this there lies no new expression of church, but rather its blasphemous denial. The church *cannot* be found amongst the merely like-minded, who associate in order to share a particular taste, hobby or perversion. It can *only* be found where many different peoples possessing many different gifts collaborate in order to produce a divine–human community in one specific location. St Paul wrote to Galatia and Corinth, not to regiments or to weaving-clubs for widows. He insisted on a unity that emerges from the harmonious blending of differences.

Milbank, in these acerbic criticisms seems to be unable to distinguish between any genuine, incarnational and apostolic expression of church and his quite obvious and romanticised notion of traditional parish ministry (Moynagh 2017). Nor does he really identify what he means by ‘perfectly viable parishes.’ As Hoare (2012:175) has remarked, ‘Davison and Milbank accuse the whole initiative of faulty methodology, an inadequate theology and a capitulation to market values.’ As I noted in the earlier part of this chapter one of the consistent problems in the criticism of FXoC has been that its theological work is ‘lite’. Again as Hoare (2012:176) goes on to argue, ‘more serious is that some of the accusations aimed at ‘Fresh Expressions’ and *Mission-shaped Church* do not stand up to close scrutiny. The latter sought to base itself on clear theological foundations, but it was not intended to be a heavy-weight theological document. It seems unfair then to launch an attack in the style of a theological juggernaut.’

Having outlined something of the theological criticisms around the movement we turn our attention to FXoC in the South African context.

administration and economy.’ Acculturation disparages local custom, traditional practice and imposes foreign categories. Inculturation from the perspective of Orobator (2010:3) at its best, ‘is understood as dynamic meeting of faith and culture that generates fresh and transforming syntheses of faith and its implications for everyday life.’

3.5 Fresh Expressions in South Africa

The journey of Fresh Expressions of church is relatively recent as Crowther (2014) notes, ‘Bishop Graham Cray visited South Africa several times whilst Fresh Expressions leader and was used as a catalyst to envision academics, senior church leaders and those with a heart for mission. From the outset, in a similar vein to the movement in the UK, there was a deep sense of ecumenicism with the DRC³⁹ taking a lead.’ In 2011 at the Diocesan synod (63rd session) in Cape Town Agendum 12 (on the final day of the Synod) ‘respectfully asked the Archbishop and the Bishop of Table Bay to lead the Diocese in actively exploring and experimenting with new forms of worship and church growth alongside our traditional forms.’ (2011:33) Additionally it asked the Diocesan ‘Growing the Church team’ to, ‘make resources available and give support and encouragement to Pastoral Charges exploring new ways of being church reaching the un-churched.’ (2011:34). As a follow up two years later at the Provincial Synod⁴⁰ a similarly worded resolution, ‘respectfully requests the Bishops to encourage the dioceses and parishes of our Province actively to explore and experiment with new forms of incarnation ministry, worship and church growth, alongside traditional forms.’ Presently it appears that the most significant development of these resolutions has been in the development of the *Mission-Shaped Ministry* course (Crowther 2014:10-11) which is run in ecumenical partnership. However, it should be noted that has been virtually nothing happening, in regards, to ‘leading and actively exploring’ from episcopal leadership in the Cape Town diocese.

3.5.1 Taking note of the ACSA history in the FXoC: Making Fresh Expressions of church speak to the Anglo Catholic tradition

Generally Fresh Expressions in South Africa has been dominated by low church evangelicals and has been taken up with great enthusiasm by the DRC, Vineyard, Methodists and the Presbyterians⁴¹ but been only mildly embrace by Anglicans. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the majority of Anglicans in the province of Southern Africa are Anglo Catholic sacramentally and ecclesially. My own experience as a newly ordained priest was Bishop Rubin's response to my description of St Martins⁴² (low church evangelical and charismatic) as not being very Anglican. "Yes", he said, "you barely have any ecclesiology." Another comment was that Fresh Expressions sounded like a bakery product. FXoC doesn't need an apologetic which might be cagily defensive but as a movement it does need advocates who can gently persuade whilst listening to genuine fears and concerns.

³⁹ Dutch Reformed Church.

⁴⁰ Resolution on Fresh Expressions of Church proposed to the Provincial Synod of ACSA (1-4 October 2013) in Crowther (2014:9).

⁴¹ The official missional partners according to the Fresh Expressions Southern Africa website include ACSA, The Vineyard, The Baptism Union, The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa, The Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk.

⁴² The Church where I was ordained a deacon and served my short curacy.

One of the initial problems in the genesis of the movement in the South African Anglican context is that too often the language and examples of FXoC really do not resonate with many Bishops, Priests and Deacons from an Anglo Catholic persuasion (although they may be more appealing to lay people). Many of the examples of FXoC that have been shared look to informal, too evangelical and often too white and middle class - a grouping of malcontents and disenfranchised parishioners who won't come under episcopal oversight. Very especially in the South African context these things lead to calcification of any initial interest because of the neglect to use more appropriate examples of contemplative, sacramental and liturgically shaped FXoC.⁴³

The language used is important in order to help people see that FXoC are just one of the many tools of the *missio Dei*. There is rich and important stream of Anglo Catholic missiology that the movement in South Africa can tap into and re-appropriate and re-imagine. This will give better opportunities of helping our brothers and sisters from other theological traditions to see Fresh Expressions as less of a neo-colonial threat and more as an opening up and way of seeing their tradition in a new light perhaps even a tool for a coming post-colonial church.

Generally, we might say that the Anglican church in South Africa in its best incarnation is Anglo Catholic, prophetic and contextual. As I have sought to show above Bevans (2002) would say it functions from a creation centred approach. Many Anglo Catholic clergy are not blind to the changes in culture or the decline of attendance in their Sunday morning congregations or the haemorrhaging of young people from the pews but they are indifferent and at times belligerent towards what they perceive to be the evangelical response to that crisis.

The history of the Anglican church in South Africa doesn't need to be rehearsed again in any detail⁴⁴ here other than to remind us that in 1821 USPAG came to the Cape whilst CMS ventured into Zululand. That evangelical inheritance remains to a large extent in Zululand with little outposts of evangelicalism flying their flags across parts of the country. Of course the Oxford movement sought to redefine its relationship with Rome calling for an understanding that the Anglican church was a 'branch' of the Roman church. It was also an important attempt to disentangle the Anglican church's compromised relationship with the state (the conservative party at prayer) and to reaffirm its independent spiritual authority. Besides the focus of worship being on the Eucharist with Vestments

⁴³ One thinks of two important publications from Canterbury Press. 1. Croft, S & Mobsby, I, 2009. *Fresh Expressions in the Sacramental Tradition*, Norwich: Canterbury Press. 2. Cray, G, Mobsby, I & Kennedy, A, 2010. *New Monasticism as Fresh Expressions of Church*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.

⁴⁴ Two important publications around the history of ACSA should be mentioned here. England, F. & Paterson, T (eds). *Bounty in Bondage: The Anglican Church in Southern Africa - Essays in honour of Edward King, Dean of Cape Town*, Johannesburg: Raven Press which paints a honest portrayal the development of the province and Lewis, H. 2007. *A Future for the Church: South Africa as the crucible for Anglicanism for the New century*, New York: Church Publishing which I found slightly idealistic and romanticised at points.

and a whole host of other Roman paraphernalia there was an important incarnational principle at work in its missiology.

Mattis (2016) states that, "the immediate practical workings-out of the theology and liturgy of the [Oxford] movement beyond the dreaming spires happened in the slums. High-church liturgy and a commitment to serve the (often Roman Catholic) poor went inextricably together: this at a time when anti-Catholic prejudice in the establishment was dying but by no means dead in England. This was not a vague aspiration toward "justice" broadly defined or vaguely synonymous with a progressive political agenda, but the combating of the very present ills of industrialization: the lack of workers' rights, outbreaks of cholera, lack of education, alongside the pastoral work of marrying, baptizing, burying the poor, and being present. It is the labor and sacrifice of the slum priests that gave real moral heft to the Oxford Movement and saved it from the insularity of which it has stood accused ever since."

There are numerous stories of slum priests in the 20th century⁴⁵ who sacrificed comfort in order to 'pitch their tents' in the most deprived parts of cities across the UK. Powell (2013:69ff) also notes the industrial missions that encouraged, 'people to come over and 'join God's union' – the church – which many workers did. However, this 'joining' did not entail having to attend a parish church, for the Industrial Mission itself was church enough. Surely a future echo of the FXoC movement?

That continued in the story of Anglicanism of South African in Township churches across the country and continues to happen today. Huddleston, Tutu and a host of others have given ACSA an incredible legacy. There is no denial of some of the sacrificial incarnational postures of clergy from the Anglo Catholic tradition. Indeed in helping to combat the notion that Fresh Expressions of Church is a kind of evangelical take over Croft (2009:42) affirms 3 areas of Catholic mission that resonate with FXoC.

The first is the holistic nature of mission. The Catholic rendering of mission, or a reading of the *missio Dei* is 'God in his very nature is a God of mission who is constantly active in the whole of creation' (Croft 2009:42). This is also affirmed by critics of FXoC like Hull (2006) and Duraisingh (2010). As I have stated earlier FXoC can occasionally be short sighted or have a diminished vision for God's work in the world. There have been consistent criticisms that the movement is more church shaped than mission shaped. We need to commend this more rounded and holist vision of the *missio Dei* from a Catholic perspective without segueing into a toothless universalism. Discernment of the Spirit is vital in assessing just what really is marked as God at work in the world. In this sense it's Bevans (2002) contention that two seemingly paradoxical positions in the contextual models may converge or overlap. For instance with in the FXoC movement it is not impossible to see the a convergence of

⁴⁵ In the UK context Revd Jellicoe comes to mind.

the anthropological model and the counter cultural model or at least there being a critical dialogue between the two?

Secondly, Croft (2009:43), as has been pointed out previously, notes the focus of the incarnation as the pattern and type of Christian mission. "The incarnational pattern, whereby missionaries go first and bless and serve a particular section of society, is emerging as the most authentic and helpful model for the development of FXoC." This commitment to bless and serve fits in with the first stage of the fresh expressions

Thirdly, Croft (2009:43) speaks of the "vital and deeply catholic principle of formation of disciples in community." Evangelicals, Croft says, often focus on calling out whereas the catholic tendency is making of disciples in existing community.

Cottrell (2009) uses the phrase "enabling Catholic Christians to think their way into the challenge of becoming a 'mixed economy' and see how Fresh Expressions might make sense within the tradition." He makes a number of suggestions which may be helpful in the South African context...helping our Gamaliels⁴⁶ be less suspicious. For example, he says if you have two services in your church on a Sunday morning which are catering to two quite different congregations with different needs, cultures and expectations) why not 3 or 4? Cottrell (2009:69) suggests that even though a catholic notion might be to draw all people to one table eucharistically pragmatically there is need, and justification, for other ways of being church. Stretch this a little and it's not impossible to envision something that draws on rich streams of liturgy but is re-imagined. A great example of a FXoC in the Anglo catholic and New Monastic tradition exists in Moot.⁴⁷ I visited the church in 2013 and met Aaron Kennedy then going forward for ordination but there are other excellent examples that draw on monastic and contemplative traditions that evangelicals in ACSA could do well to muse on in our listening and service to communities.

Cotterell (2009) also notes the cynicism that overt evangelism and church planting can foster in Anglo Catholics. Yet all churches have an inception, a birth, a start date. There was a great flurry of church planting in South Africa amongst Anglicans in the mid 19th century. My suspicion is that most clergy and desperately trying to not let the wheels fall of their current Parish setting and therefore cannot fathom how planting is possible. This is in a sense the pastoral/maintenance posture which is the default setting for many Anglican clergy. Mission shaped ministry acts as a corrective and enables apostolic giftings to come to the fore.

⁴⁶ Acts 5:

⁴⁷ <http://www.moot.uk.net/about/>

3.5.2 Fresh Expressions of Church in South Africa: A current assessment

Crowther's report from the International Fresh Expressions of Church conference on 16th-18th February 2016 is probably the most helpful barometer in assessing the particular challenges and opportunities facing the movement in South Africa. Out of the conference Crowther lists six key challenges with which the church must engage (2016:1)

1. All Christian Churches must find ways to continue the conversation on “future church” together and to be sent as one body in Christ.
2. We, the Church and its members, must hear, acknowledge and engage with the issues and the realities of our context (South Africa).
3. We, the leaders and “permission-givers”, must embrace and encourage different ways of being church, and new ways of ministry.
4. We, as Church must affirm a living (and lived out) faith in the Triune God.
5. We, as Church, are called to discipleship and discipleship-making.
6. We, as God's people, must give ourselves to listen to God, to each other and to our context.

I pick up on the first three and the last of these key challenges that seem to me the most pertinent to the conversation.

1. **All Christian Churches must find ways to continue the conversation on “future church” together and to be sent as one body in Christ.** Crowther (2016:2) notes that, ‘there was great celebration at the conference of our diversity as delegates.’ And that, ‘there was clear agreement across the diversity of church groupings and traditions, to encourage our leaders and governing institutions engage together around the questions of future church that we are called to be shaped by the *missio Dei*.’ The ecumenical nature of the movement is not to be dismissed and in part is its strength for mainline churches in all contexts. Whilst Hull (2006) could claim 11 years ago that MSC had slightly imperialistic in tone as it saw the Anglican Church as the national church over and against others this is not the case in South Africa. There certainly was a form of Christian nationalism in the relationship between the DRC and the *Apartheid* government but this is obviously no longer true. The other mainline churches like the Methodists, Presbyterians and United Reforming churches have seen the share of the market share diminish at times drastically. A new resolution to work together is important for understandings of future church. Whilst resolutions have been passed at Anglican diocesan synod in 2014 nothing has resulted in what Crowther (2016:3) calls ‘shared consultations, research and reflection’ or for ‘each denomination to plan an internal conversation with its leaders to discuss issues specific to its own challenges

and possible solutions.’ (:3) These types of conversations are presently almost nonexistent at diocesan level. Nor were there any Bishops from ACSA at the conference.

2. **We, the Church and its members, must hear, acknowledge and engage with the issues and the realities of our context (South Africa).** In the desire to join God in his mission to the world the specific fractured and complex realities of South Africa will need to be met head on. Crowther (2016:3) points out, ‘our country is growing in both disparity and polarity socio-economically and culturally. There is a challenge to engage in discussion around the concept and meaning of ‘Whiteness’ and to acknowledge unconscious White privilege.’ Crowther (:3) too notes that there was challenge over the lack of young people, women and black people in leadership at a platform level.’ Given the critiques over diversity and complicity with consumerism in the FXoC movement that we have unravelled earlier in this chapter we see the reality of a warning against such potential pitfalls. FXoC in South Africa must engage with issues related to hallmarks of authenticity outlined in chapter 1 namely **being human together, practicing Ubuntu and cultivating alternative community** as an antidote to the crushing dehumanising systems of the past.
3. **We, the leaders and “permission-givers”, must embrace and encourage different ways of being church, and new ways of ministry.** This third area I wish to explore is, on the face of it, the one that is most difficult to make head way with. From the perspective of church polity and orders, for example the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, there is virtually no room for ‘new ways of ministry’. Constitutionally and canonically there is no scope for contextually appropriate service (other than direct translation linguistically) dependant upon the locale, shaped organically (and the Spirit) by the needs of the people gathered. There is no room to depart from Canon 33.1, 33.2 and 33.4.⁴⁸ On one level the only way of **embracing or encouraging different ways of being church** is to blatantly ignore the Canons. Crowther (2016:3) acknowledges, ‘many at the conference expressed encouragement at being allowed to explore other ways of being church.’ ‘Some said they felt unrecognised in their calling and gifting to pioneer new ways.’ (:4) Of course the theological case for diversity has been argued above. The idea that there is a blueprint of church we have seen, and will see, is but

⁴⁸ **Canon 33.1 Lawful Services** ‘In ministering in the congregation no Clergyman of this Church may use any other Services but such as are appointed in the Book of Common Prayer, nor may he use these Services in any other manner than is prescribed in the said Book, except so far as alterations and abridgements of, and additions to, the Services of the Church are made or allowed in this Church by the Provincial Synod, or are allowed exceptionally by the Bishop.’ **Canon 33.2 Lawful Ministers** No person shall be permitted to officiate in sacred things in any congregation of this Church, except under the authority of the Bishop of the Diocese. Provided that any person who shall have satisfied the Incumbent or Churchwardens (in the absence of the Incumbent) that he is a Clergyman of this Church, or of some other Church of the Anglican Communion, may be permitted by him or by them (in his absence) to officiate in the congregation for one Sunday, but for no more than one without the permission of the Bishop, except he be a Chaplain to the Forces, who will be considered as one of the Clergy of the Diocese, except he be inhibited by the Bishop. **Canon 33.4 Hymns** ‘No Hymn or Collection of Hymns shall be hereafter introduced into the Public Services of any congregation of this Province without the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese.’ These Canons are probably based on the 1662 Act of Uniformity. It prescribed the form of public prayers, administration of sacraments, and other rites of the Established Church of England, according to the rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer.

a myth. There are possibilities, permutations and prototypes but no blueprints. As Jinkins (1999:3) reminds us, ‘examining biblical witnesses to the early church, we do **not** (my emphasis) find a single homogeneous or monolithic “community of faith.” From a practical theological perspective, we need to be reminded that, ‘the messy realities of plurality, diversity, particularity and contingency that constitute the experience of actual communities played a subordinate role in approaches to ecclesiology.’ It’s worth quoting Crowther (2016:4) at length here for laying a specific challenge, ‘Perhaps we have relied too much on inherited orders and structures and allowed them to constrict the church? Perhaps we have perpetuated the notion of “they must fit in with us” rather than an incarnation going to where “they” are? Our church structures, like the ropes of a tent, should be loosened and made more flexible in order to allow a necessary extension of ministry - to allow for experimentation and creative development.’

4. We, as God’s people, must give ourselves to listen to God, to each other and to our context.

The conference certainly attempted to bring the concrete daily realities of South Africa to the fore with an array of workshops (indabas) very much shaped by context. These included addressing issues of poverty and injustice, reconciliation and injustice, diversity and inclusivity, environmental issues, youth and urbanisation all with the underlying question of what the future church may look like. Whilst these indabas were a vital and necessary part of the conference none were led by local FXoC practioners. The overwhelming majority of FXoC practioners from an ecumenical perspective have come from the reformed churches who are, by and large, white males. At a missional church conference in February 2017 at Stellenbosch it was striking that the vast majority of attendees were white, male and middle class. FXoC that are not born out of the context of suffering will, by and large, not have a prophetic role in South Africa in the future. Crowther (2016:5) closes his report with this, ‘unless our denominational leaders are willing to recognise, release and resource this movement, our denominations will no longer be a part of it. Already there are those who have found themselves leading pioneering outreach projects which are growing into communities of faith. Unless these communities are embraced by denominational structures, they risk being isolated, unsupported and unaccountable, or searching for alternatives.’ This seems to be particularly pertinent in the Anglican context. Listening to God and listening to the context would be embraced by a large number of leaders from across the array of churchmanship - listening to, and being genuinely willing to, learn from each other can be difficult.

3.5.3 Fresh Expressions of Church, normativity and blueprint ecclesiology

To close this chapter, I discuss briefly the notion of normativity propounded by Ward (2015) and draw on the work of Healy (2000) around blueprint ecclesiology. Firstly, the notion of normativity in FXoC is inherently complex. Osmer (2008) famously suggests that the normative task of practical

theology is to ask the question, ‘what ought to be going on?’ Osmer sees this as a posture of prophetic discernment. In that act of prophetic discernment Osmer (2008:162) asks, ‘how is the worldly wisdom of the arts and sciences appropriately related to the wisdom of God?’ But Kaufman (2015:91ff) suggests that practical theologians should be moving from a naive normativity to an explicit normativity. Kaufman (2015:92) following Norwegian theologian Jan-Olav Henriksen makes the claim that the empirical or descriptive and the normative elements of research cannot be neatly divided into a manner that implies the former is neutral. She advocates that reflexivity is the key in order to be able to distinguish the kind of normativity at work (:96). Normativity, then, far from being a set of predefined contours about what ought to be happening is more like a growing, discerning and empathic commitment to both the research process and reflexivity on the interpretations of our interpretations.

In the light of the above asking what is normative in FXoC is a twofold process. Initially we can draw on work from the church army as we have in chapter 1 or AMWPR (2012:192) which give us a clearly defined set of questions. The AMWPR (2012:192) call this a health check list.

- Is this a community of people called by God who are committed to being disciples of Jesus Christ and living out their discipleship in the world?
- Is this a community that regularly assembles for Christian worship and is then sent out into the world to engage in mission and service?
- Is this a community in which the Gospel is proclaimed in ways that are appropriate to the lives of its members?
- Is this a community in which the scriptures are regularly preached and taught?
- Is this a community in which baptism is conferred in appropriate circumstances as a rite of initiation into the Church?
- Is this a community that regularly celebrates the sacrament of the Lord’s supper?
- Is this a community where pastoral responsibility and presidency at the Lord’s supper is exercised by appropriate authorised ministry?
- Is this a community that is united to others through: mutual commitment, spiritual communion, structures of governance, oversight and communion; and an authorised ministry in common?

Whilst these recommendations are helpful the AMWPR (2012:181) is explicit in stating, ‘a Christian community that lacks some or all of these ecclesial communities in **not** a church, though this does not mean that it has no ecclesial status.’ Normativity in this first process is clear and absolute. Whilst the notion of *ecclesial status* is not developed there are definitive ideas around what is normative from an ecclesiological perspective. The second process in normativity is a heuristic, searching and

discerning movement. This normativity asks questions about context, has a humble epistemology and is a more generous in viewing the church as a pilgrim on a journey. In this notion of normativity, I follow Ward (2015) who presents the idea of normativity as *perilous faithfulness*. Ward (2015:84) says that this kind of, ‘perilousness comes from the limitations associated with the knowledge of God. It is the theologian’s attempts to express and make sense of what has been revealed that gives rise to perilousness.’ ‘The traditional operation of theology in relation to the Church has been to set frameworks and develop boundaries. The normative function is not only necessary it is essential. Normativity, however, because of the gravitational pull of the Church appears to be a perilous activity without guarantees’ (Ward 2015:86).

Following the former Archbishop Williams Ward suggests that theologians start in the middle of things, ‘a structure of feeling’ or ‘abiding in’. In essence Ward seems to be positing the idea that ‘normativity is always located in the middle. The product thus is the approximation of normativity. It is always contingent.’ Normativity is contingent upon history, context, social constructs but also the lived experience of the concrete church. ‘What this means is that normativity operates in relation to the lived and as *part* of the lived’ (Ward 2015:89).

Blueprint ecclesiology

‘Ecclesiology’s main function is to help the church respond as best it can to its context by reflecting theologically and critically upon its concrete identity’ (Healy 2000:22). Healy notes that contemporary ecclesiology comes in many forms (:25) but reflection upon the church in recent years has usually followed something like the approach of Avery Dulles has described in *Models of the Church* (:27) The problem is that, ‘to date no agreement has been reached as to which model of the primary reality is the definitive one. Throughout the twentieth century there has arisen a succession of models, for some of which very strong claims have been made, yet none has been found to be adequate in every single area (:31). Healy wants to point out that such changes in the tides of ecclesiological fashion would seem to break down the normativity of modern ecclesiology’s proposals (:31). As has been propagated in this work Healy (:36) calls, ‘the tendency of modern ecclesiology to reflect upon the church abstractly and in terms of perfection. They represent blueprints of what the church should ideally become. Blueprint ecclesiologies are dependant for their normative force upon agreement regarding the fundamental starting point, upon the model. Healy (:37) argues that the, ‘significant difficulty with blueprint approach is that it doesn’t make sufficient distinction between church militant and the church triumphant.’ The church *in via* has characteristics of its own. Healy (:38) says, ‘should we not understand the very brokenness of the body of Christ is an expression of the church’s true reality prior to the eschaton.’ However, ‘blueprint ecclesiologies frequently display a curious inability to acknowledge the complexities of ecclesial life in its pilgrim state’ (Healy

2000:38). More recently Healy (2018) has developed the idea of what he calls pneumatological tension. This idea links well with my notion in chapter 2 that FXoC are Spirit at work in constructing *adventures in ecclesial improvisation*. As Healy (2018:8) says ‘the active presence of the Holy Spirit must always be acknowledged and prayed for, but it cannot be theorized into these structures as if we could pinpoint its location. It can perhaps be discerned retrospectively, in ethnographic and similar descriptions of congregational life, in the history of the church, but not as something we can get a handle on, and develop a theory that will indicate when and where the Spirit works.’ I therefore advocate a pneumatological normativity. This type of normativity is both precarious and free and only discernible retrospectively.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined something of the FXoC story in the UK context and tried to use Bevans’ models of contextual theology as a framework explain Hull’s criticisms to reach an appraisal of the movement. I then moved on to outline some of the challenges for the movement in the South African Afro-Catholic context before concluding by looking at the hazardous notion of normativity in the FXoC.

In chapter 4 I ask a number of questions about how practical theology relates to qualitative research then outlining and developing my understanding of ethnography as a methodology. I try to elucidate the idea of ethnography from its anthropological foundations and then explain its more recent use in congregational studies and the ecclesiology and ethnography circle of scholars. I then move on to method and explain my understandings of participant observation, semi structured interviews and documentary data and the nuances of working with such data. In closing I describe something of the journey of choosing my sample set, times frames and serendipity.

4. Practical theology and qualitative research

In chapter 2 I outlined some of the shifts towards practice philosophically and secondly traced a heuristic move towards an authentic South African practical theology as being *performative* and *improvisatory*, *postcolonial*, *transformative* and finally *mission-shaped*. In chapter 3 using those lenses, in an opaque way, I assessed the Fresh Expressions of Church movements criticisms. I now move on to ask about the relationship between practical theology and qualitative research starting with an explicit outline of my research paradigm.

4.1 Research *weltanschauung* outlined: Ontology and Epistemology

4.1.1 Ontology

In any research paradigm there are often hidden assumptions in terms of meta theoretical concerns. Every *weltanschauung*⁴⁹ starts with an ontology of some kind. Ontology is derived from the greek word *ontos* meaning ‘being.’ Ontology, then, deals with existential questions and the debate around foundational assumptions concerning reality. In this thesis I hold to a critical realist ontology. Critical realism seems to navigate a way between positivist ontology which can only deal with observable, predictable and to some extent atomised approaches favoured by the hard sciences on the one hand. On the other hand, ontological approaches from what might be called the ‘relativists’ which is a catch all term for postmodernists, social constructivists, deconstructionists and sceptics generally problematise, doubt and suggest ‘multiple’ realities. In short critical realism, ‘seeks to map a path between the extremes of modern certainty and postmodern scepticism via a triumvirate of core philosophical principles ontological realism, epistemic relativism and judgemental rationality. Ontological realism asserts that reality exists, for the most part, independently from human perception’ (Wright 2013:9).

Swinton and Mowat (2006:36) note the importance of recognising, ‘that our ability to understand and define what reality is is always filtered through a process of interpretation and construction that is influenced by a number of social, cultural, spiritual and interpersonal factors.’ Importantly they note that Christian tradition claims to have received revelation. ‘If reality is totally inaccessible, then so is revelation, a suggestion that leads to obvious and complicated theological problems’ (2006:37). As a practical theologian, therefore I subscribe to a critical realist ontology.

⁴⁹ German word meaning particular philosophy on life, or outlook.

4.1.2 Epistemology

Building on a critical realist ontology will impact the nature of our knowing. Epistemology deals with the intellectual debates that have shaped human kind's ability to know. What can be known and what are the various theories of knowledge that exist. Wright (2013:11) says that epistemic relativism 'resists both enlightenment certainty and postmodern scepticism.' Hiebert (2009:28-29) suggests, 'humans can know reality in part. But their knowledge is not a photograph of reality with a one to one correspondence between theory and facts. It is more like a map. Maps...are mental images that are schematic, approximate, and –of necessity-limited and selective.'

Therefore, true knowing is limited, as the apostle Paul suggests in 1 Corinthians 13:12. 'We see through a glass darkly. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully.' Acknowledging that human faculties are limited, frail and vulnerable to misinformation allow us to take more seriously an interpretative perspective on knowing and knowledge. Secondly, Swinton and Mowat (2006) suggest that a shift away from nomothetic truth to ideographic truth allows one to find 'meaningful knowledge that can be discovered in unique, non-replicable experiences (:38). In fact they note as practical theologian's ideographic knowledge is integral to the language of scripture and tradition. 'God reveals God's self in and through knowledge that is profoundly ideographic' (:43).

Whilst I adhere to an epistemic relativism, I want to develop a more nuanced understanding of my epistemology in this thesis. Ethnographies allow one to excavate and unearth the 'what's-happening' in more obscure and under researched settings. Since no empirical research has been undertaken on FXoC in Southern Africa despite the growing body of research in the UK and Europe it is therefore an emergent, naturalistic and discovery orientated methodology. In critical realist terms epistemic relativism means an approach to knowledge that is ambiguous, humble, open, limited and contingent. Wright (2013:16) posits that epistemic relativism asserts the priority of ontology over epistemology. Wright says that both epistemic certainty and epistemic scepticism are a fallacy. Positivism wants only to rely upon verifiable sense data at the expense of statements of aesthetic, spiritual and moral significance. Constructionist takes on epistemology, 'cannot access any reality beyond our linguistic constructs.' In epistemic relativism Wright (2013:17) suggests that, 'in affirming knowledge is constituted by the relationship between the knower and the object of knowledge critical realism rejects the extremes of epistemic certainty and epistemic scepticism. Our knowledge thus takes the medieval scholastic form of faith seeking understanding (Wright 2013:18, Ward 2015:84).

Firstly, unpacking some basic traits of qualitative research and following Swinton and Mowat (2006:71-98), Cameron and Duce (2013) and Ward (2012) asking pertinent questions about the relationship between practical theology and qualitative research.

Definitions of qualitative research are difficult to tie down given its open-ended nature (Swinton and Mowat 2006:29). Given (2008:xxix) simply states in the first instance that, ‘qualitative research is designed to explore the human elements of a given topic, where specific methods are used to examine how individuals see and experience the world.’ Qualitative research takes seriously capturing and recording the experiences of individuals and communities and using that data to make meaningful statements about them. Very often qualitative research is understood in dualistic terms over and against quantitative research. It certainly appears on the face of it qualitative research is shaped by words and description as opposed to numbers. It operates in natural settings rather than the laboratory and makes use of open-ended research instruments (such as interviews and observation) over and against survey instruments with predetermined response categories. Qualitative research, then, is of a fundamentally interpretive nature.

Although warning us of the complex historical elements of qualitative research Lincoln and Denzin (2005:3) offer a useful generic definition. ‘Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive materials practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs and memos to the self.’ In essence then, qualitative research is interpretive and naturalistic.

Swinton and Mowat (2006:29) helpfully remind us of the interpretive nature of qualitative research. They state, ‘qualitative research assumes the world is not simply ‘out there’ waiting to be discovered. Rather, it recognises ‘the world’ as the locus of complex interpretive processes within which human beings struggle to make sense of their experiences including their experiences of God.’ These interpretive processes however are fraught with problems for the practical theologian in the South African context.

Firstly, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005:1) point out ‘qualitative research in many, if not all of its forms (observation, participation, interviewing and ethnography) serves as a metaphor for colonial knowledge, for power and for truth.’ Representation of the ‘other’ which is inevitable in postcolonial contexts is problematic and according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005:1) ‘contributed, in significant ways, to qualitative researches long and anguished history, to it becoming a dirty word.’ Both Swinton and Mowat (2008:61ff) and Hankela (2015:195ff) point out these complexities around power dynamics in qualitative research (specifically in terms of interviews and general ethics). Swinton and Mowat (2008:33) says that, ‘in curating knowledge of the other, one must always be aware of subtle forms of colonialism, or neo-colonialism creeping in.’ This is especially important in this thesis given the South African context and history and I reveal my awareness of this problem in chapter 6.

Secondly, because qualitative research has a distinctive perspective on the world it is important to be aware of the *epistemological* assumptions inherent. As noted above epistemology deals with the ways in which we know things and construct and develop our knowledge. Generally, in qualitative research there are important epistemological assumptions (Swinton and Mowat 2006:35). Constructivism according to Swinton and Mowat underlies the epistemological assumptions of most qualitative research. Costantino (2008:116) reveals that, ‘ontological and epistemological views in the constructivism paradigm disallow the existence of an external objective reality independent of an individual from which knowledge may be collected or gained.’ But ‘meaning emerges from the shared interaction of individuals within human society’ (Swinton and Mowat 2006:35-36). This is problematic for practical theologians who cannot hold to an epistemological posture that reality is made up of human perspectives and is merely ‘constructed’. If as according to Costantino (2008:116) ‘the existence of an external objective reality independent of an individual’ is an impossibility then the assumptions of Christian revelation are called into question. This puts into jeopardy the relationship between practical theology and qualitative research. Later we will evaluate three suggestions from Swinton and Mowat to over-come the potential collapse of practical theology into qualitative research.

Thirdly, Swinton and Mowat (2006:43) advocate for an epistemological understanding based on the idea of **ideographic** knowledge that holds in tension the idea of revelation and interpreting surroundings. ‘It presumes that meaningful knowledge can be discovered in unique non-replicable experiences.’ Ideographic truth is important from the perspective of practical theology because it is integral to the language of scripture and tradition (:43).

Fourthly, in qualitative research the role of the researcher is not hidden, pushed to the side in an attempt at quasi objective perspective but acknowledged and embraced hence the reason for my positionality outlined in chapter 1. Swinton and Mowat (2006:58) speak of the ‘primary tool of the researcher is herself (or himself).’ ‘Good qualitative research requires a certain approach to which is dependant on the researcher’s self-awareness and ability to function effectively within an epistemological context which is complex, rich and sometimes dangerous’ (:58).

Fifthly, it’s important to explore briefly how practical theology and qualitative research are able to find some type of reciprocal relationship. It should be self-evident at this point that there is much resonance between practical theology which seeks to articulate from a theological perspective the ‘lived’ experience of human beings and to reflect on that experience. In a similar way qualitative research is profoundly concerned with interpreting and subsequently giving meaning to practice in the world through the investigation of naturalised settings, contexts and locales. But there is an inherent problem epistemologically. Since theology posits a realm of revelation and truth given by a creative, loving God and qualitative research is by and large constructivist in its epistemic approach

are the two fields irreconcilable? Some like John Milbank⁵⁰ (1990) caution against any relationship between social sciences and theology. On Milbank's 'view of the relationship between theology and the social sciences. He argues that the social sciences are a product of the modern ethos of secularism, which stems from an ontology of violence. Theology, therefore, should not seek to make constructive use of secular social theory.'⁵¹ Essentially Milbank sees social sciences as pagan. Juxtaposed with this comes David Ford who helpfully points out, 'there is another dimension of the social sciences in modernity: their engagement with the details of life, the actual contours of human existence over time. Radical Orthodoxy has tended to move toward intellectual ideas at the expense of a wisdom that takes account of those particularities' (Cunningham 2003:1).

However, both Swinton and Mowat (2006:77-93), Ward (2012:2) and Cameron and Duce (2013) suggest that such a negative attitude can be avoided by careful attention. Practical theology need not collapse into qualitative research, but a **mutual critical dialogue** can result in a type of reciprocity that affirms the theological impetus of practical theology and allows insights from actual concrete experience to give life.

Swinton and Mowat (2006:91-94) suggest three postures or attitudes to bring together, 'situations, theology and qualitative research.' These are *hospitality*, *conversion* and *critical faithfulness*.

Hospitality suggests an attitude within practical theology that can welcome and sit comfortably with qualitative research methods. This posture recognises that the Practical theologian is a *theologian* primarily but can, with openness, take seriously what qualitative research might say. Swinton and Mowat say, 'in being hospitable to other forms of knowledge and alternative approaches to the world, the object is not to seek the lowest common denominator. It is rather to create a context where-in the voice of qualitative research can be heard, respected and taken seriously.' (2006:91) Epistemologically in the generation of knowledge wisdom from the 'lived' 'communal' and 'concrete' needs to be hospitably assessed rather than with hostility.

Secondly, Swinton and Mowat (2006:92) argue for a posture of *conversion*. Conversion is a dramatic and life altering experience, a numinous disrupting encounter. Framed in the parameters of practical theology and qualitative research Swinton and Mowat suggest that conversion moves transcribed experience from lived experience and imbues it with teleological purpose. As they state, 'in our case this means qualitative research moving from a position where it is fragmented and without specific telos or goal to a position of being grafted into God's redemptive purpose for the world.' (2006:92) This does not however mean that the practical theologian him or herself is left unaltered by the

⁵⁰ John Milbank is a leading thinker in the Radical Orthodoxy movement.

⁵¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Milbank

experience. True conversion in this context allows the researcher her or himself to be ‘converted’ out of certain pre-existing understandings - to be ultimately shaped or transformed by the experience and learn something new whilst remaining committed to a theistic framework (:93).

Thirdly Swinton and Mowat (2006:93) suggest a notion of *critical faithfulness*. According to Swinton and Mowat (:94) critical faithfulness, ‘enables us to be realistic about the interpretive nature of our grasping after divine revelation and to recognise that truth is, at least to an extent, emergent and dialectic; emerging from committed, critical dialogue between situations, Christian tradition and knowledge that we gain, *inter alia*, through the use of qualitative research methods.’

4.1.3 A word on methodology and method

It seems pertinent at this point to make a clear distinction between the idea of methodology and method which on the face of it can be conceptually confusing. As Swinton and Mowat (2006:74) remind us ‘there is a common tendency to use the terms method and methodology as if they were synonymous.’

Research *methodology* is essentially the rationale one uses or advocates for the methods used to gather data. As Schensul (2008:517) paints the following, ‘methodology consists of the actions to be taken in the study and the reasons for these actions in testing or generating theory.’ Therefore, decisions about qualitative research methodology include (a) selection of guiding paradigm; (b) identification of research questions; (c) development of a formative conceptual model; (d) site selection, study population, and study sample; (e) topics, procedures, and tools for data collection; and (f) and procedures for data analysis and interpretation.’

‘The term *methods* refers to the ways in which qualitative researchers collect data to build their argument. Regardless of paradigmatic preference, all qualitative research methods have common characteristics. They are conducted in an exchange between real people’ (Schensul 2008:521).

4.2. Methodology: Ethnography

‘Ethnography is the disciplined and deliberate witness-cum-recording of human events’ (Willis and Trondman 2002:394). Historically ethnography has been traditionally located in the discipline of anthropology which attempted, through extended periods of time in a community, to say something meaningful about social interactions. Ethnography, then, at its heart takes culture seriously and attempts to interpret what is happening in a group, community or locale. This resonates with our understanding of practical theology. It is therefore a hermeneutical activity. It requires an extended period in a given context generally known as fieldwork and then that data is written up in some form, as Van Maanen (2011:1) says ‘ethnography is a written representation of culture.’ On the face of it this seems to be a simple, straightforward task but Van Maanen (2011) and Willis and Trondman (2002) caution against any such understanding. ‘Social phenomena are shot through with indeterminacy and open-endedness’ (Willis and Trondman 2002:397). Indeed, ethnography is as much about attempting to notate the “this-ness” and ‘lived-out-ness’ of human experience as it is of documenting culture. Because of this focus on the lived-out experience of a unique group or community, ‘ethnographic research is said to produce situated knowledge rather than universals and to capture the detail of social life rather than abstracting from this detail to produce reductive models’ (Taylor 2002:3). The abstractification and reproduction that takes place in the hard sciences is rejected in qualitative research methods in favour of a more nuanced, ambiguous and flexible approach to knowledge and its usefulness in other contexts. Willis and Trondman (2002:398) suggest that in ethnography there is a desire to, ‘record and present the nitty gritty of everyday life. But the nitty gritty everyday life cannot be presented as raw, unmediated data, nor can it be presented through abstract theoretical categories’ (:399).

An important idea in ethnography is that of ‘thick description’. ‘Thick description’ seeks to paint the nuanced, complex and ‘everyday-ness’ of the community that one seeks to investigate. Clifford Geertz, often considered to be one of the post war doyens of social anthropology says, ‘ethnographic description of even the most elemental sort-how extraordinarily "thick" it is. In finished anthropological writings this fact that what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to-is obscured because most of what we need to comprehend a particular event, ritual, custom, idea, or whatever is insinuated as background information before the thing itself is directly examined’ (Geertz 1973:9). I see ‘thick description’ as encouraging a narrative, novelistic, story-telling approach to data. Again Geertz (1973:10) says, ‘ethnography is thick description. Data collection-is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render’ (Geertz 1973:10).

‘Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of "construct a reading of") a manuscript-foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behaviour’ (Geertz 1973:10).

In this thesis I have opted to use and work with the notion of ethnography in contradistinction to a case study. Although the empirical focus of this research is on one particular context or community, I make the distinction from a case study and chose the ethnographic approach. According to White, Drew and Hay (2009:21) ‘essentially case studies appear to belong at the conservative end of the qualitative research continuum in ‘post positivism’, while ethnography spans their ‘critical theory et al.’, ‘constructivism’ and ‘participatory’ paradigms. In terms of researcher values, a case study approach seeks to exclude or ignore the influence of the researcher as somehow tainting the ‘data’ or ‘evidence’, while ethnography is more inclusive of the researcher and considers the researcher to be formative in the process.’ It is my firm belief that the actual reflective work of the researcher becomes a key in the formation of data and knowledge and therefore I make the case study vs ethnographic distinction.

4.3 Ethnography and Ecclesiology: who shapes who?

Van Maanen (2011:5) notes that, ‘ethnographies are shaped as well by the specific traditions and disciplines from which they are launched.’ In recent years the past skepticism that existed between theology and the social sciences has begun to dissipate and a new awareness and openness to the value of ethnography for the church is being explored. This is seen most keenly in the inaugural book from Eerdmans *Studies in Ecclesiology and Ethnography* which suggests that, ‘the church should be understood as both a theological and social/cultural entity, and therefore to understand the church it is necessary to employ theological and social scientific tools simultaneously.’ (Vogt 2013:158) but further to this the inauguration of journal *Ecclesial Practices* has drawn together a continuing body of work around ethnographic theory and practice from across the globe.

Those like Healy (2000), Scharen (2005), Swinton and Mowatt (2006), Ward (2012, 2014), Moschella (2012), Brittain (2014), Watkins (2014) and others have sought to show the interface between theology and ethnography can be mutually fulfilling. Ward (2014:2) points out in his editorial of the recently launched journal *Ecclesial Practices* that, ecclesiology must find ways to interact with the concrete church. Following Healy Ward (2012:182-199) explains that, ‘most theologians are prone towards abstract and idealized constructs. A practical prophetic ecclesiology draws on empirically grounded ethnographic work to call idealized constructs to account for the lived reality of the Church.’ Healy (2000:154-55) advocates for a practical prophetic ecclesiology that takes

seriously the church's, 'concrete, *in via* identity...which focuses attention upon the church's confused and sometimes sinful daily life and engages with traditions of enquiry and their embodiments.'

There are already a number of ethnographic studies relating to Fresh Expressions but currently these are all based in the UK or Western European contexts.⁵² As Cameron and Duce (2013) point out the interface between ethnography and practical theology is currently in an embryonic but growing from the leading group of thinkers in this area are exploring the liminal spaces between 'lived' theology, critical realistic meta narratives and ecclesial practices that in fact become mutually shaping and reciprocal. My research falls into this category but seeks to ask questions in a specific South African and Anglican context.

The mutual relationship possible between ethnography and ecclesiology is vitally important for this research. As Brittain (2014:5) reminds us, 'ethnography has the potential to enhance the church's capacity to recognise, and thus, confess, its sins, but also to deepen its corporate discernment and attentiveness to the presence of God's activity in its midst.' In the case of this research on the community supper Moschella (2012:231) notes that, 'ethnography, when focus on a congregation, might be considered one form of congregational study, one that emphasizes the meaning and function of religious practices and symbols.' In the closing part of this chapter I briefly assess the contributions of the initial writings in the ecclesiology and ethnography movement.

4.2.1 Ecclesiology cannot live by doctrine alone⁵³

One of the basic underlying assumptions held by all those who are participating in the interface between ecclesiology and ethnography is that 'blueprint' ecclesiologies (Healy 2000, Ward 2014) are in fact deficient to some extent. Scharen (2005:125) in attempting to add to the debates generated by Milbank's work suggests that, 'ethnography provides the most robust corrective to the problematic of too formal an ecclesiology.' Ward (2015:74) outlines the fundamental issue by stating that there is a conundrum running through Ecclesiology. A conundrum that centres on the fact every, 'doctrine of the church can be traced back to particular historical situations.' All doctrinal statements about the church are historically conditioned. They sought to answer specific problems and tensions that arise in every context where human beings live together in community in an attempt to live out the Lordship

⁵² *Encounters on the Edge* a series of 50 basic ethnographic studies from the Church Army research unit are available at http://www.churcharmy.org.uk/Groups/244969/Church_Army/Church_Army/Our_work/Research/Encounters_on_the/Encounters_on_the.aspx

A recent PhD published in the UK is Tueno, G.J. 2015 *Built on the Word: The Theology and use of the Bible in the Australian Anglican Fresh Expressions of Church*. Unpublished PhD Thesis Durham University. Available at <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/11081>

⁵³ Brittain (2014:5)

of Jesus Christ. It is not in the scope of this thesis to explore the very complex relationship between 'blueprint' or 'idealized' ecclesiologies over and against 'lived', 'concrete' or 'real' and contingency of actual communities in a theoretical manner but in this section I outline Fiddes' (2012:13-35) helpful essay from a systematic theologian and then suggest three imperatives for ethnography and ecclesiology namely **Attentiveness**, *terrrior* and **Conversation**.

Fiddes (2012:14) writes as a systematic theologian approaching and embracing qualitative research through the area of ethnography because, 'it is actually essential for *theology* to attempt to bring these two disciplines together.' Fiddes (:17) says that ecclesiology cannot be *only* a deduction from Scripture and tradition' for a number of reasons. Firstly, what Fiddes calls the inadequacy of deduction. Fiddes acknowledges that the deductive model of working from first principles has its place in forming any ecclesiology but this approach often fails to take contextualisation seriously. (:17) Externally Fiddes (:17) says that the way much 'traditional theology has been done, does not make sense within the unique cultural patterns of other parts of the world.' As culture is not static but fluid, dynamic and uniquely complex ecclesial responses will be cognisant of that reality. In turn there are internal problems of Christian theology in a deductive approach namely *Incarnation*, *sacrament* and *revelation*. In the incarnation there is a reminder of the concrete cultural historical reality of the word made flesh. There is a particularity about the *incarnation* that cannot be made readily into a piece of generalising theory. The work of practical theology must, have we have seen in chapter two be incarnational. 'The eternal word only speaks dialect.' As Fiddes (:19) says, 'taking *incarnation* seriously means more than applying principles.'

In speaking of *sacramentality* Fiddes (:19) suggests that 'God is encountered in an embodied way, through concrete realities.' 'God communicates God's own self through actions, relationships, and symbols in daily life. So, we cannot simply impose a set of revealed truths on a situation' (:19). Finally, in the realm of *revelation* Fiddes (:25) suggests that any model for method in theology must begin by acknowledging the self-revealing Triune God. 'Theology,' he says, presumes that we live in the presence of a self-revealing God.' but this does not mean that all created things participate in God *in the same way*, or that there is no difference between the *koinonia* of church and world (:27). 'The place of *revelation* also highlights a difference from the method of the natural sciences, and this first great difference leads in turn to others' (:27).

4.2.2 Attentiveness

Attentiveness is an important concept in the ecclesiology and ethnography intersect. Attentiveness to a particular place and people will always be attentive not in a generalized way but in a specific way that takes seriously both uniqueness of the community and the researchers own predisposition and interests. McGarth (2012:112) in opening up the idea of attentiveness says, ‘we do not come to know something simply by looking at it; we must “see” it at deeper level.’ Following initial ideas from the British novelist Iris Murdoch McGarth (:113) notes that ‘particularity must not be swallowed up in generalised theory.’ McGarth hold that ‘practical theology brings a christian “net of meaning” to particular situations without in anyway denying the specificity of that situation or trying to convert it into something else.’ Ward (2012:36) reminds us that this attentiveness has another aspect. For it is not simply about attentiveness to the locale but also the researcher him or herself. He calls this, ‘attentive observers, but attentive in certain ways.’ Ward (2012:38) says this call to attentiveness is important since, ‘research questions are situated in theoretical conversations. They arise from within, and contribute to, theoretical debates.’ Yet in ethnography ‘inherently partial - committed and incomplete. what we see and what we eventually write about are always conditioned not simply by the social and cultural realities we are researching, but also by our own contingent location.’

4.2.3 Terroir

McGarth (2012:119) uses a term from viticulture to help those in the ethnography and ecclesiology debate think more clearly about local context. McGarth (:119) says, ‘the *terroir* is an idea that encapsulates the notion of local identity, which is resistant to globalization and universalization and must be understood in terms of its own distinct geography.’ The term opens up a very important notion around the particularities of a local context to be studied. It’s also a term that acts as counter narrative to consumerism and commodification. As McGarth (:119) reminds us that *terroir* is a term beyond mere geographic location it’s a social construct. In viticultural terms it consists of the vine, the soil, the subsoil, mineral content, drainage and microclimate. But there is also the spiritual dimension - the joys, heartbreaks, pride, sweat and frustration of history. This makes a theology of place instrumental in our attentiveness. Therefore ‘a theology of place urges us to value the particular, identifying and appreciating its distinct characteristics, rather than rushing headlong to reduce it to another instance of more general phenomenon or principle’ (McGarth 2012:120).

The researcher must start with the idea that, ‘respect for place signals a willingness to work with the local situation rather than trying to convert it into another place’ (:121), ‘congregations can be studied empirically, helping their distinct identity to be appreciated.’

4.2.4 Conversation

In closing these three imperatives for the ecclesiology ethnography interface Ward (2012:48) states, 'ecclesiology and ethnography is and should be a contested field. It is a conversation.' The nature of the ecclesiology and ethnography movement being dialogical is important to remember. There are not pre-ordained perimeters or boundaries but an ongoing series of conversations around how to do empirical work within the overall mission of God. In that space of conversation there will be an openness to having one's notions about the relationship between ethnography and ecclesiology reshaped and diverted, or subverted. True conversation means there is an openness to be changed or converted by the other.

In addition to the idea of **attentiveness**, **terroir** and **conversation** over the course of my fieldwork and through my reflections I developed three ethnographic postures that I found myself empathically adopting during my participant observation and time with key leaders and guests in other settings. I am suggesting that this ethnographic posture is more than methodology and slips into spiritual and formation work.

Firstly, I had a growing awareness of my role as ethnographer being a posture of empathy or a compassionate-being-with (Nouwen 1996:41). Roman Catholic priest Henri Nouwen uses this phrase of **compassionate-being-with** to speak of his own role towards the end of his life as priest to men and women with severe physical and mental handicaps at L'Arche. The woundedness, pain, suffering and vulnerability of the people Nouwen ministered to so profoundly shaped his own understanding of power and prestige of the priestly role. During my months of participation I was aware of the gift of hearing stories from men and women who had suffered trauma, rejection, unmitigated sadness yet often lived with a grace and optimism uncalled for. I also bore in mind that I was not simply collating data but building relationships.

Secondly, I saw the ethnographic process as developing a posture of **curiosity**. Again taking an idea from Percy (one of FXoC opponents) of wanting to train *curious curates* for work in the Anglican Church in the UK (Cameron and Duce 2013:xxii). The idea of curiosity is important. Genuine curiosity means being intrigued by people, by what people say about themselves, about what people believe and say about what they do and why they do it, with a sense of suspended judgement.

Thirdly, I began to see an ethnographic posture as a posture of **humility**. The interviews I undertook, the conversations I over-heard, the tears, laughter, anger and sadness I witnesses was a reminder of the privilege I was granted in being allowed access to a community for research purposes. The data I gathered became less about data to eventually analyse and more about humbly approaching the

fragility of people and their community with a humility and gratefulness. In this there was a sense I was standing on ‘holy ground.’

4.3 Methods

4.3.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is in a way a phenomenological approach to research since it ultimately attempts to uncover, reveal and expose the thing-in-itself-as-itself. This means participant observation relies on narrative, story-telling and thick or rich description as a way of generating data in any given context or locale. Participant observation is effective when used in a naturalistic way and in a bounded context and becomes the bedrock of any ethnographic study. Moschella (2012:225) writing from a practical theological perspective suggests that the metaphor of excavation is frequently applied to ethnography in the realm of participant observation. The digging up, unearthing of ‘deep symbolic meanings of group practice and parlance.’ We need to be careful using a metaphor like excavation that might be too superficial when thinking about unearthing something that is distinctly ephemeral and more complex than simply ‘digging up’. The metaphor of excavation can give the over optimistic impression that observation leads in quite a straight forward way to hermeneutical activity when in fact actually interpreting what is happening in a context or locale is nuanced, complex and at times obscured by other phenomena. Moschella (:225) notes, importantly, that the generation and curation of data in participant observation must be made using all the ethnographers, ‘senses to take in the fullness of what transpires and record their perceptions through the use of various media.’

Participant observation is not a straightforward method to undertake and it needs to be borne in mind that there is a spectrum that involves a tension between ‘observation’ on the one hand and how ‘participatory’ it becomes on the other. As McKechnie (2008:598) outlines, ‘researchers adopt roles that have been described by Raymond Gold as varying along a continuum of participation ranging from complete observer (no participation), through participant-as-observer (more observer than participant) and observer-as-participant (more participant than observer) to complete participant.’

In the early stages of the research process it was my sense that I would operate in second mode of participant-as-observer this was generally true but was often dependant on what was happening on any given night in the room. Ward (2012:7) reminds us that full immersion in a context is not always possible (work in a prison for example) but that the posture and attitude of the researcher is vital. ‘The core value of immersion in ethnographic research is seen as the willingness of the researcher to enter deeply into the social and cultural worlds through fieldwork.’ (:7) In fieldwork the participant observer generates field notes. These field notes become one of the sources of data used to make meaning statements connected to the thesis. Brodsky (2008:341) reveals that, ‘in fieldnotes, qualitative researchers record in-depth descriptive details of people (including themselves), places,

things, and events, as well as reflections on data, patterns, and the process of research. These details form the context and quality control that shape multiple qualitative data points into articulated, meaningful, and integrated research findings.’

Participant observation is a vital part of data collection in empirical research, moreover in ethnography. On one level observing seems a fairly ordinary, innocuous every day activity that does not call for much thought or reflection. We may well be fooled into believing that a glance around will suffice. However participant observation is a nuanced, complex activity that calls on the researcher to be both self-aware and critically reflective. Being able to “see”, listen to and record the subtleties, intricacies, improvisations and messiness of a community interacting with one another, to unearth what Bourdieu calls the *habitus* is vital in participant observation. It is a complex pursuit ‘to observe people with discretion, to forget oneself in a sea of otherness and to let the imagination loose on the limitless of fragmentary stories provided by the ear and eye’ (Alain de Botton 2009:29).

But right from the outset I was fearful. I was fearful ethically that in the colonialism must fall hashtag world that I would only be adding to the plethora of white middle class men writing about, depicting and curating the experiences of men, women and children who have found a home (both ecclesially - although that might be less important) at the Supper. Using their experiences is, in the worst vein, some kind of academic pornography. As Reisz (2018) recently suggested around the work of Alice Goffman’s (2014) book *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City* there have been deep, ‘questions of “positionality”’: whether a white, middle-class researcher had a right to interpret, and so build her academic career upon, the lives of those in an impoverished black community.’ I bore this in mind but chose to focus on the idea explained by Curtice (2018), ‘Just listen. Just listen to the marginalized. Just start listening.’ While this is not an answer people want to carry home with them, it is the best advice I can generate in spaces made for whiteness.’

That idea of somehow seeking out the *habitus* is an important concept. Bourdieu (1977:73) says ‘The *habitus* is the source of these series of moves which are objectively organized as strategies without being the product of a genuine strategic intention.’ The idea of participant observation being one way of opening up a community - discovering the ‘series of moves’ which are objectively organised without being a product of strategic intention lies at the heart of a collision of objective and subjective clashes which inform much of Bourdieu’s narrative. But how does participant observation function in the real world of research. I sketch out below some thoughts.

Origins and orientations

PO as a method has its roots in anthropology but there have been examples of people observing other cultures throughout history. Both Ward (2012:8) and McKechnie (2008:598) remind us that the roots

of observation as a method in the social sciences are found in the work of Malinowski and the Chicago School in the 1920s. ‘The methodology of participant observation focuses on the meanings of human existence from the standpoint of the insiders’ (Jorgensen 1989:14). Jorgensen (1989:7) suggests that, ‘qualitative descriptions generated by participant observation are used to formulate concepts of measurement, as well as generalisations and hypotheses that with further testing may be used to construct explanatory theories.’ Participant observation is contested to an extent in terms of what it truly involves. As Jorgensen (:8) states, ‘there has been resistance to formulating definitive procedures and techniques.’ Therefore, it is an art not necessarily a science relying on instinct, hunches, listening and interpreting sometimes the ephemeral and unseen. The methodology of participant observation aims to generate practical and theoretical truths about human life grounded in the realities of everyday existence (:14).

The colonial period saw PO determinedly in the observer posture. PO shaped by a colonialist perspective was not phenomenological but decidedly skewed in its reporting. This led to distorted caricatures of contexts and peoples. Although there were undoubtedly some sensitive descriptions and analysis in the 19th and early 20th centuries by and large PO in anthropology might be seen as damaging, paternalistic, patronising, unsubtle and often demeaning. So right from the outset there are ethical considerations around PO that need to be born in mind. However, Kawulich (2005) following DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) relates an early story,

one of the first instances of its use involved the work of Frank Hamilton Cushing, who spent four and a half years as a participant observer with the Zuni Pueblo people around 1879 in a study for the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology. During this time, Cushing learned the language, participated in the customs, was adopted by a pueblo, and was initiated into the priesthood. Because he did not publish extensively about this culture, he was criticized as having gone native, meaning that he had lost his objectivity and, therefore, his ability to write analytically about the culture.

The idea of going native does not necessarily mean that writing is devoid of objectivity. Going native was considered disdainful, at best, even until fairly recently but Kawulich opens up an important idea about the relationship between immediacy or intimacy and distance in PO.

Definitions

Kawulich (2005:2) sees, ‘participant observation as the process of establishing rapport within a community and learning to act in such a way as to blend into the community so that its members will act naturally, then removing oneself from the setting or community to immerse oneself in the data to understand what is going on and be able to write about it.’ It necessarily involves a significant time period in order to experience the *habitus* of a community. Many ethnographers suggest roughly 1 year to be in situ but others only a few weeks. What seems to be important with regards to time frames

is that the researcher after an unspecified period of time becomes aware of a saturation point in terms of data collection. Nothing particularly new is coming to light in the observational process but this certainly cannot happen in a mere number of weeks. The unearthing (as Moschella calls it) and excavation process inevitably takes time.

Bernard (1994) in Kawulich (2005) lists five reasons for including participant observation in cultural studies, all of which increase the study's validity:

1. It makes it possible to collect different types of data. Being on site over a period of time familiarizes the researcher to the community, thereby facilitating involvement in sensitive activities to which he/she generally would not be invited.
2. It reduces the incidence of "reactivity" or people acting in a certain way when they are aware of being observed.
3. It helps the researcher to develop questions that make sense in the native language or are culturally relevant.
4. It gives the researcher a better understanding of what is happening in the culture and lends credence to one's interpretations of the observation. Participant observation also enables the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data through surveys and interviews.
5. It is sometimes the only way to collect the right data for one's study (:142-3)

Complications

Gans (1999:540) as an early ethnographer who was trained in the 1940s to do field work (which was essentially PO) laments what he sees as the eroding of genuine participant observation. The shift away from distanciation to autoethnographic tendencies leads to a more narcissistic research which Gans (1999:542) says, 'represents not only the climax of the preoccupation of self...but also the product of postmodern but asocial theory of knowledge that argues the impossibility of knowing anything beyond the self.' For Gans (:542) this kind of ethnography collapses distanciation in on itself and, 'has nothing to do with analysing what people do with and to each other in groups and networks, or how institutions and communities' function and malfunction.' Gans believes that the prevalence of autoethnography in PO creates enormous problems for genuine thoroughly committed research of the 'other.' The work of Dreyer (2009) around the establishing of truth from participation and distanciation is important here. 'The dialectical tension between participation and distanciation should be maintained in all empirical research' (Dreyer 2009:1).

During my research I kept notes on my own ethical dilemmas whilst trying find the right spot on the continuum explained above. An extended extract from my reflexive journal fieldnotes dated 5th October 2017 reveals something of this angst.

*The doors are opened and G (the church secretary) greets people initially but then wanders off to attend to some other needs. I slide along the spectrum from observer to participator tonight and seeing a few people unsure make myself the door duty person shaking hands, welcoming people, finding out names directing people to tables. I'm moving definitely along the continuum from outsider to insider. To cement this idea N*⁵⁴, who I've sat next to for dinner twice, arrives and asks to borrow my phone to make a call to a friend of a friend. I oblige. I am aware that after today's supper I need to be careful. I'm seeing that just a few changes to the way things are done could make the supper a lot more effective and help it grow into something more authentically ecclesial. That, however, is not much job or role. I'm there to observe, participate, excavate, listen, muse but NOT to lead.*

4.3.2.1 Fieldnotes

In fieldwork the participant observer generates field notes. These field notes become one of the sources of data used to make meaning statements connected to the thesis. Brodsky (2008:341) reveals that, 'in fieldnotes, qualitative researchers record in-depth descriptive details of people (including themselves), places, things, and events, as well as reflections on data, patterns, and the process of research. These details form the context and quality control that shape multiple qualitative data points into articulated, meaningful, and integrated research findings.' Cameron and Duce (2013:57) helpful remind us that, 'the way we observe is selective and interpretive.'

Brodsky (2008:341) says that, 'fieldnotes are unique to each researcher, written in the first person and in a free- flowing, spontaneous manner.' Fetterman in Brodsky (2008:342) suggests separating fieldnotes into two sections— observations and speculative-personal reflections. This separation may be most appropriate in ethnography, in which all data from activities such as participant observation might be collected in fieldnotes in the form of observations.

Labanow (2006:138-139) provides some helpful guidelines for practical theologians doing ethnographic work in ecclesial settings or communities. Maintaining a regular and rigorous fieldwork

⁵⁴ This name has been changed to protect identity

journal is vital to the participant observation process. Labanow (:139) suggests, ‘researchers use the following heading format to shape the reflexive diary.

- Date
- Description
- Self-reflection
- Interpretation and investigation

‘Entries can vary in length from a few hundred words to over a thousand, depending on the length and complexity of the situation’ (Labanow 2006:140). But what is essential to this observation process is the self-reflection that takes place on the given context both internally and externally by the researcher. This leads to appropriate and useful ‘thick description’ that is the core material in any “writing of culture”. Geertz (1973:11) calls this, ‘the writing out of systematic rules, an ethnographic algorithm, which, if followed, would make it possible so to operate, to pass (physical appearance aside) for a native.’ Labanow (2006:141), in the shape of the reflective diary, notes the importance of the self-reflection and interpretation elements of keeping a field journal. Ethnography takes seriously the autobiography of the research him or herself. Labanow (2006:141) of the final section on interpreting and investigation ‘the researcher was smelling the air and strategising about how to further develop the study. The hunches and intuitive sensing were an important part of the early stage of data collection.’

4.3.3 Semi Structured interviews

Interviews provide important empirical data which can be used in an ethnographic study. Cameron and Duce (2013:83) point out that, ‘the goal is to capture the uniqueness of the context rather than to attempt systematise data. This type of interview procedure is likely to have its roots in a critical realist epistemology (:83). ‘Semi-structured interviews use many kinds of open-ended questions. Some questions may ask for relatively concrete information’ (Ayres 2008:810). Brinkmann (2008:470) says ‘Good questions are typically brief, simple, and open, and often the researcher will be interested in concrete descriptions of the respondent’s experiences rather than more abstract reflections.’ Often during my interviews my role was simply to prompt those interviewed to tell the story. On some occasions the interview would move into uncharted territory that was actually only tangentially related to the topic I was interested in. At other times interviews became quasi confessional but I saw this all as part of the compassionate-being-with posture I hoped to adopt rather than simply trying to illicit data from subjects. This fits well with Ayres (2008:810) who suggests that, ‘semi-structured

interviews also use a variety of probes that elicit further information or build rapport through the researcher's use of active listening skills.'

4.3.3.1 Ethical considerations in Semi Structured interviews

In a similar way to participant observation there are important ethical considerations to be reflected upon in semi structured interviews especially when those eliciting responses fall into the category of vulnerable people (this might be with regards to age, race, social location etc). Moreover, interviewing in qualitative research involves the recognition of complex power dynamics between the interviewer and the interviewee. Since the researcher (the interviewer in the majority of cases) is attempting to garner information that ultimately becomes empirical data to be analysed and curated representation of the interviewees true 'voice' must be sensitively considered and handled. Ward (2012:8), from a practical theological perspective posits that, 'interviews are focused on the attempt to discover an **authentic voice** rather than a representative or reliable sample.' Indeed Heyl (2001:370) highlights that in terms of interviews, 'ethnographic enquiry today is a contested terrain.' Despite the contestation surrounding interviewing in ethnographic fields Heyl (:370) suggests 4 guiding principles or parameters that seem pertinent in this context.

Firstly, 'Listen well and respectfully developing an ethical engagement with the participants at all stages of the project.' **Secondly**, 'acquire a self-awareness of our role in the co-construction of meaning in the interview process.' **Thirdly**, be cognisant of the ways in which both the ongoing relationship and the broader social context affect the participants, the interview process and the project outcomes.' **Fourthly**, 'recognise that dialogue is discovery and only partial knowledge will ever be attained.'

In this process Brinkmann (2008:471) warns, 'it is an ethical challenge to the interviewer that the openness and intimacy of the interview situation can lead the respondents to disclose information they may later regret, and there is a risk that the interaction may become a quasi-therapeutic relationship.' This was especially pertinent when interviewing guests at the supper who were long term homeless and/or recovering from some form of addiction (alcohol or drug related). Although I had met those being interviewed at the supper on a number of occasions and shared a meal and conversation with them the shift into a more formal interview scenario could be jarring. Whilst each interviewee spoke naturally, and to a degree honestly, I sensed the formal recording and the signing of the research ethics paperwork made them feel partially uncomfortable. This awareness of the power dynamics in interview situations is important. Van der Waal (2009:36) can remind us that, 'ethnographic fieldwork itself in such a setting in which the reflexive ethnographer appreciates that they are part of a field of asymmetric relations of power. Ethnographic fieldwork requires great care in managing relationships as these may acquire privileged dimensions with ethical implications.' One

particular issue relates to the way in which researchers work can have the potential to further wound, traumatise or dehumanise participants who may well already be marginalised and therefore vulnerable. This is a deeply important point that has too often been overlooked. Spivak (1989) has called this a kind of epistemic violence. Liampattong (2010:17) notes that, ‘because of their poverty and powerlessness, many have been coerced into research endeavours which further render them more vulnerable. At present time, we are still witnessing this. Do we, as social science researchers, have the moral obligation to provide culturally competent care to these marginalised people?’ I attempted throughout the interviewing, and generally in all my interactions, to be as aware as possible around these issues.

4.3.4 Documents as data

‘A document is a text-based file that may include primary data (collected by the researcher) or secondary data (collected and archived or published by others) as well as photographs, charts, and other visual materials’ (Schensul 2008:232).

Although documents invariably contain information, it is also quite clear that each and every document enters into human activity in a dual relation. **First**, documents enter the social field as receptacles (of instructions, obligations, contracts, wishes, reports, etc.). **Second**, they enter the field as agents in their own right, and as agents documents have effects long after their human creators are dead and buried (e.g., wills, testaments). In addition, documents as agents are always open to manipulation by other as allies, as resources for further action, as opponents to be destroyed or suppressed. (We should not forget that people burn, ban, censor, and forge documents as well as read and write them.) Given these multiple facets of documentation, it is not surprising that multiple methods are appropriate for their analysis’ (Prior 2008:230).

‘A second important source of information is the range of documents mostly available at the organizations themselves. These take the form of minutes, reports with limited distribution and files of correspondence and other ‘gray’ (unpublished) literature that may be of great significance. Often one may need to negotiate with representatives of the organization about the use of these documents’ (Van der Waal 2009:34). Indeed, Cameron and Duce (2013:142-3) note that, ‘faith communities and church based organisations produce huge quantities of grey literature.’

Various documents included an online newspaper article, reflexive journaling as part of an undergraduate theology course from a community supper leader, websites which included details of

the supper for volunteering purposes⁵⁵ and reports on how the community supper fit into the growing movement of FXoC in South Africa from a third party.⁵⁶

4.3.5 Co-creation and reflexivity

In this research I take seriously the role of myself as the researcher seriously and move away from any pretence of objectivity. I follow Swinton and Mowat's (2006:58) suggestion that the primary tool of qualitative research is the researcher him or herself. My presuppositions, presumptions and autobiographic narrative, rather than being seen as a hinderance, are viewed as a necessary and vital part of the generation and curation of knowledge. This reflexivity is an integral part of the process Swinton and Mowat (2006:60). Indeed Ward (2012:7) reminds us that 'ethnographers are constantly reflecting on their fieldwork and methods.' As Ward (2008:3) says, 'reflexivity is an intentional and disciplined form of reflection. It is a way of showing how practical theology grows out of a personal history, social context and theological tradition. It is a conscious acknowledgement of a certain commitment.'

4.3.6 Triangulation

Choosing a mixture of data collections methods in the ethnographic process is known as triangulation. 'The concept of triangulation is borrowed from navigational and land surveying techniques that determine a single point in space with the convergence of measurements taken from two other distinct points. The multi-method approach is seen to be a research strategy that can reduce biases or deficiencies caused by using only method of inquiry' (Rothbauer 2008:892). 'Triangulation can result in vast amounts of evidence' (:894). In ethnographic studies Flick (:179) suggests that 'in addition to visual data are receiving considerable attention. Apart from observation video data and photographs.' Visual data (and/or documentary data) plays an important role in helping recover the unsaid and fill in the gaps in terms of facial expressions, silences, body language etc which is often impossible to interpret with only aural recordings...or the field notes of the researcher.

4.4 Approaches

4.4.1 Ethical clearance, interview questions and entering the community

Ethics clearance was submitted on the 21st June 2017 and granted by the University Research Ethics committee under project number: THE-2017-0251-179 on the 25th July 2017 for a period of 3 years. Ethics clearance included submitting permission from the Rector of St Peter's Church, my research proposal, an ethics consent form for all those being interviewed, a list of questions, my participant observation framework based on material included in this chapter. I also submitted, at the request of

⁵⁵ <https://www.newhopesa.org/community-dinners/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.growingthechurch.org.za/site/Data/Sites/1/Newsletters/2013/GtC-3rd-Quarter-2013.pdf>

the committee my framework and protocol for approaching potential participants. As described above given my pre-existing relationships with the church community negotiating an entry point was relatively easy. Before interviewing all my research subjects I asked them to complete a consent form. In some cases this was complex as the language involved in the document was too difficult to understand. Often I would give a brief summary.

4.4.2 Time Frames, blogs and reflexive practice

Following a purposive sampling position I adopted I already had preexisting relationships with some of the pioneer leaders of the community supper and had blogged about it in 2015.⁵⁷ In terms of time frames I spent an initial 10 weeks⁵⁸ (4 months) at the supper each time writing fieldnotes⁵⁹ anywhere in the range of 200 words to 1200 words. I also wrote various memos that reflected on books, bits of literature I was encountering and my own ethical wrestles. In total I wrote 16 reflexive journal entries 12 of these were direct participant observation fieldnotes the other 4 were internal reflections on books, and ethics. As a result, and as part of my reflections on what I was observing and beginning to sense emerging from the context, I wrote a number of blogs which captured uninformed, fractured, improvisatory and often intuitive responses to what I was hearing and seeing on a weekly basis.⁶⁰ These initial blogs later helped form some of my editorial work in this chapter and the analysis and interpretation chapter 6. After a sabbatical period from my role as minister from 16th January until 16th April 2018 I had time to read through interview transcripts and to think about whether I was recording and gathering voices of those who had been previously voiceless and marginalised. My interviews were with pioneer leaders and volunteers many of whom had high levels of education and could articulate complex theological arguments and reflect on the supper. I decided to conduct two more interviews with supper guests on the 12th & 19th April 2018. Given the symbiotic relationship with those who were part of the Supper I was often in touch via whatsapp and email when I had a query or question. During the write up of this work in June to September 2018 I took another chance to make field notes at a funeral service⁶¹ for one of the long term guests in the community as a way of determining the ecclesial nature of the space.

⁵⁷ <https://jazzgoat10.wordpress.com/2015/10/20/reflections-on-the-community-supper-at-st-peters-mowbray-a-juncture-of-ecclesial-liminality/>

⁵⁸ 7th September until the 7th December 2017 and then again in April 2018

⁵⁹ I wrote 16 fieldnotes 12 of which were essentially participant observation reflexive fieldnotes that are included in the ADDENDUM of this thesis.

⁶⁰ <https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2017/08/12/up-close-and-personal-participant-observation-distance-and-ethics/>
<https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2017/10/05/afro-catholic-why-fresh-expressions-of-church-are-failing-to-make-an-impact-on-anglicans-in-south-africa/>
<https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2017/10/20/snowballing-and-serendipity-being-a-reflexive-researcher/>
<https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2017/11/21/fresh-expressions-sawubona-and-safe-spaces/>

⁶¹ 1st August 2018

4.4.3 Snowball Sampling and Serendipity

As I spent time at the community supper on the Thursday nights something I didn't anticipate happened. It wasn't something happening necessarily in the context but something happening in, and to, me as I became increasingly aware of the hazards and delights of gathering data. The old epistemic notion of data gathering that equates to simple, straightforward collecting and collating of information is dead. In the anthropology of the past there was limited self-reflection and certainly little thought as to how the interpreter shaped the gathering process. In a way it was very un-self-aware. The self-reflexive work of the researcher in fact adds to the process of research. Rather than considering the research period as a static, predetermined event where interviews are held and events observed the data gathering timespan is in fact is a dynamic, continually changing fluid event where the researcher is on a voyage of discovery about the context and must respond intuitively and reflectively.

As I reflected on what I saw I realised that at the beginning of the process I saw the pool of interviews in quite a one dimensional manner, i.e. only two groups of people - leaders/volunteers and guests/recipients in fact the reality is much more fractured and complex. Whilst there are those who were pioneers and original leaders there were also those who functioned as volunteers who had no real working knowledge of the history, or the story of the supper or even of its ecclesial intentions. There were others who were not pioneer leaders but played crucial roles in the practical leadership of the supper. Those ranged from kitchen staff, volunteers from another church, people engaged primarily with children. They had a story to tell, another dimension to add to the weave of voices that make up the supper - it became my intention therefore to interview a few (3-4) people in this category. They were diverse in age, race and background.⁶²

I operated on a snowballing principle in terms of sampling. The advantages of snowball sampling in qualitative research settings allows one the ability to recruit hidden populations. It relies on the notion that research in any given setting is not static and preconceived but fluid, dynamic and open to significant change when one enters the context and begins to see new or deeper complexities that need to reshape the sampled population. This also probes the idea of research ethics from an official university view point. Research ethics clearance was given for a period (in my case) of three years and asked the researcher to report back to the board with any significant changes. In the case of the community supper snowball sampling allowed me the opportunity to uncover the hidden voices that call out in the liminal space between pioneer leaders, volunteers and guests.

⁶² Notably P5, P10 and P12

Presentation of Sample set⁶³**[Figure 2]**

Participant No	Gender	Race	Role
P1	Female	White/British	Pioneer leader/Volunteer/Guest
P2	Male	White/South African	Pioneer leader/Volunteer/Guest
P3	Male	White/British	Pioneer leader/Volunteer/Guest
P4	Female	Coloured/South African	Guest
P5	Male	Coloured/South African	Pioneer leader/Volunteer/Guest
P6	Male	White/South African	Volunteer/Guest
P7	Female	White/South African	Volunteer/Guest
P8/35	Female	White/South African	Pioneer leader/Volunteer/Guest
P9	Male	White/South African	Guest
P10	Female	Black/South African	Volunteer/Guest
P11	Male	Coloured/South African	Guest
P12	Female	Coloured/South African	Volunteer/Guest
P29	Male	White/South African	Volunteer/Guest
P37	Male	Coloured/South African	Volunteer/Guest
P38	Female	Coloured/South African	Guest

Venette (2012) suggests that, ‘snowball sampling, in general application, is a type of convenience sample. If you are trying to recruit people who are difficult to identify or have to meet certain criteria to participate, then snowball sampling can be used to ease data collection.’ However, Morgan (2008:816) points out that, ‘snowball sampling poses a distinct risk of capturing a biased subset of the total population of potential participants because any eligible participants who are not linked to the original set of informants will not be accessible for inclusion in the study.’ In the case of the community supper I took the approach of the serendipitous. The serendipitous in qualitative research, ‘refer(s) to finding something of value while searching for something else or to finding something sought after in an unexpected place or manner’ (Stebbins 2008:814). One of the underlying approaches to my work in practical theology is that genuine practical theology in the South African context must be postcolonial. As I have sketched in chapter 2 Lartey (2013:xviii) notes that, ‘other voices, especially submerged, ignored or rejected voices are invited to articulate their own **authentic** voice. Subjugated voices with despised knowledge are given room at the postcolonial table.’ Postcolonial strategies, then, resist the colonial narrative and seek an opening up of voices - to sing, wail, howl, scat and **improvise** their way out of colonial objectification. A postcolonial stance sees

⁶³ The odd numbering series is a result of the order in which documents were uploaded to Atlas.ti

below the surface and looks for complex, messy responses to 'otherness' by the colonizer. With this in mind, I conducted interviews with guests who fell into the previously disadvantaged category. I noted in my interviews that often the voices of those previously disadvantaged although couldn't necessarily articulate answers in theological categories more often than not gave a gut response, more visceral and raw and therefore less premeditated. Many of those voices eventually made up the subheadings of my interpretive chapter 6.

The serendipitous approach allows one to uncover, excavate and unearth those missing voices in places that can sometimes be overshadowed by prevailing hegemony. Whilst the community supper is very obviously a place where people are attempting to be human together, to eat together and be curious about one another the weight of history, of privilege, of dividedness is always lurking beneath the surface waiting to usurp and disrupt seeing one another and building genuine relationships.

In this chapter I have outlined my approach to qualitative research and developed my understanding of ethnography before sharing something of the ethical dilemmas and considerations in working with vulnerable people. I now turn, in chapter 5, to outline how I followed the work of LeCompt and Schensul (2013) in my data analysis process as well as explaining my processes using Atlas.ti. I reveal how results emerge from the data by following noticing, collecting and thinking. Then I explain the 4 step recursive process which is both inductive and deductive to code the data and then abstractify it leading to certain domains. LeCompt and Schensul (2013:2) say that, 'ethnographers create ethnography in sometimes tedious and often exhilarating two-step process of analysis of raw data and and interpretation of analysed data. Analysis reduces data to a story ethnographers can tell; interpretation tells readers what the story means'. I conclude the chapter by explaining briefly the social and ecclesial context of the study.

Chapter 5

Analysing and Interpreting data

This chapter explains the how analysis of the data was undertaken whilst narrating something of the Supper's life. Following LeCompte and Schensul (2013:2) this chapter is based on the notion that analysis in ethnographic work reduces data to a story to be told. However simply *telling the story* is on one level an impossibility. Van Maanen (2011) explores the various modes, or ways, of writing ethnography and delineates the pursuit into three main categories of *realist* (2011:45ff), *confessional* (2011:73) and *impressionist* (2011:101) tales. Each of these categories of ethnographic writing elicit a certain type of narrative. Van Maanen (2011:xviii) says, that 'by raising the question of voice and the role of the writer in the collection, rendering and reading of ethnographic tales, (he) is trying to crack open the notions of culture, feildwork, and ethnography so that new questions can be raised.' For this thesis I follow what Van Maanen (2011:127) calls a *critical* tale narrative. Van Maanen notes that often ethnography has been accused of being, '*parochial, romantic and of limited vision and blindness to the political economy in which all groups must swim to survive.*' Bearing in mind that the Community Supper as a context is not cut off from the larger issues around power, lingering colonialist intent, consumerism and capitalist strategies I try to write a *critical* type of tale. *Critical* tales also take seriously interdisciplinary work drawing on other disciplines. This is the case in my work drawing on practical theology, but also missiology, the social sciences a bit of literary fiction, musicology and importantly ecclesiology; all in all, a bricolage of sources.

5.1. Data analysis and processes

Data analysis in qualitative research is an ongoing, emerging and iterative or non-linear process (Smit 2002:66). In many ways data analysis begins well before any attempts at the systemic and rational process of sorting and ordering data. In my case data analysis began the moment I immersed myself in the context of the Supper. In this thesis I draw upon the work LeCompte and Schensul (2013) who give clear frameworks for data analysis and interpretation in ethnographic studies. 'Ethnographers create ethnography in sometimes tedious and often exhilarating two-step process of analysis of raw data and interpretation of analysed data. Analysis reduces data to a story ethnographers can tell; interpretation tells readers what the story means' (2013:2).

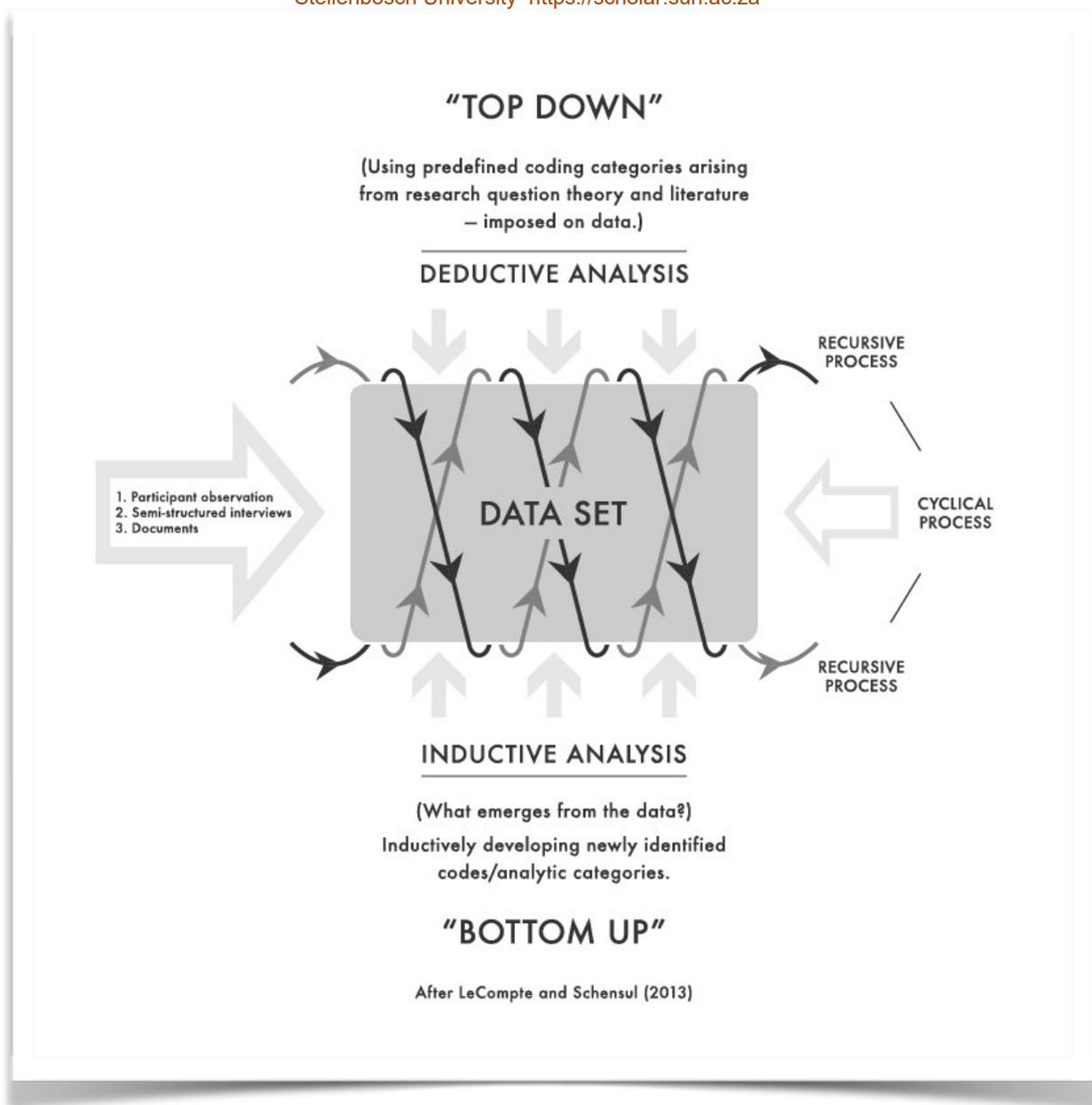
Data analysis in ethnography can appear on one level to be a straight forward process but LeCompte and Schensul (2013) warn against any such attitude. Central to their thesis is the idea of the recursive process (2013:27) (See Figure 3 below). This process involves, 'constant questioning, getting answers, asking more refined answers, and looking for instances that clarify, modify, or negate the original formulations.' It is, then, a cyclic process. This recursive process is both deductive and

inductive. Again, LeCompte and Schensul (2013:83) point out that, ‘discussing only induction and deduction, as many research methodologists do, is an oversimplification because, in fact, ethnographers actually use both induction and deduction through-out their analysis and move back and forth between the two in a third strategy which we have called recursivity. Initial, open or general coding is both an inductive and deductive process.’

LeCompte and Schensul (2013:90) outline how results emerge from data. This is a complex and tricky pursuit. Because qualitative research involves words; ‘words are fatter than numbers; they have multiple and sometimes ambiguous meanings’ (:90). The problem faced by ethnographers is that they must somehow organise and classify segments of text. Ethnographers are sensitized to *noticing* specific ideas (:91) because of the conceptual or theoretical frameworks they work with. Data analysis, then in another way, is the moving back and forth between concrete pieces of text to greater levels of abstraction and back again.

Locating things that are significant in a database (or data set) requires knowing why and for whom these things are worth noticing (:95). This is both an emic and etic process. By emic and etic process I mean things that are both important to the outsider (researcher?) and the insider. Whilst this is an intuitive process where the researcher’s hunches and musings are pursued it does not mean that it has to lack a systematic process. LeCompte and Schensul (2013:93) use a 4-step process which I have loosely adopted in this thesis as a guide. In speaking of aggregating and disaggregating phenomena or what they call the “pieces” data and, ‘to think of them arrayed on a continuum from the least to most concrete. Those “pieces” start at the most concrete level.

- These are ‘called *items* or *facts*. They consist of discrete and concrete activities, objects, persons, or other low-level classifications that fit together under a single definition. That is, items and units are alike on the basis of some criteria that cause them to be clustered or classified into a single category.
- In the second phase of the process speaks of ‘*units* or *variables* consist of clusters of items. The multiple ways these items differ, despite sharing common criteria within a cluster, constitute a variation in the variable.
- Thirdly *patterns* or *factors* consist of groupings or collections of these categories.
- Finally, *domains* consist of larger groups of patterns that are linked together in ways that form the foundation for an overall cultural portrayal or theory that explains a cultural phenomenon.



[Figure 3]

5.2 Using Atlas.ti (CADA) coding and memo making

Bearing the above in mind for this thesis I used the qualitative data analysis computer software Atlas.ti. Atlas.ti is a qualitative data analysis tool whose, 'software frees you from all those tasks that machine can do much more effectively...like searching for key words, integrating material into one place, etc' (Friese 2014).

Benaquisto (2008:85) points out that, 'in qualitative research coding is the process of generating ideas and concepts from raw data such as interview transcripts, fieldnotes, archival materials, reports, newspaper articles, and art. The coding process refers to the steps the researcher takes to identify, arrange, and systematize the ideas, concepts, and categories uncovered in the data.

Smit (2002:67) rightly points out the complexities of working with qualitative data. ‘Meaning is inherently ambivalent and context-dependent; hence one cannot rely on the respondents’ intentions as an incontestable guide to interpretation. Respondents or participants perceive and define situations – including the researcher’s intentions – according to their understanding of their own motivations and of the contexts in which they act. Neither motivations nor contexts are self-evident, and allowance has to be made for the usual mix of ignorance and self-deception, delusions, fantasies and even lies. Inconsistencies and contradictions in humans do exist. In addition, social forces such as obsequiousness (obedience) towards power, pressures for conformity, and fears of embarrassment and conflict can also distort behaviour and motivations. Pure rational accounts of respondents’ intentions cannot be expected or even hoped for.’

Another place where many begin in coding is to look for information as it concerns the original goals and interests of the research study. This is how theoretical concepts inform and shape the coding of data. In assessing the data as it emerged in the process of semi structured interviewing, participant observation and document gathering I bore in mind my understanding of practical theology in a South African context on the one hand, and the normativity and critiques of the FXoC movement on the other hoping that this would bare significantly on the data. However, I was also cognisant of the idea that one should not allow those hermeneutical issues to overshadow or overwhelm what might emerge from the data independently of preconceived theoretical concerns. This fine balancing act calls for one to comb the data for themes, families, groupings and frames that may be familiar and at the same time stand in contradistinction to what might be expected. In terms of a data analysis process I followed a set of specific phases. In these phases the researcher is aiming at higher levels of abstraction in order to search for new knowledge.

5.2.1 Noticing, collecting and thinking

During a sabbatical period in early 2018, and in a precoding stage, I checked transcriptions of interviews. During the process of checking transcriptions, I reread all the interviews seeing initial patterns and themes arising in an embryonic state. I also began some initial thinking using Friese’s idea of, ‘noticing things, collecting things, thinking about things’ (2014:12-14) and wrote a corresponding blog.⁶⁴

5.2.2 Initial or open coding (*items and facts*)

In the initial round of coding I uploaded 38 documents which included 15 interviews (12 transcribed and 3 as audio files later transcribed), 16 participant observation field notes, an online newspaper

⁶⁴ <https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2018/03/19/thinking-about-things/>



[Figure 4]

article, a transcribed theologizing by one of the community supper pioneers, a paper written for an undergraduate course by one of the pioneers, and two youtube videos on the supper that I converted into MP3s. This made up my **data set** or as Atlas.ti identifies it, my **hermeneutical unit** (HU). During my initial coding I created 172 codes and 376 quotations which I initially converted into a word cloud to help me see some key themes (see **Figure 4** above)

As Benaquisto (2008:86) notes, ‘for many, coding starts with attention to very fine details and evolves into emergent categories that are applicable at much higher degrees of abstraction.’ Some of the codes made were direct quotation codes (InVivo, which is generally more inductive) others more generic or broad. During this open coding I also wrote a number of memos that often related to ideas arising from both my practical theological concerns outlined in chapter 2 and the literature around FXoC in chapter 3. There were also codes that surprised me. For example, I hadn’t anticipated there being so many comments in interviews around food. I began to think about food, table fellowship, biblical notions of the messianic feast, eating together and food quality as a particular strand of thought that needed more probing that wasn’t dealt with in any way in my questions. I had been so concerned about the ecclesial nature of the community supper that in many ways I had missed the pragmatic concerns that often underpin a community’s *habitus* and the physical nourishment that comes from good healthy food. During this initial stage I colour coded some key *units* or *variables* that began to emerge. After initial coding I printed out all my codes checking quotations and making adjustments

where I had initially miscoded, cut a quotation unnecessarily short, or reassigned a quotation linked to a code. There can be a tendency to ‘rush’ the data and start drawing out themes and concepts prematurely rather than allowing the data to “speak” for itself. The idea in some ways is to come under the data and allow space to see patterns emerging. I tried to allow time in between coding and early thoughts on themes to allow the data to ferment in the researcher. This enables clearer and more carefully processed levels of abstraction to arise later.

5.2.3 Focused coding (*units and variables*)

The move from open coding to a more focused coding is not a clearly defined step. Many caution that although there are general guidelines that indicate a progression in the coding process from identifying new concepts to refining and integrating existing categories, one should not think of the process of coding as linear’ (Benaquisto 2008:87). During this process I built a number of code groups or families, 14 in total, that seemed to deal with the codes that I had generated. Atlas.ti is not an interpretive tool but it does allow one the ability to organise and systematize data in a way which opens up sophisticated and nuanced relationships between quotations, codes and families. Following LeCompte and Schensul (2013) and the recursive process I combed my data again and generated more codes (total of 197 and 439 quotations) whilst also keeping my research question and my interview questions close at hand. During this phase of the process I also wrote a number of memos linked to some of the domains I felt were emerging from the data. I also deleted some codes which felt superfluous or reassigned codes. During this part of the process some *domains* seemed to come to the fore which began to shape my ideas about interpretations. During this stage of the analysis I

	Name	Comment	Creator
◇	1. Testing ecclesiality (Celebrating communion)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	2. Testing ecclesiality (Church)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	3. Testing ecclesiality (Fresh Expressions theoretical framework)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	4. Testing ecclesiality (Improvising)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	5. Testing ecclesiality (Liturgy)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	7. Probing pathologies of power (Apartheid and SA complexities)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	8. Probing pathologies of power (Being human together)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	9. Probing pathologies of power (Equalizing power)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	10. Recognising reciprocal relationships		Benjamin Aldous
◇	11. Recognising reciprocal relationships (building community)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	12. Recognising reciprocal relationships (posture of participants)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	13. Recognising reciprocal relationships (stories)		Benjamin Aldous
◇	14. Fathoming food in the Kingdom (food)		Benjamin Aldous

[Figure 5]

found giving certain codes colours a very useful way of visually working and organising data. Of the 197 codes were uncategorised leaving 187 to be grouped into 14 **units** and then sorted into 4 key **domains** (See **Figure 5** above).

5.2.4 Searching for Patterns and Domains

In the continued reassessing of the data set I saw the emergence of 4 domains. The first dealt with the ecclesial nature of the community supper and sought to categorise these patterns. As I began to think more conceptually and organise the data with a view to explaining the supper's life from a number of perspectives I resorted some of my categories merging some together until I finally had 13 units/variables grouped into 4 domains. Some units/variables had a large number of codes. Others only had 1. Although I organised these into specific areas during analysis and interpretation there was a fair degree of overlap. For example, in the domain *Testing ecclesiality* there was significant 'bleeding' between categories in the interpretation of the data.

5.3 Singing the context

5.3.1 South Africa and Cape Town

Social context

Forster (2017:149) reminds us, 'the social context of South Africa is extremely complex. A detailed analysis of the macro, mezzo and micro contexts of South Africa's social past and current context is a topic that could be a study all of its own.' However, Hart (2013:6) states that, 'at the moment when former president F.W. de Klerk unbanned the ANC and other liberation movements, in 1990, the 'South African nation' was deeply in question. Quite literally it had to be conjured into existence out of the rubble of a deeply divided nation.' Chipkin could ask the question in 2007 whether in fact South African's do indeed exist? 'In the absence of any traditional unifying principles (of language, culture, religion, race and so on), the identity of South African's is elusive' (Chipkin 2007:189).

Therefore, the concept of South African identity and social context is an ambiguous and contested notion given the history. Whilst it is not in the scope of this work to delve into this idea in any significant way I do sketch a brief outline by singing the context of South Africa, Cape Town and the suburb of Mowbray. Are FXoC able to open safe spaces (Cilliers 2007:19) where by genuine connection across previous boundaries can in fact lead to mutual respect and robust friendship can for? Where, in short, people can practice Ubuntu and be human together in community?

Alan Paton's opening lines in his 1948 novel *Cry, the Beloved County*, 'in those grass covered hills lovely beyond any singing of it,' paint a picture of the natural beauty. However South Africa's complexity is not to be underestimated. South Africa continues to be a place in transition. Cilliers

(2007) makes the observation that South African society is like an onion with multiple perspectives and possible analysis. South Africa is also increasingly pluralistic and secularized. Smit (2009) suggests that the social transformations of the last 24 years have happened almost overnight in comparison to other societies and as a result this leaves large sections of the population vulnerable. Planting and growing *new contextual churches* in South Africa will mean deep and honest reflection on painful and complex social realities.

The diversity of the Western Cape's flora and fauna is mirrored in the diversity of its people. However, Cape Town is still a divided city⁶⁵ largely due to *Apartheid* spacial planning that carved up the landscape through parliamentary acts like *Group Areas*.⁶⁶ The woundedness of the city can be heard in the stories of the tens, if not hundreds, of thousands who were forcibly moved between in the 1950's and 60's.

5.3.2 Mowbray, St Peters and the Community Supper

That frames the macro and mezzo context of the suburb of Mowbray. 'Mowbray is one of the Southern Suburbs of Cape Town, South Africa and lies on the slopes of Devil's Peak. Mowbray is at a junction of several major Cape Town highways and has an important multi-modal public transport interchange at Mowbray railway station. Its original name was Driekoppen ("Three heads" in Dutch).'⁶⁷ The original name of "Three heads" refers to the heads of three slaves who were tried for murder in 1724 and set on a spike planted at a crossroads. At this crossroad and a tavern developed a village. By 1850 the first residential township was build and named Mowbray by the register. Today 'Mowbray is home and work to a diverse group of people, whether measuring by housing, income, race, nationality, employment or age' (Stewart 2017:4). In recent years there has been a growing number of African nationals resident, students in newly built UCT residential blocks and those living on the streets. Although usually delineated as part of the southern suburbs the main street in Mowbray is urban and gritty.

St Peters Church is just off the main road and close to the public transport interchange. Historically the church was consecrated by Bishop Gray with its first Rector Revd Long on the 6th June 1854. St Peters was established, and continues to operate, under a Trust Deed dated 2nd June 1854 as a Church intended for the worship of Almighty God according to the liturgy a ritual of the Church of England.

⁶⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/gallery/2016/jun/23/south-africa-divided-cities-apartheid-photographed-drone>

⁶⁶ Group Areas was in fact made up of three parliamentary acts in 1950, 1957 and 1966. The acts assigned racial groups to different residential and business sections in urban areas in a system of urban apartheid. An effect of the law was to exclude non-Whites from living in the most developed areas, which were restricted to Whites.

⁶⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mowbray,_Cape_Town

Like the Parish of St John's in Wynberg⁶⁸ St Peter's is a church in association with ACSA. It's evangelical tradition and ethos has been guarded through the trust deed and agreements between the Archbishop and the Parish. Until the arrival of a new minister at Easter 2010 the previous incumbent had been leading the church for some 40 years.⁶⁹ Scharen (2005:135) says that a 'church's physical location, then, offers options for concrete acts of charity.'

The community supper began on the 23rd February 2012 with a handful of people including 4 key pioneer/leaders who I interviewed at length as part of data gathering. All pioneers I interviewed expressed a similar intent, a sense of urgency, a desire to see community being built. *So really, the motivation was creating a community or deepening the relationships in community.* [P1:1]

Another expressed distress at the disconnect between people in her area.

One day, while chatting to a homeless man who I would see scavenging in our neighbourhood, I realized I was also acquainted with his children and his grandchildren – who also lived on the street. It suddenly hit home that these were generations of children who were born to destruction, taking this destruction into their adult years. WHO WAS I to opt out of at least getting to know them, and engaging with their stories? I had mistaken laziness and arrogance in my myself for wisdom. I began longing for a more neutral space to get to know some of the people who lived on the streets. With a friend, I began dreaming of a regular meal. [P35:18]

5.3.3 A vignette: Setting the scene

I use the field notes written on the 7th September my first week of participant observation as a basis to give a little vignette of the community Supper and help set the scene. This a reminder that ethnography is 'thick description' and helps the reader enter the context in a literary way.

It's chucking it down with rain and has been all day. When I arrive a few guests are lining up outside the hall. When it's cold and wet as it often can be during a Cape Town winters day people wait stoically under black bin liners or huddle under a tree, faces solemn and defiantly patient. When the sun is out the mood turns jovial. On many occasions people would greet me with a shout. 'Pastor!' Often people are in conversation with one another, others just resting perhaps having walked considerable distance.

⁶⁸ <http://www.stjohns.org.za/about-us#/history/>

⁶⁹ Revd Holdsworth had been curate from 1977-87 and then Rector from 1987 to 2009 (Rhind 1994:22)

That day I'm shown the back door route by a longer term member. The kitchen is empty excepting a middle aged woman earnestly messaging on her phone. I wander round and look outside the back gate. Two young 20 somethings who look like students are asking if this is the right way to the Community supper. I'm an insider already it seems as I show them where to go. Other new volunteers arrive. All from a local non demoninational church in the city that has links to the supper. Everyone does the usual greetings, where are you from etc.

P2 arrives and gathers the volunteers into a circle to give some input. All new members are given a simple A6 piece of paper which outlines what the Supper's intentions are. The opening sentences read, "A weekly celebration where we journey over a meal from isolation and ignorance to encounter, from encounter to relationship and from relationship to transformation."

P2 is relaxed, easy going...magnanimous even? He also introduces me as someone who is doing research, observing and listening to stories. P2 uses the phrase, "this meal is an opportunity to lurk."

He also uses the phrase, "this is a place where we practice being human together" several times in the evening. He reminds the volunteers, "the only thing you've got to offer is your curiosity." There is a list of principles to think about for those who express a need at the meal. I'm intrigued by his use of the phrase, "We always have communion but sometimes we celebrate communion as the Eucharist."

We are told to pray for the supper in groups of 3/4. A young man in my group prays "help us to be guests."

P2 tells the new volunteers to go outside and line up with the guests waiting to come in. This remark causes some consternation. As we walk through the kitchen to the front of the hall some volunteers are confused that they have been made to stand in line with other guests. They think there has been a mix up and they should be serving! The idea of equalizing power seems some way off.

I choose a table in the corner and am introduced to P4, John, P5 and one or two others. Although its been raining all day and many people are obviously quite wet the atmosphere is jovial. P4 shares a bit of her story. A small lean striking woman she

comes from Springs in the Northern Cape has brothers and sisters but can't go back home because of her situation. She is so softly spoken that I often have to ask her to repeat what she has said. I wonder if speaking to a white man is difficult for her - whether it makes her shy or self conscious. She tells me she formerly worked at the Mount Nelson in the kitchens.

P5, across the table from, begins to talk to me. I've met him a few times before. He is a stalwart at the church. Now retired he fixes things up, comes to church to retile walls, help with maintenance. He tells some of his story. He was married in the church 39 years ago, his wife is a lay minister. He says, "This place (he is referring to the Supper) restores what the locusts have eaten." I'm not sure exactly what he means at first but he begins to narrate more of his own story. Forced removal because of the group areas act in the mid 1960's. I'm struck how quickly and transparently people share being very unselfconscious.

Chapter 6

Analysis and Interpretations of data

This thesis is titled 'towards an assessment of' which is an intentional heuristic devise which speaks of a searching that is incomplete. To assess is to evaluate or estimate the nature, ability, or quality of a thing. Bearing this in mind the interpretive chapter of this thesis seeks to making use of adjectives that talk to the idea of assessing; testing, probing, recognising, fathoming. In the analysis of my data set through following LeCompt and Schensul's (2013) recursive process I arrived at **4 key domains**. **1. Testing ecclesiality 2. Probing pathologies of power 3. Recognising reciprocal relationships and community 4. Fathoming food in the Kingdom.** In this thesis I do not separate the analysis and interpretation parts of this work. They seem to be inseparable to me. Discombobulating them only serves to separate the *telling of* and *explanation of* the story of the Supper from one another.

6.1 Testing Ecclesiality

If FXoC have been criticised for undermining, breaking or reshaping Anglican ecclesiology (Moynagh 2012, Davidson and Milbank 2010) then an exploration of how the 'lived' and 'concrete' experiences of an emerging ecclesial community are a vital part of this study. Again, my research is about testing, probing and discerning both the ecclesial nature of the community and its Anglican and South African shaping. I used the word ecclesiality as a neologism. The idea of 'ality' as a suffix that turns an adjective into a noun (of sorts). As Foord (2001:316) points out, 'ecclesiality addresses the ontology of 'church.' I delineate this section on **testing ecclesiality** into two parts. The first deals with normativity in FXoC and so tests how the supper has charted the path of birth and growth in conversation with FXoC theorists and practitioners. The second part asks questions about her ecclesiology in terms of worship, liturgy and eucharistic characteristics before concluding with some thoughts around hospitality and hostility around FXoC.

6.1.1 Testing ecclesiality: Discerning an emergent framework for innovation

Moynagh (2017:29-30) traces what he calls 'an emergent framework for innovation' whereby he envisions a process that sees the formation of new contextual churches. In my interviews and observations at the community supper whilst there appeared, on the surface, to be a wide range of responses around its intentional ecclesial nature I identified something of Moynagh's framework. Moynagh draws on the ideas of innovation and complexity to open new ways of thinking about how new ecclesial communities develop. Firstly, Moynagh (2017:19) says that 'new ecclesial communities have emerged relationally, through step by step improvisation, and have come as surprising gifts to their contexts.' That notion of improvisation underpins the framework set out below. The six elements in this framework do not necessarily operate sequentially rather co-exist and intertwine with each other (:29).

Dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction, ‘theologically is the God-given sense that a gap exists between the present and God’s future, between current realities and the promised Kingdom’ (Moynagh 2017:29). A dissatisfaction although not always expressed in such language was an important factor in the initiation of the community Supper. One pioneer leader spoke of the sense of **urgency** felt because she and her husband discerned a lack of community in the area and others were taking too long to decide what to do as a response.

*I think the reason they had a problem with it is because they weren’t involved in the process, although we’d been having those initial discussions with J regarding the community meal. We just got to a point the Christmas before we opened, I just had a real sense of **urgency** that, why don’t we just do this and see if it works, so we did. [P1:8]*

Moynagh suggests that dissatisfaction in the Spirit’s hands can create movement towards the kingdom (2017:30). The church’s own history comes into play here. Before a new minister and his wife moved to the church at Easter 2010 the previous minister had been in place for around 35/40 years. The church had diminished in numbers, was isolated from the local community and other churches in the area with similar churchmanship. The arrival of new leaders in fact created a rupture in the church’s life and created a moment of opportunity. As Moynagh notes, ‘leaders can push organisations towards instability by disrupting existing patterns and ways of doing things’ (:30).

But dissatisfaction was not only expressed in terms of community creation. One early pioneer leader, perhaps on a parallel journey, was impacted by the intergenerational homelessness she encountered in her neighbourhood.

It suddenly hit home that these were generations of children who were born to destruction taking this destruction into their adult years. WHO WAS I to opt out of at least getting to know them, and engaging with their stories? I had mistaken laziness and arrogance in my myself for wisdom. I began to want to listen to them, hear what was on their hearts, hear their stories, and let them get to know me as much as they would want to or not. I began longing for a more neutral space to get to know some of the people who lived on the streets. With a friend, I began dreaming of a regular meal where people living in the formal houses. [P8/35:18]

Her desire for a space to connect with people became a key factor in her **dissatisfaction** and coincided with the new minister's pioneering sensibilities. But dissatisfaction is only the first step in the process. Out of that dissatisfaction driven by urgency in the case of P1 emerges *exploration*.

Exploration

Exploration is not based on prediction. 'Rather than replying on plans that assume a stable future, a future unchallenged by the kingdom, can occur through a Spirit led process of trial and error, which is a means of discerning God's rule. You stumble on an experiment that keeps working' (Moynagh 2017:31). Another pioneer leader P2 spoke about the emergence of the supper's contours as setting up multiple experiments.

the concept of emergence and, and the concept of you, you try, in – they talk sometimes about multiple parallel experiments. You try lots of different things because the, the system is complex enough that you can't say, well if we do this it is going to lead to that, so let us try lots of things, see what they do and, and, and then allow them to die, the things that aren't working allow them to go and the things do work and strengthen them. [P2:80]

Essentially this is about, 'making it up as you go along. With improvisation, the spirit enables you to change the plan in response to signs of the Kingdom in the context' (Moynagh 2017:31). A number of factors seemed to be in place in order for the early development of the Supper. Firstly, new leadership which was willing to take the risk of starting something even though there was not a clear outcome of how things would develop. Secondly a primary leader who could say of himself, "*I mean I have always been very strong with my, and I think you and I have had this conversation before that my style of leadership is more improvisational, more like jazz than a symphony.*" [P3:38] A leadership style that was open to new ideas or starting something without being sure of the end result and a willingness to allow others to shape the life of the Supper seem to be key. Thirdly in this exploration stage linked to the idea of the dissatisfaction stage is the notion of enough space to try and fail. As we saw with pioneer leader P1, the attitude of, *why don't we just do this and see if it works, so we did.* [P1:8] Moynagh suggests that in the **exploration** stage may include the bringing together of two or more concepts that have not been combined before to produce innovation. In the birthing of the community supper there was on the one hand a desire to create community. As [P3:1] says, "*the desire from the beginning was simply to create a space for people to be in community together because we had observed that Mowbray lacked community in our feeling and particularly St Peter's lacked a sense of community.*" This was combined with other pioneer leaders who discerned the

intergenerational homelessness in the community and longed for a space to connect meaningfully. The new leader in the context could release others too.

But what he (P3) did do quickly was give space for people like P2 and me to explore new ways of gathering together as church. The dinner we had begun dreaming about was one such space. With full belief this idea was inspired by God we began a dinner at St Peters, simply a meal open to anyone in the surrounding community. [P8/35:20]

For pioneer P2 there was an intention right at the outset to create a church community of some kind, ‘so certainly from a get go for, for me without necessarily knowing what it would be there was this desire to see a different kind of church service if you wish, might have been the language I would have used, emerged.’ [P2:1]

This innovation was Spirit led combining three nodes, a desire to create community, address the need to connect with those living in on the streets and to gather as church in new ways. The 4 key pioneers P1, P2, P3 and P8/35, ‘relished the freedom to follow their noses, embrace the unexpected, improvise wildly and be surprised by the results’ (Moynagh 2017:32). It should be noted that all these elements can be in operation at the same time or some together. In the case of *exploration* the Supper continues to rely on improvisation in its on going life and witness.

Sense-making

‘A core task of sense-making is to craft a narrative that connects what is emerging from the Kingdom to the team’s God-given values and history’ (Moynagh 2017:32). This core task was witnessed not so much in the interviews, which didn’t really touch on such matters, but primarily from my witnessing as a participant observer on Thursday nights. Moynagh (:32) notes that the use of language that, ‘connects God’s future to the teams past.’ The use of certain types of language especially articulated by pioneer leader P2 took the form of a theologizing in both the team gathering before the supper at around 6.15pm most weeks and the actual opening welcome of the supper. During both of these points there was an opportunity to use the language of welcoming, treating each other with dignity, being human together, being curious, lurking, seeking mutual transformation and equalising power. This theologising by P2 also consistently took the form of improvisation upon a snippet of liturgical material from the ABP (Anglican Prayer Book 1989) or reminding those gathered for the meal that the communion table was always in the background. An extract from my field notes on 7th September 2017,

I'm intrigued by his use of the phrase, "We always have communion but sometimes we celebrate communion as the Eucharist."

In turn this theologizing is reflected back in the values of the meal which are often verbalised by both guests, volunteers and leaders in the context of the supper. For Moynagh (2017:33) this sense-making often happens intuitively. The sense-making task is vital and should not be rushed. In a way it is a narrating of the *habitus* as Bourdieu would say. P2 and at times P3 played the role of sense makers. Sense makers are visionary. They call out the future hope of the coming kingdom. Moynagh (2017:69) says that sense makers, 'account for the story so far that lends credence to the proposed venture, persuasive narrative draws in potential partners, helps create coalitions of support.' These sense makers hold the vision of the life of the Supper by telling a story but also by helping those gathered as both team, volunteers and guests to hold on to key values. Those were most often articulated verbally and included saying, '*we're living in the space of hospitality and we are living in what it means to be welcoming to people and to enter into lives together, working at equalising power, calling out dignity in each other and working toward mutual transformation.*' It is this process of embedding into the ecclesial life of the community a narrative that allows freedom to create into the future. Out of this *sense-making* comes the notion of *amplification*.

Amplification

'Amplification is the process by which the Spirit multiplies and spreads small changes through positive feedback' (Moynagh 2017:33). Amplification is more likely when leaders encourage multiple interactions between individuals. This means that amplification is not controlled by one leader instead amplification can mean exponential growth that is difficult to tame or reroute. It also has the potential to disrupt the original intentions of the FXoC. A good example of amplification which we will explore in more detail later in this chapter is the introduction to the supper of a group from another church. P29 had led a ministry amongst the homeless community since 2010. After connecting with P2 P29 saw the community supper as a place to walk alongside those who were sleeping on the street. He explains,

I checked out Thursday nights really loved what they were doing. It was this hybrid between shelter ministry and street ministry almost because it was street ministry in the confines of a safe space which was something I had never really seen before. Most soup kitchens I had attended were outside and very impersonal. [P29:1/2]

P29 found the supper a ‘revelation’. As a result P29’s ministry in local Haven shelter stopped and a team were due to join him. That team collapsed but through word of mouth and relationships a fresh team of 15 from a large charismatic church from the city join the community supper within three months. However, this ‘plant’ into the supper from another church was far from straightforward. During my months of participant observation, I noticed how an influx of young, white, middle class twenty somethings often turned up to the supper. P2 in an interview was more than a little annoyed,

Big Church⁷⁰ puts the meal and as a place of contact for people to come along which initially was fine but then they ran like a big homeless people’s ministry seminar thing like six months ago and we started getting like these gangs of sort of twenty white upper middle class do-gooders arriving you know and they were mostly only there for like a week so in the two week, in the time they have been there, like a lot of the, the extras that have been there, are people who are not going to be there next week.

The notion of amplification whilst positive can also be fraught. The amplification that took place left unchecked could have potentially changed some of the DNA of the supper because of an influx of people not necessarily committed to the core values. Moynagh fails to deal with the idea that in each of the nodes in the emergent framework can have points of fragility. Amplification, then, is both a moment when a new contextual community grows and opens up but also can be distracted, or thrown off course. P2 along acted as a sense maker in the context of the supper by theologizing, by reminding the community of its core values and markers by reminding those involved of the supper’s history. In doing so the potential to be derailed was safe guarded.

Edge of Chaos

Moynagh (2017:34) says that, ‘instability is a sign of openness to change.’ The edge of chaos is an important concept that holds a, ‘balance between enough openness to allow novelty, but not so much innovation that the system is torn apart.’ This, Moynagh notes, is a difficult place to remain for new contextual communities. In the case of the community supper it seems that the edge of chaos, the liminal space the supper found itself in was often not appreciated by initial members of the founding church community.

‘when P3 came along and he introduced the community suppers, everybody was aghast, you know. A lot of the St Peters that started coming have fallen away, so they obviously felt that’s not where they want to be, you know, so that’s a bit disappointing. [P12:29]

⁷⁰ A pseudonym

Operating on the edge of chaos actually allowed the supper to clarify that this was a new community that was not necessarily conforming to the hardened edges of church. Moynagh (:35) says that ‘improvisation creates the disorder out of which novelty arises.’

we'd have sort of 20 at the beginning and then it grew a bit more, and it's just gradually been growing but it was about probably two years ago that we sort of noticed that actually it's two thirds homeless people and a third church and local community.

[P1:34]

Transformation

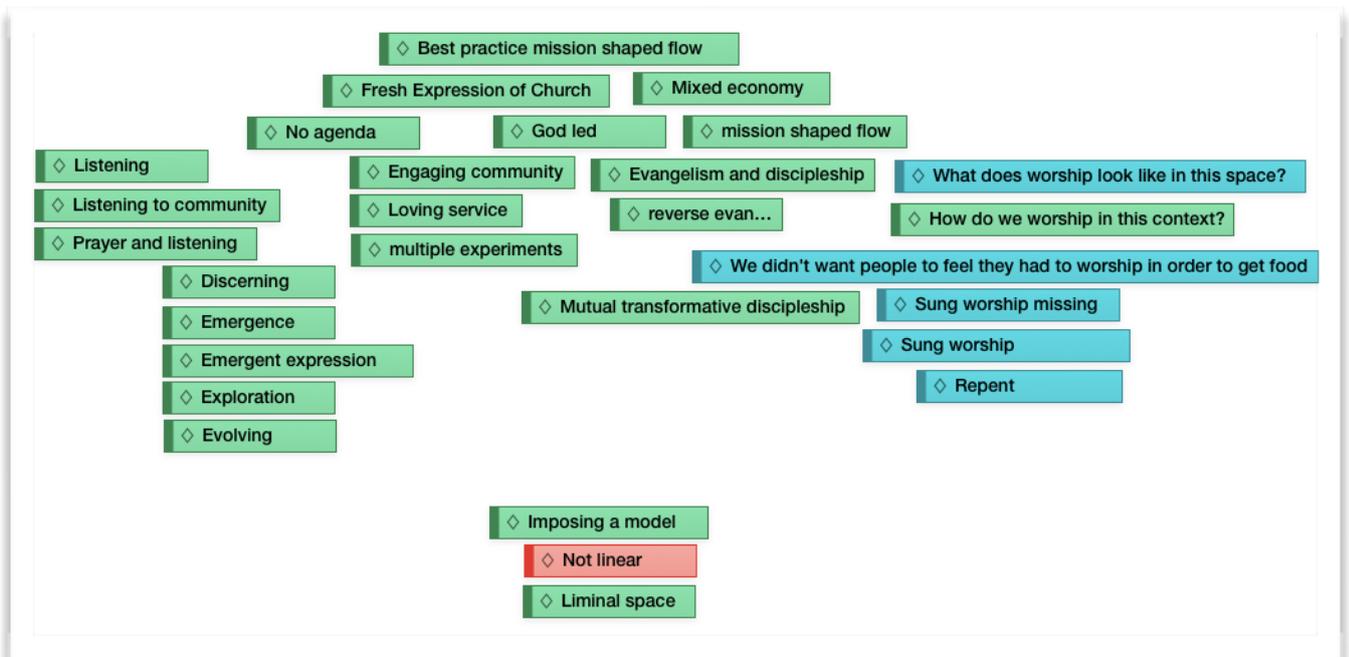
Moynagh (2017:36) notes that, ‘transformation is the end result of the five other processes working together in overlapping and interpenetrating ways,’ Moynagh (2017:75) continues that, ‘typically, managers preserve; they keep the organisation going; they protect what they’ve got. Entrepreneurs transform.’ The entrepreneurial nature of leaders like P1, P2, P3 and P8 has meant that the supper has attracted support from not only the local St Peter’s congregation but others in the community. At a recent funeral for Green Eyes a well-known, and loved, member of the community Supper a number of traders wanted to find ways to support the supper’s life. The Supper has seen the transformation of lives of people living with addictions going into rehab and remaining clean. Often as Moynagh (2017:77) points out, ‘transformation isn’t sensational rather individuals’ lives are being changed in mostly small ways.’ This is largely true for the Supper.

2. Testing ecclesiality: The serving first journey

Whilst it is possible to trace the genesis of the Supper via Moynagh’s framework for innovation any presumption that all those interviewed about the development of the supper over the past 6 years would be in agreement about its ecclesial shape would be quite wrong. In fact, the array of responses from those interviewed about the supper’s life was diverse. When shown *The serving first journey* (or the mission shaped flow as I often termed it) diagram below it elicited a wide variety of reactions revealing peoples own unpremeditated responses to the supper’s life and witness.



One of the initial questions asked by those deemed able to reflect theologically on the supper's journey was; **Where do you sense you are in this mission shaped flow?** Reflect on that for me? Whilst only one of the pioneer leaders (P3) was very well acquainted with the diagram all found it a helpful tool to analyse its life. The codes associated with the serving first journey are included below in Figure 6.



[Figure 6]

Prayer and Listening

There are definite elements of prayer and listening in the birthing and genesis of the Community Supper but this was offset by some internal tensions. Other members of the church mostly made up of new members who had recently joined from a large, affluent evangelical charismatic Anglican church were prayer walking and engaging a community of rough sleepers. But it took P1 and P3 to actually just launch something. Ironically, they were criticised for not praying enough. P3 took the idea of listening to God and to the community as a central starting point but didn't anticipate starting an FXoC. He says listening, *'was conscious and deliberate, but it wasn't conscious and deliberate in the sense of we are going to listen to the community so we can start a fresh expression it was conscious and deliberate because I always want to listen to the community that I am serving.'* [P3:40] when asked if he was listening to both God and community his response was, *'Ja I think so, I mean I, I am not, I am not one who is often con, conscious of God speaking directly in that sense.'* [P3:45]

This idea of double listening is an important concept in the MSC report from 2004. 'Double listening is a process that, 'involves listening to the culture where a church might be established, and to the inherited tradition of the gospel and the church' (2004:104). But listening is not a process that can be rushed. Goodhew, Roberts and Volland (2012:160-2) suggest that listening to both God and the community should be, 'long and hard in a variety of places.' Deep listening could involve a significant audit of the community and a collation research about the context which P8/35 took seriously but not was joined up with the listening processes of P3 and P1. Moynagh (2012:129) speaks of 360-degree listening which can be equated to taking bearing from a compass. Listening to the context, listening to the wider church, listening friends, local church and prayer partners, listening to the word through bible study and prayer.

However, in the case of the community supper it took a leader who was willing to risk and disrupt the expectations of others about the process of ***prayer and listening***. P1:36 says of the inauguration of the supper, *'came from, we want to form community, we were criticized for not praying enough at the time.'* That criticism came from leading members of the church. Again, P1 reflected back,

'particularly, were very, they felt that we'd rushed ahead which I think is quite a South African thing. There's just, in my experience in getting things going, there's a lot more reflection that seems to happen maybe just in church circles, maybe in Evangelical church.'

Interestingly there seems to be a tension between an ***urgency*** in some pioneer leaders, which could well have been Spirit led, and those who were still in the process of prayer and listening. Moynagh (2012:164) notes that 'listening prayerfully to people you feel called to serve could shape every aspect

of your witnessing community life.’ Whilst there is evidence of listening in multiple forms and a sense of God’s Spirit leading in retrospect one important dimension that seems to be absent is Shier-Jones (2009:163) advice that, ‘pioneering ministry cannot be done to a community by someone who knows what they need. It can only be done with a community by someone who shares their need.’ Goodhew, Roberts and Volland (2012:163) point out that this principle is of critical importance but is often overlooked. It seems that on one level the supper was initiated not *by* the community but *for* it. As we will see later in this chapter the idea of power and their pathologies cannot be ignored in the South African context especially where there is a high potential for re-enacting client-benefactor relationships or perpetuating *Apartheid* era power structures however unseen or hidden they may be. Kirke (2011) speaks of a posture of powerlessness in mission shaped ministry. She points out that in following the missionary Spirit, ‘we have to espouse powerlessness if we are going to truly going to be incarnational as the body of Christ in mission.’ Whilst attempts are made at the supper interpersonal, socio economic and political power structures are always lurking beneath the surface waiting to usurp the suppers commitment to equalising power. Kwayani (2014:2) too notes that, ‘there is always a power dynamic operating when people’s needs are met. he goes on to say that, ‘Without developing relationships with communities, churches run the risk of helping from a distance instead of ‘incarnating’ themselves among the people God has entrusted to their care.’ We will explore these issues around power more deeply in a later section suffice to say that the supper at times vacillated - between genuinely equalising power at times and and falling into the trap of replaying old power dynamics inherent within South Africa’s dispensations of the past.

An important point to note in dealing with this model of serving first is that it does not necessarily function in a linear fashion. The commitment to listening and is an ongoing requirement hence in the diagram it undergirds all that happens in the life of the community. In interviews with both pioneer leaders, volunteers and guests the notion of being listened to cropped up again and again. P9 could say that in other food provision settings in the city people were not listened to. ‘*Yes sometimes we’re at other places where we didn’t really get heard but here we do.*’ [P9:5]

Loving and Serving and Building Community

I use the phrase loving and serving in contradistinction to loving service as in the original diagram from 2006 as Moynagh (2012:218) notes ‘loving service did not fully capture the experience of pioneers who were primarily engaged in building relationships.’ This is probably true of the Community Supper. Whilst on a surface level there is the provision of a weekly, hot and nourishing meal the main pioneers P1, P2, P3 and P8/35 were primarily interested in the building of community. The act of service in providing food became a focal point for the building of community. ‘*you say loving service and you sort of assume that for, but like something like a soup kitchen, there’s loving*

service, there's, we want to feed people that have nothing and that wasn't where the supper came from.' [P1:35]

So I would, I would place as in the sort of interface in building at community exploring discipleship, that said over the last two years I think we have sort of dipped our toes into church taking shape in different ways so I think there is, we kind of moved through and come back. [P2:5]

Evangelism and Discipleship

the Discipleship and the Evangelism came out of those conversations, they were very intentional. It moved from just hi, how has your week been, to something a lot deeper than that. Then that's just continued and grown, and then we moved into table hosts, so it's just a very intentional, we don't want to lose this, we actually want to strengthen it. [P1:10]

It appeared to the researcher during periods of observation that evangelism was not overt. But the kind of evangelism and discipleship happening in the weekly gathering is complex and at times surprising. P8/35 notes in one of her reflections for an undergraduate course how she journeyed in her understanding.

I can see now that I began at those dinners believing in my deepest heart that I was there to help homeless people move away from addiction and dysfunction. Their discipleship was to meet Jesus if they didn't know Him already, and move in a somewhat linear fashion towards becoming productive members of society; and my discipleship was to help them in that movement. I'm groaning, covering my head with my pillow as I write this.[P35:8]

P8/35 expressed how her own understanding of evangelism and discipleship had changed into a more mutual dialogical approach. The space created at individual tables is primarily for the creation of relationships. There were times when guests would aggressively evangelise other guests. An extract from my fieldnotes dated 30th November 2017

T strikes up a conversation with me saying that if only Jews had been able to conceive of God in any other way apart from as Father. God is in each of us he tells me. He is here present in our midst, not out there somewhere. I ask him if he has theological

conversations at the tables. Yes, he says but often other guests are trying to evangelize him or correct his faulty theology. It really doesn't appear to bother him.

It is evident that there is plenty of theological diversity in the room on any given evening and that there is no tool or process that any leader has stipulated. Perhaps there are even hints of a reverse evangelism taking place at the Supper. Rollins (2006:54) argues that a type of reverse evangelism takes place and, 'this powerless approach breaks down the 'us' and 'them' dichotomy and provides a space which we are all less defensive.' Essentially the evangelism and discipleship are as equally messy as the community gathered is. There have been moments where evangelism and an apparent commitment to faith are actually an overspill of the toxic relationships between the homeless community and religious institutions which I give a deeper account of later. One example of the Supper's messy evangelism is quoted below.

One particular guy came out of England for example, came out of London, lovely guy, very exposed to homelessness ministry in the UK and he was thrilled that this one guy came to faith in the evening. I was a little irritated that he has got him there but his whole framework he just didn't understand, and I wonder whether I understand the London complex but he certainly was surprised that somebody could respond to God so quickly and I was like no, he is just playing to you. [P2:11]

By and large the primacy of the community is relationship building hoping for mutual transformative discipleship. Aggressive evangelism or a proselytising is avoided by all the pioneer leaders and volunteer leaders too, as a general rule. Moynagh (2012:331) reminds us that, 'evangelism is not a popular word.' Especially when its associated with a 'over narrow approach to the gospel and with a dogmatic, individualistic and insensitive focus on a moment of conversion' (:331). As witnessed above given the context of the Supper's predominant community and that community's complex, sometimes deceptive and coercive relationship with religious institutions and food provision services authentic and meaningful evangelism will take context and mutuality utterly seriously. Wilkinson (2008:102) notes that there have been, 'some who argue that we must rediscover and regain confidence in traditional forms of evangelism.' Others may find the new programmes like *Alpha*, or *Purpose Driven Church* by their newness give some hope (:105). Both of these attitudes have to be eschewed in the context of the Supper. What type of evangelistic course, then, needs to be navigated for the supper? Wilkinson (2008:107) remarks that, 'in evangelism many practitioners deal with distilled gospel rather than immersing the hearers in the whole biblical narrative.' This is a move from evangelism as propositional and routed in theological factoids and focused on people moving across some line, of being 'in' or 'out' to a relational, narrative approach that focuses on the spiritual journey of individuals in the context of the community. If immersing hearers in the whole biblical

narrative is important then discursive, discussion-based evangelism is key. At present this is not systematic in the Supper. Over the past few months (May and June 2018) a Saturday morning bible study in a local cafe in Mowbray based on the book *Reading the Bible with the Damned* has resulted in a group of people wanting to explore the discipleship together.

Evolving Worship/Church taking shape - accidentally

Church as an accident. P3:39 says, *'there was never an expressed or subconscious intention to turn what we are doing on Thursday nights into a fresh expression of church.'* Moynagh (2017:298) again says *'Individuals may travel the journey intentionally or accidentally. Perhaps they did not plan to help start an ecclesial community.'* When asking P8/35 about the emergence of worship she said, *'I've got questions about what worship is, but I see it as a corporate giving individual, the corporate space for turning our faces to Jesus.'* The worship life of the Supper has taken on a variety of forms dependant on who is in the room. When interviewed guests by and large said little about the worshipping life of the community they were nearly always more interested in the relationships happening in the space than the acts of worship or the practices. Two volunteers in the form of P12 and P7 had found a particular form of worship instigated by a regular volunteer on guitar with a ad hoc band a profound expression of the life of the community. During an early visit to the Supper in October 2015 I wrote a blog⁷¹ in which I described something of the worshipping life at that point.

Around 7.10pm considerable numbers have left after the meal although the hall is still buzzing. Some helpers and guests are clearing up. Again there is no sharp delineation between those serving and being served. There is a gentle rhythm to the clearing process. Children run in and out.

A circle of chairs is formed. The minister leads a simple communion with grape juice (being cognizant of the issue around alcoholism). A guitarist and flautist play one or two songs. There is a little confusion around song numbers but this only adds to a spirit of ease which exists. There is a natural flow between the end of the supper and the Eucharist. One man (a long term member of the supper) shouts,

"Go deep, go as deep as you can.

Deep as you can go or he will spit you out of his mouth."

⁷¹ <https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2015/10/20/reflections-on-the-community-supper-at-st-peters-mowbray-a-juncture-of-ecclesial-liminality/>

It's difficult to know if this is sarcastic or par for the course. A man behind the circle of chairs finishing up his meal and slightly worse for wear starts an impromptu singing of This is my story this is my song. Rather than ignored everyone joins in. Although most of us are unsure of the words. This part of the evening is clearly meaningful for most of the guests and helpers. It might be described as benignly chaotic.

During that period the worship was lively, usually making use of songs in Afrikaans which is the predominant language group for many of the guests. People were encouraged to be themselves by singing and dancing. Interestingly for P7 who in my interview with her claims to be an atheist says the following,

P7: Yes, the music was...ja, the music was very special because...

INTERVIEWER: Why was that so meaningful to you? Just...I mean, just...

P7: I don't know, it was just...there were some beautiful songs, the one about the deer, what was it?

INTERVIEWER: That's the deer pants.

P7: Yes. I think I just...and his voices and the people from the street and just... that was a very special part and then I used to enjoy the communion as well, I used to observe and it was just for me very special to see these people totally integrated in this...

Again, the memory of P12 of those particular almost riotous worship times are summed up as, *'the Thursday is just you know, come all you vagabonds, you know, I remember J's music, you know, that was brilliant, ja this...it is just fitting beautifully here.'* [P12:21] However these worship times before the eucharist eventually faded as the leader burnt out. P8/35 narrates this story of his stepping back,

'he brought the music though, so he's the musician, he would do it so big that he tired out until the point where he would just break, and he was like, he had to step back. I was sad to see him go but I was also grateful to see him go because it doesn't, we don't, that burden isn't needed here, those crossing the boundaries is not helpful to any of us but the music went with him.' [P8]

During my 4/5 months of participant observation the acts of worship had become quieter and generally more reflective. P3:21 *'when we have communion now it is quite a reflect, you will see on this Thursday when I do it, it is reflective - I try and involve silence in that as well it is reflective and*

peaceful. We have had sung worship, there was a period when we had sung worship every week and that was quite noisy.'

The worship that has emerged in the space of the Supper is a reflection of who was in the room at certain times. There has been an ebb and flow about the worshipping life of the Supper. Whilst the liturgical flow of the Supper, which I analyse in more detail later in this section is both improvisatory and often tailored to echo the tradition whilst finding words and symbols of meaning for those gathered it's hard to see this reflected in quite the same way in the sung worship. Might it be that the sung worship that happened in the past in fact stopped the emergence of leaders? P2 muses,

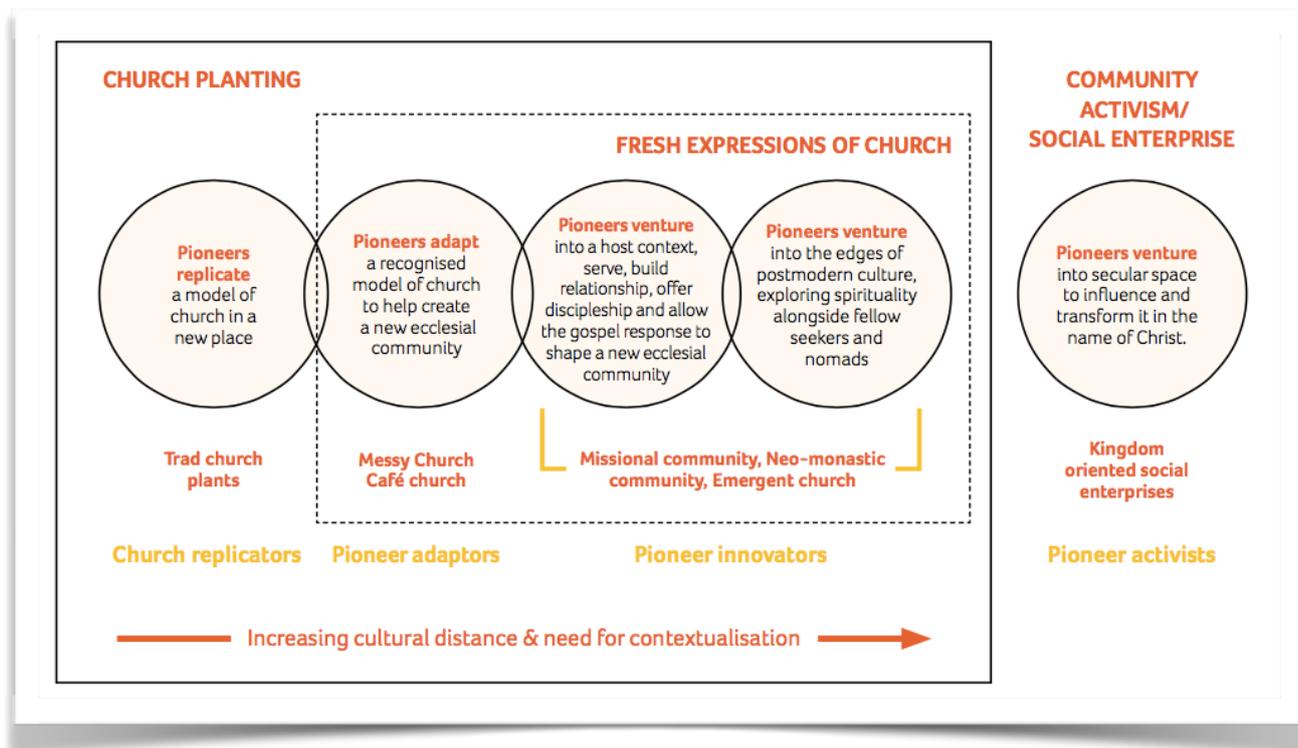
'Authentic leadership and ownership in welcoming and doing communion and then participating of people who would be considered at one level the sort of service participants if you wish and I think that is our work right now and so and actually I think sung worship might get in the way of that.' [P2:15]

Worship needs to be contextually appropriate but not only that, it needs to grow out of the life of the people gathered and reflect the experiences of the life of the people gathered. 'If forms of worship are disconnected from the context, worshippers will find it more difficult to encounter God. God will be distanced from individuals everyday experience making God feel more remote' (Moynagh 2017:281). If the larger proportion of the community are made up of people sleeping rough and wrestling with addiction issues or relationship breakdown authentic worship will take that seriously. At the same time worship which is authentic needs to be birthed out of, and by and for, the people gathered. Again, P2 has a vision of this happening through workshopping,

I have been chatting with a musician called J E who has spoken on, she has to quite a bit of work with ... the slave songs, from the American South, spiritual, spirituals and she was like how, like what it might mean to help people, so I am trying to get her to come along help people write their own spirituals that we sing. [P2:83]

'Worship led by the congregation is an apt vehicle for offering to God the relationships between community members. Participation in leading and preparing worship echoes members participation in the community's life.' (Moynagh 2017:289) Currently that type of participation is limited. Moynagh (2017:293) suggests a liturgical hermeneutic that has five elements empowered by the Spirit; **Focus, essence, essentials, practices** and **discernment**. Drawing on his thoughts around essentials, practices and discernment I would argue that the Supper continues to be on a path to maturity but has some way to go. Moynagh (2017:245) argues that there is a difference between the essence and essentials of worship and that the, 'esse of the church is insufficiently nuanced.' He

further argues that the *esse* of the church should be seen as four interlocking sets of relationships UP, IN, OUT and OF. ‘Being essential to something need not be the same as being the essence of it.’ (:245) So ‘word and sacraments are essential for worship, but this does not mean they are the essence of worship.’ (:279) Furthermore, ‘in God’s grace practices put flesh on the essentials of worship.’ But practices must connect with how relationships of church are experienced. The **practice** of messy, improvisatory sung worship in the past was unsustainable because it was based on one volunteer and his particular gifts and perhaps charisma. Although it captured something of the way relationships were experienced by the people gathered it was perhaps ‘imposed on’ (even in a good way) rather than ‘birthed out of.’ If the experience of the guest of the supper is shaped around notions of table fellowship, being human and being accepted one would expect, and want to see, tangible examples of this in the practices enfolded. Moynagh (2017:280) reminds us, ‘practices are the servants of ecclesial relationships.’ If equalising power and mutual transformative discipleship are at the core of the Supper’s aspirations, then the **practices** of worship must embody those aspirations and seek out ways to enable them to be actualised. Currently this is somewhat lacking. Encouraging participation of people who are used to being beneficiaries can be difficult. It will take a breaking of the patron - client relationships that lurk beneath the surface in many similar settings across the city. It will almost certainly be messy, and perhaps unusual. Those responsible for the Supper will have to act as gentle curators, giving space and opportunity to those on the margins



[Figure 7]

6.1.2 Testing ecclesiality: Modes of pioneering

Pioneering the community Supper has been both accidental and improvisatory but also actualised by the specific empowering of other leaders. P8/35 says, *‘the rector had the biggest part of starting this meal, but within months, responsibility had moved out of his hands to the dinner being informally organised.’* [P35:19] Goodhew, Roberts & Volland (2012:133) define pioneers as ‘those who can speak authentically of God’s future for the church and the wider world *and* draw others into moving towards this future.’ Baker & Ross (2014) call pioneers the people with the ‘gift of not fitting in.’ But pioneers and pioneering are complex. Within the pioneering gifting there are various typologies or places on the spectrum where people fall and then are able to inhabit the gifting in order to see a new contextual church brought to birth and consequent maturity. Pioneers don’t fit into neat boxes but ‘what pioneers have in common is the desire and ability to work with others to make something happen that hasn’t happened before’ (Goodhew, Roberts and Volland 2012:136). Work based on Ralph Winter’s (1973) concepts of modality and sodality has been developed by Lings and also Aldous (2017) and Hodgett and Bradbury (2018). Winter’s (1973) basic premise is that throughout church history there have been two structures of redemptive mission which can basically be seen operating in modal and sodal modes. *‘Modality* comes from the root word *mode*. This in turn refers to the customary way things are done. One might say it is the default position’ (Lings :1). This stands in distinction to Sodal where we get the idea of *‘Sodalitas* was used for social and politics associations; religious fraternities; electioneering gangs (an interesting take on mission); and guilds.’ As I have written, ‘it is probably better however not to see Modal or Sodal as diametrically opposed

or to see them in binary/dualistic terms pitted against each other but rather on a spectrum or continuum. Essentially Sodal pioneers and Modalist sustains' (Aldous 2017). However, the nodes of Sodal or Modal engagement or calling can overlaid onto the continuum is a lemniscate (sometimes called an infinity symbol). The lemniscate overlaid on the continuum reveals the way in which there two, perhaps seemingly diametrically opposed positions in fact are interconnected. These two foci of Sodal and Modal in fact have a reciprocity about them. In the best possible scenario the Modal church gives stability, historicity, depth and a picture of the marks of maturity to the Sodal manifestation. Likewise, the Sodal church reminds the Modal and inherited form that the call to join God in his mission to the world is not a second step (Moynagh 2012, 2017) but a first step. However, I think Hodgett & Bradbury's (2018:31ff) spectrum of typologies is most helpful. Firstly, 'pioneer innovators' are therefore these deeply committed sodal or 'sobornistic' pioneer leaders who with their teams venture out beyond the edges of the church's structures to explore the creation of faithful expressions of Christian life among people of a new context. (Hodgett & Bradbury 2018:32) They disturb others, but they tend to pioneer innovate and then need to move on to another pioneering setting. At that point what is vitally important are pioneer sustainers who can dig down and continue the work of developing a team, finding continued creative ways to develop ecclesial maturity if it is some way off. Hodgett & Bradbury's diagram above **[Figure 7]** is helpful but it doesn't cover the types of pioneering typologies needed in any **one** new contextual plant. I argue that whilst pioneer innovators are great initiators that they often struggle to sustain and develop things.

In terms of the community Supper it is possible to see the Rector P3 and his wife P1 as the pioneer innovators. In the telling of the story P3 and P1 took the risk to begin something that they had no idea would morph into a new ecclesial community but within two or three years were no longer involved to the same degree. At the time of interview in November 2017 P1 was no longer part of the Thursday gathering but her foster children regularly attended. The pioneer sustainers in P2 and P8/35 are actually the ones who have been able to continue to nourish, develop and innovate within the given framework. P2 and P8/35 both have long history within the Anglican church and so can echo the historical formularies in their pioneer work whilst also being free enough to improvise a path that honours the context of the people.

6.1.3 Testing ecclesiality: Primary Church Community, Not really Church, Playing Church, Warm Church

Far from offering a clear account of the Supper's ecclesial nature interviews with pioneer leaders, volunteers and guests threw up a whole range of responses. By and large pioneer leaders were committed to seeing the supper morph into mature church but were only too aware of the fragility of the gatherings. Volunteers were surprisingly enthusiastic about the supper as church and guests had a range of responses which suggested a degree of ambivalence. Those volunteering at the supper who made up some of the core team who had been involved since the early days were overwhelmingly positive about the supper's churchiness. Others who volunteered, but had been grafted in from *Big Church*, tended to see the supper in a more service orientated manner and had quite rigid and unreflective notions of church.

Primary Church Community

Whilst there was a fairly ambiguous attitude towards the Supper's ecclesial status two pioneer leaders made a commitment right at the beginning that this would be their **primary worshipping community**. P8 shared, '*so, I think I've just had to be having my own thinking about what is church gathered but I'm there now I see it as my church community.*' [P8:12] '*I certainly I remember entering into it, going this is now our weekly service.*' [P2:3] They also discussed with their children that the Supper was now to be their primary worshipping space. 'For my kids this is not a place where they come and do something good but where they serve.'

Not really Church

Of those interviewed P6 and P29 were both volunteers from *Big Church* who, whilst able to see the value of the meal, struggled to imagine it as an ecclesial space to some extent. When asked if the community supper was church P6:5 responded,

P6: I think the answer to that is yes, but I think it's also Christianity to me there's church in so far as there are things to be learnt, there is a space to be mindful of God, there is worship and so on, but... the answer is yes.

INTERVIEWER: If it is yes, what is it that you understand is being church?

P6: Well church is fellowship and church is teaching and church is sort of corporately worshipping, corporately confessing, corporately engaging with the Christian faith and for me that is something that happens on Thursday nights. I don't expect its true of everyone, people serving or people attending I don't expect it is true for all of them, but it is a place where God is working in a corporate environment and affecting lives.

Whilst P6 could see that it might be church for others he couldn't necessarily see the supper as a church community for himself. This speaks to perhaps the embryonic relationships he had formed in community '*I think I am still forming relationships with people here.*' (P6:3) and a model of church from *Big Church* that was quite rigid and institutional on one level. P29 found it difficult to see the supper's ecclesial value because of his own understanding of worship. He could say,

'musical worship would form part of that holistic model and that isn't really evident on a Thursday night. My wife and I feel somewhat that's missing so we can't wholeheartedly call it church because it's missing that aspect which is funny and then there's no scriptural input but my wife and I were debating whether we get that anyway at Big Church because the messages are so often seeker friendly.' [P29:11]

Interestingly this interview with P29 became quasi-confessional.⁷² During our fifty minute interview P29 was able to reflect verbally on his own understanding of church and his personal journey in *Big Church* shifting to the fringe. His own personal commitment to issues around social justice and journeying alongside those with addictions were reshaping this theology in a fairly conservative evangelical charismatic church. Some within *Big Church* saw him as a radical.⁷³ An excerpt from my fieldnotes dated 7th December 2017 '*It's a reminder how unformed or unreflected upon people's understanding of church is and often in the ZAR context how conservative ideas of church are - probably a lingering Christendom issue.*' Both P29 and P6's understanding of church was rooted in what Moynagh calls **practices**. Understandings of church as practice orientated.

Whilst Pioneer leaders P1, P2, P3 and P8/35 recognised church developing although it was chaotic and messy at times guests gave a varied set of responses. P7, P37 and P38 were all quite clear that whilst they valued the supper and attended on a regular basis. '*INTERVIEWER : Is it...I mean you said you're...obviously got a church background, but do you see the community supper as church?* P7: *No, I don't.*' P7, an gentle atheist, groped for a way to articulate what was happening on a Thursday night,

⁷² P29 left *Big Church* in early 2018 and joined St Peter's as a member and has made the Community Supper his primary worshipping community.

⁷³ A comment from a member of *Big Church*'s extensive staff.

P7: It wasn't churchy, it was just something very special.

INTERVIEWER: Maybe church is a bad word.

P7: Special, it was something very special and unifying for those people. I don't know, it was just...there were some beautiful songs, the one about the deer, what was it?

INTERVIEWER: That's As the deer pants.

P7: Yes. I think I just...and the voices and the people from the street and just...that was a very special part and then I used to enjoy the communion as well, I used to observe and it was just for me very special to see these people totally integrated. Totally accepted sharing the chalice.

P7 saw the value of the eucharistic meal as a place of acceptance but not for herself. She could see it was something special for **those** people. Whilst P38 agreed that it wasn't church but thought it was, 'nice that it's run by church people. They don't install that, you know.' [P38:5]

P4, P9 and P11 all responded to questions about whether the supper was church in more opaque ways. Although P5 and P9 said it was church it was difficult from the perspective as the researcher to tell whether the answers given were answers they expected me to want to hear. I was very aware of the power dynamics in being a white educated foreign male. Hankela (2015:202) points out that, 'research relationships are embedded in a world of conflicts marked by system-backed privilege and system-created domination.' I attempted to consciously note that 'investigating the limits to hearing should be an imperative part of the research practice of middle-class scholars, and much more so white and/or male middle-class scholars' (:204). Kritzinger (2012:235) also notes the issue of voicelessness amongst those who feel inferior. It was not so much about giving a voice to those I interviewed who fell in to a previously disadvantaged category but, 'rather speak of inviting someone's voice to be part of the academic conversation' (Hankela 2015:204). Hence in this section I've drawn on specific quotes to make up subheadings of the chapter.

That being said P11 attended another church on Sunday's but could say, 'To me it's fellowship yes. To me it's because currently I'm only like involved with one cell group during the week and then Sunday I go to church.' P11 saw the supper as a mid-week space to re-engage with Christians. 'The supper is where people speak truth you see that is one of the things I love of the community dinner it's all about truth, I don't have to attend or I don't have to perform, I can just be.' P4 admitted that, 'I had to get used to it yes it is now my church too' but she goes on to admit that growing up as a Catholic and say, 'I do go to different churches, at the end of the day it's same house the same house of God. There is no difference for me actually because I believe in what I believe, I believe in God.'

P9 saw the supper's ecclesial legitimacy through its eucharistic element. *INTERVIEWER: Tell me is the community supper a church for you? Is it like church? P9: Yes because they give the Thursday after the meal those who want they get together and they have communion.*' It's worth quoting an entire extract from P9 at this point.

INTERVIEWER: Do you stay for communion?

P9: Sometimes I have already yes.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me what that means to you?

P9: Well you've got to know that communion is something great I mean you look at what Jesus has done for us, and what he did at the last supper and what were the words... this is my body and my blood given unto you whenever you eat or drink do it in remembrance of me that is communion.

INTERVIEWER: So you remember? Do you like the way it is done at St Peters?

P9: Yes it excites me I look forward to it brother yes I have done it quite a few times.

INTERVIEWER: Fantastic and you feel like it's a... you have been spiritually connected to God through that?

P9: Amen brother amen to that yes and it is good it's all good here.

A surface reading of P9's responses could see a strong eucharistic understanding of the church but this doesn't really reveal the undertones of religious servility that were apparent to the researcher during the interview. During some of those questions I was aware of a kind of obsequiousness slipping in. One another level I had in the back of my mind the notion of *playing church*.

Playing Church

Since the supper is most weeks made up of around 75% from the homeless communities in Mowbray, Observatory and further afield it is important to probe a little deeper.⁷⁴ P2 revealed the complex relationship between churches in general and the homeless community having an impact on the supper's ecclesial journey. An extract from my fieldnotes dated 21st September 2017.

P2 reminds volunteers they can pray for people at table should the need arise. No need to play with the religious formula. Many soup kitchens invite the homeless into this religious dance whereby they feel compelled to say religious things or make religious claims.

⁷⁴ Interview with P38 gave some insights into the various communities of rough sleepers in the southern suburbs.

I'm struck by a comment that P2 made in our interview this week. I get the sense that the community supper is a space that functions as a detox from religious talk and modes of religious posturing and some soup kitchen's unwittingly (or perhaps not) enforce on people through their doors. They only get to eat if they have prayed a certain prayer etc. P2 tells me that in the homeless there can be these elements of charm and deceit because that's a way of staying alive in some extent.

It was my sense that when approached with questions about church P4, P9 and P11 may have found it difficult to give answers that truly reflected their understanding of the Supper's nature. Perhaps they felt it might disappoint me or that in my role as researcher I had another agenda. But the idea of detoxing from religiosity wasn't merely something detected by the researcher but rather was an ongoing long-term issue. As P8/35 reflected on the early stages of the supper. *'Most of the people gathered in that hall on a Thursday night have been to many church services. I've seen it repeatedly that a person living the most dysfunctional life of addiction on the street can put on a religious voice and tell me step-by-step how to be 'saved'. I'm longing to be part of something where Jesus is incarnated among us.'* [P35:6] Part of the long-term project of the supper is to create a safe space where people can be free from the need to perform. P11 very much felt that the supper was a place free of performance. *'I love of the community dinner it's all about truth, I don't have to attend or I don't have to perform, I can just be.'*

One of my questions of the Supper was if it was a place where people can **'perform'** the faith. What seems to have emerged, on a superficial level at least, is that in fact the Supper can be a place where men, women and children **do not** have to **'perform'** or take part in acts of pseudo religiosity to be accepted. This is a powerful starting point for genuine discipleship. Nell and Grobler (2014:761) note that *'Fresh Expressions movements show love to people, not because they act or look a certain way, but in spite of all these things. Strangers are welcomed, outcasts included.'* It should be noted that this distancing from religious toxicity and pseudo performance was not only detected in the guests but volunteers too. An extract from my fieldnotes 30th November 2017, *'I speak with PT, the brother of an Evangelical Anglican minister. I ask him if this is church? - he says it definitely is. Much more so than a normal Sunday service. "This is much more real. There are ways we can serve here." Patrick explains that traditional church wasn't really cutting it for him anymore.'*

Warm Church...Sunday people are frozen

Volunteers who had been part of, or continued to be a part of, St Peter's church (P5, P10 and P12) tended to have a broader and more elastic and flexible view of the Supper's ecclesial status. P10, a middle-aged isiXhosa speaking woman who came from a high Anglo catholic Anglican church in Langa, surprised me with her insights into the supper as church,

INTERVIEWER: Does this feel like Church for you? I mean, is it?

P10: Yes, it is. Because we pray first and then they also pray after they eat. Like they do Holy Communion, and they used to sing also.

INTERVIEWER: Does this feel like, more like Church than on Sunday morning?

P10: Ja, it feel like really, ja, yoh, this is a warm Church.

INTERVIEWER: This is a warm Church?

P10: Warmer than Sunday.

INTERVIEWER: Warmer than Sunday?

P10: Uhm.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me why, if you can, warmer than Sunday?

P10: Because they are free, they're free.

INTERVIEWER: People are more real.

P10: They more, free. Sunday people are frozen.

Although rooted in a churchmanship⁷⁵ much more likely to be ecclesially hard edged or rigid it seems P10 was primarily operating out of the intimacy of relationships. The idea that '*people are more real*' in contradistinction to '*Sunday people being frozen*' might suggest that ecclesial authenticity for the volunteers who make up the service team is born not out of canons, constitutions, prayer books and liturgical arrangements or indeed any particular **practices** but about embodied **relationships**. P12 saw the supper not as warm church but as church for those who struggled with the conformity of solid or inherited church. *I think it's church for people who...who can't stand rules and regulations, you know, of...of a regular church, so it's coming and being amongst God's people that makes them feel safe, so to me that's church.* [P12:19]

Another was to analyse the importance of **relationships** over **practices** in emerging ecclesial contexts is from the work of Frost and Hirsch (2003). Frost and Hirsch (2003:47-51) outline the difference in ecclesial settings of a bounded set or centre set approach. Frost and Hirsch (:47) suggest that, 'a missional-incarnational church is a centred set.' A centred set is defined by its core values in that

⁷⁵ Or churchwomanship.

sense everyone is in and no one is out. Though some people are close to the centre and others far from it, everyone is potentially part of the community in its broadest sense.’ The centred set church (or community) is not concerned with artificial boundaries that bounded set churches have traditionally added. Importantly in the context of the Community Supper ‘no one is seen as unworthy of belonging because they happen to be addicted to tobacco or because they are not married to their live in partner’ (:49). Many at the Supper struggle with alcohol, sometimes drugs. A large majority have complex relationships with their families, have sometimes served time in prison. Others have lived many years on the streets. Others may not have complex personal problems but they are tired of certain forms of what they deem arrogant evangelicalism. The centred set approach has a generosity built into its fabric around belonging and acceptance that we will deal with in more detail in this section.

A Fresh Expressions South Africa YouTube clip⁷⁶ that charted something of the supper’s early genesis reveals that even 2 years into the supper’s life one pioneer leader expounded the view. *‘We don’t want to do what we do on a Sunday in here because we found that most people here don’t feel comfortable with church on a Sunday.’* [D32:12] This was corroborated by P37 whose own experience of growing up on the street with the resultant death of his mother outside St Peters when he was 13. He said, *‘So a personal story. I think my Mum always struggled with that. My Mum was an alcoholic and once I got off the street I used to go to a church in Obs. She used to come and visit me there but she would feel so out of place.’* [P37:23]

These experiences fit well with more established FXoC who have moved into significant maturity in other contexts like the UK. Zac’s Place⁷⁷ in South Wales began in the late 1990’s after the local leader Sean Stillman booked a function room in a local bar every Sunday night to answer questions of bikers, musicians and those on the fringes of society. Some were in recovery from addictions others had faith battered by negative church experiences (Goodhew, Roberts and Volland 2012:93). What was particularly telling in Zac’s place is embodied by the comment from one biker who says, ‘You get your peace. You are allowed to be you, warts and all. Open wounds, closed wounds. They don’t expect any form of conformity.’⁷⁸ In essence it was and is a ‘Church for ragamuffins’ (Goodhew, Roberts and Volland 2012:94).

However, one must caution against a romanticised reading of the supper’s ecclesial contours. Moynagh (2017:238) outlines how the, ‘essence of the church has traditionally been understood to compromise certain practices, such as sacraments, proclamation of the word, confessional statements.’ Moynagh (2017:238) notes that with the scrutiny that many institutions came under in

⁷⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3C7IH-khwjk>

⁷⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPpwLhpQBJk>

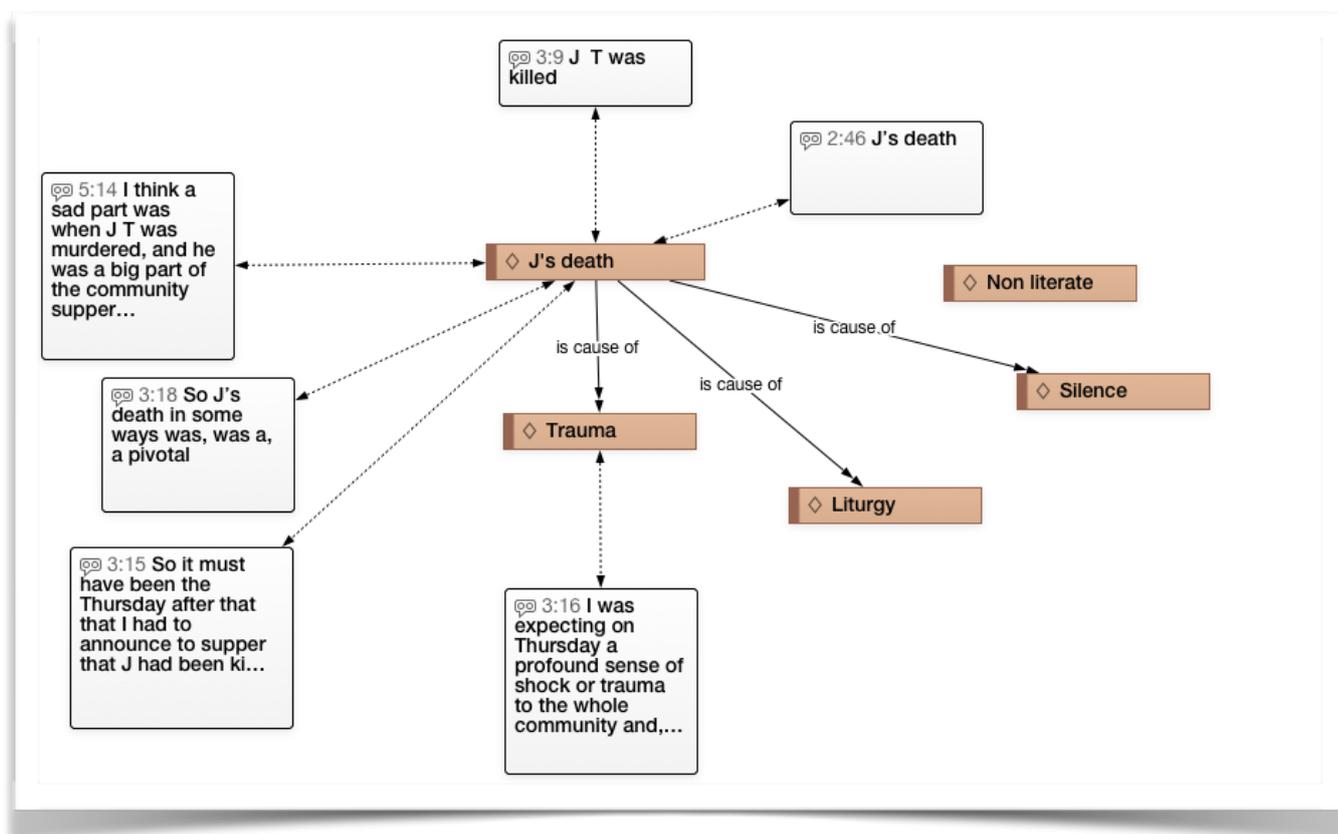
⁷⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPpwLhpQBJk> 1min 52sec

the 1960's there was an inextricable shift away from church as **practices** to church as born out of **relationships**. We discuss this in more detail in the closing part of this section.

From analysis of the responses by those interviewed it seems that there is a liminality about the supper ecclesial nature from those who attend. Work by Watkins & Shepherd (2014:92-110) revealed the complex and sometimes disconcerting challenges in the early stages of a FXoC. They show from a study of Messy Church in the United Kingdom that, 'a potential problem for the practitioner team was that people were attracted to the church, they wanted to be part of the church, but they didn't want it to be the church!' (2014:99). This made for a messy ecclesiology where, 'messy Church is seen instead as church for beginners,' or as 'church lite' (:101). Further they use the illustration of a swimming pool. They say that this, 'is best understood as functioning like the shallow end of a swimming pool. Messy Church is a place where beginners can be fully immersed in church, where they can explore, play, learn and build confidence, but still keep their feet on the bottom' (:101). This kind of posture towards those who attend the community actually allows for genuine journeying and Moynagh (2017:238) says they experience 'ecclesial grace.' It might well be that the supper is a place of ecclesial graciousness that enables those in the 'shallows' an opportunity to experience grace.

6.1.6 Testing ecclesiality: Worship - Liturgy that emerges from a wound

How a context begins to worship is an important area to probe in this work. If 'ecclesial grace' is to be experienced in contextually appropriate ways then unearthing how that happens is vital. In the case of the community Supper the beginnings of worship came out of tragedy, violence and global terrorism in a unexpected way. **Figure 8** shows the codes J's death, Trauma, liturgy, non-literate



[Figure 8]

and silence and their relationship to one another. These became the fundamental codes for assessing the birth and development of the liturgical life of the Supper. As charted below the death of a prominent member of the Supper became the catalyst for the community's rich but sometimes fragile worshipping life.

The original Church House report from 2004 contained minimal instruction and guidelines around the use of authorized texts for Fresh Expressions. In essence the Report encourages liturgy "from below" to emerge from the context and emphasized authentic cultural forms. The Report, 'affirms the importance of culturally appropriate Anglicanism emerging 'from below' - from the interaction between an Anglican church planting team, the target culture and the historic gospel' (2004:117). The Report also speaks of a common core in the church's worship that was not regarded as static. The core

was evolving, and this led to the emphasis on patterns and structures rather detailed and prescribed texts.

The community supper in Mowbray, Cape Town started on the 6 1/2 years ago and has developed into a weekly gathering of roughly 120 people with a simple eucharist every other week. The initial impetus behind the community supper was simply to create community. Original leader/pioneer [P1:1] said, ‘the motivation was creating a community or deepening the relationships in community.’ [P5:3] saw the creation of the supper in another light.

I think why I was excited about it was because of the doors being closed so long because of the political system. So doors were closed, a little bit of the history of St Peters is that, you know, in the mid 1800's St Pauls (Rondebosch next door suburb) was an extremely rich church. St Peter's was almost built to get a bit of the riff raff out of St Paul's to down in the location. If you look at the majority of the community supper guests, they're all disadvantaged people from the system of apartheid. So they are descendants of parents that suffered in the middle of the system, and the result that they're on the streets and in the gutter and in that condition is by no means purely their fault. It's a result of the system that brought them to that point, but they've got to survive it and with a little bit of help maybe they'll get there, that's why I regard the supper as a way of God's because what they do get at the supper, the supper is definitely something bigger than our conventional church.

I observed a pattern in the life of the community that resulted from a wound. In interviews with leading protagonists [P1, P2, P3, P5, P8/35] the opening greeting (perhaps a call and gathering? Although not observed as such), which includes a welcome and a sustained silence where people can repent, reflect or simply centre themselves, emerged from a rupture in the life of the community. The death of one of the original community supper leaders in a terrorist attack in Nairobi in September 2013⁷⁹ led to the introduction of a silence, a pause, a confessional space in the weekly gathering. The leader who died in the Westgate shopping mall attack on the 21st September 2013 had been the church Warden and played a significant role in the early life of the supper. I quote an extract from a recent interview,

P3: "J was very involved in Thursday nights and was very popular. J was always all about community. He was brilliant at building relationships with people on a very equal basis. I was expecting on the Thursday (after J's death) a profound sense of shock or

⁷⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westgate_shopping_mall_attack

trauma for the whole community. I invited people to share words, memories of what J meant to them and that got quite noisy because people were kind of shouting things that J meant to them, positive things and then at some point I led us in a time of silence and that was the first time we had silence consciously as part of the supper”

Interviewer: *“But you had acts of worship before that?”*

P3: “I don't think so”

Interviewer: *“So J's death in some ways was pivotal?”*

P3: “Ja”

Liturgy emerges from a wound

My contention is that authentic and contextual liturgy can emerge from a wound, from a rupture, or a cataclysmic event in the life of the community. It seems to be to be a perfect example of liturgy that has emerged, as the 2004 report would express it, 'from below.' It has not been imposed from above but develops out of the pain, the woundedness of the people gathered. That tradition has continued over the last 4 years. Some of those interviewed declared that the silence was more than an act of confession or penitence it was the one point in their week where they could be silent, still and yet be safe.

P2:47 in interview says,

‘I had a couple of people come to me two or three weeks (ago) and just say, I so value that silence like it is just so good but I am like why, they are no it is just I feel right it is the right you know and, and so that is I think for me the answer to that question is, I think we are yearning to build a more permanent community maybe that is the desire for every church community.’

Many of the community supper guests are long term homeless. Living on the streets affords no security. To be still, silent and safe is virtually impossible in their usual contexts. Allowing an authentic liturgical life to emerge from within the community supper when it can navigate it's own path reliant on context whilst still finding itself as church is important. This seems to me to be the work of the people (which I understand is liturgy's original meaning). There is some way to go of course but something genuine is emerging. An extract from my participant observation field notes dated 13th April 2018

There is a definite sense of elements of the supper solidifying and a feeling of permanence. I try to sit quietly in the corner and note the liturgical flow of the evening.

Welcome: P2

Announcements: P29 - takes the form of openings in shelters, courses around job readiness, a new food provision in Woodstock and local government plans for a homeless shelter in central Cape Town.

Silence: P2 reminds people this is a time to turn, repent and reflect.

Prayer: Again P2 practices improvising on the line of text from the eucharistic prayer. "We who are many, are one body for we all partake of the one bread." He says "By all rights we shouldn't be one body".

The Meal is served

What is liturgy?

Smith (2006:376) reminds us that, 'liturgical variation was common before the printing press, when there was no standardized rite in the Western church.' Robinson (2009:6) in her Masters work at Oxford Brooks on the interface between liturgy and FXoC can say, 'the purpose of the liturgy is threefold. Firstly, it provides a framework for corporate worship, which involves order and provision of particular ways of being and doing in a confined space and time. Secondly, it creates meaning through communicating in diverse ways the story of God's relating to humankind, and in light of this encourages personal and corporate appraisal of relationship with God, self and other people. And thirdly, liturgy offers the possibility of fresh encounter with God.'

However, critics of FXoC see this context bound, supple and improvisational attitude towards liturgical formation as anything but formational. Davidson and Milbank (2010:93-118) in a lengthy chapter entitled *Flight from Tradition* suggest that, "Fresh Expressions writers want to wean us from the particular cultural patterns of the Church of England" and that, "novelty is preferred to stability" (:100) and the "chosen over the given" (:102). Indeed, they go on to suggest that Fresh Expressions pioneers "fish around (liturgically) for the great *idea*" (:104) their "liturgical innovations are narrow and predictable" (:105) "lackluster and inept" (:108) and generally have "a pick and mix attitude towards the liturgical tradition" (:109).

Whilst they make important points that should be taken on board by those initiating FXoC that will have an Anglican identity this critique comes out of a very narrow understanding and commitment to Anglican identity and churchmanship and out of a somewhat idealized and romanticised notion of the Anglo Catholic tradition. They believe that whilst "there are disparities between varieties of Anglican churchmanship in the Parishes, (but) these are as nothing compared with the disparity of worship, style and structure in Fresh Expressions." On one level this is true but it does not acknowledge the very great variety and approach to liturgy already in existence in Parish churches across the country,

(and the globe) nor does it recognise that there may be a more flexible approach as suggested in the Report to shaping liturgy in a broader way with a **called-gathered-equipped-sent** outline or another 'foundational liturgical structure of **Gather, Word, Table, and Send**' (Smith 2006:385).

Firstly, Davidson and Milbank admit to struggling with the language of the original report because "the church of England does not speak like this." - therein lies the rub - perhaps it should. They argue that Fresh Expressions' ad hoc approach to liturgy detaches embedded meanings from their original settings thus nullifying them. Interestingly they rely significantly on the writing of Wittgenstein and Saussure to make their points. "There are philosophical matters at stake here." (:108) they say. A quick look at the bibliography of *For the Parish* shows 5 references to the work of Wittgenstein but only one reference to Bosch (and not even his 1991 *Transforming Mission*!) In all this there seems to be a profound disconnect from those outside the world of Anglo Catholic symbolism and ceremony (99.9% of the wider population) for whom these things have no ready meaning. The point of Fresh Expressions is not for those already in the pews but those encountering the story of Risen Jesus for the first time. As Bishop Cray (2012:15) points out 'Many fresh expressions of Church begin at a catechumenate stage. They are potential congregations at the start, exploring faith (therefore) it is inappropriate to put credal words on their lips, until they have some understanding of them and consent to them.' Demanding that everyone sing the Gloria, listen to 4 readings, and genuflect towards the reserved sacrament makes no practical sense for a group of people who are so profoundly unchurched and disconnected from those symbols.

Liturgy as pick and mix

Secondly, perhaps we can see the gift of mosaic like culture of the post institutional world. Both Moynagh (2012, 2017) and Ward (2003) seem entirely comfortable with accepting the consumerist nature of the world and argue that the church must learn to operate within that framework. Whilst Davidson and Milbank want to rile again post-modern consumeristic attitudes there is an opportunity within. A pick and mix approach to texts and liturgical flow could in the long run be a gift. Tilby (2008:78ff) and Davidson and Milbank (2010:109) believe that "a pick and mix attitude towards the liturgical tradition" essentially undermines the coherence of tradition but Moynagh (2017:285) suggests that rather than seeing this approach as undermining, 'an eclectic, fluid approach may foster a more inclusive attitude by learning from a variety of traditions and refusing to see one's own as definitive. Such as choice and change need not result in thoughtless bricolage.' But Tilby (2008:82) argues that, 'those involved in fresh expressions need to examine their attitudes to liturgy from a much more self-critical perspective.' Essentially, she argues that, 'what keeps our new movements potentially orthodox is our liturgy.' (:84)

There could be a discovery of an ancient prayer that opens up a whole journey into Celtic spirituality or the life and witness of a particular saint. This surely is a good thing? Most people who are encountering the story of the risen Christ are going to do it in a number of different ways. Enforcing a particular liturgical approach is pragmatically a disaster. Allowing people the opportunity for discovery of the richness of tradition should not be enforced but nurtured.

Davidson and Milbank seem to want to act as liturgical dictators. Yet Turner (2009:143) can say, 'desirable as it may seem for some, the Church of England does not have any kind of liturgical police force. Most know that is a very good thing.'

Turner's own essay "Liturgical issues and Fresh Expressions" in the book *Fresh Expressions in the Sacramental Tradition* is a much more generous and pragmatic in approach. He reminds us that, "as long as liturgy is to be the work of the people, the life-style and culture of the particular context in which a community springs up will influence its liturgical expression" (2009:144).

Whilst Davidson and Milbank are vehemently opposed to any deviation from the book of common prayer Turner's liturgical hospitality opens up two important avenues to explore. Firstly, he speaks of inculturation. True inculturation is a two-way process. Since it is a two way process it means that there will be a conversation and always the possibility of conversion. There will be a dialogue between that which is given and that which might be explored upon. In the case of the liturgy of the community supper at present it can look on the surface like very little is given.

Liturgy as improvisation

That said Turner (2009:147) also points out that liturgically the oral tradition was important. One might say that the improvisational skill of the Eucharistic president or service leader were paramount in the early church. The ability to "read" the community, be rooted in orthodoxy and lead extemporary prayers was a hall mark of deep spirituality for Justin Martyr. Recently one community supper leader improvised an open liturgy based on the prayer of humble access (APB of Southern Africa 1989:127). Using the first three lines as a refrain he weaved a prayer, a reflection, a "from below" liturgy that spoke of eating together in deeper ways, of the whole supper being a Eucharistic act. Often the leader will use the same kinds of language when gathering the service team before the supper. These kinds of improvisational and seemingly accidental approaches far from being ill thought out or departing from authorized texts are in fact authentic liturgical responses to a diverse and complex community. They emerge out of deep connections of life together.

Liturgy for the non-literate

In a recent address to United Society Partners in the Gospel⁸⁰ Kgabe points out ‘The Anglican Church is still seen by many in South Africa as an English Church, a missionary Church, a Church of “well-to-do persons”, and not *yet* rooted in its local context’ (Kgabe 2018). That is a lamentable statement, yet accurate to some extent. The community Supper subverts that idea and therefore liturgy that emerges from a wound seeks to move away from top down imposition of texts. One pioneer leader in interview can say, *‘The goal of Thursday is to create, is now to create a worshipping community space that works with the difference of the person who our Sunday worship isn’t going to work for.’* [P3:37] Many of those attending on a Thursday night are not particularly literate. Of the 120 attending weekly around 75% are long term homeless. Another leader could say, *‘We don’t want to do here what we on a Sunday because most of the people who come here don’t feel comfortable on a Sunday.’* That, however, in the FXoC movement doesn’t denigrate the importance of the Eucharist. But, ‘the creation of an Anglican liturgy which carries the Church’s family likeness, yet which not only allows but empowers considerable local choice, diversity and creativity, is urgent’ (Cray 2012:11). Whist attempts to be liturgically creative can be traced significantly at the Supper perhaps it’s worth reminding ourselves that during the 1950s Powell (2013:68) reminds us that in the Church of England, ‘ecclesial experiments began to occur across the country, liturgies were adapted to differing contexts, lay people gained responsibilities normally reserved for ordained clergy, eucharistic services were conducted in people’s houses and on different nights of the week, and parish meetings took place in public spaces to encourage wider participation.’ Perhaps in this we are reminded that indeed Ecclesiastes may be correct in reminding us there is nothing new under the sun.⁸¹

Three Future Liturgical Contours

Ruth Meyers (2010:47) suggests a number of aspects that go into marking up what she calls a missional liturgy. I draw on 3 aspects below reflecting on how the Supper, does and could, grow in its attempts at authentically constructed liturgical improvisations.

Community and Symbol

‘The more that worship gathers the diversity of God’s people—young and old, of different races and ethnicities and different social classes, with different theological perspectives the more worship can show forth the mystery of God’s reconciling love’ (2010:47). The Supper’s diversity as outlined above is a profoundly important part of its life together. Moreover, a community that embodies and inhabits its liturgy in such a way that come alive through speaking and singing. Liturgy must speak in the language of the people, drawing on images and idioms that are comprehensible in the contemporary

⁸⁰ Anglican Christian outreach

⁸¹ Ecclesiastes 1:9

context. (Meyers 2010:48) *'I think that critical work for us now is building community that isn't just a serving community and a recipient community that we see the emergence of, we see the development of and so that takes us into discipleship I suppose, the sort of authentic leadership and ownership in welcoming and doing communion and then participating of people.'* [P2:14] Liturgy as the work of the people will need to echo the tradition without placing words on people's lips that do not echo the values of the gathered community which reflect an eschatological hope. This also acts as a postcolonialising tool because it can undo the hegemony of Western, English words sculpted for a particular people and time and replace it with the language and voices of the people gathered. P2 again alludes to the idea of emerging liturgical devices that mirror the 'wretchedness' or the people gathered. P2 wanted to invite a local musician to help the community write their own songs. Like *'the slave songs, from the American South, spiritual, spiritual and she was like how, like what it might mean to help people, so I am trying to get her to come along help people write their own spirituals that we can sing.'* [P2:83] Again I am reminded of Lartey (2013). In helping those often excluded find their voice postcolonialising liturgy will, 'actively seek out **other** voices, especially submerged, ignored or rejected voices to be invited to articulate their own authentic voice.' (Lartey 2013:xviii) This is can and should be a creative activity which 'produce new forms of practice' (2013:xviii).

Proclamation

Meyer (2010:49) says, 'the proclamation of Scripture may be difficult to comprehend for those unfamiliar with Christian worship.' At present the community supper does not have a set form of proclamation although there have been times of proclamation. P3 says, *'well the sermons happen through, I would argue happen through discussion. Which is quite I would argue, is quite a rabbinical model.'* The proclamation in fact often happens in an improvisatory way around tables. Often as people share their weekly events and pull out their bibles to discuss an idea or verse. One Lent period there was a simple talk translated into Afrikaans each week. But increasingly there is a desiree to engage with scripture in deeper ways following Bob Ekblad's *Reading the Bible with the damned*. P8:4 said, *'I'd like to know more how do we read the Bible together?'* In February 2018 P8 and P29 started a bi monthly bible study meeting at a local coffee shop in Mowbray on Saturday mornings. These were made up of Thursday night members who wanted to go deeper in scripture.

Thanksgiving

'Thanksgiving does not deny the suffering and struggles of the world but rather locates them in the larger horizon of salvation history. Christian thanksgiving has an eschatological thrust, celebrating the inauguration of the reign of God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus even as it yearns for the fullness of that reign yet to come' (Meyer 2010:50). There have been mild celebrations at the

Supper when people have successfully been through rehab. Many times, there have been moments at tables when people have celebrated the success of securing a job or reconnecting with family.

6.1.7 Testing ecclesiality: Eucharistic resistance

‘If a local church is to be, not only a sign and instrument, but also a foretaste of the kingdom, its worship will be a vital component in shaping its life as an imperfect anticipation of the future which Christ has secured. The danger of some liturgical traditions, which represent a sort of liturgical archaeology, is that they totally lack this element of a prophetic anticipation and they only seem to point back. This is a fundamental failure in inculturation. Some fresh expressions will introduce a Eucharistic celebration at an early stage, others will recognise a need to create an understanding and hunger for the central act of Christian worship, that is a matter of contextual discernment, but all sustainable Anglican fresh expressions will be Eucharistic’ (Cray 2012:14). Again, an excerpt from my fieldnotes dated 26th October 2017

The original leader is there tonight. Around 7.10 just as the food is being cleared away he announces communion. A few later comers arrive so it's getting more rowdy. Around 15 people gather around the table - a talkative woman next to me says louder than necessary, "Come and eat and receive your healing." I ask her what she means. She explains that when she took communion at a Catholic church she was healed by taking the body and the blood.

The communion really is pretty simple in terms of liturgy - just based on 1 Corinthians 15. It's obviously profound for a number of people gathered around the table. I'm struck by how much it embodies Luke 14 and Jesus parable about the wedding feast. The poor, the blind, the crippled really are gathered around this table and despite the noise of people waking past or shouting and a bit of jostling for food I sense this is a holy moment. It's church.

During that particular gathering there were people on crutches, children sitting on laps with snotty noses being wiped away by a loving mother's sleeve. We were not a well-groomed, well ordered or a presentable people. A few people had obviously been drinking. It was not quiet, nor solemn but as one leader said,

The Thursday is just you know, come all you vagabonds, it is just fitting beautifully here, you know, come as you are, it doesn't matter who you are, it doesn't matter who you are or what you are, what you've done, you know, you're just accepted. [P12:21]

There seems to be an element in the gathering that as one leader says is a form of 'eucharistic resistance.' [P2:40] Yik-pui Au (2012:53) following Zizioulas suggests, 'the Eucharist is a "communion of otherness" to address the individualism which excludes others and fears otherness.' It also acts as an antidote or counter narrative to the consumeristic or often plastic culture in which the church is called to operate. Consumerism commodifies all and those who cannot or are deemed unworthy to operate in the culture are essentially useless. 'The poor, the needy, those without homes, the unemployed are therefore marginalised and discarded. The gathering around the bread and the cup in fact can act as a "counter-formation" to these culture problems' (Yik-pui Au 2012:55). As Urwin (2008:40) points out, 'the eucharist is a great leveller. Whether the Archbishop of Canterbury or the poorest of the poor...you all receive the same fare - bread and wine.'

There is also evidence that this eucharistic resistance is improvisatory and participatory too. On occasion guests have arrived with offerings for the communion table. P2 retold the story of **R** on one particular night.

***P2:** R is passionate about having communion happen and he is clearly quite versed in Anglican church stuff but has a very strong opinion outside Anglicanism on that we can't use yeast, so he is quite determined that every time we use bread, like where it is somewhere outside,*

***INTERVIEWER:** So you need Matzos, it needs to be*

***P2:** So he arrived with (interrupted)*

***INTERVIEWER:** Unleavened.*

***P2:** Ja, so he arrived with rotis.*

***INTERVIEWER:** Oh ja.*

***P2:** The one night ja he arrived and (interrupt)*

***INTERVIEWER:** It is much more contextual.*

***P2:** And, and ja totally, that was it was good. So he had arrived the one week and I had said, well this is what we have got, and then the next week we weren't going to do communion and he arrived wanting communion and arrived having purchased rotis. So we had rotis and grape juice,*

***INTERVIEWER:** Just bring.*

***P2:** For communion that night*

***INTERVIEWER:** And so, so you hadn't planned to have an act of communion that night.*

P2: That night that he arrived like with this offering if you wish.

Taking seriously the ability of the community to contribute physically to the life of the eucharist is important for a number of reasons. R's desire to contribute to the eucharistic life of the Supper by bringing rotis is profound. If part of the underlying narrative of consumerism is to marginalise and denigrate the poorest and most needy and deem them useless and unable to contribute to society. R's offering acts as a counter narrative. His offering is not rejected because there were no pre plans to celebrate communion rather they are embraced and an improvised eucharist takes place to dignify the offering. As noted in chapter 3 the issue of FXoC being shaped by consumerist mentalities has been debated in the Western European context. Percy (2008) and Milbank (2008) both suggest that FXoC is complicit with consumerism. Percy (2008:33) notes that there is an element of 'brandscaping' in the Fresh Expressions movement which plays into the consumerist malaise rather than 'acting as a prophetic critique of it.' I argue that the Supper in fact can act as an antidote to the petit bourgeois nature of some FXoC by offering a subversive inclusivity to those often rejected, sidelined or dismissed in consumer culture.

6.1.7 Testing ecclesiality: Hospitality or Hostility - Anglican ecclesiology under pressure?

In this section of analysis and interpretation I have attempted to test the ecclesiality of the Supper both from the perspective of normativity in FXoC whilst charting something of the birth and genesis of the Supper and interpreting some of the contours. Secondly, I have tried to show the Supper's ecclesial life in terms of acts of worship, liturgy and eucharistic resistance. All of this moves towards the testing of Anglican ecclesiology. This is not new ground. As I stated at the beginning of this thesis the 2004 MSC report became an unlikely best seller. It has, 'sold over 30,000 copies, reached an international audience and has been credited with reshaping the Church of England's ecclesiology' (Moynagh 2012:52) There is such a vast array of literature on the topic of Anglican ecclesiology that it is impossible to survey anything justly. What I outline here is a heuristic notion of an Anglican ecclesiology through the hermeneutical lenses of 'lived', 'concrete' experience of the community supper, the fresh expressions literature and Anglican theologians from the communion. I have written about some of this in an informal manner at other points.⁸² I begin with some opening caveats from Avis (2000, 2007) and Williams (2011) before using Croft's (2008:186-198) seminal essay *Mapping ecclesiology for a mixed economy* as a way of navigating this section. Croft indeed uses a navigation analogy and, 'offers a compass as an essential help where the map may not be sufficient' (:187). That compass suggests four courses of direction

⁸² <https://thejazzgoat.wordpress.com/2015/08/04/ecclesial-hospitality-v-ecclesial-hostility-leonardo-boff-liberation-and-fresh-expressions/>

- Descriptive ecclesiology
- Discerning ecclesiology
- Derived ecclesiology
- Developmental ecclesiology

Again, this is not an attempt to be all encompassing in a pursuit of definitions of Anglicanism but a humble offering to the conversation.

My **first** caveat is the imperative for doing ecclesiological work happens in shifting, changing contexts. I am doubtful whether the Anglican church in South Africa believes it is operating at the end of Christendom although work by Siaki (2002, 2007) presents evidence that membership in the Anglican church has declined since the end of *Apartheid*. As Croft (2008:196) points out, ‘in a period of comparative stability for the Church where things are more or less seen to be ‘working’, these areas of ecclesiology are not particularly significant.’ It’s my sense that ACSA believes itself to be operating in a ‘settled’ period after the chaos of the *Apartheid*. Again Croft (2008:188) notes that in a time of mission in a changing context attempting to get to the essence or heart of the church becomes a vital task. The belief in a settled and set ecclesiology is seen by the general malaise of interest in FXoC in the diocese at episcopal and clergy level.

My **second** caveat is as Avis (2000: 61) says that, ‘Anglicans readily acknowledge like all branches of the Christian Church, without exception, Anglicanism is **provisional** and **incomplete** in the light of the church that is spoken of in the creeds as one, holy, catholic and apostolic.’ Right from the offset constructing any type of Anglican ecclesiology involves a posture of humility and thus I would argue a hospitality. Anglican ecclesiology offers the church as sign and a foretaste of the Kingdom. Moreover, the AMWPR (2012:91) rightly reminds us that, ‘there is no single authorised source that contains a comprehensive statement of the Church of England’s official teaching concerning the nature of the church.’

My **third** caveat is that whilst often Anglican ecclesiology can appeal to history, tradition, reason and scripture as starting points, drawing on Archbishop Williams (2011) back to basics exercise, might be asking the question, ‘Where does the church start?’ William’s answer is not Pentecost or the resurrection, nor in the people of Israel nor at creation. ‘The church is not some kind of decorative religious luxury that was thought up by people who wanted something to do on Sunday mornings. The church, the assembly of God’s friends, of God’s invited, starts with God’s purpose before the world began.’ This third caveat deals with what Foord (2001) calls ‘ecclesiality’ with the ontology

of the church. That ontological question leads us to begin an understanding of church based on the doctrine of the Trinity and on the dynamic interpersonal relationships of the Godhead.

Provisional but trinitarian

Foord (2001:336) says this is an approach that has, ‘sought to ground the being of the church in the trinitarian being of God.’ In a Trinitarian ecclesiology, ‘the church’s members have been drawn by the Spirit through the Son into a participation (*koinonia*) of the Triune being and life of God, a life of communion.’ (:336) The dynamic relationships in the Godhead act as a starting point for talk about the church. Therefore, just as the Father, Son and Spirit are what they are because of their relationships with each other, so ‘to be a human person is to be-in-relationship. ‘The Church is ‘first and foremost a community of persons-in-relation’ (:337). A relational approach finds its legitimacy in an ecclesiality based on the doctrine of the Trinity. As Gunton (1989:48) reminds us that the, ‘inadequacy of the theology of the church derives from the fact that it was never seriously and consistently been rooted in a conception of the being of God as triune.’ Relational approaches to ecclesiology take their cue from the the inner dynamic of relationships in the Godhead; kenotic, self-giving, ever loving relationships that exist between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Moltmann (2000:113) say that theres ‘an ancient concept for community without uniformity, and personality without individualism.’ Moltmann (2000:114) says that in the trinity ‘the divine persons are ‘habitable’ for one another, giving one another open life-space for mutual indwelling. Each person is indwelling and room giving at the same time.’ ‘Through their mutual indwelling the divine persons are giving each other themselves and the divine life in selfless love.’ (:115) ‘The being of God *is* the persons in relation to each other.’ (Gunton 1989:70). This vision of a social trinity emphasises the love which flows between the three persons in community and is a primarily relational view if the trinity as a committed community. It also sees love as intrinsic to the nature of God, so it shares much in common with the previous two models. The gospel offers us a share in the divine Koinonia, which draws us both into the love of God and into fellowship with one another so that as a church we may experience the unity in diversity of Trinitarian relationships. The goal of mission becomes the creation of such a community in which freedom for one another and fellowship with one another in commitment to one another. In fact this can give mission an irresistible social dimension. I argue that this relational approach to ecclesiology as echoing something (imperfectly of course) of those who see the Supper as their primary place of worship.

However, Foord (:340) criticises this approach by suggesting, ‘it would seem that because this analogy centres on *how the church should live*, we are talking about the *mission* or *vocation* of the church, rather than its ecclesiality.’ But Gunton (1989:75) can say that speaking about the triune God,

‘is a kind of analogy of echo: the Church is what it is by virtue of being called to be a temporal echo of the eternal community that God is.’

In this discourse around Trinitarian ecclesiology Ward (2015) warns that centring ecclesial shapes on the doctrine of the trinity can, in fact, be something akin to blueprint ecclesiology which I cautioned again in chapter 3. For Foord, Gunton and Moltmann grounding the church in the being of God is an ontological pursuit or as Ward (2015:76) says, ‘the being of God shapes how the Church engages in mission.’ Ward notes that this is especially true in the social trinitarianism of contemporary theology and points out that the MSC report utilises Trinitarian theology to frame normative moves. (:77) Indeed my chapter on practical theology in South Africa advocates this position - that a mission shaped is Trinitarian. However, Ward (2015:78) cautions the use of a ontological abstract positions like social Trinitarianism because resulting ecclesiologies can in fact be quite different. ‘The Orthodox Zizioulas settles for hierarchy, and the Free Church Volf for shared leadership.’ He says that ‘traditions are affective because they are inhabited and lived in. Theologians traditioning in the Church shapes how they reason.’ ‘Social Trinitarianism has traction and plausibility in contemporary ecclesiology because it connects to affective sensibilities that circulate in the lived. It feels right’ (Ward 2015:79).

Whilst I’ve outlined the inherent problem with blueprint ecclesiology from Healy (2000) and Ward (2015) in chapter 3 it is necessary to work through some of these notions around models and blueprints.

6.1.7.1 Descriptive ecclesiology

Croft (2008:191) says a descriptive ecclesiology, ‘works systematically through the doctrine of the church down the ages.’ It can also draw on the sources and historic formularies that the church has given credence to. I follow Avis (2000:52ff) in his sound choice around the sources of Anglican ecclesiology but balance it with Mobsby’s quest to test new contextual churches Anglican nature. Mobsby (2006) sets about asking the question as to whether new contextual churches were indeed Anglican. What is and what counts as Anglican is a complex pursuit. The Anglican church since its, ‘beginnings has been forged on the anvil of ecclesiological controversy’ (Avis 2000:9). In the light of this Mobsby (2006:69-72) argues that by looking back to Hooker’s writings one can see an ecclesiology that developed, ‘at a time of significant cultural shift’ (:70) to deal with the premodern and modern and that, ‘Hooker clearly believed in a pluralistic church of England where both Catholic and Protestant could co-exist’ (:70). There was a ‘both’ ‘and’ attitude towards ecclesiology in the formation of the church. This is not dissimilar to the mixed economy or mixed ecology as I prefer being advocated by the FXoC movement. Descriptive ecclesiology suggests both a turning to the past,

which we do below, but also an acknowledgment that as the descriptive stops us from being too caught up in the idealised which Croft reminds us has been all too prevalent in recent Catholic and Protestant ecclesiology. I explore this further in the **developmental ecclesiology** section.

Past Descriptions

The Thirty-Nine Articles

It's important to be aware that the Thirty-Nine Articles, like all historic formularies, are contextually bound and are a result of specific forces and arguments in play during the reformation period. 'The Articles of Religion affirm that the Church of England accepts the dominical sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper' (AMWPR 2012:92). A reasonable description of the church or an attempt at the essence of the church through description might be found in Article 19 'The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.'⁸³ However that is balanced with the need for contextualisation. The common problem of celebration of the mass in Latin meant the majority of people did not understand what was being said. Article 24 makes a case for serious commitment to the word become flesh only speaks dialect. 'It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have publick Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people.'⁸⁴ As shown above in my extensive narrative around *liturgy emerging from a wound* and along the lines of Douglas (2000) I see the Supper as a form of Anglicanism that, as I outlined in chapter 2, is an '**embrace** of celebration of apostolic catholicity in the vernacular moment.' That embrace begins with the incarnation. Importantly the reality of the incarnate one amongst us can only be experienced contextually in the tongue used by the people gathered.

Marks of the Church [One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church]

Another essential formulary is enshrined in the Nicene Creed. 'We believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.' When testing the ecclesiality of FxOC this important formulation is analysed by most advocates. Croft (2008:189) suggests that, 'this line remains a brilliant example of distilled ecclesiology and, indeed of the simplicity that lies beyond complexity.' Both Church House Report (2004:96-98), The AMWPR (2012:85ff), Mobsby (2006:72ff), and Moynagh (2012, 2017) all seek to explain that, 'fresh expressions and pioneer ministry do seek to embody the four marks' (Roberts, Goodhew & Volland 2012:209).

⁸³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/articles-religion#XXIV>

⁸⁴ <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/articles-religion#XXIV>

Roberts, Goodhew and Volland (2012:209) actually suggest that these 4 marks be reversed to or turned upside down. This is an interesting and important idea. By reversing the marks and beginning with the notion of the apostolic Roberts, Goodhew and Volland (2012:210) intend to recover what they believe to have been marginalised or lost. ‘Apostolic has either been marginalised or seen in terms of ‘apostolic succession’. The debate as who does- and does not - succeed from the first apostles has its value, but also has more than a whiff of ecclesiastical one-upmanship.’

Roberts, Goodhew and Volland (2012:210) argue that ‘the primary meaning of **Apostolic** concerns mission.’ The Church is a sent church. Sent into the mission of God the divine initiator. ‘Apostolic churches honour the Spirit because he is par excellence the divine fuel for mission.’ By positioning the apostolic in primary place, the *missio Dei* is given a central role. They even suggest that roles in episcopal roles should plant one church a year! (:211) The MSC report (2004:132) noted somewhat ironically, ‘a number of pioneers are living with the tension between the call to be Anglican and the call to be apostolic.’

Roberts, Goodhew and Volland (:211) reason again seeing **catholicity** as ‘cultural niceness’. The church catholic according to the MSC report (2004:97) is an invitation to inclusion. It is broad across time over the past twenty centuries. Catholicity appeals to the church across the globe (2012:212) and the church in its ecumenical diversity. Avis (2000:65) believes that catholicity points towards inculturation. He says, ‘the catholicity of the church, which in the past has often been a byword for authoritarianism, uniformity and the crushing of local traditions of cultural imperialism, is actually, when rightly understood, a mandate for cultural **hospitality**.’

‘Being **holy** is, above all, that mark of the Church that is not ours to achieve but ours to receive.’ (Roberts, Goodhew and Volland 2012:213) Again the MSC Report (2004:97) suggests that holiness from a mission shaped posture means, ‘the willingness to die to one’s own comfort and preferences and be made alive to God’s. It is a holy church that is willing to die to its own culture in order to live for God in another.’

Roberts, Goodhew and Volland (2012:214) note that, ‘all too often Christians have seen being ‘**one**’ in terms of being one in doctrine, structure and liturgy. Unity has therefore been the unity of doctrinal statements, ecclesiastical structures and liturgical uniformity.’ As has been argued in this section on testing ecclesiality unity with a healthy generosity recognises the great variety of gifts and contexts that churches operate and seek to be faithful. Unity as argued in the MSC Report (2004:96) takes seriously this notion of diversity. It argues that reproduction is not cloning (or *McChurch* as Roberts,

Goodhew and Volland (2012:215) but, ‘involves the imaginative ability to take on a diversity of forms in different cultures.’ Unity should start in mission.

The Book of Common Prayer

A third source is the book of common prayer. The 1989 Anglican Prayer book of ACSA, ‘stands alongside the South African Book of Common Prayer (1954), which in turn is grounded upon the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, itself the heir to the three Prayer Books of 1549, 1552 and 1559’ (1989:9)⁸⁵ As outlined in Chapter 3 according to the canons there is to be no departure from the services outlined in the Prayer book. However, as I have investigated in this section of chapter 6 liturgical policing is not, nor has it been, very helpful. Tilby (2008:83) notes that, ‘it is well understood in *The Book of Common Prayer* where wisdom of the church is found in keeping the means in public liturgy ‘from too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting any variation from it.’ But she cautions that, ‘What keeps our new movements potentially orthodox is out liturgy’ (Tilby 2008:84). Whilst in this thesis we have turned our attention to a new contextual church there are mission shaped examples in more traditional examples that suggest the language and rhythm of the prayer book can act as a missional tool for an older generation. Bayes and Sledge (2006:43) say that, ‘the Prayer Book can be seen as a living resource not a fossilised liturgy.’ Moreover, ‘in the same way that actors work hard to make the language of Shakespeare accessible and alive so we approach 1662 in the same way.’ Although there is no use of the 1989 Prayer Book in any formally recognised way at the Supper at present the improvisatory and performative skills of leaders like P2 and P3 continue to help bring at least fragments of the tradition into the Supper’s gathered life. An unnecessary imposition of formal liturgy at this point in the Supper’s unfolding would be a pragmatic disaster. Can Moynagh (2017) and Watkins and Shepherd (2014) notions of ecclesiological ‘overflow’ and ‘grace’ be evidenced?

The canons

Fourthly the canons. Avis (2000:56) says that, ‘the canons of a particular church normally contain certain important ecclesiological statements, and in this connection the canons have suffered undeserved neglect.’ As noted earlier in the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, there is virtually no room for ‘new ways of ministry’. Constitutionally and canonically there is no scope for contextually appropriate service (other than direct translation

⁸⁵ For a more in depth of the history of the Prayer Book in Southern Africa see Houston, P.C & Kruger, A. 2017. From England To Under African Skies: The Quest for an African Anglican Liturgical Voice, *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 43(2):1-22.

linguistically) dependant upon the locale, shaped organically (and the Spirit) by the needs of the people gathered. There is no room to depart from Canon 33.1, 33.2 and 33.4.⁸⁶

Lambeth Quadrilateral

As laid out in chapter 3 the Lambeth Quadrilateral is stated thus.

- The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God.
- The Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith.
- The two Sacraments – Baptism and the Supper of the Lord – ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
- The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.

Avis (2000:57) remarks that, ‘the four articles are intended to comprise the essentials that Anglicans would insist on in any reunion of churches.’ With regards to the Supper the 3rd and 4th elements seemed to be most pertinent. I deal with the issue of the Episcopate under derived ecclesiology but here attend to the vital question around baptism. The issue of baptism as one of the two core sacraments was acknowledged in interviews with pioneer leader P3. A following extract from the interview

INTERVIEWER: you have in act of worship through the communion every other week.

Has anyone asked to be baptized?

P3: A couple of times we have had people asked to be baptized in fact somebody asked just a few weeks ago now,

INTERVIEWER: Interesting.

⁸⁶ **Canon 33.1 Lawful Services** ‘In ministering in the congregation no Clergyman of this Church may use any other Services but such as are appointed in the Book of Common Prayer, nor may he use these Services in any other manner than is prescribed in the said Book, except so far as alterations and abridgements of, and additions to, the Services of the Church are made or allowed in this Church by the Provincial Synod, or are allowed exceptionally by the Bishop.’ **Canon 33.2 Lawful Ministers** No person shall be permitted to officiate in sacred things in any congregation of this Church, except under the authority of the Bishop of the Diocese. Provided that any person who shall have satisfied the Incumbent or Churchwardens (in the absence of the Incumbent) that he is a Clergyman of this Church, or of some other Church of the Anglican Communion, may be permitted by him or by them (in his absence) to officiate in the congregation for one Sunday, but for no more than one without the permission of the Bishop, except he be a Chaplain to the Forces, who will be considered as one of the Clergy of the Diocese, except he be inhibited by the Bishop. **Canon 33.4 Hymns** ‘No Hymn or Collection of Hymns shall be hereafter introduced into the Public Services of any congregation of this Province without the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese.’ These Canons are probably based on the 1662 Act of Uniformity. It prescribed the form of public prayers, administration of sacraments, and other rites of the Established Church of England, according to the rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer.

P3: And I said, I had a conversation about it with him and I said okay come back and chat to me about it again next week and he didn't. So we have never actually done it but somewhere has awaked something.

INTERVIEWER: So people have expressed a desire.

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: How, I mean if you were to do that, what would it look like in that context?

P3: Very good question.

INTERVIEWER: I am just thinking what, you know what makes church I think you know if you look at something like Lambeth Chicago quadrilateral it is the, the, the sacraments the two or core sacraments would be communion, the Lord's supper and baptism and so it is obvious that, that communion is happening and it is meaningful and contextually appropriate by, I am just fascinated by the baptism question.

P3: Ja, and it is precisely for that reason that I see baptism as one of two sacraments and the marks of authentic church is precisely the reason that I think we need to find a way to make baptism possible and relevant on Thursday night and I wonder whether, my model of always saying people come back and talk to me next week.

At the time of study the lack of any baptisms from the community again suggests two things. Firstly the communities own ecclesial liminality or fragility. Secondly P3 desired to find, 'a way to make baptism possible and relevant on Thursday night.' [P3:26] Whilst no baptisms had taken place at the Supper there were signs of beginning to think both logistically and contextually about how baptism might be appropriately take place in the setting. P3's own long-term experience with the homeless community in London and the issues around *playing church* need to be borne in mind. The vulnerability of many of the homeless community in terms of religiosity is important. As I've noted above the Supper is a space where by many can detoxify from religion. Whilst baptism is clearly seen as a sacrament of welcome and membership into the church it's necessary

6.1.7.2 Discerning ecclesiology

Croft (2008:193) argues that discerning ecclesiology is especially important in an era of change and flux. 'Any attempt at a definition (of church) must be applied only as a tool in a discernment process as the Holy Spirit continues to create and do new things (Croft 2008:194). 'Discernment is a matter of the heart and of character as well as an intellectual exercise.' Croft reminds us that, 'in the eighteenth century the Church of England applied its corporate discernment to whether Methodist societies were in fact to be recognised as church and (with hindsight) conspicuously lacked the wisdom and grace of Barnabas.'

6.1.7.3 Derived ecclesiology

Croft (2008:195) suggests that derived ecclesiology focuses on ‘how the church should order its life for its own well being?’ ‘This includes questions around church governance, and how the church should administer its sacramental and preaching life.’ In this debate is the critical role of the episcopate which is an important relationship to explore in regards to the Supper. One of the defining marks of Anglicanism is the historic episcopate. ‘Bishops are the chief pastors in the local church or diocese (the expression ‘local church’ being rather a theological technical term for the sphere of the bishop’s ministry) with oversight of clergy, laity and responsibility of implementing the canon law of the church’ (Avis 2000:55).

Bishop Garth Counsell the bishop of Table Bay, and therefore the bishop with episcopal authority over St Peter’s, Mowbray, in response to an email as to whether he was aware of the Community Supper and saw it as a legitimate part of the worshipping life of the diocese replied, ‘*I am not aware and have not seen a format of the Community Supper as an expression of Church life. I can therefore indicate that it is also not officially an accepted and authorised part of the worship life of this diocese.*’⁸⁷ This response displays both something of the complex relationship the church has with the diocese on the one hand and the a prevailing attitude to new contextual churches from an episcopal perspective in South Africa in general on the other.

Firstly, as noted in chapter 3, in 2011 at the Diocesan synod (63rd session) in Cape Town Agendum 12 (on the final day of the Synod) ‘respectfully asked the Archbishop and the Bishop of Table Bay to lead the Diocese in actively exploring and experimenting with new forms of worship and church growth alongside our traditional forms’ (2011:33). Additionally it asked the Diocesan *Growing the Church team* to, ‘make resources available and give support and encouragement to Pastoral Charges exploring new ways of being church reaching the un-churched’ (2011:34). One can argue that there has been very little leading the diocese in actively exploring and experimenting with new forms of worship. The non-activity over the past 7 years seems to suggest either a lack of capacity, genuine interest, or both. Is there a lack of mission shaped vision in the diocese and province or is there simply an ecclesial hostility to new ventures?

Secondly the seeming lack of interest may stem from a larger problem; the historic relationship with the diocese. As noted earlier St Peter’s Mowbray is, like St John’s Parish, Wynberg, one of the few Evangelical Parishes in association with ACSA and the diocese (Vos 1972:3). This has led to numerous agreements signed between St Peters and the Archbishop of Cape Town over the past 100 years or so. These agreements essentially allowed St Peters as a historically evangelical Parish to

⁸⁷ Personal email received on the 15th June 2018

appoint its own clergy, would not be subject to any assessment levied by ACSA but would contribute on a voluntary basis as well as safe guarding property rights. Moreover, the agreement made the way of worship in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer.⁸⁸ The 1956 Declaration of Association with the Archbishop of Cape Town in Annexure B could be interpreted as offering liturgical freedom allowing the St Peter's council elected at Vestry to approve other liturgies as necessary. This historic independence has caused a fair amount of friction between Parish and diocese/province. It is perhaps symptomatic of the relationship between the Bishop and the Parish that their ecclesial improvisations are seen as a continued a reiteration of independence and perhaps defiance? In an extensive interview with pioneer leader P3 the issue around episcopal oversight cropped up.

***INTERVIEWER:** Would you say that the Bishop knows about Thursday nights and acknowledges it and approves of it (interrupt)*

***P3:** I have no, I have no idea if the Bishop knows about it.*

***INTERVIEWER:** Have you ever written to him and told him about it?*

***P3:** I don't know if he knows. Graham Cray Bishop knows about it,*

***INTERVIEWER:** He is the Bishop of a, just for, ja he is the Bishop of another province.*

***P3:** Well he is retired, he is retired.*

***INTERVIEWER:** He is retired now ja.*

***P3:** And he has been you know I have been around the same context of Graham Cray for a while now, whenever I tell the story in his presence Graham is always there nodding and smiling and giving us the thumbs up and saying, this is what fresh expressions is.*

Bishop Graham Cray, as noted previously, was the Archbishop's missionary and the team leader of Fresh Expressions of Church who visited South Africa extensively helping to establish training mechanisms and the international partnership (Crowther 2013). In the 2004 Church House report suggestion was made of a new legal measure of a Bishop's Order which could nurture, validate and help multiply FXoC (2004:131). As Cameron (2012:42) notes 'the passing of a measure to allow Bishop's Mission Orders in 2008 means that fresh expressions of church can now exist legally in their own right outside of parish and diocesan structures.' This however this is far from the case in the South African context where there have been no such orders or even hints at allowing new ecclesial life to start apart from the traditional worship first model (Moynagh 2017:39-41). It seems the issue around new ecclesial communities like the Supper and the episcopate are going to continue to be fractious or even non-existent until both Parish and Bishop start pursuing conversation. The Parish

⁸⁸ This service is still observed in the Parish at the regular 8.00am Sunday Service.

needs to be more forth coming and invitational. The Bishop needs to take his synodical acts more seriously and lead the way in mission by, ‘actively exploring and experimenting with new forms of worship’ (2011:33). The original MSC report (2004:101) noted the importance of the bishop’s missionary role. As Croft (2008:197) points out, ‘if we are to develop mature communities effectively, both pioneers and permission givers (Bishops) will need to become adept at this style of reaching wise pastoral conclusions in dialogue with Scripture and tradition.’ In counter balance the MSC report (2004:141) noted the difficulty with which Bishops often had to operate. ‘It’s often easier to stop what isn’t wanted rather than to establish what is wanted. So bishops may prevent disasters more easily than they can promote successes.’ Presently it seems episcopal hostility seems to be playing out in the debate.

6.1.7.4 Developmental ecclesiology

Lastly Croft (2008:197) speak of developmental ecclesiology by which he means ‘lived’ ecclesiology or, ‘the in-depth examination of the life of the local churches often accompanied by the drawing of conclusions for their life and witness.’ This thesis falls directly into the category. Croft notes that, this kind of developmental ecclesiology which contrasts the actual with the ideal says, ‘in the future better safe guard church leaders of all kinds against believing too readily their own rhetoric and somewhat rose-tinted view of the communities they serve and lead’ (:197).

In this section I have tried to argue that Anglican ecclesiology needs to inhabit a posture of humility about its contours both from a historical vantage point, from the view of Anglican sources and in light of the actual lived experience of congregations over and against an idealised and blueprint ecclesiology.

It must be borne in mind that the Community Supper was birthed accidentally out of the idea of eating a meal together 6 years ago. Given it’s accidental and improvisatory nature the fact that it remains in a liminal ecclesial position is hardly surprising. It is a pilgrim church moving towards maturity as the people gathered move into maturity.

To be sure the Community Supper is certainly on its way to becoming a mature expression of Church but it will need support to do that in a way that finds the balance of echoing the tradition whilst remaining contextually appropriate. Liturgy is still being shaped and honed and may well never follow even something as seemingly loose as the Alternative order for the Eucharist (1989:131). There will need to be plenty of ecclesiological grace to enable meaningful baptismal rites and contextually authentic funeral patterns for example. I end this section on testing ecclesiality with a

quote from Healy, ‘ecclesiology is not about the business of finding the single right way to think about the church, of developing a blueprint suitable for all times and places. Rather, I propose that its function is to aid the concrete church in performing its tasks and pastoral care within what I call its “ecclesiological contexts” (2000:38).

6.2 Probing pathologies of power

During my interview with P2 a sentence from him triggered an import exploration of the work that was happening at the community Supper. When questioned about criticisms of FXoC P2 said, ‘*my one critique is that I don’t think we spent enough time thinking about power*’ This led me to becoming more curious about how this notion of power was playing out in the context of the Supper on a weekly basis. P2 also pointed out that one of his issues about the FXoC movement was having a, ‘*concern in the South African construct that it represents culturally and that for many of the people pushing at its, it represents culturally a sort of white, western understanding and is quite dismissive of other expressions.*’ [P2]

Pathology relates to the idea of studying, the causes and roots of disease. During the analysis process I organised codes around the issues of power, diversity, apartheid and other concerns into three *units* or *variables* which I entitled 1. Apartheid and SA complexities 2. Being human together and 3. Equalising power. From these *units* I attempt to tell the story of the Supper as a place where power is both equalised and at other times old power dynamics rear their ugly head.

The community Supper, perhaps unsurprisingly, is a community of paradox. It’s a community of paradox since it operates in a context of paradox. A paradox is, ‘a seemingly absurd or contradictory statement or proposition which when investigated may prove to be well founded or true.’⁸⁹ It is paradoxical in that it purports to be a place of inclusivity, mutual transformation and commitment to equalising power yet at times is none of these things. The analysis of the Supper will testify to this idea, but it must also be coupled with the fact that beneath the surface there are times where this is actualised and others when it is not.

⁸⁹ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/paradox>

6.2.1 'We see you' Sawubona and safe spaces

Over the past 25 years, since the first democratic elections,⁹⁰ South Africa have made great strides in some areas but we still continue, by and large, to be unable to practice sawubona.⁹¹ This can be seen on a daily basis in the news. Whether a Penny Sparrow blasphemy⁹² or the fact that only 18% of South African people have friendships with people outside of their race group.⁹³ That we continue to be unable to see one another is, on one level, hardly surprising.

As already outlined in chapter 5 the political geographer Gillian Hart (2013:6) says that, 'at the moment when former president F.W. de Klerk unbanned the ANC and other liberation movements, in 1990, the 'South African nation' was deeply in question. Quite literally it had to be conjured into existence out of the rubble of a deeply divided nation.' We might ask the question how are we getting on in the conjuring process given that 'in the absence of any traditional unifying principles (of language, culture, religion, race and so on), the identity of South African's is elusive?' (Chipkin 2007:189) Part of that elusiveness is born out of a divided history. One group's liberator was another group's terrorist. Ricoeur (2000) speaks of a 'manipulated memory' and this has been applied nations in transition in Eastern Europe by Professor Kusa. With no agreed shared history or way of narrating the past the tendency for one politically dominant group to claim exclusive control over the shaping of the narrative a manipulated memory comes to the fore. In a world increasingly shaped by ontological anxiety and where liberal democracy is struggling how do we as a national overcome our woundedness and trauma in order see each other.

The community Supper located at St Peter's an Anglican church, like almost every church in Cape Town, suffered through the group areas act. As P35 narrates it's, '*a faith home to a small community living the history of forced removals, families who had lived and worshiped together in this community until they were forced to move away from the area in the 1960's.* [P35:2] This had an enormous impact on some members of the community but for others was something to be borne. P5 himself, subject to a number of moves and the death of family members because of the psychological trauma of group areas saw the Supper as a corrective of what I noted in my fieldnotes dated 7th September 2017

He [P5] tells some of his story. He was married in the church 39 years ago, his wife is a lay minister. He says, "This place restores what the locusts have eaten." I'm not sure exactly what he means at first but he begins to narrate more of his own story. Forced removal

⁹⁰ 24th April 1994.

⁹¹ Sawubona is an isiZulu greeting literally meaning 'We see you'.

⁹² <https://www.iol.co.za/news/penny-sparrow-fined-r5-000-for-racist-rant-2067166>

⁹³ <http://ewn.co.za/2018/06/05/listen-only-18-of-south-africans-have-friends-from-other-races>

because of the group areas act in the mid 1960's. I'm struck how quickly and transparently people share.

Yet others like P12 could narrate a different thread,

I'm not that sensitive to the past. I know my sister did because she's darker skinned than me, my dad, my dad was a French Creole, so very dark skinned, you know, so I'm aware of it, but I never felt that you know, there was only one occasion at church and because you go through life like that, you know, with blinkers on, so you don't really see the hurts of people, you don't realise hey I've got to sit at the back of the church because I'm coloured, you know, I never even thought of that, it didn't bother me. [P12:8]

Today the Supper is a space that is 'multiracial, multilingual, multi-age, multi-economic' [P2] This is true of both guests, and volunteers (although not of pioneer leaders) and was affirmed through my regular participant observations. The volunteer team made up of St Peter's members who commit to serve on a weekly basis are a motley crew, P2 says, there is,

'F who is a single coloured grandmother with her grandson who is problematic and she lives in a tiny apartment somewhere in Mowbray on a social grant but comes to, like so she is part of the, there is P10 who is, you know who she is, there is ourselves, there is P5 and P12 and up until recently there was a Kenyan academic family who have had to go back for visa issues, but N and M would come along.'

In terms of guests almost every week there were people from across the continent. Again, from my fieldnotes dated the 14th September 2017,

I meet G who is from Uganda and living in a shelter in Parow. She is very softly spoken and it's hard to hear exactly what she is saying. It's her first time to the supper. She says she escaped from Uganda ('I was freed' she says). I'm unsure if she means she has escaped some form of slavery?

A few weeks later on the 5th October 2017 I noted,

Tonight, I choose a table I've not sat at before and instantly fall into a conversation with C. She is Rwandan but lives in Cape Town. Over the next 20 mins she narrates her life story which involves escaping the war in Rwanda and traveling through Africa over 10 years. 5 in Mombasa Kenya, a few months in Tanzania, a year in Malawi, a few months in Mozambique and finally to South Africa. Opposite her on the table is J P who is from the Songo tribe in central Congo but has a similar story of studying, living and working in

Uganda, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Both have jobs, both are well educated, self effacing, and delightful company. It's a reminder of the inclusive nature of the Supper and that everyone and anyone really is welcome.

The Supper is not only a place where South Africans in all their diversity can meet, eat and commune together but it's a place where wider Africa can be included too. If there continues to be mistrust internally amongst race groups of South Africa there is a serious problem of xenophobia towards African nationals seen most strikingly in the xenophobic attacks of 2008 and 2015. The Supper acts as a space where, as P37 puts it, *'you end up not seeing people's statuses.'* [P37,]

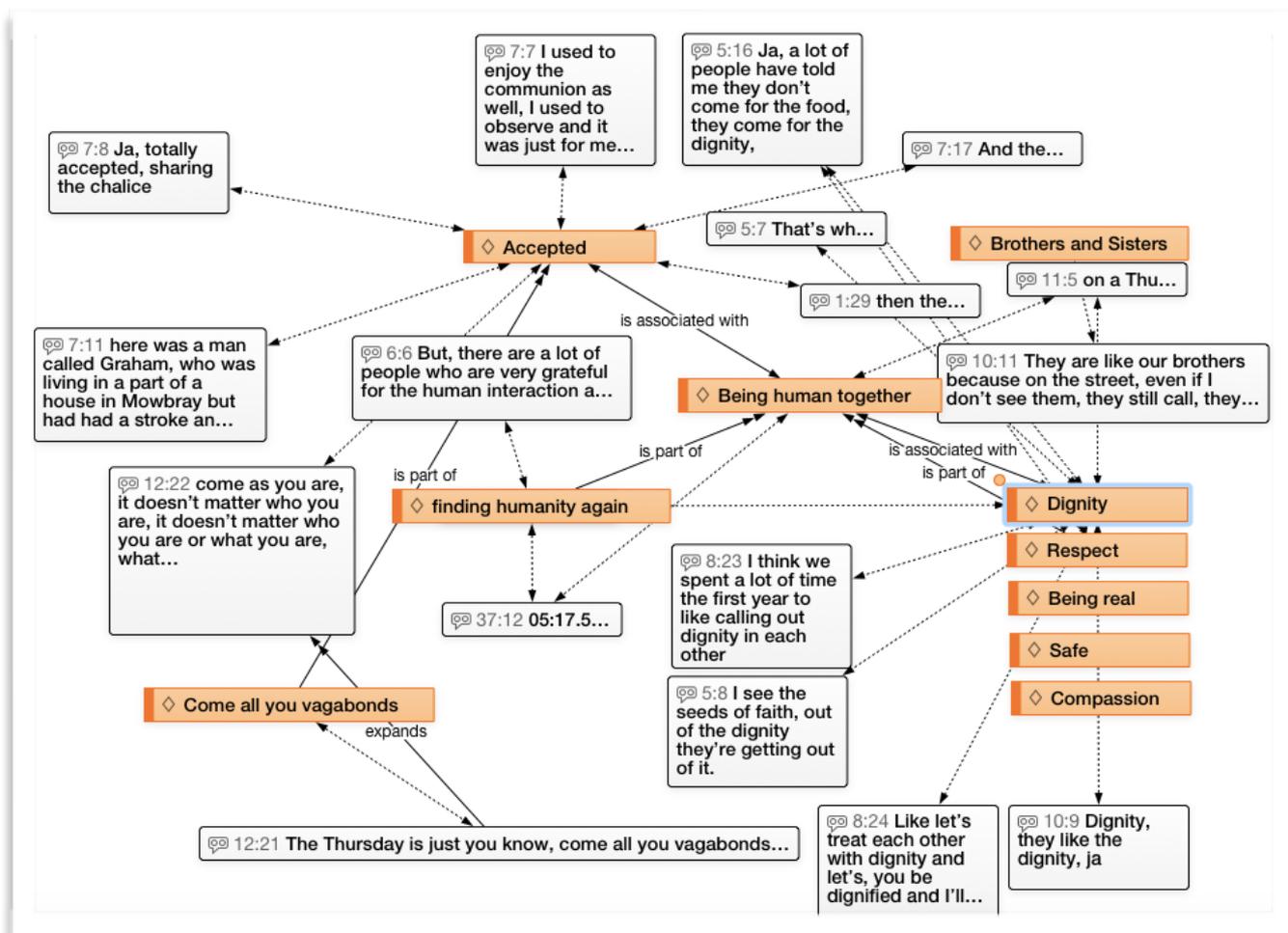
I suggest that in order to truly learn to see one another we need spaces where that is possible. In a helpful paper written by Cilliers in 2007 he depicts South Africa as an onion with various layers of complexity that need peeling off. Any analysis of those complexities is an ongoing issue as we continue the journey into democracy. What Cilliers suggests is that there is an internal challenge to society between what he labels Americanism (better understood in terms of consumerism and globalising imperialism) and a traditional African understanding of personhood and identity being best summed up by the notion of Ubuntu. Ultimately, he posits that, *'what is needed in South Africa is an intercultural and interpathetic space for redefining our identity. Religion, being part of culture, can operate as a definitive and formative space-creator and space-setter within culture'* (Cilliers 2007:20). I suggest that the Community Supper at St Peters on Thursday nights is creating such a safe space, an intercultural and interpathetic space.

As already noted each week between 80-120⁹⁴ people come together to eat a meal. P11 says, *'what I appreciate mostly of the community dinners that for the hour that I am here then I am human... there are people who are interested in me.'* [P11:2] The supper was not intentionally created to service the needs of the community of rough sleepers from the southern suburbs but over the past 6 1/2 years it has developed into a space where people can genuinely meet one another, enjoy a meal and see one another in new ways. For many sleeping rough means there is an absence of safety in their lives. *'It was street ministry but within the confines of a safe space which was something I had never really seen before.'* [P29:1] *'I have people say stuff to me about it or talk about enjoying the peace of this space.'* [P8:6]

Creating safe spaces that equalise power and truly allow people to be human is vital if we are going to undo the dehumanising effects *Apartheid* continues to have. Cilliers (2007:19) following the work of The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation suggests that, *'these spaces originate in relationships*

⁹⁴ A weekly note of numbers is included in the service register of the church.

where honesty is a sine qua non, but held in tension with respect. In other words: differences are put on the table and not hidden or masked, but these differences may never lead to disrespect of the other. On the other hand, acknowledgment of past and present transgressions is held in tension with responsibility – a deep confession coupled with the sincere desire to act and to transform that which was and still is wrong in our society. In this way, through mutual adherence to these four basic values, a framework for dialogue in a “safe space” can be created: honesty, but with respect acknowledgment, but with responsibility.’ Whilst Cilliers uses the idea *put on the table* as a metaphor I wonder if the actual idea of eating together, being served a meal together in fact helps to create a



[Figure 9]

space where men and women, boys and girls can true see each other. I expand on the notion of meals and eating together in the final domain of *Fathoming food in the Kingdom*. In short eating together acts as a leveller.

6.2.2 Being human together

In this second aspect of probing pathologies of power I focused in on the idea of being human together. The codes of Accepted, Being human together, Being real, Brothers and Sisters, Come all you vagabonds, Compassion, Dignity, Finding humanity again, Respect and Safe were grouped together around a *pattern* of **Being human**. A visual of the codes and some of their inter-relationship is set out in **Figure 9** above.

Missiologist Saayman (2010:1) suggests that due to, ‘the various embodiments of social alienation an important causative factor in the alienation is the lack of common human South African identity.’ I have already noted above from Hart (2013) and Chipkin (2007) the elusive nature of South African identity but follow Saayman (2010) and DeGruchy’s (2006) questions that perhaps the lack of social cohesion and identity is linked to the idea that as Saayman asks, ‘Is it perhaps the case that we are not at all at ease with everything that belongs to the human condition in South Africa?’ (2010:1) The dehumanising effects of *Apartheid* still linger. Again, as Saayman reminds us at the height of the state of emergency an illegitimate regime tried to maintain its power, ‘these were years when images of inhuman deeds committed by human beings against other human beings were seared on to our consciences.’

In approaching the Supper, I was seeking to draw out the quality of relationships that existed between people who gathered to eat a meal on a Thursday night. One question I asked was to **Describe some of the relationships that you have with people here?** P4, a homeless young woman responded, ‘*How can I say now...it is something like we are all human and we all people it doesn’t matter what situation you are.*’ [P4:6] Or P11, an older man who had been sent to prison for life but found himself up for parole in an unexpected turn of events says. ‘*Then come on a Thursday and then you find yourself for one hour I can be human... for one hour I have dignity.*’ [P11:5] P37 who grew up on the streets but found an opportunity to escape after the death of his mother saw the gathering on Thursday as a space for the recovering of humanity that is potentially lost by the dehumanising effects of living as a rough sleeper. ‘*All you look at and all you see is human beings coming together. But this allows you to find humanity again.*’ [P37:10/12] Finally P5 a long-term member of the St Peter’s Church community who had helped host a table for a number of years said, ‘*Ja, a lot of people have told me they don’t come for the food, they come for the dignity, and I know it’s for the hunger for God.*’ [P5:16]

An extract from my fieldnotes dated the 7th December 2017, *If being human together is a central theme it seems theological persuasions are very much secondary. Having said that there is a very*

real spirituality being grown at tables. Tonight I see two people being prayed for having shared something of their week or their story.

Those interviewed, not only guests but pioneer leaders too [P1, P2, P3 and P8], all spoke to the idea of being human and calling out dignity in each other as core value of the Supper. Again, from my field notes P2 often used the phrase, ‘*this is a place where we practice being human together several times in the evening.*’ [PO1] It could be these words had subconsciously infiltrated the minds of guests and volunteers. As noted in the section on *Testing ecclesiality* P2 continually functioned as a sense maker often using the early part of the gathering each week to theologise. Is it perhaps the case that in the use of liturgy in the oral tradition those gathered were simply reflecting the inculcated values of the Supper and articulated them back to me during interviews but didn't necessarily hold those values? On the other hand the theologising and sense making by P2 actually just gave voice to how some of those who gathered at the supper understood themselves and their own experience but could finally give voice to that in their own right?

Saayman (2010:7) believes that the need for a new human identity is paramount and that starts with the notion of being *homo sapiens* before being rich or poor, black or white. He goes on to say, ‘it is an open secret that we had no shared rights and no shared human identity in colonial times and under *Apartheid*: ethnocentrism, or our status as oppressor or oppressed precluded a shared human identity’ (:7). I argue that those former categories are being erased, or certainly blurred at the Supper as people sit and share a meal. This is not instantaneous. The values of the meal state ‘we **work** at equalising power’. This seems to suggest an ongoing, incomplete and humble posture regarding genuinely being human together. Those interviewed who would fall into the category of ‘left overs of our history of racist-capitalist injustice’ appeared to experience the Supper as a place of genuine acceptance. Interestingly P5 [a white middle class woman] revealed that she felt totally accepted,

P7: they've been incredibly welcoming, they...nobody is trying to get me to join the church or...

INTERVIEWER : *Convert or do something.*

P7 : No pressure or, you know I'm upfront and I...this is who I am, I don't go to church, I'm...don't want to join a church, I don't want to be tied down to anything.

INTERVIEWER : *But you're respected for being you.*

P7 : Ja. And they've been incredibly accepting.

This kind of acceptance is noted in the work of Nell and Grobler's (2014) work on FXoC in the UK. They note that in many instances it was an accepting movement. ‘There are no hidden agendas and

no efforts to make someone a part of “your congregation”, but rather an acceptance and posture of love towards who enters their community’ (Nell and Grobler 2014:755). Part of this acceptance was being able to be real with each other and not wearing some kind of mask as P11 could say,

In other places like outside you will that you’ve got to hold back because you can see this person is not being sincere with you so why must I be sincere with you... so instead of going that path I rather just clamp down and I walk away I’m not going to sit and still entertain anything here with this person because I can see he is not being truthful, it’s all about wearing a mask whereas here at the community there is no mask, everybody is being you, so I don’t need to have a mask. [P11:4]

6.2.3 The (im)possibility of equalising power

Perhaps unsurprisingly little writing exists around the issue of power in FXoC.⁹⁵ Since most academic reflection on new ecclesial communities has taken place in the Northern hemisphere challenges around power that continue to occupy the global South are barely touched on. In my research into the Community Supper at St Peters in Mowbray, Cape Town the issue of power crops up again and again which given the post-*Apartheid* landscape of South Africa is not surprising. The issue of power both in institutional settings and interpersonal relationships continues to erupt into, sometimes, heated and violent confrontations. South Africa is still a divided nation. White privilege and strains of supremacy can be detected in all sorts of places not least the church. Power dynamics and the continued disequilibrium of power is ever present. The community supper that gathers on a Thursday night has a set of values that are often circulated on a A6 piece of paper to new comers who wish to volunteer. The meal is committed to enacting 8 values.

- Everyone is welcome
- We eat a meal together
- We pursue mutual transformation
- We become neighbours and friends by hearing each others stories
- We are a safe space
- We encourage each other in following Jesus
- We work at equalising power

Whilst this list is laudable and is partially being enacted I wonder if the weight of history, our history of dividedness, inequality and alienation is always gnawing at our door when we gather in diversity?

⁹⁵ One notable exception is from Mason, M. 2008. ‘Living in the distance between a ‘community of character’ and a ‘community of question’. in Nelstrop, L & Percy, M. (eds). *Evaluating Fresh Expressions: Explorations in Emerging Church*, Norwich: Canterbury Press:85-104.

One of the community Supper's long-term leader/volunteers narrates something of his understanding of why the meal acts as a counter narrative,

Well, if you look at the majority of the community guests, they're all disadvantaged people from the system of Apartheid. So they are descendants of parents that suffered in the middle of the system, and the result that they're on the streets and in the gutter and in that condition is by no means purely their fault. It's a result of the system that brought them to that point, but they've got to survive it and with a little bit of help maybe they'll get there, that's why I regard the supper as a way of God's because what they do get at the supper, the supper is definitely something bigger than our conventional church. [P5:6]

Whilst this is undoubtedly true underneath the surface the issues around notions of service provision, client/beneficiary-patron relationships and occasional subservience or obsequiousness are often lurking. Practicing mutual transformation and hearing each others stories only happens authentically when those with power consciously enter into a kenotic posture and are prepared let go of their status. During observations over the first few months at the Supper I was distinctly aware of the number of young, white, middle class twenty somethings who were attending the supper in order to 'help'. These volunteers from a well established mega church in the city came with sincere hearts but little reflective awareness of how their presence and assumptions about who was in charge and who needed 'help' could lead to awkward encounters and possibly undo some of the suppers defining contours.

An extract from my fieldnotes dated 7th September 2017

It's chucking it down with rain and has been all day. When I arrive a few guests are lining up outside the hall and I'm shown the back door route by a longer term member. All is calm the kitchen is empty bar a middle aged woman earnestly messaging on her phone. I wander round and look outside the gate. Two young 20 somethings who look like students are asking if this is the right way to the Community supper. I'm an insider already it seems as I show them where to go. Other new volunteers arrive. All from a local non demoninational church in the city that has links to the supper.

P2 is relaxed, easy going...magnanimous even? He also introduces me as someone who is doing research, observing and listening to stories. But I get the sense that having a large group of well dressed exclusively white young people in the space may be occurring more regularly than he would like. P2 uses the phrase, "this meal is an opportunity to lurk."

He also uses the phrase this is a place where we practice being human together several times in the evening. He reminds the volunteers, "the only thing you've got to offer is your curiosity."

P2 tells the new volunteers to go outside and line up with the guests waiting to come in. This remark causes some consternation. As we walk through the kitchen to the front of the hall some volunteers are confused that they have been made to stand in line with other guests. They think there has been a mix up and they should be serving! The idea of equalizing power seems some way off.

The Supper's wide spread story of success and its porous nature means that in any given week there can be an influx of people from outside the usual demographic. Often people come to 'lurk' or to get ideas for their own projects. This can have both positive and negative effects. As P2 describes,

we started getting like these gangs of sort of twenty white upper middle class do-gooders arriving you know and they were mostly only there for like a week [P2:60]

This in turn led to some awkward encounters.

*...my kids were actually the ones that picked it up, Z was all offended, because he does, but he like, he realized that, that these, the young people were arriving and taking over because they were **making the assumption** that if there were beneficiaries, no, no, no if there were bene, like so we try and move away from beneficiary recipient type anyway but they are arriving with that, I get it but they were identifying F and P10 and P10's daughter as those to whom the meal was being provided, rather than those who were part of the service team because their whole framework. [P2:64]*

Being aware of power and eschewing 'innocence' (Boesak and Biko)

Power and their pathologies cannot be ignored in the South African context especially where there is a high potential for re-enacting client-benefactor relationships (as seen above) or perpetuating *Apartheid* era power structures however unseen or hidden they may be. Boesak, in his 1977 book *Farewell to Innocence*, propagates the idea that the farewell to innocence is for white people. 'In order to maintain the status quo, it is necessary for whites to believe, and keep on believing that they are innocent. They are innocent because they just happen to have a superior position in the world' (1977:4). Whilst Boesak was writing over 40 years ago the same 'innocence' continues to be a posture that many white South African inhabit. As I reflected on the complex power dynamics at the Community Supper I wondered if it's still the case. More often than not in my observations over a period of 4 months I was struck how those functioning as table hosts were young, white, privileged

men. Already by sitting at the table and assuming a position of host plays against the Supper's intention of subverting normal power dynamics. Claiming an 'innocence' and an unawareness of what happens when white people position themselves in a space Boesak says will not do. A conscious and deliberate effort is to be made to eschew innocence and give power away. In many ways Biko (1978) offers an even more robust criticism to white power and innocence. Biko asks what type of sacrifice white people would be willing to make in the light of black suffering? Biko (1978:22) speaks of white liberals of being, 'masters of deliberate evasiveness.'

The question often comes up "what can I do?". If you ask him to do something like stopping to use segregated facilities or dropping out of varsity to work at menial jobs like all blacks defying and denouncing all provisions that make him privileged, you always get the answer - "but that's unrealistic!". While this may be true, it only serves to illustrate the fact that no matter what a white man does, the colour of his skin - his passport to privilege - will always put him miles ahead of the black man.' (Biko 1978:23)

This may seem a particularly unfair or acerbic response to young people coming to serve the context of the Supper on one level. In a sense it is. But on another level, it still speaks 40 years after writing of the huge gaps that exist in the realms of privilege and status.

On the other hand, it could be argued that these tables act as a great leveller. The same food is served, each person has a chance to share their news, pain, joys and challenges. And it is obvious that genuine listening was going on. As Sara Savage points out 'the experience of being listened to is so close to the experience of being loved as to be indistinguishable' (Moynagh 2012:252). There appears to be a kind of oscillation effect between postures of humility and the desire for mutual transformative encounter counter balanced with subtle power dynamics that at times take us back to the toxic and corrosive power inequality of the past.

Boesak says that 'power is relational' (1977:53), but 'true power is never to rule over but to *share with* (1977:54). Boesak claims this mirrors a biblical understanding starting in the creation narrative - that God invites human beings to share in **his** power not to dominate but to steward. Jesus operated out of relational, kenotic power rather than the institutional and positional power of the Pharisees and other leaders. Boesak (1977:56) argues that, 'black power means discovering that the white power structure defines the reality of black life.' But the demographic of the Supper is not only about racial power inequalities it is also about the powerlessness of the poor. Many of those attending the Supper have lived on the streets for long periods of time. Part of that powerlessness is manifest in being excluded from mainstream life (Christian 2011:131). That exclusion means being unable to access services (the simple matter of obtaining an ID document can thwart many). Being excluded from opportunities to enter rehabilitation or work readiness programmes. That powerlessness has also at times annihilated self-esteem and dehumanised people. P29 during his interview was aware of the

issues of power but articulated that it was possible to for there to be an equalizing of power around the table on a weekly basis and that the dissolving of middle-class power can allow others the space to lead and take authority.

You have to be intentional about this mental shift where we as the middle class have to try and dissolve our power mentality that we have, and for the poorer class to embody this sense of power. They have more power than they think, around this table. If both parties can do that. That's what I find with N. He obtains this amazing authority at the table, being an elderly gentleman who is much older than those around him, he assumes this authority that is deserved.

Espousing powerlessness and the kenotic trinity (Moltmann)

Annie Kirke (2012) speaks of a posture of powerlessness in mission shaped ministry. She points out that in following the missionary Spirit, 'we have to espouse powerlessness if we are going to truly going to be incarnational as the body of Christ in mission.' Whilst attempts are made at the Supper interpersonal, socio economic and political power structures are always lurking beneath the surface waiting to usurp the Supper's commitment to equalising power. Kwayani (2014:2) too notes that, 'there is always a power dynamic operating when people's needs are met.' He goes on to say that, 'without developing relationships with communities, churches run the risk of helping from a distance instead of 'incarnating' themselves among the people God has entrusted to their care.' Indeed perhaps in the Supper's inception an important posture was lacking. Shier-Jones (2009:123) reminds us that 'pioneering ministry cannot be done by someone who knows what *they* need, it can only be done with a community by someone who shares their need.' In the UK context FXoC have been accused of being middle class and consumer driven by both Percy (2008) and Davidson and Milbank (2010). This is challenged by a report from the Urban Church Fund entitled *Poverty and Fresh Expressions* (Cameron 2012) which narrated and analysed stories of FXoC planted among working class and underprivileged white communities in the UK. Whilst the demographic is different to the South African context the ideas around power come to the surface. Cameron (2012:43) remarks that, 'the approach inherent in fresh expressions of church is for flatter and more fluid structures, and for inclusive and empowering team-working.' It is my sense that this is true of the Community Supper's original pioneer leaders and volunteers especially as the Supper was initiated by the leadership of P1, P2, P3 and P8/35 which reflected a, 'leadership which is about ideas, inspiration and vision rather than setting out clear strategies and objectives' (Cameron 2012:43).

Whilst the early pioneer leaders started with the simple desire to eat a meal and see what happened as the community has developed and gathered a life of its own the original intentions and commitments can appear to fray when others enter the setting.

The local NGO *Abundant Life*⁹⁶ through the work of P29 established the Supper as a place to journey alongside people who were living on the street and struggling with addiction. P29 happily uses phrases like ‘*our pool of benefactors*’ and ‘*a spreadsheet of benefactors we will never delete.*’ [P29:17/20] This type of language stands in contradistinction to the narrative used by P2 who emphasises in interview with the researcher, ‘*like so we try and move away from beneficiary recipient type*’ of language. [P2:64] Paradoxically at the same time the community longs to see lives transformed and there have been mild celebrations and congratulations when it’s announced that at the end of year gathering that some members of *Abundant Life* had,

walked the journey with people into shelters and rehabs, we did like a bit of an audit and over 25 people have been placed from this community into rehabs and into shelters, so thank you to everyone who’s walked journeys with guys and encouraged people to move into shelters and rehabs. [P28]

One of the key problems seemed to be that of values and relationships. Whilst the values of the meal dwell in the *habitus* of the regular community gathered those values are often in need of being reiterated to visitors. Again, P2 says,

but they [white middle class volunteers] don’t necessarily get the value and hospitality that we are not trying to rush the food that was our discovery earlier this year is that we were all feeling rushed by this, slow down. I said to P29 like you have to deal with that because I am not going to, I like we are responsible for this group of people and, and when, and so you know it is something like Pinky has done this for a long time and so she tends to manage the putting out food because she knows what is going on.

Espousing powerlessness in relationships is more than simply show. It mirrors something of the kenotic relationships within the Godhead and therefore if our ecclesiology finds its starting point in the social trinity, we do well to consider it for a moment. Moltmann (2000:115) says ‘through their mutual indwelling the divine persons are giving each other themselves and the divine life in selfless love. The persons empty themselves into one another. What the son is doing by becoming human, according to Philippians 2:6, is nothing other than what he is doing in eternity with regard to the

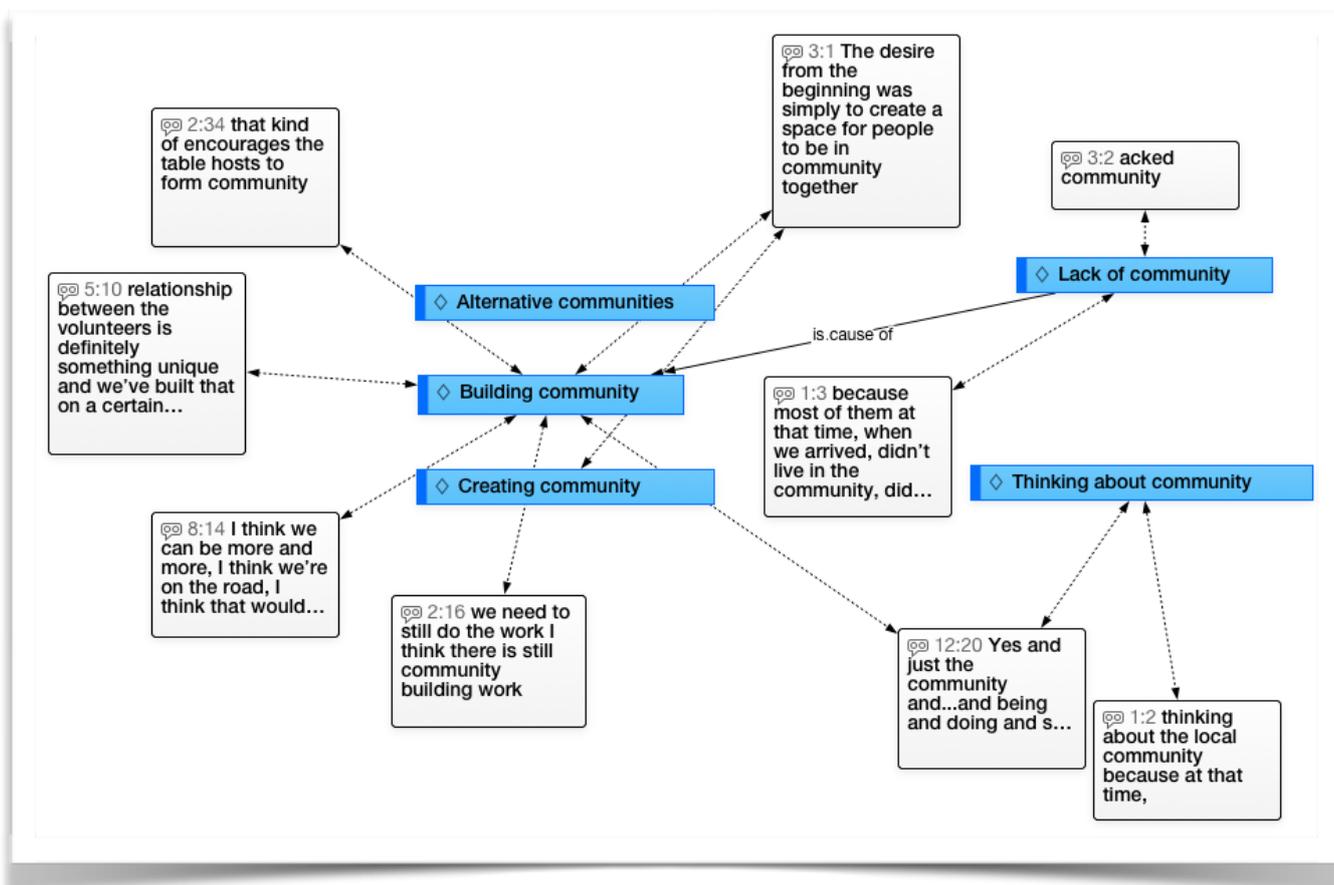
⁹⁶ The original name of the NGO has been anonymised for the sake of this study

Father and the Spirit: giving oneself.’ This commitment to incarnational mission that Kirke speaks of is echoed in the MSC Report (2004:87-89). As already noted in chapter 3 there have been criticisms of the way in which the reports handling of the incarnation is weak and undeveloped. However the MSC Report carefully balances the prevalence of ‘Western Anglicans to only emphasize only one part of the dynamic of the Son’s incarnation. Usage is mainly concerned with a vulnerable identification with others.’ There is far less emphasis placed on the radical cost of the Son. (:88) As already noted above in Moltmann (2000) this can be counter balanced by a focus on the powerlessness which Jesus the Son actualises by willingly taking the form of, ‘a dying crucified servant. If it is the nature of the God’s love to undertake such sacrifice, it must also be the nature of his Church’ (MSC 2004:89).

6.3 Recognising reciprocal relationships

6.3.1 Building community

A third theme identified was the repetitive theme in the interviews around the idea of building community. The codes of alternative community, building community, creating community, lack of community and thinking about community were identified. [See **Figure 10** below]



[Figure 10]

The notion of building community was part of the DNA of the Supper from its earliest inception. It was expressed by pioneer leaders P1 and P3 that there was a distinct lack of community was one of the motivating factors. Although I explored something around community in the section on *Testing ecclesiality* we now move deeper into narrating the genesis of the Supper in that development of community. There appears to be some evidence that leaders, volunteers, guests and saw church as defined as a set of **relationships** rather than a set of **practices**. If ecclesiality in the context of the Supper is relational then exploring the building of those relationships in community is vital.

In this **domain** of recognising reciprocal relationships it would be naive to think the road to building community was straight forward in any way. Over the 6 1/2 years of its existence the Supper has grown from a group of largely church people into a fully diverse and complex gathering. Many weeks

when I was present there was a sort of benign messiness. It was ordered but always had potential to erupt if someone came through the doors who was drunk or high. P1 says that in the early days of the Supper there was a commitment to accepting people in whatever state they appeared. *‘But we also, from the beginning, we’re very clear that we if someone is drunk or high, they also could come in. If they started being violent and creating problems, then they go but they’re accepted for who they are and what particular state they’re in that day. And that was difficult for a lot of people.’* [P1:29] That kind of radical commitment to inclusion was difficult for some early members of the Supper who were largely church people and perhaps had very clear ideas about what acceptable behaviour was required in a church hall!

Some guest’s memories of the early days of the Supper were far from flattering. Long term homeless woman P38 remembers in an excerpt from my interview with her below.

P38: ‘The people who were here that time, this is going about 6 years ago were different to the group now.

Interviewer: So you came right at the beginning.

P38: Yes, they were more wild then.

Interviewer: More wild? (laughter)

P38: Yes, actually they settled, everyone settled down.

Interviewer: What was it like in the early days?

P38: There used to be fights, seriously, nobody had patience for the next one and everybody just wanted their food and if they didn’t get their food it was like your fault and you would be bashed up.

Interviewer: So its very different?

P38: That it looks like everybody has got a bit of manners now. And sensitivity for the next one.

This lack of organisation was due to several issues. Firstly, P1 and P3 started with Supper without proper systems in place. Their sense of urgency, as I’ve narrated earlier, was part of the spontaneity that marks the Supper’s life out. Secondly as P3 remarked to me in a whatsapp⁹⁷ message *‘As I remember, initially things were fairly simple and straightforward; it was only when we got a critical mass of homeless people coming (can’t remember when that was) that things changed, and we had to create systems as we went along depending on what worked. There were chaotic evenings, but I wouldn’t say that the overall flow was chaotic.’* Given this P10 felt there was a space for her to step in and take charge of the organisational aspects of Supper in the early days.

⁹⁷ 7th July 2018

P10: Because some of them, they came, they are under the influence, so.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, because they've been drinking.

P10: Yes, exactly. They just do anything. It was a chaos.

INTERVIEWER: So, was it quite chaotic those first few months?

P10: It was chaotic when they started there, those people came for supper/ dinner.

So, I just helped.

Today P10 continues to play a pivotal role in the organisational leadership of the weekly supper, growing in confidence and helping to be part of the main leadership team. Alongside this P8/35 narrates an example of the potential chaos in the early years and the on-going dangers in building community amongst broken people,

I was really aware of that one night I was standing the door, the front door last year and a guy walked up and he had a big metal stick and he walked over to the tree and he just hit the tree very loudly with it like, and it was, I was like, that could kill, he could kill somebody with this stick. Then I panicked, I was standing at the door thinking, oh, my gosh, if he just walks in this room and just starts busting heads, you know, I realised we do have a responsibility to, we have that many people in the room together with that much mental illness and that much substance abuse and that much stress and stuff coming in from the streets, we do have to take a responsibility, like all of us that are holding the space. [P8:31]

Building a community that will be both heterogeneous on all sorts of levels is a complex and evolving activity. In this section I use Vanier's (1979) classic text *Community and Growth* as well the FXoC literature and also draw on other African theologians to reflect on the nature and complexity of community in the light of the Supper. Jean Vanier's 1979 book *Community and Growth* is borne out of his experiences of community living at L'Arche which began in 1964. Although the community of the Supper do not live together in 'community' some of the insights garnered by Vanier are useful for reflecting on a diverse and disrupted people who come together each week to eat a meal. Vanier (1979:6) says that, 'we can be ourselves without fear or restraint. Community deepens through mutual trust amongst its members.' Vanier (1979:10-11) also points out that deep community relationships have made the transition from 'community for myself' to 'community for others'. This transition from egoism to love from death to resurrection that allows this process of community for others. But Vanier points out that the building of community is a never completely finished. (:13) I argue that on a number of levels people at the community Supper are making this journey from egoism to love in sometimes quite fractured and fragile ways. P1 in a voice message⁹⁸ reminded me of the kind of

⁹⁸ Whatsapp voice message dated 7th July 2018

transitory relationships in the community that were taking place. *‘One of the things we noticed over time was...how people would move from coming along just for the food to coming along for the food and conversation and then carrying to come along for the relationships. And some of them would start serving as part of their involvement.’* This reflects something of the shift into the notion of ‘community for others.’

Vanier (1978:12) points out that, ‘community begins to form when each person tries to welcome and love the others as they are.’ Or even more forcefully, ‘a community only becomes a community when *most* (my italics) members have consciously decided to break these barriers and come out of these cocoons of ‘friendship’ to stretch out their hands to their enemies.’ At the community Supper the pursuit of friendship across the former boundaries of suspicion, deceit and historical inequality appears to take place on a regular basis. As Vanier (:22) notes, ‘God seems pleased to call together communities of people who, humanly speaking, are very different, who come from very different cultures, classes and countries.’

because I think that critical work for us now is building community that isn't just a serving community and a recipient community that we see the emergence of, we see the development of and so that takes us into discipleship I suppose, the sort of authentic leadership and ownership. [P2:14]

Whilst Vanier (1978) offers important reflections on the notion of community I also want to bring into dialogue with Vanier community from an African perspective given that this work is rooted in the Cape Town context. Tschwane (2009:69-76) sets out a useful notion of community from an African perspective following the work of Mbiti, Ogbonnaya and Mugambi. Firstly, Mbiti asks a question of the place of the individual in the community. He argues that in an African traditional life, the individual does not exist alone except corporately (1989:105). For Ogbonnaya, ‘community is seen and experienced as relationships of mutual affirmation, which extends the fundamental connection of human beings beyond that of immediate geographic proximity and immediate biology to include the natural connection of people everywhere (Ogbonnaya 1994:2). For Mugambi the African concept of community comes with an inclusive sense of identity in which the **stranger is made to feel at home**. Here no efforts are spared to help a stranger become adapted to the community he has joined. Moreover, in African culture, ‘communality, relationship and fundamental interconnection underlie the African mode of seeing and being in the world’ (Tschwane 2009:69).

The notion of welcoming the stranger or making the stranger feel at home is evident at the Supper. During my observations over a period of 4 months I often sat next to someone who had come to the Supper for the 1st time and witnessed the welcome from leaders and others.

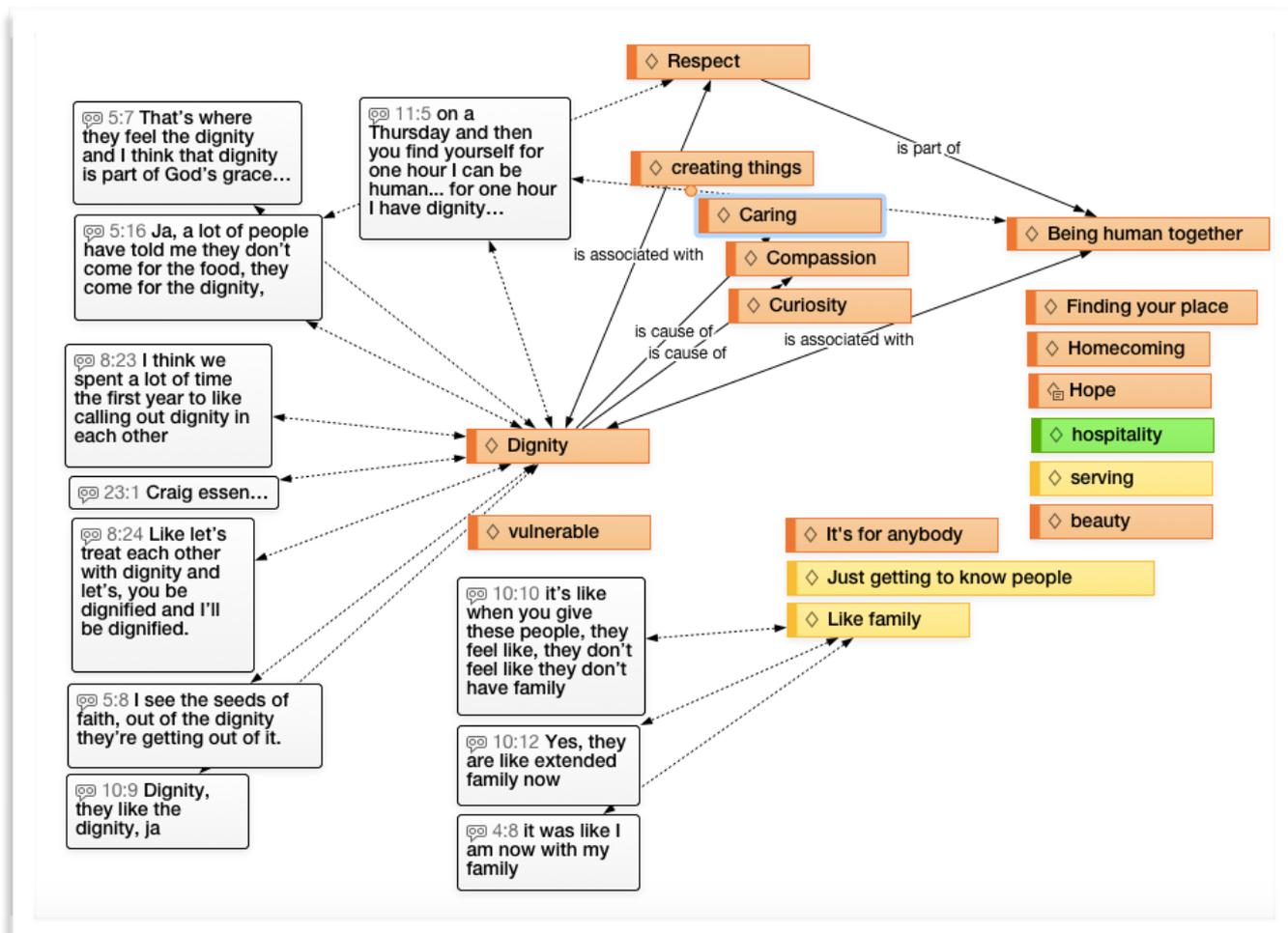
However, these concepts of community are quite broad and some of the FXoC struggles with this level of inclusiveness. The AMWPR reminds us, ‘the essentials of Christian community are defined theologically not sociologically. Christian community is not simply a heightened form of human community but is related in a particular way to Jesus Christ.’ The most intensive form of Christian community is found in gathering round the proclamation of the Gospel and celebration of the sacraments’ (2012:155-156).

Not only is there the messy journey of building a community but there is a sense that the community Supper functions as an alternative community. P2 says, ‘*I think we are to some extent, it is kind of like temporary once a week alternate community like in a sense where once a week there is this sign of something else that opens up the possibility of what could be.*’ [P2:37] In that statement there is both the idea of an alternative community and future eschatological hope. The idea of alternative community comes up in the work of Bosch. As Van Wyngaard (2013) notes, ‘church as alternative community remains a key aspect in understanding the work of David Bosch.’ Although the idea is largely absent in his *Summa Missiologica Transforming Mission* it crops up again and again in his earlier writing. For Bosch (1977a:11-12) the alternative community is marked by radically transformed membership rules where the distinctions between “in-group” and “out-group” no longer matter.’ Being, then, an alternative community at the Supper is about reflecting something of the eschatological hope of the Kingdom. In some small way mirroring the messianic banquet. In its diversity and messiness there is a picture of attempted ‘being human together’ and reflecting the inclusiveness and abundance of the meal envisioned by Jesus in Matthew 22. Van Wyngaard (2013:7) reminds us that for Bosch, ‘when the church seeks to speak to society with a prophetic voice - whether in a process of nation-building or liberation - she needs to tangibly reflect the new community in her life and structures, otherwise it will be of no effect (Bosch 1978:100-101).

6.3.2 Posture of participants

Secondly the relationships that were evidenced in this building of community and communities can be seen more clearly in what I call the posture of participants. The codes of beauty, caring, compassion, creating things, curiosity, dignity, finding your place, home coming, hope, hospitality,

it's for anybody, just getting to know people, like family, respect, serving and vulnerability were arranged under the **pattern** or **factor** of posture of participants. [See **Figure 11** below]



[Figure 11]

In this pattern I hoped to expose the relationships that existed at the Supper as leaders, volunteers and guests journeyed from egoism to love as I used Vanier (1979:10-11) who points out above, 'that deep community relationships have made the transition from 'community for myself' to 'community for others.' The posture of participants in these community relationships started with the the early commitment to call dignity out in each other. P8/35 says that, *'I think we spent a lot of time the first year to, like, calling out dignity in each other. Like let's treat each other with dignity and let's, you be dignified and I'll be dignified, I think that has been kind of enculturated.'* [P8:23] This commitment to calling out dignity in one another was reiterated on a regular basis through the weekly theologising of leaders. An example from my fieldnotes dated 9th November 2017 *'P2 essentially speaks about the ethos behind the meal. It's not about eating and running about but about communing, sharing conversations, listening, showing **dignity** towards one another.'* [P23:1] As the notion of dignity acts as a seed to grow the posture of participants relationally. P38 reminds us of how the posture of

participants grew over the years. P38 *'That it looks like everybody has got a bit of manners now. And sensitivity for the next one.'* As dignity was called out respect, care and compassion grew. P7 says, *'I've noticed incredible compassion among a lot of the people on the street.'* That compassion grows into care and mutual relationships. P11 says,

P11: *I've got to know a couple of guys, a couple of good people, people who are a caring and kind they show interest in my life like what kind of a week I had where I am at in my life, what are my goals for the following week or what do I do with my time. How do I spend my time, do I waste my time or do I do something beneficial with my time and to me that means a lot to me that there are people out there who are concerned about how I spend my time.*

INTERVIEWER: *It's a genuine relationship?*

In these growing postures there too grows a sense of hope and homecoming. P37 says, *'so there's this sense of homecoming and belonging where people view that, view community dinners as the starting point of something good.'* [P39:17] In that homecoming there is also the opportunity to find a place, to find a way of serving. One young white volunteer could say, *'A handful of times I've sat down and sort of received the supper but mostly I like... I enjoy and I find myself doing the serving side of things and the washing up.'* [P6:2]

P1 tells a story that seems to narrate the move that Vanier suggests is evidence of genuine community.

I mean, we've seen a lot of volunteers come and go, and the new ones that arrive from the sort of less diverse, more middle-class churches, maybe I can even give you a closer example. H, bless her cotton socks, just really, she'd never been in situations where she was sitting with homeless people and having conversations and beginning to build relationships. She'd regularly get very freaked out about boundaries, and because she'd never been in situations where she'd had to put boundaries up because everyone in her life was very well behaved. So you know, her faith was like sort of so big but then she went to community Supper and then moving out her faith became some a bit different, as well, and she's actually the one that's got this long-term relationship with the girl that's now settled with her kids. She goes and sees them once a year, she travels all the way to Oudtshoorn, stays with them for a few days.

6.3.3 ‘Tell us your stories’

Drane (2000:133) notes that in the context of post-modern culture in all its paradox and contradiction story is central to the contemporary quest for meaning. The community Supper as well as being a place for building community and alternative community in contradistinction to the consumeristic and globalised world is a place for telling stories. Telling the stories of one another’s lives and hearing and holding those stories without judgment or scorn. Drane (2000:149) again says that, ‘personal stories are more intentional reflections about ourselves and our life journeys. They involve sharing those things we have discovered to be true, and which might in turn be helpful to others as they struggle with the same issues of identity and meaning.’ The Supper seemed to be a place where people could narrate, or tell, their story without fear of rejection.

INTERVIEWER : So it’s breaking that cultural...which is the other kind of places are, you get your food and you go.

P12: Yes.

INTERVIEWER : Whereas this is a whole different thing.

*P12 : Yes, this is stay you know, come, **tell us your stories**, you know, let’s listen, let’s talk. I think when it started it was like that.*

I witnessed the relative ease with which people shared their stories sometimes plotting great parts of their lives with candour usually not experienced in a church context. Over a number of weeks, I sat at a table with N who enjoyed monologuing for me. N’s story was one of growing up in a degree of privilege but because of rebellion, broken relationships and being deemed the ‘black sheep’ of the family he found himself cut adrift from those who actually had the ability to help him, at least financially. Again, an excerpt from my field notes dated 21st September 2017,

N interrupts me and it seems I need to be on a table to really observe. I’m sticking out by placing myself in a corner. Nick monologues tonight - with a little help from me. He narrates his life. Again I’m reflecting on that fact that in 3 weeks of being at the Supper I have heard more about a few peoples lives than I have in a conventional church setting where there is limited space to hear stories. I guess the problem may be that we hear each others stories but that we are not being intentionally invited to find ourselves in another story - the grand narrative of scripture.

My concern during my observations at the Supper is picked up in this last sentence. ‘I guess the problem may be that we hear each others stories but that we are not being intentionally invited to find ourselves in another story - the grand narrative of scripture.’ Again Drane (2000:150) says that a corrective to a sort of myopic and selfish telling of story is to see that, ‘personal stories of Christians

are going to help others on the spiritual journey, it will not be because their journeys are different but because they are the same...broken, fragmented and dislocated. By connecting our personal stories with God's bigger story...we can be empowered in the struggle to find direction, meaning and purpose.'

P37 has lived on the streets with his mum as a child and into his early teens. He had long term experience of the kind of pain and brokenness that most people live with in the rough sleepers community. But he could, '*find level ground at the Supper, I find level ground. You end up not seeing people's statuses.*' [P37:9] He continued

P37: You're sitting next to a person who possibly has had a lot of pain in their life and you don't know their story.

Interviewer: Is it a place to tell stories? Are you hearing people's stories?

P37: It's a place to tell stories especially when you are feeling comfortable enough to do that.

Being able to hear people's pain and the dislocated and broken bits of their lives has great power not least in the South African context where we have largely been so disconnected from one another. As explained earlier, we often have dehumanising views of the *other* because they were shaped implicitly by the *Apartheid* narrative. The weight of history, our divided history, has often stopped us from seeing and hearing one another without prejudice. Again Drane (2000:149) explains that, 'in a world where so many people's individual stories seem to be fragmented and meaningless, the open and honest sharing of personal experiences is one thing above all others that will hold out the possibility of hope.' P5 gives evidence of this by sharing, '*on Thursday Suppers we are all on the same, we're all right on the bottom, we all sit at the same table, eat the same food. Drink the same coffee and we share the same stories, whether it's from a different level but it's the same stories basically.*' [P5:9]

Drane (2000:136) reminds us that, 'stories provide people with a vehicle through which to express themselves at moments of pain and turmoil. As a genre it facilitates the articulation of deep insights and emotions far more easily than detached, rational explanation has ever been able to.' Moreover, Drane argues that by allowing people to share their personal stories they can act as a counter narrative to the, 'narratives that inform our lives to be provided by the phony stories of consumerism' (2000:136).

One particular way of both sharing stories and building community can be seen in funerals. The Supper has seen a number of members die over the past 6 1/2 years and attempted to provide services

for those who might not normally be particularly welcomed in a church community for burial. My fieldnotes for the 1st August 2018 narrate an example

It's a bright but cold Cape Town afternoon. I've come to be present at the funeral of PT a long-term community supper member who was living on the street and died of TB. The wife of P had come to the Supper on the previous Thursday to discuss having some kind of service.

It's good to see old faces and I'm warmly greeted by P2, P3, P8/35, P10, P29 and P5. I'm reminded again of the team who really hold the Community Supper and are committed. The service is due to start at 2.30pm but only gets going around 2.40pm. About 24 people have gathered. Some one explains that today is the day people pick up their SASSA grants so it will be quieter than they hoped or expected.

Pioneer leader P3 starts the service explaining that it will be conducted in English and Afrikaans. The majority of those gathered are probably first language Afrikaans. He explains that the whole church, the church that gathers in Thursdays and the church that gathers on Sundays are together in remembering PT. Is this a sign that there is growing recognition of a kind of symbiotic relationship between these ecclesial places. It feels like the mixed economy is working to some extent.

P3 uses the opening sentences of the funeral service in the 1989 prayer book the rest of the service is informal. P2 swaps between Afrikaans and English inviting people to come and share stories of P. As the service runs some people arrive. The stories are mostly in Afrikaans, a few in English, one is Xhosa is translated by P10. PT's nickname was Green Eyes. He was obviously well known in the Mowbray area but grew up in Ocean View. He'd been living on the streets for about 20 years. P2 explained to me how he'd had a long conversation with PT 3 weeks ago about being known and being remembered. P2 gives a mini sermon floating between English and Afrikaans. PT's wife is visible appreciative and makes comments back and forth. During the prayers she is weeping openly.

I know from speaking to leaders of the Supper that over the years there have been funerals for people living on the street who had made the Supper their home. This feels like an important ministry in itself. Where to the poorest and most vulnerable street people go when someone dies. I'm guessing some churches might not be very interested.

I am also reflecting on how P2 and especially P3 held a space and didn't impose the full Anglican Prayer book service on this group of bedraggled and broken people. The formality of a normal requiem mass that is often standard fare in the diocese would have been so inappropriate, confusing and possibly bewildering for those gathered. But P3 used some key sentences and phrases lifted from the prayer book that fit well. But it's the improvisation often parts of the service that really spoke to the congregation.

Community within community

Not only was the interest around stories apparent but when asked if there were stories to be told about the supper those interviewed shared how sub communities or table communities were being formed within the overall community. Some table hosts worked hard in continually connecting with the same guests. P5 says, *'I would say that the idea was that we should have a table host and somebody should try and maintain a certain table each week, so that we need to have some sort of connection. So I chose to have the table in the corner and over that period, over the last 3 years.'* [P5:11/12] These table communities have developed to, in a few instances, tell their own stories. P2, P3, P5, P4 and P8 all made mention of a significant event of attending a Cape Town City football game together at the stadium. *'He [P5] arranged a trip I don't quite know how it came about that it was, it was around his table, the table he is at every week, he arranged a trip, trip to the football.'* [P3:35]

But in the last year I've found that I've had about four or five guests which was developing a sort of relationship and it was funny enough that the one guy is a Barcelona Soccer fan, and with Benni McCarthy becoming the new Cape Town Coach, I mentioned to him that I would like to take him to Cape Town Stadium and go watch the game together. But then P2 said, no, he'd like to go along and so it ended up with us being about a party of 13 with about five, six homeless guests along. The way God worked around that was that the neighbour two roads down phoned the office, the church office and asked, she says she feels the need to do some sort of community service, is there anything she can do for the church. And G said no, she can cook, and she wasn't a trained cook, she came in and she started cooking beautiful meals, she owns a business, Shuttle Tours, and she offered to pay the tickets for all the people going to Cape Town Stadium and to supply the shuttle and supply a guide. So we landed up going on a tour first around the Waterfront in the late evening lights, which was a treat for everybody, and then we went to the game and we thoroughly enjoyed it. It was raining, it was storming but we thoroughly enjoyed it.

The trip to the soccer developed a community within the community and the sharing of life together outside of the normal confines of the Supper seems to have deepened relationships. P8 narrates,

M I've hardly noticed, so anyway, she went to the soccer game and ever since then she's so friendly with me, I talked to her that night, I spent a little bit of time talking, she was a tough nut to crack actually but now I see her around and I've run into her a few times walking around Mowbray, we get huge hugs. I see her sitting on the grass somewhere with a group of people from the dinner that I know go over to them, she gets up and she comes over and gives me a big hugs and she talks to me, she is so affectionate and warm. She obviously feel connected to me now in a way. [P8:22]

6.4 Fathoming food in the Kingdom

6.4.1 Fresh Expressions and Food

The story of food in FXoC is important. The original MSC report (2004) listed cafe church as one of the 12 new ecclesial forms seen developing. Moynagh (2017:19) suggests that this is in fact part of the 'innovation' around new contextual churches by modifying the rules of the game. But perhaps it's the idea of cafe church that has become most prevalent in the UK context. Moynagh (2017:19) says, 'take cafe church for example. What made it new? Many would say that it was the joining together of two concepts previously kept apart: cafe and church.' Examples of Cafe Church⁹⁹ abound and continue to be one of the primary forms of connecting with people from outside the church setting. *The Day of Small Things* report (2016) from the Church Army research unit sought, through quantitative and qualitative research to identify prevailing commonality amongst the fastest growing FXoC from 21 dioceses across the UK. The report identified cafe church as, 'the 2nd most common type and a 1/3rd continue to grow in size. They were relatively weak at drawing the non-churched, and the third highest for attracting Christians' (2016:123). 'They are 5th most likely to have taken no steps in promoting discipleship. Perhaps the *laissez-faire* culture of cafe life contributes to this. But all of them have taken some routes in evangelism. Cafe church is among the least popular choice for catholics and liberals but above the average among the other traditions' (2016:123). In the cafe church model there are perhaps two distinctions that need to be made. **Firstly**, cafes that establish themselves in a church building. A good example is host cafe @ moot¹⁰⁰ based at St Mary Aldermary Church, in the heart of the City of London, 'serves direct trade coffee hand roasted by Mission Coffee Works. We brew loose leaf teas from *We Are Tea*, our pastries are delivered via bicycle from the *Little*

⁹⁹ <http://www.cafechurch.net> based in Crewe.

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.moot.uk.net/host/>

Bread Pedlar and cakes come from *Artisan Foods*.’ This falls decidedly into the petit bourgeois consumer driven networked communities of young adults in central London and seems entirely appropriate. **Secondly**, are churches that establish themselves in cafes. Cafe church @ Costa¹⁰¹ of which Guisborough Methodist is one example. This mode of cafe church seeks to contextualise by removing the potential obstacle of people entering a church building. However, whilst both these modes of church do help non-churched people find places to ask spiritual questions and potentially combat social alienation and loneliness they do not really deal with the issue of hunger. Moreover, in the 2016 *The Day of Small Things* Report it was noted that cafe church model, as seen above, often failed to connect with the non-churched and was not good at promoting discipleship. The cafe church’s relationship with food is, in fact, fairly ambiguous. Food is not central to its identity but rather connecting with life style patterns of middle-class consumers. Whilst some cafe churches might say they help people think about social justice issues of fair trade the whole idea of being in need and being hungry is a non-issue.

Whilst cafe church models have been relatively easy to replicate perhaps more difficult is putting food at the centre of the story. An important example of the centrality of food and eating is Barbara Glasson’s bread church.¹⁰² Glasson’s bread church is seen following the mission-shaped flow of prayer, listening, forming community, discipleship and church taking shape as something of a *par excellence*. Gathering round the making, baking and breaking of bread has developed a faith community described as,

Everyone is welcome to join us. We have job seekers, homeless people, businessmen and businesswomen, single mums and single dads with children, asylum seekers, retired people, teenagers, people with mental health problems, the list is very long!¹⁰³

Bread Church (officially known as Somewhere Else) doesn’t necessarily deal with hunger but it does put the making of food in community at the forefront. Another FXoC that places making food as a central concern is cook@chapel¹⁰⁴ based in the diocese of Oxford. This is a rural context as opposed to *Somewhere else* which is urban. cook@chapel was inspired by Glasson’s work in Liverpool. Pioneer leader Katherine said ‘I love the idea of cooking with people as Jesus shared food with his disciples. We are in a rural area. I love the idea of cooking with people as Jesus shared food with his disciples,’¹⁰⁵ Fourthly an interesting idea being developed in FXoC US is dinner church¹⁰⁶ which operates out of the simple axiom, ‘there was a time when Christians gathered around tables, included

¹⁰¹ <http://www.guisboroughmethodistchurch.org.uk/costa-cafe-church-at-costa-guisborough/>

¹⁰² <https://www.somewhere-else.org.uk>

¹⁰³ <https://www.somewhere-else.org.uk/our-community/>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwV8o6zGuOU>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/food-thought-fresh-expression/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://freshexpressionsus.org/product/welcome-dinner-church/>

the strangers and the poor, ate together, and talked about Jesus.’ It’s this final mode of FXoC and food that the community Supper finds its theological home.

Whilst the Supper has developed over the past 6 years into a liminal ecclesial space or a community marked by ‘ecclesial grace’ (Watkins and Shepherd 2014:110). It continues to be a place where food and eating together are central to the gathering. There are soup kitchens across the city of Cape Town but the Community Supper is something different.

6.4.2 Not a Soup Kitchen

One of the intriguing notions that cropped up in interviews with both guests and volunteers was quite how different the community Supper was in the spectrum of food provision services in the city. P1 spoke of how the Supper was, ‘*not so much an alternative community but an alternative to a soup kitchen.*’ [P1:17] The idea that the Supper is not primarily a food provision space seemed to be iterated by both guests, volunteers and leaders. Pioneer leader P3 said ‘*we need to keep re emphasising the loving service and the forming community aspect so it is not a food provision program.*’ [P3:6] The Supper breaks the usual relationship client/beneficiary relationships that can be so prevalent in the city. P29 who had long term experience of working as a volunteer in homeless shelters in the South Suburbs noted that ‘*Most soup kitchens I had attended before were very much outside, they were very impersonal, they were more like about feeding people.*’ [P29:2]

The typical food provision services can, as noted above, put needy, hungry and homeless people in a position of religious acquiescence as they feel obliged to ‘perform’ or act in obsequious ways in order to secure a plate of food. P6 observed that ‘*there are a lot of people who do value what is done here that isn’t done typically in a food provision environment. That is I suppose a consistent highlight if I can put it like that it’s a good thing about each night.*’ [P6:4]

In order to break this these kinds of inauthentic performance from vulnerable people the Supper takes a significant break each year which stops it from, as P2 puts it, being a food security initiative to be an essentially relational space.

‘People often ask the question, why such a long break, and I think it falls into the space...and I say it over and over again, but it falls into the space of us being not being a food security initiative, we are not trying to solve [indistinct] and we’re living in the space of hospitality and we are living in what it means to be welcoming to people and to enter into lives together.’

But as we have seen the Supper is more than a soup kitchen but the actual idea of providing food for people's physical need shouldn't be overlooked. There are hungry people who do need physical nourishment.

'I've stated in the previous section that we aren't a soup kitchen. But in some fundamental ways I believe we are. Every week when we have the hall ready and the door is opened to the people waiting to come in, there's a power division. There is a separation between those of us who organise the meal or arrive to offer help as 'volunteers' – mostly privileged and pale-skinned; and those of us who live on the streets or living in temporary or insecure housing – mostly not formally or regularly employed, and mostly with darker skin tone.' [P35:12]

Out of these questions need to be asked about what sets the Supper apart from other places in the city attempting to provide food for the hungry. I list them as **Decent food, Table fellowship or having Supper with friends.**

6.4.3 Decent food

'P8 runs this good food club and in the mist of that we were wondering how do we, how do we get decent food into this story as well so that the food is dignified not just the conversations.' [P2:49]

The story of *decent food* in the context of the Community Supper is more than quantity but a step back to reassessing quality and seeking to ask deeper questions about not merely eating, but what is being eaten. We live in an era of industrialised, mass produced food. Food has become commodity. The irony of overconsumption by some coupled with a lack of nourishing life-giving food for others reveals often what a bad relationship many have with food. As Wirzba (2011:74) says, 'when food is reduced to commodity and we to consumers, it is inevitable that our primary concern that food be inexpensive, convenient and plentiful in supply.' What marked the Supper out as distinctive in the realm of food provision as remarked on above was not just in terms of the performative but in what is actually eaten. An extract from a volunteer,

P10: *And I like it cause the food is fresh and it's good.*

INTERVIEWER: *It's good food?*

P10: *It's like a takeaway.*

INTERVIEWER: *Is that different to other soup kitchens? Have you seen other soup kitchens because the food quality is not good, or?*

P10: *Ja. Food quality is not good. Some of it, if it's donated, it's expired from the shops.*

INTERVIEWER: *Oh, okay. So, it's food that's gone past it's expiry date?*

P10: *Yes. That's why the shop, they just give, they think, no, I don't want this food, it's expired. So, I must give it away.*

INTERVIEWER: *Give it away to poor people?*

P10: *Poor people, yes.*

P10 could compare her own experience of a township based soup kitchen in Langa to the the Supper. *'Compared to the one in Langa, called the soup kitchen, it was different because there they give people, they take, they come in and put their names in.'* She explained that the soup kitchen in Langa did not encourage the eating of food together but that people would simply pick up their food and take it home. *'there is no conversation, they don't ask them, what's your problem, whatever.'* The conversations and resultant relationships dovetail into the idea of eating good food together.

Wirzba (2011:xiii) says, 'to eat in a way that is mindful of God is to collaborate with God's own primordial sharing of life in the sharing of food with each other. It is to participate in forms of life and frameworks of meaning that have their root and orientation in God's caring ways with creation.' At Community Supper eating food that has been sourced from the good food club which P8¹⁰⁷ calls a, 'solidarity food purchase group' which consists of 45 households that try to buy directly from producers as is possible cutting out supermarkets and middle men.' The Good Food Club takes seriously the needs to develop the following.

- "Supporting local farmers, producers and suppliers: We want to support farmers and producers who are local to our region, or as close as possible.
- Just treatment of employees: We want to support farmers and producers who uphold the dignity of their workers/employees and pay them a fair wage.
- Ethical farming and husbandry methods: We value and support farming methods that are kind and considerate to the environment and the livestock.
- Source good wholesome food and produce: We want to find good, wholesome food and produce, which we distribute within the club. We like to source organic produce whenever possible, when it is available locally.

¹⁰⁷ Whatsapp voice message 14th June 2018

- Relational – we value our relationships with each other as club members, so having a cap on the number of households is important. And we value our relationships with the producers we buy from.
- Community: Building a sense of community within the club is important. It is helpful to decide on a geographical area and keep club membership within that area. Out of this food club network other things can grow and develop like advocacy, awareness, cooking clubs or gardening clubs, for example.
- Access and Empowerment: we want to equip people with information that assists them in making good choices as consumers and giving people access to good food across the socio- economic spectrum.

Moreover, this buying cooperative has a donation option which allows people to donate directly to the Supper. In June 2018 the monthly gift was around R2000. This money has to be used to buy ethically sourced organic produce (usually meat) to be used at the weekly Supper.

An extract from my fieldnotes dated 17th September 2018,

P2 says, "it's been a holy mystery that we have resources." He also reminds volunteers that part of the expression of hospitality is not getting the worst food but people belonging to a buying club add money to their bill and meat is free range/fair trade.'

This can be problematic as Wirzba (2011:xiii) points out, 'in advanced industrial societies, where speed, convenience, and cheap prices have become the most valued characteristics in food consumption, it is hardly surprising that eating has become thoughtless and irresponsible.' In a nation like South Africa where there continues to be gross inequality, malnutrition, and cheap bad food is the order of the day, inculcating a new set of values around food can be challenging. Some members of the volunteer team lean towards purchasing cheap chicken because it will provide more meals. But this is in contradistinction to the values behind the meal. The statistics of how many meals per month are provided are never recorded since that is not the primary reason for gathering.

I sense that the Supper goes some way to correcting, or perhaps creating, an alternative narrative about food, community and hospitality. As P10:5/6 and P3:43 pointed out in their interviews other soup kitchens use food past sell by dates. The Supper seems not only to offer a space of hospitality but an ethic of detoxifying from the usual bad relationship with food. Could the Supper be a place where people not only detoxify from performative and deceptive religiosity but also detoxify the body from eating food that has expired or is of poor quality?

6.4.4 Table fellowship or having supper with friends

‘It’s a community meal. It’s the equivalent of having supper with friends.’ [P32:5]

Whilst the Supper is not a soup kitchen and works hard to provide decent food a factor that cropped up again and again in interviews relates to the idea that of table fellowship. Whilst I have explored sometimes complex power dynamics around the tables on occasion that does not mean one should dismiss the fellowship that takes place despite the past. Martin Jones in his intriguing work *Feast: Why humans share food* explores from an archaeological perspective the social and physical imperative of gathering to share food. Towards the end of the book he notes that, ‘It is as if the most treasured ancient ritual of the gathering in a conversational circle to share food ‘died’ at some point during that later twentieth century, displaced by an antisocial, commercial jungle’ (Jones 2007:281). South Africa’s *Apartheid* history has been instrumental in the breakdown of the nuclear family. As I pointed out in chapter 2 the internal colonialism of South Africa was unique in that the colonisers and colonised lived side by side. This meant that in order to continue the subjugation of one people over another laws were created to divide people in every conceivable way. Moreover the need to create vast cheap labour resources (mostly for the mining industry) for on going propping up of the colonial system meant the task of dehumanising black people as a result increasingly the table is not the focal point of the end of the day for many families, as with eating food, that lack nutrition and filling up on junk, more and more people eat on the run. The art of dining at a table is dying.

6.4.5 Table fellowship in the time of Jesus

Of all the gospels perhaps, Luke’s has perhaps the clearest succession of stories around food and fellowship. Robert Kerris (2006:14) suggests that in Luke’s Gospel, ‘Jesus is either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal. - You can eat your way through Luke.’ Jesus is called a glutton and a drunkard a friend of sinners and tax collectors.¹⁰⁸ In his interactions with people around the table Jesus is doing some unusual and unexpected things. Things that I suggest are mirrored in the life of the life of the Community Supper. P2 often curated the meal as a eucharistic act. From an interview he says, *‘on the one hand I see the whole meal, if we think about communion, I see the whole meal is an expression of communion and those are expression are Eucharistic.’ [P2:27]* This relates to how Patterson and Banks (2013:435) understand eucharists. ‘According to early traditions, [eucharists] relate as much to ordinary meals and general dietary disciplines as to special religious ceremonies. This local and every day emphasis meant that some witnesses of earliest traditions do not recognize which meals are “Eucharists” and which are not.’ Of all the meals Jesus partakes in they all are, rooted in, and reflect the passover meal.’

¹⁰⁸ Luke 7:34

Whilst there is not scope in this work to make a detailed account of all meals, I do particularly focus on the idea of Jesus associating with outcasts, misfits and broken people through the gospels. McCormick (2004) helps to put the meals of Jesus and the notion of table fellowship in their historical Greco-Roman context (2004:41). McCormick points out that, 'Jesus does a good deal of his teaching at meals not just in instruction but how he conducts himself.' However, Jesus table fellowship has an upside down flavour but this can only be understood in the context of the place of meals and eating in the ancient Greco Roman world. In Jesus day the symposium was the formal banquet model for the perfect or ideal meal. A rich evening of conviviality and conversation. Only free men were allowed to recline at these meals (women and slaves had to sit) and guests took their place around the room according to their rank (McCormick 2004:41). The symposium served as a school for manners and the rules of etiquette were seen as ideals of how people should treat companions, strangers, and those of different class or social standing (:42). Most of the meals Jesus attended in the gospels followed a similar structure of the symposium but he subverts the expectations and dismantles the hierarchies that existed in those contexts. McCormick (2004:47-48) notes that Jesus new type of hospitality, 'imitates God's hospitality and that means sitting down at the table with the poor and needy, breaking bread with them as out companions and welcoming them into our homes and communities as guests.' That radical hospitality continued into the early church's self-understanding. An extract from the *Disascalia Apostolorum* a 3rd century text gives clear instruction for bishops, 'if a poor man or woman should arrive and there is no place for them, then you, the bishop, with all your heart provide a place for them, even if you have to sit on the floor.' in McCormick (2004:49) How are these biblical and historical patterns of table fellowship and hospitality witnessed at the community Supper? Wepener and Barnard (2010:204) in ethnographic work amongst a rural AIC in KZN note two important things that, 'firstly hospitality seems in a way related to the african spirit of ubuntu.' Secondly hospitality in that context was evidenced by a meal with the pastor of the AIC. As part of pioneer leader P2 regular pre-Supper gathering he reminded the volunteers, '*we're living in the space of hospitality and we are living in what it means to be welcoming to people and to enter into lives together. Sit at a table and get to know someone.* [P28:2] The spirit of Ubuntu outlined in chapter one from the work of Tutu (1999) and Mbaya (2011) dovetails into the ideas of McComick that it is, 'God's hospitality and that means sitting down at the table with the poor and needy, breaking bread with them as our companions.' The table fellowship that happens on a Thursday night acts as a powerful way of undoing hierarchies, subverting narratives around who has power and allows the voices other those previously subjugated to speak, laugh, cry and sing. This in turn functions as a tool develop Ubuntu. Again Tutu (1999) reminds us, 'I would not know how to be a human being at all except (that) I learned this from other human beings. We are made for a delicate network of relationships, of interdependence.' The idea of having supper with friends around the table triggered a kind of nostalgia for some of the guests and volunteers. P4, a middle-aged woman who grew up in

Springs in the Northern Cape has brothers and sisters but can't go back home because of her situation. She formerly worked at the Mount Nelson in the kitchens. The Supper seems to function like a memory trigger back to her family's own kitchen table. *'What I can say, is personally I like it not just for the food, I have met some people, real people. Like they're really good people and they take me a lot back to... way back and what I see in them is sometimes things that I miss.'* [P4]

Again P11:3 could express that the Supper was a space where outcasts were accepted and given a seat at the table both physically and metaphorically. He said that during the week he felt, *'more like an outcast more like you are the dregs of society and things like that so nobody has got time to find out where do you come from, what happened to you.'*

Carrying on the narrative P11 says,

it's like you have your back against the wall and then come on a Thursday and then you find yourself for one hour I can be human... for one hour I have dignity I sit at the table I'm not sitting on the pavement on the street and having a meal. I'm having a meal that is made with love it's not scrap that I'm eating. [P11:5]

Perhaps the weekly Supper is a place where solidarity is enacted? Perhaps the Supper is a place where there is an opportunity to practice being companions together. Many who gather at the Supper may not have had a meal with their own family for years. For others there is trauma linked to the idea of eating around a table.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps the pain of loss is too much for some. Regardless the tradition bears witness to the importance of these ideas of eating and drinking together the future promised banqueting table of God. A particularly poignant piece of liturgy from the CofE morning prayer says,

*in your loving mercy bring to your table
all who are fearful and broken,
all who are wounded and needy,
that our hungers may be satisfied*¹¹⁰

Some FXoC in the UK context have been accused of using food as a ploy to get people in the door or as a way of drawing a crowd. Urwin (2008:40) notes FXoC that, 'loads up tables with cakes and goodies to entice the punter and indeed practices hospitality is not enough of a sign. It is not a true foretaste of the messianic banquet.' One might argue that the Supper may be an example of such a

¹⁰⁹ A friend recently recalled how his foster children found sitting around a table to eat a meal too traumatic and would nearly always take their food off to eat alone or save for later.

¹¹⁰ A refrain from morning prayer <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-in-daily-prayer/morning-prayer-contemporary-saturday-14-july-2018>

ploy. But the emphasis at the Supper is on relationships and there is certainly no loading up of tables with cakes and confectionary.

Lastly in this section I want to suggest from the work of Ross (2008) that perhaps this practice of hospitality is both eschatological, in that it seeks to open up a foretaste of the messianic banquet, but that it is missiologically too. Ross (2008:169) says that, ‘shared meals are central to hospitality.’ For Ross (2008:169), ‘when we eat together, as we let down our guard and share stories, we begin to create relationship and this is at the heart of mission – our relationship with God and neighbour.’ A missiology that takes seriously food, dining and shared meals reflects something of Jesus’ daily life rhythm in the New Testament. This missiology is a commitment to joining God in his world even in its brokenness, dysfunctional relationships and continuing hegemony where the powerful exclude the vulnerable and weak from a place at the table. As developed early in section 6.3 Ross (2008:170) develops the idea of hospitality as a way of seeing one another. Ross goes on to suggest that poverty is a good host. Because poverty is lack it enables us to be needy and needful. More than that mission-shaped hospitality creates room. In this sense it reflects the Trinitarian Godhead who make room for one another (2008:173).

In this section I have outlined how the community Supper takes food seriously. It takes food seriously by making sure meals are of good quality and meat is sourced ethically. In this way it acts as a counter narrative to the commodification of food. The Supper is also a help people practice table fellowship.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to set out the data analysed in a critical and novelistic way always been conscious of LeCompt and Schensul’s (2013) important advice that ethnography, ‘reduces data to a story ethnographers can tell; interpretation tells readers what the story means (:2). I have taken this concept very seriously in the chapter seeking to allow the themes of improvisation and performance and the postcolonial to surface when discussing issues of ecclesiality and power. Tracing the themes of emergent innovation in the supper’s development in the light of work by Moynagh (2017). Following Vanier (1979) I hoped to highlight how the supper was a place where volunteers, guests and leaders moved from ‘community for myself’ to ‘community for others’. In fathoming food in the kingdom I sought to show how finding a place at the table was not simply a metaphor but a ‘lived’, and often ‘messy’ experience for many gathered as they felt genuinely accepted and entered into some form of mutual transformation.

I purposely used direct quotations from some of the most vulnerable I interviewed to shape sub headings in order to allow those voices previously subjugated, and pushed to the margins, an opportunity to cry or sing out.

I now turn to the conclusion offering a reflection on the most salient points of, not only chapter 6, but of the whole thesis and my own experience as a practitioner working on the ground. I also include some thoughts on additional areas of research that are needed in light of the research I have undertaken here.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Towards an Authentic Fresh Expressions of Church in ACSA

In chapter 6 I attempted to show that an authentic FXoC in South Africa is a fragile and liminal community. The Supper in many ways reflects the continued paradox and complexity of the nation, city and suburb in which it has rooted itself. The Supper oscillates between being a place of hope, homecoming, celebration and a genuine empathic space some weeks and on other occasions revealing the sinful and brokenness of the church militant.

By following, somewhat haphazardly, the serving first journey denoted by Moynagh (2017) the Supper has grown from a group of 20 people to well over 120 meeting every week over the space of nearly 7 years. The ideas around improvisation and performance are particularly important in structural ways. All the pioneer leaders interviewed [P1, P2, P3 and P8/35] were comfortable operating in a ‘make it up as you go along’ kind of way. The idea that no one particularly knew what the form and rhythm of the community would eventually look like but all were committed to following the missionary Spirit continues to play out in the Supper’s life and growth.

The sensitivity to which pioneer leaders handled the development of a liturgical flow of the Supper is to be commended. As noted in the section on *Liturgy emerges from a wound* the leadership listened and did not rush the opportunity to, ‘to put credal words on their lips, until they have some understanding of them and consent to them’ (Cray 2012:15). By allowing the woundedness of the Supper to be the starting point for a liturgical shape the gradual development of the weekly order has grown.

In terms of performance, again, there are two particularly interesting areas to note. **Firstly**, turning the notion of performance on its head I have tried to argue that the Supper acts as a place where people can detox from the need to act in obsequiously religious ways. The need to detox from performing in order to secure a plate of food is vital in order to develop a community of faith committed to unmasking and being ‘real’ together. **Secondly**, performing at the supper can be an expression of being able to shout, dance, sing, cry and laugh. In a way there is room to perform the faith in unusual ways. At communion every other week are gathered a motley crew, a bunch of *vagabonds* as P12 named the community. Informality and spontaneity are the order of the day whether in the impromptu slightly drunken singing of a hymn, the assortment of instruments being played or children running through the meal. The need to conform to a set of agreed religious behaviours is eschewed in order to let people bring their gifts even in messy and chaotic ways. Those who have often been rejected or sidelined or are in some way the left overs of the colonial and *Apartheid* structures as Lartey (2012) says, ‘are invited to articulate their own **authentic** voice. Subjugated voices with despised knowledge

are given room at the postcolonial table.’ The issues of performance and improvisation leads us to consider briefly being a church in the postcolonial continuum.

As noted, earlier Pato’s 1989 essay, now close to 30 years old, still highlights some of the issues around *Becoming an African church* from an Anglican and South African perspective. Pato (1989:159) asks, ‘why is it taking such a long time for an authentic African church to emerge?’ He acknowledges an, ‘acute awareness that the Anglican communion in southern African is a church still dominated by European Christian forms. (:159). Pato (1989:163) argues that there have been failures by following an adaptation model. ‘Adaptation as it is currently embarked upon reflects the repulsive presupposition of a theology of mission in which Christianity is seen as a cultural tradition. A confrontation between Christianity and Africa is seen as an encounter between the West and Africa.’ (1989:163) Pato asks, ‘is the eventual product of this process a genuinely African in form and character, or is it a subtle form of western domination?’

Pato (1989:171) says that, ‘the majority of black Anglican Christians have been largely influenced by European Christianity particularly in the area of spirituality and worship.’ Whilst this is not inherently negative there are questions about the importation of certain spiritualities and patterns of worship that have not been critically reflected upon but simply taken on. A postcolonial reading of some of these practices of worship which largely reflect the anglo catholic spirituality of the province might be seen as what Bhabha (1994) calls *mimicry*. Bhabha (1994:85) says that, ‘mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge.’ In mimicry the colonial subject seeks to find identity in a mirroring and reflecting back on the symbols and patterns of the coloniser. But Bhabha (following Lucan) points out that in fact this mimicry is a camouflage not a harmonisation of repression of difference. In mimicry there is an ambivalence (almost the same but not quite). This does not merely ‘rupture’ the discourse but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a ‘partial’ presence. The colonial subject is, ‘almost the same but not *white*.’

ACSA’s partial inability to throw off its colonial past and develop a truly postcolonial church is related to its consistent location of ecclesial models and spirituality rooted and re-routed in 19th century middle class English Anglo Catholicism. The mimicking of this ecclesial and spiritual discourse and in patterns of worship and polity continues. Goedhals (1989:105-126) could ask if there has been a shift from paternalism to partnership in the last 150 years of Anglican life in southern Africa? In terms of liturgical life Houston and Kruger (2017:19) lament the continued hegemony of English in the complex revision process for a new Prayer Book. They note that the, ‘feel of the liturgy is, therefore, more Western rather than dynamically African.’ And that, ‘pursuing a common catholic voice, rather than expressing a diversity of voices, has proved to be disastrous in the past’ (Houston and Kruger 2017:20). This kind of liturgical and ecclesial rigidity and hostility seems to play out

across the Province. The community Supper is a humble example of an attempt to decolonise the church by being a church that has emerged out of listening and serving a locale. A liturgy has sprung from below out of the woundedness of the people gathered. It continues to be a place where men, women and children experience a radical inclusivity and are on journeys of discipleship. Only an ‘ecclesial grace’ at this juncture in the Supper’s genesis, in all its frailty, will allow the possible emergence of a mature expression of church.

What of the Supper’s transformative and mission shaped contours?

The transformative aspects of the Supper can be seen on both a personal, human level and on an ecclesial structural level. The Supper is replete with stories of personal transformation. P37 narrates a story of J who is a not untypical. The transformative story of J is but one example of people who gather at the Supper and are on journeys back to into mainstream life.

J ended up saying, ‘I’m finding my way back, and I’m finding my way back.’ And he kept on saying these words and it kind of went past my ears and then I recaptured it and I’m wondering what does he mean by saying ‘I’m trying to find my way back’. So I asked him and he said ‘I’m trying to get back to where I was and I’m building a life for myself. He says ‘I’m creating things out of my own’. And so a few days later I was walking down in Obs and there he is in a coffee shop, working, and he was making coffee. He had this skill that he could make coffee, really good coffee with smiley faces and the foam on top. [P37]

This kind of story sums up the transformational reality of a number of guests. Others have successfully been through rehabilitation centres and have remained free from substance abuse. P29 has taken a leading role in helping many through that process as well as helping others into work readiness programmes. *We have a guy just come back now. He’s one year clean from a 15 year heroin addiction as of the 12th December 2017. We met him here and he’s now living with his sister in Mitchells Plain. [P29]* But transformational processes on a personal level can also be seen in the equalising of power at the Supper. This is what Ganiel (2007:3) has called the process of, ‘changing relationships between previously antagonistic groups, dismantling unequal socio-economic structures.’ It’s important not to be naïve about the accomplishments of the Supper but not to belittle them at the same time. This dismantling happens in patchy and often sporadic ways when those who previously might have no cause to sit at a table and have a meal together do so. As outline in the section on *Pathologies of power* there are moments of profound *seeing* taking place at the Supper. Coupled with this is a reminder of the inability, at times, of those who hold power not to recognize how their very presence can often reinforce the unbalanced and corrosive power dynamics.

Being mission-shaped sits at the core of the Supper's identity. As Taylor (1972:3) so eloquently reminds us that, 'the chief actor in the historic mission of the Christ church is the Holy Spirit. He is the director of the whole enterprise.' It's my sense that the Supper has taken seriously trying and, surely at times, failing to follow the missionary Spirit. For all its weaknesses it seems to be exercising the idea of ecclesial improvisations led by the Spirit. Like the early church, the Supper, as Taylor (1972:4), again says is a, 'story of stupendous missionary achievement of a community inspired to make a continual series of creative experiments by the Pentecost Spirit.'

It's church Jim, but not as we know it

Out of this study I argue that the community Supper is on the cusp of moving into ecclesial status. The term from Watkins and Shepherd (2014) of ecclesial grace is important. On one level this is liminal stage or fragility could be disappointing but by being honest about what needs to happen in order to become fully church there are some milestones in the path to look for and mark. **Firstly**, the question of oversight and especially Episcopal oversight. As noted in the section on *Testing ecclesiality* currently the Suffragan Bishop of Table Bay does not recognise the Community Supper as a church community in its own right. This is problematic from an authenticity view point but can be overcome. Pioneer leadership at the Supper needs to build bridges with the Bishop in spite of the complex historical relationship between Parish and diocese. The Bishop needs to be better versed in the theology, language and praxis of FXoC or new contextual churches if he is going to take seriously the previous requests at Synod. **Secondly** the issue of sacraments. Whilst the sacrament of holy communion is celebrated regularly and appropriately the issue of baptism is unresolved. This is linked to wanting to help those who ask for baptism to do so in a way that does not reinforce issues around religious toxicity and so might be overly cautious. The leadership need to have some clear internal discussions and guidance about how the issue of baptism might be dealt with in the coming years. **Thirdly** the issue that the Church Army research's 10 parameters brings up in the form of parameter 8. 'At least the majority of members (who are part of the public gathering) see it as their major expression of being church' (2013:10). This is doubtful. Even those sampled in my interviews had a range of replies to the Community Supper being church. Most likely only the core leadership, volunteers and a handful of guests see it as their primary worshipping space. Of 120 who gather each week perhaps only 30 view it as their 'church'. Out of this I argue that there are 6 needs that should be reflected upon in order for FXoC movement in South Africa to strengthen.

In this conclusion I bring out **6 needs** that I have witnessed that should be developed in the future if we are going to see FXoC flourish and grow.

The need for the role of a sense maker

The idea of a sense maker (Moynagh 2017:32) is vital in the growing life of a FXoC. Moynagh (2017:334), as I have sought to show, says that, ‘sense making is an essential component of the innovation framework. Founding teams create insightful, inspirational and instructional narratives to describe who they are and what they seek to achieve.’ The role of the pioneer leaders P1, P2, P3 and P8/35 is not to be underestimated in the journey, precarious as it is, into ‘ecclesial grace’. Each pioneer leader in the context of the supper played the role of sense maker in both explicit and implicit ways. In the case of P2 his weekly theologizing into the pre-Supper gathering, the holding of silence during the opening liturgy, the improvisational narratives weaved from scripture and the prayer book helped to, ‘construct a reality and draw out its implications’ (Moynagh 2017:335). Sense making has an eschatological edge in that, whilst narrating the ideas and ideals of the supper, pioneer leaders were in fact reminding those gathered of a future hope. This connects with the idea of the Supper being an alternative community. An alternative to the predominant hegemony of consumerism and commodification. Sense makers also operated in a more implicit way. Rather than narrating and improvising verbally and often publicly P1 and P8/35 often helped the community Supper to make sense through physical acts of hospitality and kindness. In the early months of the Supper simply cooking a meal for 30 people on a weekly basis without much help revealed a different way of being together. The actual lives of P1 and P3 who would sometimes form deep and lasting relationships with drug addicts, ex-prisoners and the like was an embodied narrative which had the potential to help people see a new way of relating to one another as community (although this was not always viewed as such). Moynagh (2017:337) notes that this sense making helps form or produce team. This seems to be the case at the Supper. The pioneering core’s sense making activities grew a team also committed to a future hope. The team acted as a centripetal force drawing others into the process of imagining a preferred future for those gathered. Moynagh (2017:338) goes on to say that, ‘to create a convincing narrative, you need team members who see and reflect on different aspects of reality.’ But surprisingly Moynagh argues that teams who share similar backgrounds and attitudes aid team cohesion. Whilst this might be true (?) in Moynagh’s global north context the diversity of the team formed around the sense makers at the community Supper breaks previous hegemony and privilege. Sense makers at the Supper continued, even when it was difficult, to weave a narrative that was built on a commitment to diversity and seeing one another across the divides. The sense maker’s roles were very often bound up with calling out dignity in the other, moving away from corrosive religiosity and finding common humanity.

On a macro level there well may be a need for the role of sense maker perhaps at archdeaconry and episcopal levels. If the sense makers role is to theologise, to call out a future hope and help create a

new narrative this needs to happen not only within FXoC themselves but in the ecclesial structures of that direct and dictate policy.

The need for sense makers in the establishing of new contextual churches is paramount. Those willing to weave a narrative of God's preferred future and continually theologise an invitation to join in what God is doing, and wants to do, in a context are essential. Sense making requires improvisational skills and the ability to build teams of diverse individuals both racially, economically and potentially theologically.

The need to create authentic liturgy

Those improvisational skills have been instrumental in not only sense making but also in sensitively curating a liturgical life. As we have seen in chapter 6 the liturgical flow of the supper resulted in a wound. The Supper continues to occupy a liminal space liturgically and it will, in the coming weeks and months, need to reflecting more seriously on how it develops those rhythms of life together. I suggest two ways forward here. The first is to take more seriously the notion of liturgy being the work of the people. Whilst the giftings of the sense maker have helped introduce fragments of the tradition through improvisational skill there will need to be a deepening of participation in crafting new words. I suggest this happens when three elements come together. Firstly the echoing of tradition. An authentic Anglican liturgy in a new context will be mindful of the prayer book (ABP 1989) but can also tap into the resources of the global communion. The teaching of the Lord's prayer (if not already known) might be an initial consideration. Following the **called-gathered-equipped-sent** flow one could extrapolate the sending prayer (APB 1989:129). Secondly authentic liturgy must give voice to the diversity of people gathered. A question might be asked about how the liturgy mirrors the community gathered? Words said should reflect the parochial, perhaps fractured, idioms of the local people. Thirdly genuinely appropriate liturgy for the Supper must call out an eschatological hope. It is future orientated in that it will speak of that which is not yet and hoped for in the coming of Christ. In doing so this should create a liturgy from below (MSC 2004).

The need to create safe spaces and to practice 'Sawubona'

I have tried to argue in this thesis that there are times when the Supper is truly an authentic example of FXoC being contextual and dealing with the challenges of the post-*Apartheid* landscape legitimately. As I have sought to show there are times when those gathered to eat a meal on a Thursday evening do indeed practice Sawubona and are able to see one another across all the old divides. This oscillates into other occasions where white power and privilege usurps the kingdom work being done and can patronise and dehumanise those previously disempowered. There are no perfect churches. As Healy (2018) has noted 'sometimes the church is just OK.'

The Supper has, I believe, created safe spaces for all sorts of people to eat together. An alternative community or, as the data reveals, alternative communities have sprung up in the contours of the Supper. Gathered into this disparate messy place are those passionate about good food and committed to breaking the unhealthy relationship the poor have with mass produced supermarket junk. There are others committed to journeying alongside those caught in addiction. Still others have created a space where those on the margins, the vulnerable and homeless are able to do some kind of religious detoxing. The unhealthy relationship some homeless have with the institutional church spaces which can involve duplicity and deceit in order to secure a plate of food are broken down. Some come to simply eat, others to serve and clean, others still attend to children. For a group of people the breaking of bread and sharing the cup are of paramount importance and others the opportunity for a point in the week where they can be seen, where they believe they are truly being human. Authentic FXoC in South Africa probably need to bare these things in mind.

The need for rethinking language

One of the issues faced in developing FXoC is around naming and language as remarked upon in chapter 3. The use of the term Fresh Expressions of Church has caused criticism from a number of thinkers (Percy 2008, Milbank 2008). There may be a need to rethink how the movement in Southern Africa brands itself (although the whole notion of branding is at the very heart of some of the criticism). Whilst the language has not been overly problematic for other mainline churches it has caused some concern amongst Anglicans. Michael Moynagh has used the term *new contextual churches* as a way of side stepping the issue. It may be that drawing on the missiology of the anglo catholic tradition there is a way of re-imagining the language. Being able to tap into the stories of contextualisation and incarnation in the late 19th and early 20th century with the slum priests in England may be useful. Helping those opposed to the movement to see its theological breadth and diversity is important. Its ecumenical nature should not be overlooked too. This means there is a need to rethink language and use language that resonates with the Anglo catholic tradition which is already rich in missiological thinking. This is linked into the next point.

The need to tell stories from the sacramental tradition

The FXoC movement has been partially successful because it has used the power of story telling through technology. A continual stream of stories and their updates has helped many grasp what it means to do contextual, transformative mission through the website, DVD's and online forums. However, stories of FXoC are nearly all from the global north. Frankly they are too white, middle

class and low church evangelical. These examples are often far too alien to be considered as viable options in a more Anglo catholic setting. Telling more stories from the global south where new ecclesial life has sprung from contexts of poverty will be vital for the future. There are many stories from the sacramental tradition that put the Eucharist at the centre of the action. Although based in the UK, Lings (2002) shares stories of what he calls, ‘passionate catholic sacramentalist meets radical mission minded evangelists.’ Narrating the life of Father Damien who, following a placement in Papua New Guinea, was sent to work in working class UK estates. He worked with the notion that, ‘doctrine tells us *what* we should do and *why*, but it is only sensitive, wise, contextualised missiology which will unlock for us the delivery questions of *how*, *where* and *when*’ (Lings 2002:9). Father Damien was committed to saying the Mass because that is where Jesus is present.

Later Father Damien asked a profound contextual question, ‘Which building do most people naturally go to?’ It was the answer that was a shock – ASDA¹¹¹ welcomed 1000 people an hour to its superstore’ (Lings 2002:10). Through a series of meetings and connections Father Damien developed a relationship with the supermarket manager and started celebrating communion at 10.00am on Sunday mornings at the entrance way of the store followed by breakfast.

Stories like the above are more likely to resonate with those who put the eucharistic act at the centre of their theology and missiology even though the response of celebrating in a supermarket may cause a few eyebrows to rise. ‘Catholics, rightly, are concerned about non verbal as well as verbal expressions of faith’ (Williams 2009:2). The symbolic and ritualistic elements of the catholic could be a gift. There is also an opportunity to connect with the postmodern generation who may be seeking spiritual experiences in terms of the numinous that they fail to experience in evangelical or charismatic settings. Another example which of a FXoC being profoundly committed to the centrality of eucharist is in Cambridge UK. Capewell (2006:1) notes that Goth worship at St Edward King and Martyr in central Cambridge takes seriously,

the Christian celebration of Holy Communion. The goth aesthetic permeates the service with minimal use of artificial light, thick incense, modern rock and metal music and the congregation mostly dressed in the trademark gothic black. The specially written liturgy revolves around the paschal candle and makes extensive use of the Johannine imagery of light and darkness, balancing the darker and more pessimistic goth outlook with the joyful Christian message of salvation and redemption.¹¹²

More work is needed to convince or persuade Gamaliel as Croft (2009:36-51) would argue. That could be an extensive and possibly slow journey.

¹¹¹ ASDA is a UK supermarket

¹¹² https://www.praxisworship.org.uk/Archives/PraxisNewsOfWorship/Praxis_News_of_Worship_12_2006-7_Winter.pdf

The need for rediscovering Bishops in mission

The Lambeth gathering in 2008 was subtitled *Equipping Bishops for Mission and Strengthening Anglican identity*. The reflections published contain the most explicit commitment to mission theology than ever before at such a gathering. The voice of Bosch, whilst not explicit, is evident (see section B:22 in 2008:9). The reflections note that Bishops, ‘must learn and support one another so as to be better equipped in their role as leaders in God’s Mission’ (2008:9). Furthermore, ‘there is need for a greater effort to find fresh expressions of ministry with and to young people, and a sense of zeal and passion for their inclusion in the life of the church’ (2008:10). The 2004 MSC report called for the development of Bishops Mission Orders. These mission orders free newly pioneered FXoC from ‘quasi-parochial status and modelled a creative untidiness in church life’ (MSC report 2004:131). Whilst this has developed in the UK nothing similar seems to have been implemented. Nor has there been any particular initiatives in rethinking training for a new generation of priests who may feel a calling to pioneer a new work. Presently I know only of one example in the entire Province of ACSA where a Bishop¹¹³ has ordained a pioneer minister. It may very well be that the lack of effectiveness in encouraging Bishop’s in South Africa to engage with FXoC is, as mentioned above, its evangelical nature or perhaps a feeling that this is another panacea offered by the global north – a form of neo-colonialism at play? Until there is more ready engagement between the Episcopate and those pioneering on the ground it seems that many FXoC will go underground and operate effectively illegally, in terms of ecclesiastical structures.

7.2 Contribution to research

This research, offered to the ecclesiology and ethnography network, the Anglican Church in Southern Africa and lastly the Community Supper at St Peter’s, Mowbray itself, fills a gap for in -depth research into the growing FXoC movement both in Southern Africa and globally. To date nothing charting the complex, ‘lived’, ‘concrete’ and messy realities of an FXoC in development in South Africa exists. This research is a small step in the need to engage, not only the Anglican Church but, a range of denominations with the haemorrhaging of the mainline churches market share and the choices needing to be faced in a post-*Apartheid*, postcolonial era. Although an advocate for the movement of FXoC I’m unsure if there is the appetite for change in parts of the mainline church. It’s my hope that this research adds to the voices coming from the global south. During the writing of this thesis I was acutely aware of living and working in the global south but having growing up in the a context of relative prosperity and access to resources.

¹¹³ Bishop Martin Breytenbach in the diocese of St Mark the Evangelist in Limpopo province.

7.3 Suggestions for further research

Firstly, I suggest more empirical ethnographic studies on other FXoC in South Africa. Given the complex landscape of South Africa both physically and socially it's important to open up deeper understanding of FXoC through writing stories. It would be important to test the notion of authenticity in a rural context, perhaps a suburban context and perhaps most of all in a township setting.

Secondly, I would suggest empirical work amongst Bishops and perhaps theological training institutions such as COTT¹¹⁴ to ascertain current understandings of mission, contextually theology and church planting. This seems a vital task if there are going to be significant changes in attitude towards FXoC at provincial and diocesan levels. It would also seek to understand the training mechanisms for future clergy and whether there might be possible pioneer training tracks opening up for those who felt called to develop new contextual churches. Thirdly it might be important to do some quantitative study around the actual numbers of people attending a FXoC in which particular diocese and something of their demographic make up. Studies conducted in the UK between 2012 and 2016 showed 1109 Fresh Expressions of Church identified in 21 UK Dioceses with 50,600 attending¹¹⁵. Although there continues to be decline there are some stories of hope and some significant numbers to back up the passion for pioneer training and releasing of new lay and ordained personnel.

7.4 Final remarks

This thesis is a humble offering to the FXoC movement, the ecclesiology and ethnography network, to ACSA and to the Community Supper itself. It claims no more than to add to the plurality of voices in the first two movements but from a South African perspective. FXoC will continue to grow in Southern Africa but it's an embryonic movement that without the right support could flail, lose direction or become disassociated from ACSA if not nurtured. The Supper is a place of 'ecclesial grace' for those on the fringe of mainline church or Christian experience. Whilst at times it can be a place where the old power struggles of *Apartheid* are occasionally played out it is often host to genuine cross cultural encounter where people feel truly 'seen' and 'heard'. For all its failings and weakness it does practice 'sawubona' and real mutual transformative discipleship. In short it is a place to be human together, as P11 liked to say to me on more than one occasion, '*For one hour of the week I can be human.*' If being truly human together is a kingdom activity then the church in all its sinfulness and messiness is being authentic.

¹¹⁴ College of the Transfiguration, Grahamstown, Eastern Cape

¹¹⁵ <https://freshexpressions.org.uk/about/our-story/>

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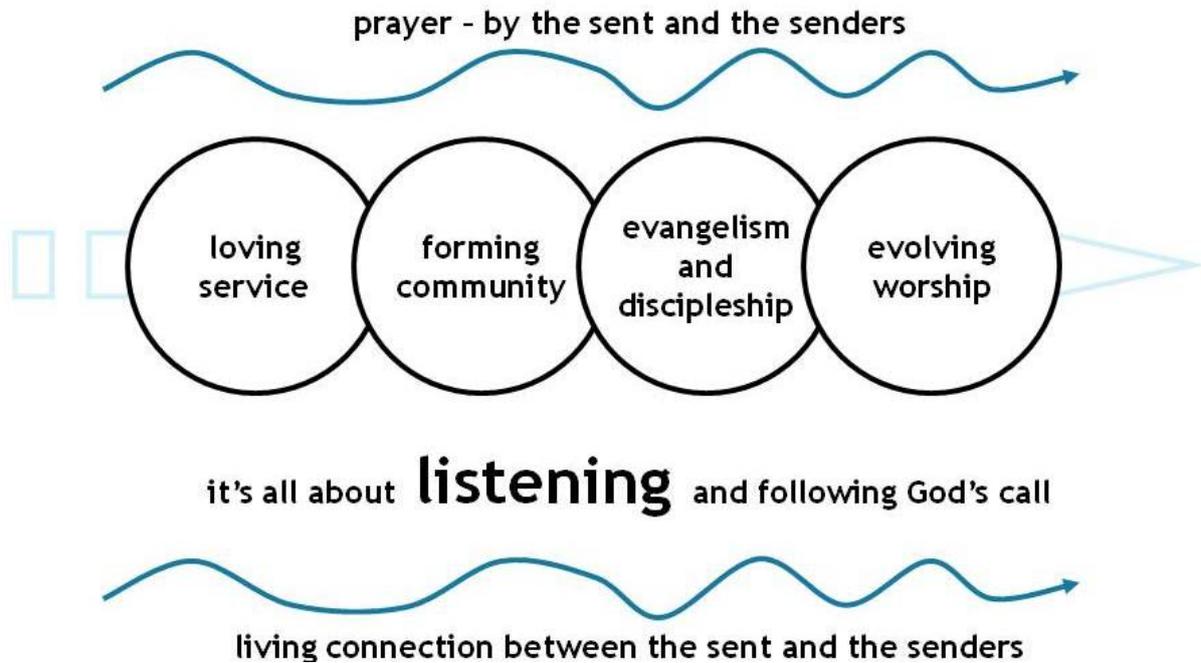
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ANNEXURE A

Fresh Expressions interview questions [Revd Benjamin Aldous PhD student Practical Theology 20897626

Leaders questions

1. Did you, and other leaders, begin the Community Supper consciously following the diagram



below which has become a key resource for pioneering an FXoC?

2. Where do you sense you are in this mission shaped flow? Reflect on that for me?



3. Was the aim to start a new ecclesial community? Why?

4. Are you aware of any criticisms of FXoC? If you are say something about those in the context of what's happening at the Community Supper.

5. Is there any sense that the community supper is an **alternative** community? Tell me what that means or looks like in terms of the weekly gathering?

6. How do people perform the faith or improvise the faith at Community Supper?

7. Share a story or two or how people view Community supper as a place of of participation, belonging and acceptance?

ANNEXURE B

Participants or Guests questions

1. Tell me how you ended up attending the Community supper?
2. Describe your relationship with the people who come here?
3. Describe a highlight of your time being involved here?
4. What do you understand as being church?

ANNEXURE C



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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Revd Benjamin Aldous

PhD Study entitled

'Towards an assessment of Fresh Expressions of Church in ACSA (Anglican Church of Southern Africa) through an ethnographic study of The community Supper at St Peter's in Mowbray, Cape Town.'

1. Interviews with key members of the leadership team.
2. Interviews with selected members of the community Supper guests.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Revd Benjamin Aldous [BA(Hons), MAAMS, MA] from the department of Practical Theology at Stellenbosch University. The results of which will form the empirical research of a PhD thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been a key member of the leadership team or guest of the community supper for a significant period of time.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to assess whether Fresh Expressions of Church in South Africa are an appropriate and authentic form of church for the context through an ethnographic study. The purpose of the study is to offer something both to the actual church community as it reflects on its development after 5 years in existence and secondly to the Diocese and Province (Cape Town and ACSA) as it attempts to support such ventures in new contextual church planting.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

1. Be available for a substantial semi structured interview at the community Supper's premises St Peter's Church, Mowbray. This would take roughly between 1-1/2 hours.
2. Be a regular participant at the community supper over a 6 month period during which the ethnographic study would take place.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable potential risks to in this research for the participant.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no specific benefits for subjects expected from the research.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There will be no payment for participating in this study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of pseudonyms and/or numbers attached to specific persons. All data in forms of audio recording will be stored on a laptop and a back up hard drive. Information for coding and analysis will be shared with my supervisor Dr Ian Nell. It may be necessary for third parties for coding purposes to access the data but only all names will be confidential.

Interviews will be taped digitally. All those subjected to interview will have the right to review/edit the tapes. The interviews will be erased after the PhD has been submitted and successfully defended.

This research will form the basis of a PhD thesis but at the present time there are no plans to publish the work in a formal manner other than internal university readings. It may be that this research will be presented at Diocese and Provincial level in the future. There may be possibilities for the research to be written up in a less formal or academic manner as part of the work of Fresh Expressions South Africa. All those participating in interviews will have the right to review anything written and offered for formal publication.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact The Principal Investigator: The Revd Benjamin Aldous via email jazzgoat@icloud.com or on cell number 074 5872990 or at Barnabas House, 18 St John's Road, Wynberg, Cape Town, 7800. Supervisor: Prof Ian Nell via email ianell@sun.ac.za or phone number 021 8084850 or at The University of Stellenbosch Theology Faculty, 171 Dorp Street, Stellenbosch, 7600.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me by Revd Benjamin Aldous in English and I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject/Participant [ID No]

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [name of the subject/participant] and/or [his/her] representative _____ [name of the representative]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [Afrikaans/*English/*Xhosa/*Other] and [no translator was used/this conversation was translated into _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator

Date

ANNEXURE D



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APPROVED WITH STIPULATIONS

REC Humanities New Application Form

25 July 2017

Project number: THE-2017-0251-179

Project title: Towards an assessment of Fresh Expressions of Church in ACSA (Anglican Church of Southern Africa)

Dear Mr Benjamin Aldous

Your REC Humanities New Application Form submitted on 21 June 2017 was reviewed by the REC: Humanities and approved with stipulations.

Ethics approval period: 25 July 2017 - 24 July 2020 REC STIPULATIONS:

The researcher may proceed with the envisaged research provided that the following stipulations, relevant to the approval of the project are adhered to or addressed.

Some of these stipulations may require your response. Where a response is required, you must respond to the REC within **six**

(6) months of the date of this letter. Your approval would expire automatically should your response not be received by the REC within 6 months of the date of this letter. If a response is required, please respond to the stipulations in a separate cover letter titled **“Response to REC stipulations”**.

The researcher should give more detail about how he will approach potential participants who he wants to interview.

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (THE-2017-0251-179) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

Included Documents:

Document Type

Research Protocol/Proposal

Informed Consent Form Informed Consent Form Informed Consent Form Data collection tool

File Name

Fresh Expressions and Ethnography in SA Revd Ben Aldous Stellenbosch

Rev B Aldous 20897626 Ethics consent form 1

Rev B Aldous 20897626 Ethics consent form 2

Rev B Aldous 20897626 Ethics consent form 3

Fresh Expressions questions Revd Ben Aldous PhD Stellenbosch FINAL

Participant Observation Framework B.Aldous 20897626

Date Version

14/06/2017

14/06/2017 14/06/2017 14/06/2017 14/06/2017

Data collection tool

14/06/2017

Page 1 of 3

Proof of permission Rev B Aldous 20897626 St Peter's consent form 14/06/2017

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely, Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.

The Research Ethics Committee: Humanities complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

ANNEXURE E



To Whom It May Concern

9th March 2017

This serves as confirmation of permission from the Trustees of St Peter's Church, Mowbray for Revd Benjamin Aldous BA (Hons), MAAMS, MA ID No:751223-6187-180 to attend, observe and conduct an ethnographic survey at St Peter's Community Supper, and any other gatherings associated with the event for his PhD research, detailed as follows.

“Towards an assessment of Fresh Expressions of Church in ACSA (Anglican Church of Southern Africa) through an ethnographic study of The community Supper at St Peter's in Mowbray, Cape Town.”

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information. Yours sincerely

Revd David Meldrum

~ www.stpetersmowbray.org.za ~

Church Street, Mowbray, 7700, South Africa
t: 021 689 1903 | e: office@stpetersmowbray.org.za

ANNEXURE F**Transcript of interview with P1**

- INTERVIEWER:** Okay, it is the 9th November and I'm here with P1. P1, did you and the other leaders begin the community supper consciously following the diagram, and I guess that you would have seen variations of these over the years, if not, just pretend you have no, no, be honest. But when you started back in 2011/12, were these little flow charts, were they in your mind or in the mind of others who were kind of?
- P1:** No, they weren't, I haven't seen this particular diagram or anything similar until fairly recently. So almost looking back on what we did and how it fitted or it didn't, P3 was much more aware of these sort of, so it might well have been in his mind but it hadn't I hadn't come across it. So really, the motivation was creating a community or deepening the relationships in community.
- INTERVIEWER:** When you say that, I mean, and you're speaking about the relationships existed within the church community that were thin or fractured, or the relationships in the community like Mowbray, the streets, what community?
- P1:** Both, so we'd started talking maybe 18-months before we started with J T and just dreaming of the idea of a community meal and eating together and basing it, thinking about people in the church. But also thinking about the local community because at that time, I think they might still have been going over to the taxi rank to pray weekly. I think it was around then, but there has never been much of a history of an outreach at St Peters, it was all inward [unclear 0:02:35]
- INTERVIEWER:** Service?
- P1:** Yeah, because most of them at that time, when we arrived, didn't live in the community, didn't live in the area so they came in on a Sunday, saw it was really quiet so decided that nothing happened in Mowbray and then went home after the service. They all, a lot of them had lived in Mowbray at some point, they either moved out because of group areas or moved out later, so you've got older white ladies who moved into Mowbray after group areas and then moved out to nicer suburbs like Claremont and places.
- INTERVIEWER:** Then others ...
- P1:** Then other people had moved in but there weren't many of those people coming to St Peters at the time.
- INTERVIEWER:** So the coloured families who probably left under group areas who still felt that deep affection for the church is there, and obviously the rulings around group areas was, that was one of the loopholes in the law?
- BEV:** Yeah, so yeah, I mean, from when we arrived, there was just this sort of desire to get involved more in the community, both personally but also as a church. And eating together is always an obvious thing to do, because everyone likes eating food. So it was partly, the idea was partly to develop relationships between people in the church community, but also to open the doors and just invite people in from the community, which hadn't been done for many years if, in fact, ever. So that's where it came from, so really, we started at the forming community.
- INTERVIEWER:** Yeah, the guest of service was happening in the sense that you were praying, thinking, discerning the idea to open the doors was the juncture between these two?
- P1:** Yeah, it was almost, you say loving service and you sort of assume that for, but like something like a soup kitchen, there's loving service, there's, we want to feed people that have nothing and that wasn't where the supper came from. It came from, we want to form community, we were criticised for not praying enough at the time.
- INTERVIEWER:** By who?
- P1:** Should we name names?
- INTERVIEWER:** They will all be anonymised.
- P1:** C and J, particularly, were very, they felt that we'd rushed ahead which I think is quite a South African thing. There's just, in my experience in getting things going, there's a lot more reflection that seems to happen maybe just in church circles, maybe in Evangelical church, I don't know but certainly in St Peters, but then also in Christ Church in the warehouse and all the other sort of Christian communities I've come across. It might just be me.

- INTERVIEWER: We can work on that later.
- P1: Yes.
- INTERVIEWER: That's interesting, so you feel people aren't willing to take a jump, they ought to take a risk just starting something in case of, it doesn't work or what is it?
- P1: I don't know, it could be like any of a million reasons, like a personality thing, you know, there aren't many sort of go get it South Africans in Evangelical circles. Maybe that's the, compared to me who grew up in London, you know, you live life at a very fast speed. Maybe that's it. I think the reason they had a problem with it is because they weren't involved in the process, although we've been having those initial discussions with J regarding the community meal. We just got to a point the Christmas before we opened, I just had a real sense of urgency that, why don't we just do this and see if it works, so we did. It started off with P3 and I cooking every week, mainly pasta bakes and easy, and then went from there.
- INTERVIEWER: Where do you sense you're in the mission shaped flow now? I mean, I know you haven't been for a year but there are two diagrams, I think they related, this just has a few more circles in either of them, where would you say?
- P1: I think we moved into Evangelism and Discipleship, I mean, all these happen at the same time. Particularly when we introduced table hosts, or no, it was earlier than that we were very clear once we got more people and more volunteers, the people should be volunteering in a way that suited them. So not everyone was to sit at a table and have conversations because some people are much happier washing up. We were very strong on serving where you want to, and from early on, particularly when P2 and P8 started getting involved, the Discipleship and the Evangelism came out of those conversations, they were very intentional. It moved from just hi, how has your week been, to something a lot deeper than that. Then that's just continued and grown, and then we moved into table hosts, so it's just a very intentional, we don't want to lose this, we actually want to strengthen it.
- INTERVIEWER: Do you think that it's touching the evolving worship?
- P1: Yeah, yes, there's been sort of ebbs and flows of your more traditional worship activities, like sung worship, communion and it was always for those who wanted to. It happened at the end, it was short, no one was forced to stay, so yeah, definitely moved into that, where that is now, I don't know.
- INTERVIEWER: Was the aim, right in the beginning, to start some sort of ecclesial community, in your mind?
- P1: No, it was to build community, build relationships.
- INTERVIEWER: Church is an accidental byproduct of that?
- P1: Yeah, so if it became that then great, and if it didn't then great. So it wasn't intentional, it wasn't planned, but it was, we were open to the idea of it being that.
- INTERVIEWER: It's interesting how some people have said its accidental, it wasn't planned, and other people have said, no, it was really planned right at the beginning, just as I've talked to a variety of people.
- P1: Yeah. No, I mean, that probably also reflects the time when they came on board when things were evolving and all the way through, we were open to the fact of saying there may be a point where we say, okay, this isn't working anymore, and we stop it. So it was all held very lightly and, but yeah. But looking at this one, I think certainly there are people within supper who, over a long time, have seen it as their church and their worshipping community. You know, that is P2 and P8 and Kids but it's not just them, it's also some of the people who are living on the street or who are visitors.
- INTERVIEWER: Are you aware of kind of any of the criticisms from fresh expressions that have been made, if you are, can you say something about that in the context of the community supper? If you're not, then you don't have to.
- P1: Not really, I mean, I have but they've probably slipped my mind.
- INTERVIEWER: That's fine, they could come out in other ways. Is there a sense that the community supper is an alternative community over and against the world or?
- P1: I think those involved from the beginning and also certainly, I've heard this reflected when I was there, not so much an alternative community but an alternative to a soup kitchen.
- INTERVIEWER: So it's an alternative to the other communities that attend to give relief.

- P1: To give this loving service, and particularly newer people have often commented on how different it is.
- INTERVIEWER: Say something about that what comments?
- P1: It's from the practical stuff that people first realise where people are served at their table, volunteers sit with others and the level of conversation.
- INTERVIEWER: Are there other ways or are there other distinctives that make it feel like it's different?
- P1: Beyond the practical stuff, it's the relationships. Over the years, there have been some very strong relationships built up between people who wouldn't, in any other situation, meet each other.
- INTERVIEWER: So it's creating a new context for people to connect?
- P1: Yeah.
- INTERVIEWER: Have you got a story about that, I mean, like an actual kind of real life people who?
- P1: Yeah, one of the, I have got a lot of stories but one of the guys who started coming fairly early, he is a guy called R. Yeah, and just over the years, P3 and I developed a strong relationship with him and he's come for supper, we've been to his sister's house with him and we've helped him out and helped him start a little business, and we've done all sorts of things, you know, we go on outings, sometimes he will come. Now he's back in prison, I'm going to go and visit him, it's a long-term relationship.
- INTERVIEWER: That long-term relationship is heralded by the highs and the lows and the reality of messy lives.
- P1: Yeah, and you know, he was accused of stealing from the church and from us and he might have done, and we don't know, and we're still in a relationship with him. So he's someone that's been quite constant and who we've, I personally have built a relationship with. There are other people who come for a bit, disappear, and then come back again.
- INTERVIEWER: Sounds like church?
- P1: Sounds like church, yeah.
- INTERVIEWER: It's a regular church because people come and then disappear for ages and then come back again.
- P1: Yeah. There's other guys like K who is on the streets in Mowbray, came a long time to supper, we developed a good relationship, and then every time I see him around on the streets, usually he's digging through rubbish when I pick the kids up from someone's house on the corner. We'll stop, hop out of the car, chat briefly and go on, I mean, other people we've got into rehab, or one girl left her abusive boyfriend, I know for a long time she was back and forth and now she is settled in Oudtshoorn with her family. She's got two girls, and so it's all, it's about those long-term relationships and that's why it stands out from a soup kitchen.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, that's amazing. How do you think people perform the faith or improvise faith at community supper, I mean, I've been going for a number of months, it's not normal church, that's one of the great things about it. Probably because I don't have to do anything, is there a sense that people are kind of performing faith, I mean, one of the interesting things is that there isn't a need to perform in the sense that people often feel that they have to in church on a Sunday morning, you know. Is there a way that?
- P1: I think so, I think, I mean, we've seen a lot of volunteers come and go, and the new ones that arrive from the sort of less diverse, more middle-class churches, maybe I can even give you a closer example. H M, bless her cotton socks, just really, she'd never been in situations where she was sitting with homeless people and having conversations and beginning to build relationships. She'd regularly get very freaked out about boundaries, and because she'd never been in situations where she'd had to put boundaries up because everyone in her life was very well behaved. So you know, her faith was like sort of so big but then she went to community supper and then moving out her faith became some a bit different, as well, and she's actually the one that's got this long-term relationship with the girl that's now settled with her kids. She goes and sees them once a year, she travels all the way to Oudtshoorn, stays with them for a few days.
- INTERVIEWER: It's a performance that's kind of pushing the boundaries of what the borders of faith that so many of us have, breaking through them or stretching them and pulling them in uncomfortable directions?

- P1: Yeah, and I mean, even if that is being in the kitchen washing up for the entire evening, that is probably very likely stretching someone's faith boundaries because you still, although there's a distance between what's happening with all the people, you still get people coming in. And you know, because everyone treats each other as with respect, and you know, this is a human being, this isn't a homeless person, you have to do that, too. In many cases people have never been in a scenario where they've had to do that. So you know, you can stay in the kitchen for a whole month and still your faith is being stretched, I think.
- INTERVIEWER: Share a story or two of how people view the community supper as a place of participation, belonging and acceptance? You've already sort of spoken about it's a place where people belong, they count it as a place they come because they're respected, or they treated with dignity that's come up again and again in interviews. But it's a place of acceptance, a place of participation, too?
- P1: Yeah, from the beginning we were very clear that everyone was to be treated equally, and it's almost difficult talking about it because I am forced to use words like volunteers and homeless people. But on the ground, that distinction doesn't exist, so whoever you are, you can help serve supper or wash up or, you know, it's not just the volunteers who do that. But we also, from the beginning, we're very clear that we if someone is drunk or high, they also could come in. If they started being violent and creating problems, then they go but they're accepted for who they are and what particular state they're in that day. And that was difficult for a lot of people.
- INTERVIEWER: Do people want to, so that is not an issue around acceptance, in a sense, were there people that wanted to mind the door and keep the drunk and high people out?
- P1: It came up repeatedly, not like every week, but I mean, there are so few incidents, I mean, like in four years I was going maybe like two or three where we had to kick people out.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, because I've eaten dinner with people who are clearly drunk almost every week.
- P1: And yeah, what was I going to say, a very important point, it's going to be crucial to your thesis. I think also for P10, for P, for other volunteers that we've had, particularly those that come to the services on Sunday. It's been a great time for them and the rest of us because it's really developed relationships that you just can't do on Sunday. It's just too pointless, P is a great example.
- INTERVIEWER: Is it because you're serving together, what is so important?
- P1: Yeah, and you just laugh together and you get frustrated together and you talk, you know, and you find out what is actually happening to the extent that, so P, she's a granny. She's got custody of her grandson, the dad is an alcoholic and lives at home, and the mom is on the streets and has another partner, and the boy is ADHD and is sort of on the FAS spectrum but doing okay in school. And he came with P every week, and they've been part of St Peter's since we arrived, and when he was younger he was just a nightmare, his behaviour was terrible. But just that constant relationship and acceptance of who he was and who P is, I mean, she doesn't have much, she's a very harsh woman. But loves that boy and does everything she can for him, and through Thursday's particularly, we've been able to build a really good relationship to the extent that when she dies, we're going to adopt her grandson. Then similar stuff with P10, I mean, she came on Sunday's, she always did but she's a middle aged Xhosa woman, loves her Mothers Union Langa and just so unlike P3 and I. But she's been living with us for three years when her accommodation fell through, and if she had just been coming on a Sunday we wouldn't have had the space to develop that sort of relationship with her where she felt she could just turn up on our doorstep the day or the night her and her daughter got kicked out. That's not about P3 and I, that's about what happens on a Thursday and that's just the volunteers. Yeah, I mean, the relationships that have been built with people in other scenarios, I mean, we've had a number of atheists who committed to volunteering for years. And who now joke that, you know, they go to church once a week.

- INTERVIEWER: That's great, P1, thank you so much, I think there's, it's 30 minutes, so I think that's plenty to transcribe and to think through, but thank you so much for taking the time this afternoon. Is there anything else that you want to?
- P1: One thing that might be worth saying is just how the attendance has changed over time, because when it first started it was pretty much evenly split between church people, homeless people and local people.
- INTERVIEWER: How many people were coming in those early days because there are no records?
- P1: No, I mean, we'd have sort of 20 at the beginning and then it grew a bit more, and it's just gradually been growing but it was about probably two years ago that we sort of noticed that actually it's two thirds homeless people and a third church and local community. I mean, now even we get so many volunteers in from other churches. It's quite entertaining.
- INTERVIEWER: Thank you for that, here endeth the sermon.

ANNEXURE G

Transcript of interview with P2

INTERVIEWER: Let's go. It is the nineteenth of September, we are at Craig Stewart's house in Rosebank and in the room as well is Eliza, is it Getman, Getman,

P2: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Is just observing today but we are – I am putting out there for ethical reasons. P2 let's kickoff, did you and other leaders who kind of began the community supper consciously follow this this diagram which I am going to show you, which has become a really quite key resource in the pioneering of fresh expressions of church. I presume you have seen something like this before?

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Just tell me ja, were you consciously thinking about, obviously forming a community that can eat a meal together but was there a, was there an end goal that it would turn into some type of a ecclesial, ecclesial community?

P2: Say yes to that, for sure, so certainly from a get go for, for me without necessarily knowing what it would be there was this desire to see a different kind of church service if you wish, might have been the language I would have used, emerged. I, I don't have a particular background to any of this.

INTERVIEWER: Sure.

P2: So if you had said to me, did you sit with this diagram and map out the journey (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: ja ja.

P2: Ja, no but was there a desire to start engaging the community of people and out of that start exploring expressions of discipleship and worship and sacrament and all the rest of it, yes for sure.

INTERVIEWER: So that was, that was really in your mind right from day one.

P2: It was, I mean I am, as I am saying that, I am hoping that I had overlaid that over but I am,

INTERVIEWER: No, no.

P2: I mean I, I certainly I remember entering into it, going this is now our weekly service.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: So right from the beginning P8 and I like articulated it to the kids and articulated to everyone that this was, this was an emergent expression of our weekly church engagement was going to be this place and that is how we have spoken of it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that was the case for other people who were involved in that initial, I mean Dave has got a very bad memory and he won't mind me saying that,

P2: Okay ja.

INTERVIEWER: So do you think that that was the case for the other people who gathered on those initial, I mean I think it is the 23rd February I think is, was the first time,

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: That you met in two thousand and eleven, so it is five and a half years ago if you can get back there (interrupt)

P2: I mean,

INTERVIEWER: Who else was in that (interrupt)

P2: I mean so there was J, J and C were there, certainly there was conversations with James around that and seen what that was I, you and I tended to shoot the breeze on those kinds of things so he was certainly in the mix with that. I remember talking about it with P3 so, so he would have, he would have been in the mix. I mean in those early phases there were a few other people that came along,

INTERVIEWER: Who subsequently left or moved (interrupt)

P2: Who have mostly, largely moved on, so of that core, initial grouping, P5 and P12, P8 and I,

INTERVIEWER: Okay so P5 and P12 were part of (interrupt)

P2: Ja, they were around, I don't think they would have defined themselves as part of like the forming group but they were certainly there from the get go and also in the early days there was a much stronger, there were a lot of people who

will were also there on Sunday who came along for a meal on Thursdays but I think slowly as the meal evolved there were people for whom it was too noisy, too distracting too this that and the next thing, and that was fine.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, okay.

P2: And oh no H not H, AH has I think been around maybe not from the very, very beginning but, but certainly from early on. So I would say for almost all of us there would be something. I would also say I am sure that if you ask each of us individually like what we meant by that it would have been very different.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, I know, totally agreed. I mean I have, just interviewed P3 and so, even to hear he's kind of, I think he sees it much more as a kind of almost accidental emergence of this, this ecclesial body however we define it. So it is interesting to hear for you it was obviously right from day one more concrete idea that this is going to be, I am committing myself to this becoming something.

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Just look at the diagram again,

P2: I must go back to my email.

INTERVIEWER: It is fine I mean that is part of having several sources of data is that we can see how, emerging from those emails might be some other kind of clues but looking at this kind of little diagram, where would you say or sense you are in the mission shape flow today, so community supper has been running for five and a half years,

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: In this, and this kind of flow where, where did you see yourself, I mean what has recently happened in the fresh expressions movement is that they have changed this again and made it a circle which I think is much more helpful, so as you said you start here and it kind of goes round so they are doing it again, flow is at the top and the listening is at the top and it flows round. But tell me something about where you are and reflect on that for me.

P2: So I would, I would place as in the sort of interface in building at community exploring discipleship, that said over the last two years I think we have sort of dipped our toes into church taking shape in different ways so I think there is, we kind of moved through and come back and moved through and come back would be my my kind of expression of it and part of that I think, forgive me I must have tried and write something about complexity and complex systems and working (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Here you can draw a map (interrupt)

P2: And, and one of the understandings there and it does shape my understanding of these kind of things is the, is the concept of emergence and, and the concept of you, you try, in – they talk sometimes about multiple parallel experiments. You try lots of different things because the, the system is complexed enough that you can't say, well if we do this it is going to lead to that, so let us try lots of things, see what they do and, and, and then allow them to die the things that aren't working allow them to go and the things do work strengthen them and, and all too often what it means is you take, you take something, so we had a sung worship component eighteen months ago.

INTERVIEWER: Ja I remember coming.

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: That was actually my first experience.

P2: So, and we did that for a while.

INTERVIEWER: How long did that happen for? I mean can you remember?

P2: Probably most of a year although not every week but most of the year driven quite strongly by one particular person who really wanted to do it, B who came from Natal.

INTERVIEWER: R and B ja.

P2: And, but in the end doing it largely killed him, I mean he had, he had, I mean there were a number of aspects with B that led to them feeling burnt out and just moving, moving on and then we had, and the meal wasn't the only expression of that but there was,

INTERVIEWER: So that has been in a sense an emergence that, that got, but came up but has,

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Has now tailed off because (interrupt)

P2: Because there is on the one hand nobody to pick it up and on the other hand I think we learnt some stuff but I, if I reflect on it now having watched us I would say, it wasn't an emergence of sung worship that, it wasn't an expression of sung worship that emerged from an authentic reflection of who you people are and how they were expressing, it was an overlay of this is how worship is done and people react to that so one of the dynamics I think we deal with in this particular community is that they are very churched because many of the places that I engage with or in church places and so they know how to play the game if you wish, they know how to be religious, they know how to gain the favour of religious people by having stopped drinking on Tuesday. Pastor, pastor I stopped, last drink on Tuesday, or my favourite of the lot, few months was a guy who got healed in front of me and he was standing in crutches and then stood with nothing and nobody had prayed for him or anything it was just you are standing there and suddenly got this look and like pastor, pastor look I am healed. It was so clearly a thing and we have had sort of outsiders come and join us for a - outsiders in the sense that they are guests that arrive from somewhere else to come see, so observers may be might be a better term. One particular guy came out of England for example, came out of London, lovely guy very exposed to homelessness ministry in the UK and was thrilled that this one guy came to faith in the evening. I was a little irritated that he has got him there but his whole framework he just didn't understand, and I wonder whether I understand the London complex but he certainly was surprised that somebody could respond to God so quickly and I was like no, he is just playing to you.

INTERVIEWER: Playing.

P2: Ja, so I would say though, the worship was good and it definitely brought something and there were moments that were deeply holy and deeply appropriate and really really good and, and particularly at times where we toned it down a

little bit and integrated it into some of the expression of communion was like, like in a space it felt appropriate. So I, I I think we will we will come back to some form of something because it did, I mean there was an evening I was standing outside waiting for something and I was feeling a little dismissive of this and this guy came out and stood outside just sobbing, actually no he was outside, I came outside and he was just standing there crying and so we stood for a while and then I said, what is up, he is like no singing that song it's like, he said that just like reached into my heart and reminded me of some stuff from prison and like who I want to be and who I am not and the choices I have made in the last six months and the things that I did before and how I can make a shift in that and that over quite a long period of time was a watershed evening and it was entirely immersed in a drunken rendition of some Hillsong piece of music you know like but it reached into his soul.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: So I think some form of some collective stuff, I have been chatting with a musician called J E who has spoken on, she has to quite a bit of work with ... the slave songs, from the American South, spiritual, spiritual and she was like how, like what it might mean to help people, so I am trying to get her to come along help people write their own spirituals that we sing. So, so in that sense I would say we are, I, I hadn't seen this properly and then somebody came and showed it to me a little while ago and it actually really released me because I had been feeling the pressure to move (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: To get there.

P2: To get there and I think that whoever it was showed it to me and then gave a sort of timeline and it was clear to me we were, we were kind of where we needed to be and so I realised no it is all right because I think that critical work for us now is building community that isn't just a serving community and a recipient community that we see the emergence of, we see the development of and so that takes us into discipleship I suppose, the sort of authentic leadership and ownership in welcoming and doing communion and then participating of people who would be considered at one level the sort of service participants if you wish and I think that is our work right now and so and actually I think sun worship might get in the way of that, like allowing, waiting for to see who kind of enters into the realm so that, so ja, so I would place us here,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, so (interrupt)

P2: But I think we have done, we have sort of done that and for me that is all right, because we experimented a little bit and try things and I am indicating with my finger but (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Ja, I just have to say that is your, so your finger is there the person transcribing, will not be able to tell.

P2: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: So your shift, you are in this intersect between building a community, exploring discipleship and church taking shape.

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, so somewhere in there.

P2: And I mean if you had to centre it I would say exploring discipleship but we, we need to still do the work I think there is still community building work and I think, and then there this kind of experimenting with forms and we have done that for a number of years so we have done lent courses where we did a simple kind of teaching experiment in the garden outside during the one lent each Wednesday just before supper and it actually went really really well. So we have tried things like that really, we we we also tried welcoming people in like the moment we open, the moment anybody arrives so that, practice right now as if you wish to service team meets beforehand for a quick like a briefing and stuff and what we did for a while was to just open the doors and everybody could come in and then we would say, hey feel free to come and join us for praying or whatever and initially people did that and then suddenly nobody was coming and we realised what was happening is that people would arrive early get their table at the, get their seat at the table, come up to pray and by the time they got back their seat was gone and the place full so, so that didn't, didn't work for a while and so I think this allowing things to evolve by trial and error is probably one of the ways we just, so P8 is doing the artwork thing now which we have done before and she is now wanting to do it for a little bit longer and see what happens. We have had a prayer table before that, we wanting to rig it up. There is a Bible study using the reading the Bible with the dammed thing that we are beginning to look at, maybe starting outside of Thursday evenings, we thought before of having a sort of pre service service but now thinking of maybe initiating something afterwards instead long (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: No, no it is not, it is very helpful. So I, I am trying to summarise in the sense is that, that it's, that lots of things have been attempted and some of them have been really good and meaningful but that in some sense they have been talked down, that they have been seen from both, by someone from outside the community, this is how we are going to do things now.

P2: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: Whereas it's at a stage where this genuine exploring discipleship will actually mean the, the Eucharistic element will, is, is is going to be birthed out more out of the community and what that looks like you don't actually know right now.

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: So what happen you are doing something but it's, it's, it's malleable and pliable and could be quite significantly changed or shaped by the community who, who are there and I think that is, you know one of the criticisms of fresh expressions has been that in the UK is that, that it's been often around in its worst-case scenario, it has been about securing funding for three years or for five years and then once that funding tails off something is being formed but then the leader has to withdraw because they are fulltime stipendiary priests and so one of the bonuses about what is happening in the community supper is this space for things to grow without there being that expectation from you know even P3 not going around for a year, doesn't, doesn't stop the thing from growing into anything. I, I, I have already asked you about question three so, I mean, we can look at question four, but then we might better take a different tack. Are you, you kind

of aware of any freshest expressions, criticisms or things that you have heard that are kind of negative about fresh expressions and if you are, say something about that in the context of the community supper.

P2: Okay. I mean not explicitly I don't, I haven't read so, I have probably been in, in this sort of steering role that I have played, I haven't because of the rest of the life and busyness, so I haven't like gone on courses and all the rest of it so, I have attended a couple of talks I mean, so, no but I say that in a sense of like I am not, I am at a distance really like the, like some of the ideas. I think I do partially given my own I suppose working professional background in terms of thinking about development and transformation and stuff I am aware of a few things so I think in, in looking at what I have listened to and seen I have certainly, critique would be a strong word because I don't think I am informed enough for it to be a critique but I think the, the sort of role of power and how power plays out in communities I don't think is sufficiently expressed certainly in the, in the moments of told, so whether it be the power of European, North American models coming in, and, and sort of been assumed to be applicable, often assumed not necessarily by Bishop Graham Cray of England it might be assumed by Bishop whoever, I am here in South Africa, who just assumes that the model there must work here so it is not necessarily an input, but the people going out must work there, so let us do it because that is how they do it rather than a, and then just the sheer power of resources and then added into the mix in South Africa the sort of racial and cultural sort of hedge money and power that plays out and I don't think is probably engaged enough and so participation and drawing people in is, is probably rushed in my opinion so I think the, I feel like part of our role and certainly a lot of my time in kind of steering people is saying no, it is like no we are not going to do that yet because it hasn't emerged it and if we try to emerge it now people would give you the answer that they think, so that sort of and you know do you think we should have a prayer meeting, you know pastor, pastor of course we should have a prayer meeting you know because that is the answer they think I am waiting for you know, what do you think we should do? Oh we should have some worship because their only frame of reference is, is constraint by their experiences as well and I then come in the outside and assume that my hipster jeans wearing takkie wearing expression of it is better,

INTERVIEWER: Emerging church.

P2: My emerging church that is so free that I am now going to impose it on them when, when L's desire is for quite a deep sacramental expression which if I scratch the surface you know it has got a lot to do with the need for rhythm and discipline and, and regularity in his life.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: And, which might be different to R who has got an anger problem and has escaped prison in Pretoria and is this like you huge Afrikaans guy that wants to hit you when he is drunk you know and so, so that would be my one critique is that I don't think we spent enough time thinking about power. I think unconsciously and this goes back to my understanding of complex ideas is that we, that it gets received and sometimes presented but certainly received as best practice models that need to be taken on board rather than examples in emergence practice in a space where we can learn from the emergence practice and then say how does it emerge where we are,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: And so I have been mildly amused at times and quite sheepish more regularly when I go to a conference like Anglicans Ablaze and St Peter's community meal is up on the screen as an example is (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: We know you can get onto You Tube and watch the fresh expressions South Africa video,

P2: Ja, and there we are.

INTERVIEWER: It is not very (interrupt)

P2: And I am going (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: It is quite hard to hear what they are saying, but we can see it.

P2: So, so those would be two of my critiques certainly no, no I imagine that there is some others as well and I think there is, I do have a concern in the South African construct that it represents culturally and that for many of the people pushing at its, it represents culturally a sort of white, western understanding and is quite dismissive of other expressions and yet the underlying principles are correct you know that, that, that if we could,

INTERVIEWER: Contextual.

P2: If it could be less attached to jeans and takkies and t-shirts, not that I have any problems with jeans and takkies and t-shirts which I am pretty much wearing today except for my sandals but to kind of say what you know what does it look like to even robe up, you know like, so I mean on the one hand I see the whole meal if we think about communion I see the whole meal is an expression of communion and those are expression of Eucharistic.

INTERVIEWER: I noticed that, that was an interesting, sorry can I just pause you there?

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Because there are two things that you say almost, I mean I have come only for a few weeks but the, the equalizing of power is something that you talk about and you talk about the, the notion of lurking and, and I have I have picked up on that you have said it now, you probably say it regularly I have only been for a few weeks but this, you keep saying welcome to communion, that a whole meal is a communal communion act.

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: A Eucharistic act that someone you know without delving too deeply into the,

P2: I mean that is something I am, I mean and to some of my friends amusement, my sort of higher church friends they are amused that I am like coming to them saying, have you this about Eucharist, but in kind of reading some of the stuff going actually there is some, not seeing it in that lense and understanding that has been really good and yet at the same time the act of taking communion or like as a, as a distinct act against the rest of the meal has been a remarkable place for a smaller group to like and, and some of, I mean some of the dynamics you wrestle with are in the act of a common cup where sort of someone who is drooling and clearly has got some infectious disease are now (slurping sound) slurping from grape juice and passing it on to me and, and now I am trying to get my head around what do I mean when I say, we

who are many are one body for we all partake of the one bread would like, what do I mean as I take this one cup you know and so then we can move to intention because all the doctors around us said, dude stay – and then Anna says, ja but there is their fingers and their fingers are going to get the stuff and I think there, like I wouldn't necessarily have thought that one of our first sacramental expressions if you wish although we have done a, we have done a funeral, is that a sacrament?

INTERVIEWER: You have done a funeral?

P2: There has been, I mean there was a funeral of a person, so there was J,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: Who was significant but there was also T, I hope I get the name right who was a member of the community and the funeral was at St Peters Church because we effectively where the place that his family and friends knew. I would have been surprised at the start to say oh we are landing in this communion's spaces has been listening and yet when we do the distinct act of communion rather than understanding the whole then I am comfortable with living with both of those because they both play different roles. I don't know where we were with that,

INTERVIEWER: No it is fine (interrupt)

P2: The criticisms.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, you don't feel you have to (interrupt)

P2: Ja, so I mean I think that, that last thing is that receipt of best practice rather than like what do we take and learn and then I don't have a sense of how rushed my sense of fresh expressions is that it accepts longer time horizon's.

INTERVIEWER: It does, I mean it is interesting if you look at the literature I think the whole, this whole idea of listening, there are stories where people have been listening in a community for you know ten years and then something has burst you in this loving service,

P2: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: In the first circle, after ten years of being in a space and just saying, I don't know what to do here or the Holy Spirit saying, don't do anything, so then, don't feel you have to that is such a (interrupt)

P2: No so that's, but I agree with that, I think if there were, if I had a sense of like, oh we can do this in a three year model then I would have concerns and say like the, but I don't get that sense, I think western and fresh expressions takes particular, seems to be, although no I mean it is ecumenical (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Let's say ecumenical.

P2: It is ecumenical so my experiences has been and evangelical world tends to be but I think it is also true for the ecumenical world in terms of much of its understanding of some of these practices, it tends to like have timelines and outcomes and things and and so if you wish dialogical practice of welcoming the unknown and align conversation to give birth to something and trusting that imagination will be released as we stand at the well and have a conversation like those things and my, this sort of lurking comments come from there they come from this story from a community development theorist called Peter Westeby who uses this story of, I don't know if I have said this in my times on Thursday, but he uses the story of villagers in west Papua, I think it is Papua New Guinea who have a tradition of hospitality but because you don't want to impose your hospitality because if you arrive in then they have to be hospitable towards you. You wait outside the village on the edge of the forest and you lurk and when they see you they come to you and they say, come be with us and so you don't want to remain deep in the forest because then they will never see you, so you want to put yourself positionally on a minimal space (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Ja, ja, ja ja

P2: And I think that is a little bit of what we are doing is like this, this homeless, vulnerable community, but I mean I think it is true for all communities but they are so, on the one hand disempowered on the other hand live out their lives surviving through mechanisms of subservience deceit and like playing the game because that gets you to the next whatever the next is.

INTERVIEWER: Meal.

P2: The next meal the next thing that, that if you sort of place yourselves in such a way that you are not doing very much you are saying no a lot, you are refusing to, you know you are not entering into the game.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: And that takes quite a degree of consciousness and I mean on Thursday night, I think you had left already but a scenario played out about P29 who is in this space wanting to be someone who helps homeless people, playing out quite an aggressive conversation with someone who was coming to get his money that he was owed and it was that in a sense P29 either has kind of overstepped and I was in the mix like it is not like, ah look at you I mean I was, he had come in, I had said, it sounds like an interesting idea using snap scan to help people, I have realised it is just quite glorified begging but, but now we are playing, now we are playing the game so now manipulation now we switch to anger and all the rest of it as oppose to saying, I don't know, that is my usual thing you know it is like how do you do. I don't know how you get an ID book in this city you know so those, somewhere in there are my critiques, I apologise to that person transcribing.

INTERVIEWER: No no, no it is very very helpful these things. Is there, is there any sense that the, I mean I think where you are exploring some of this but the community supper is an alternative community, Dave have asked me to explain what I meant by that, I can explain if you want or you can just take it as it is. I mean alternative space from the, perhaps, perhaps that world of manipulation, charm and deceit that is part of most most of the guests way of operating because it is for survival mechanism,

P2: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: Because that is what they have done for ten years to still be alive, or whatever,

P2: Or forty ja.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: For one or two of them.

INTERVIEWER: So, so-so is there a sense of, there is something about the community supper as an alternative to the world's way of operating and being, or their way of operating in the world.

P2: I think yes on a couple of levels, what one would I might use the word alternative communities maybe at one level so I have got a couple of thoughts on this that jump to mind so one of them is this idea that what, what we have seen over five years is I think the, so there is, there is this journey that I, the person who told it to me told me it was Richard Rohr he wrote it to me but I cannot find it in their Richard Rohr literature that he sent to me so I, Paul Robinson told me about it, where he talks about over meals, I apologise about the dogs,

INTERVIEWER: It is fine.

P2: And that, that that over meals from isolation or ignorance to encounter from encounter to the relationship and from relationship to transformation.

INTERVIEWER: Which is another thing you say on,

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: On Thursday.

P2: So where he drinks, ja

INTERVIEWER: Or your briefing set.

P2: Where we, where I feel like I have seen those most profoundly has been where some form of smaller subcommittee has emerged sometimes temporarily and sometimes more long term where somebody has entered into a journey, so it might have been a family with another one or two people, there is P5's collection of people so that, we have over the last year have started adjourning towards the idea of a table host, that kind of encourages the table hosts to form community at their table by inviting people back to their table regularly and I have noticed for myself that I am tending to play more of a role of trying to help those host's to understand their role and to be a table host myself.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: I had assumed I would be a table host but it is kind of shifted so I am still getting my head out trying to kind of play a, in the spaces from, so I think, so you have seen like P5's community where people are going to soccer games together and doing things outside where there, we have got a number of examples of I think that journey from isolation to transformation, some of whom which had been long term radical change for people be it a person who was on the streets on heroin and Vodka now in full-time employment in an apartment because there was this community that turned around him, be it a lady P7 who is a suburban mom, now grandmother, round the corner who hadn't ever been to church and certainly doesn't consider herself a believer of any form yet but now expresses some degree of engagement with the faith community at St Peter's dinners and is quite intrigued by communion and what is happening there and has become and the transformation for her has become this person who knows all the homeless people in this neighbourhood, so she the meal has given her enter so now she walks she will, she will get money to like fix up a portion of the canal and she will recruit them to come and work with her, she will hear that place allows you to shower and are raising, and she will go down as a homeless person she can look quite scruffy and sort of arrive and make use of the facilities before she signs off on deciding that they are okay, she uses it as a client before she decides to do it and, and so her journey is different, she is a suburban thing and I think that expresses something of what we want to desire was, it wasn't a service community to the homeless people it was this desire that in this neighbourhood we started creating connection points across historic barriers so that is like the sub communities so those smaller kind of, things and there is a community that I only discovered, I mean I knew they were there but I didn't discover how formal they were a week ago, ten days ago around P29 who has a group and they call themselves the New Hope or something, but they are, there, there is about eight of them who come to the meals most Thursday nights. They are on a little whatsapp group and they are acting as a net for people who decide they want to go into rehab or get into shelters and things and so if, if it gets expressed what happens on the whatsapp group is somebody puts up their hand to journey with them for as long as they want to be journeyed with and it is quite an intense commitment it is like they get together every week for whatever the help kind of do the advocacy work that helps them get into the shelter or get into rehab which means like walking them to the bus and getting them on the bus or walking them to the clinic or meeting, usually meeting them at the clinic so that there is some degree of them and they have got this little thing going that they, they so there is, they this kind of internal web inside St Peter's dinner that is catching people who express a desire to make a difference and it meets their, they have been wanting to do stuff, P29 has and all his normal service points have been hard to build the kinds of relationships where as now St Peter's dinner has kind of given him this natural collection point. I think the other alternative community that I would like to think we are and I think, I think we are to some extent, it is kind of like temporary once a week alternate community like in a sense where once a week there is this sign of something else that opens up the possibility of what could be and it, and we might not be able to last it for the whole week you know the, the sort of impact of it might bleed off that by the time we are back at the next Thursday we haven't quite got it right that, but that in a, in a sort of our every Thursday night there is an opportunity for people to be human again and (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: That phrase that you use, being, this whole idea of being human.

P2: I read somewhere (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: John deGruchy

P2: I picked it, no I don't, well it might ultimately be there, I cannot remember where I heard it.

INTERVIEWER: it's a big John, sort of

P2: I picked it up, I don't know where I picked it up but I just, it was (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: It would be very helpful for me to,

P2: Like lighted, ja if I could reference it. Or it was just my, I will see if I can find it, might have actually been, there might, I will go and look there was some papers that somebody gave me on the Catholic theologian on communion resistance or Eucharist resistance or something that I read, and I think he might have used this idea (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Ja, I mean it is not, it is not new.

INTERVIEWEE: But I think so there is P, P has come, to the right from the very beginning. He is either drunk or very drunk at every meal like there is, I don't think sobriety exists in his lived experience but he has been on the streets since he was fifteen, sixteen was in and out of jail initially, because in his words he wasn't a very good criminal so he was on Robin Island in medium security, so as a criminal not as a political and then he has been on Mowbray ever since, so it is what he does you know when the big monster storm earlier this year came through we went driving round trying to say, hey and he was like, I am fine, leave me alone look I am going to go and be there. I mean not leave me alone he was like thanks for coming to check I will be all right. My roof is not going to blow off because I don't have one, but anyway there is, there is a moment that has always stuck with me and him is that he came to me two or three years we have been going for a while and he said, he is quite angry and he said one of the, as he termed them one of the volunteers had told him there was no food and then handled him badly because he had arrived a little bit late and he said to me, in this sort of quite drunken state, he said I don't, I don't come here for food, I can get food, I know how to get food, I come here for respect.

INTERVIEWER: Like Mam.

P2: Ja, and,

INTERVIEWER: Because he said that a few times.

P2: Oh did he? Oh that is interesting. Okay so I haven't heard him repeat that ever before, so oh that is interesting okay, so (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: So he was at the, the, sorry just to – that time I came and interviewed P8 and I, I wrote a blog. That night we had communion and it was with all B and the music and he went, he had said to me, you know why I come here, and I was like, why do you come you know.

P2: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me, because I don't come here for food, I come here for respect.

P2: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: So it was clearly something that is not just a one off thing it is a deep (interrupt)

P2: So I didn't know that, like because that he said it to me once in a middle of a drunken state but I then more recently had a situation with him where we were sitting around the table and there was some new people and they tried to like get me to do something, and he said to them, no this isn't this kind of place, like let it go, like we come here to have a meal together, we don't do that here. So and, and what I said to P8 was like him policing, if you wish the values of the meal,

INTERVIEWER: Ja. Show something ja.

P2: Without being told that those were the values of the meal you know,

INTERVIEWER: Because they have been absorbed by (interrupt)

P2: They had been absorbed and so I have had similar conversations sort of anecdotally with people where I, they will make a comment like, oh this isn't the same and I will be like well what is different? Well we are treated like humans so we behave like humans. Or it is like home so I am back around the table again it is the one time a week,

INTERVIEWER: I get to sit.

P2: I get to sit and I am always stunned at how long people most weeks are able to hold the silence, every once in awhile we get a newcomer who is religious and (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: And he starts praying.

P2: Start praying.

INTERVIEWER: Shut up!

P2: Ja, that is not what we are doing here, so then how do you handle that, but, but I am always I, we started doing the silence partially as an expression of this idea of the whole thing being communion so it is a moment to reflect and repent basically it is like this moment and to give thanks like there is all these kind of pieces in it and so I started being silent.

INTERVIEWER: We explored with Dave quite a long time about where that silence came from.

P2: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: J's death, P3's memory but again P3's memory is sketchy so (interrupt)

P2: Ja, it certainly emerged (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Something around that time as a way of saying, let's be quiet and,

P2: It was certainly used back then it has only become part of our regular practice I would say probably in the last year.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

P2: Certainly the length of time we hold it and as a regular like consistent event (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: And is that, I get the sense it is the point in the week where you most of those people had not had an opportunity to be quiet,

P2: And safe.

INTERVIEWER: Or be safe.

P2: So that is the combination I think it is, I have come to place and think about like it is a place to be quiet and silent and I have had, I started doing it again so I ja, and I had a couple of people come to me two or three weeks and just say, I so value that silence like it is just so good but I am like why, they are no it is just I feel right it is the right you know and, and so that is I think for me the answer to that question is, I think we are yearning to build a more permanent community maybe that is the desire for every church community and don't, I think we are seeing the existence of alternative communities within it and some of them are just two people, there is a guy called L and I who go and have

coffee together or breakfast together and we have, I think we have the emergence of a friendship and, and there are people that come to our door that we, we suggested come to the meal and now they come to the meal and with us here and that has kind have shifted, now I am P2 I am not (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Pastor something or other thing.

P2: Even if I say I don't have food here I don't get played,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: Obvious this kind of and then there is this, and this desire to have a moment in time which if nothing else stands as a sign of an alternative like as, as a place where others can find and, and in, in that I am struck by increasing stories I hear but don't get to deal with of people who kind of wonder through the doors on Thursday morning to come and cook food because they have heard about it or give money because they have heard about it and so this kind of lack of a need for a budget almost and the fact that P8 runs this good food club and in the mist of that we were wondering how do we, how do we get decent food into this story as well so that the food is dignified not just the conversations and, and then this is going to throw away, well why don't we add twenty rand onto the ordering form and if anybody wants to you know maybe we will make three hundred rand, it is like two and a bit thousand rand every month comes in for that, and the suppliers kind of help out and now, now you have got this food that is also more than just the cuts and the dregs you know and so we form this alternative community and that, that is important and it is part of the reason I, I mean we are trying to manage the sort of volunteers thing because it is, it has actually been difficult in the last six months.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, just pause on that because that is something I have, you know I have, I am observing which I think is a really interesting dynamic that of the last few weeks I have been there is a very, obviously a group of people who come to help and have, just overheard some comments about, oh but I, I wasn't expecting of this so,

P2: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: You know how, how, that is obviously a dynamic that is complexed and, and (interrupt)

P2: And it is one once again we are experimenting with so like there is this, there is this reality at the meal that there is this thing of two churches, so there is St Peter's and then there is Big Church and, and Big Church primarily through the lens of P29 and I trust P29 so we deal with things but he is an evangelist in this sense that he can solve things and, and he is passionate about stuff so I mean it in that sense, like he can, like people get into his passion and they want to do things and so P29 is passionate to see people engaging with homeless people differently,

INTERVIEWER: Wonderful.

P2: And so he talks about that and as a result Big Church puts the meal and as a place of contact for people to come along which initially was fine but then they ran like a big homeless people's ministry seminar thing like six months ago and we started getting like these gangs of sort of twenty white upper middle class do-gooders arriving you know and they were mostly only there for like a week so in the two week, in the time they have been there, like a lot of the, the extras that have been there, are people who are not going to be there next week and they weren't there the week before. And so part of having the kind of like briefing this to do that, we have actually P29 and I have just agreed, and I think we have just told everybody else but in that particular relationship where the two people that count, where I have said to him, I mean he was saying how much, how many emails he fields for people to come so he was showing me his list of emails, so he sends them that little briefing sheet we do and he tells them a little bit but he also says these are the ways you can help out and so people come along and so what we have agreed now is that he is not going to say that what he is going to say now is, if you would like to come we open the doors at six thirty you wait outside and come in and enjoy a meal. Here is the values of the meal, here is what is expected of you but just come and have a meal. If after a few weeks of doing that you are interested in becoming part of the kind ongoing service then you and I can have a chat and we can talk about what that looks like and so in a sense saying we don't have this backdoor that you come in just because you are this small group that has come to volunteer because the, what has happened and I had to have quite strong conversations is that they are a very white upper middle class church, I mean you know that, but for the purposes of the research our congregation isn't and so we had, we have got a small service team who quite honestly can run the meal, like, there is a small group of us that if nobody else pitched up between us we could make the meal happen and it wouldn't be a problem and it is, F hasn't been coming because there was a relation difficulty with one of the other St Peter's people so we are trying to manage that but F who is a single coloured grandmother with her grandson who is problematic and she lives in a tiny apartment somewhere in Mowbray on a social grant but comes to, like so she is part of the, there is P10 who is, you know who she is, there is ourselves, there is P5 and P12 and up until recently there was a Kenyan academic family who have had to go back for visa issues, but N and M would come along and, so you had this team from St Peter's,

INTERVIEWER: Who are multicultural.

INTERVIEWEE: Multicultural, multilingual, multi age, multi economic.

INTERVIEWER: Economic ja.

INTERVIEWEE: So you had professors and F who was a, whose, who worked as a cleaner all her life you know and, and so that was the service team and, and my kids actually the ones that picked it up, Z was all offended, because he does, but he like he realized that, that these, the young people were arriving and taking over because they were making the assumption that if there were beneficiaries, no, no, no if there were bene, like so we try and move away from beneficiary recipient type anyway but they are arriving with that, I get it but they were identifying F and P10 and P10's daughter as those to whom the meal was being provided, rather than those who were part of the service team because their whole framework and reference (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Because they don't have relationships.

P2: And they don't have relationships outside of that and so I, that one I like, I said to P29 like you have to deal with that because I am not going to, I like we are responsible for this group of people and, and when, and so you know it is something like Pinky has done this for a long time and so she tends to manage the putting out food because she knows

what is going on and she knows how to manage it and all the rest of it but people would come in and think they know more efficient way to do it and, but they don't necessarily one gets the value and hospitality that we are not trying to rush the food that was our discovery earlier this year is that we were all feeling rushed by this, slow down. So, so the decision we have now made is to say actually you don't get to come in to, if you want to come to the meal to look see, come to the meal and look see, the doors opens at six thirty I will be on the other side of the doors and then I said to him, I said common ground wouldn't allow me to arrive on a Sunday and like (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Come in the back or (interrupt)

P2: I could play guitar, I am, I am having help with the service I am going to play guitar today and maybe give a sermon you know, like I would like to give a notice please.

INTERVIEWER: No you can say that.

P2: Exactly you know and, and so (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: But that is an important thing.

P2: And so in terms of like language it as their and emergence of faith community is to say like, no the people who are holding it like there is some values we hold that are becoming more and more important and that can get subverted by, just random people pitching up and yet at the same time we don't want to say people not to come because we want to be a place where people are welcome and we want to help build those connections, so you are welcome to stand outside in the cold with everybody else who is hanging around outside, so that is the decision we have just made,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, no I think that is a really important, important one and it will help grow the authenticity of the community in the future. Let me just give you, ask you one more question is, is how, how do you, you talked a little bit about where you are in this mission shaped flow and but how do you people perform the faith or improvise their understanding of faith in, in the community supper I mean you have shared some stories as we have gone along which I, which were really great, these, these, chef from into some transformation or process where people have you know left alcohol and drugs and those things, are there other ways you have witnessed or you see people performing the faith, as a notion I am really interested and I just think in that space I think the flexibility the openness of it might lend itself to that.

P2: I mean there have been some occasions and they are the ones that I have yearned you know how to make happen because they, every time they have happened they have been spontaneous rather than, so they have been accidental rather than planned and P8 and I in particular talk a lot about that how we could potentially make it but, there have been a couple of occasions, I mean there is one that kind of is the marker for it but where something I sat down I was at a table with a group and there was a comment about the kingdom of God, I think it was quite a is sort of moralistic, this person was judging themselves quite strongly I suppose because the bottom line it was quite a, you know and I, you have heard me say like we are not trying to give, I think I have, I am not sure if I have used those exact words but I would say for the most part we are not trying to give faith, because I always there is, there is faith in that community you know and, and whether it is the guy the rabbit the guy who said to me one night, oh, I have given up trying to get them trying to get them to call me P2 and not pastor, it is just a default position because they cannot remember my name,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, we get it, we get it.

P2: But they are like pastor, pastor, pastor he is like, oh I stand here I want to follow Jesus but then I walk through those doors and I want to follow the bottle and he is talking about outside, outside on the street and I was like, well that is not too different to me, like I said I experience that my particular thing is probably slightly less socially or slightly more socially acceptable but there is not a big difference I don't think but this one particular time there was a comment like that and I said, well like does the Bible say that, like what about this part, and I can't remember the particular passage but it was one of the sort of parables of Jesus, I said how do you hope, didn't Jesus say this and that, and no no what do you mean, so I said and, and they were like oh really and three of them dug into their bags, Bibles appeared on the table, it is just sort of at the end of the meal and suddenly this like scrappy Bibles were being gone through and we ended up having this (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Improvisation,

P2: Improvised Bible study like around the table where it wasn't Craig the pastor telling them what it was, it was a group of people having a conversation about what it means to be faithful in our particular existence and what the text had to say to that and, and so I think what does happen certainly in the roles, the kind of the roles of perhaps the gifting that I bring into it is like looking for moments of like that and then beginning to use those as markers to say how do we, are there ways to make it happen more, and one of the ways we are experimenting with is this idea of table host. I think we need to do some work on equipping table hosts and at the moment the table hosts or too uniform, we have had other table host uniform in the sense that they are primarily white men and some of that has simply been that, that group of people, less it be interpreted as white men are faithful that, that group of people are, are really committed they wanting to be there every week. I have discovered that most of them make up P29's little Abundant Life group and I have said to him, I wonder whether there wouldn't be some benefit in them not being table hosts because then they can be free to do what they want to do and we can build a deeper network of people who see this pastoral connection to their table that can, like P5 does, like P5,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: P5 quite naturally, I mean P5 has explored ordination at some point and, and so P5 in his very kind of, deliberate way I mean P5, I wouldn't, I wouldn't be able to tell you how many people have come but P5 has it written down every week.

INTERVIEWER: Yip, yip I watch him. I have watched him.

P2: And he has got that somewhere he has got all the numbers and like you know when you are asking for numbers I was like P5 tell me where the numbers are, there are so, so there would be expression of faith. I think we have seen quite regularly and what we have tried to encourage is sort of people praying for each other and trying hard for that not to be,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P2: The service team praying for and yet at the same time where there is a group of people who are willing to serve and one expression of that is praying for people and we have had, I mean we have had a couple of things, I mean we have had quite a significant healing on one occasion with a guy who P8 was sitting with and he had a big abscess inside, so you can see it, but it was, you could see the swelling you couldn't see the abscess, he was in huge pain he had taken pain killers and P8 just really felt that we needed to pray for him before we left so we did you know as often happens, it is like okay, hope you feel better and, and then we drove off and saw him walking up the road and then on the Sunday we were actually at church on Sunday morning and he was standing out with a smile like a barn door wide and he is like, you didn't see me chasing you down the road, we are like no we didn't see you, he says you guys the moment I like I walked away like there was this thing and the pain and that thing was gone it is like gone, it is all gone and that has been three, or four days. So this, so there has been that (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Sort of spontaneity.

P2: Spontaneity of it and then I think we are seeing the sort of mutual transformative discipleship beginning to happen on a more planned way and I think the bits we will see in the next sort of while are probably in the realm of maybe a sort of engaging the text together, I am very taken by Bob Ekblad's reading the Bible with the dammed I mean contextual Bible studies so it is, it is not just his stuff but in the in the times that I have used some of his framing of the text it kind of does blow their minds a little bit because they are so, I think they, certainly the homeless vulnerable community are so use to the text being the text of domination and the text being something where, I mean,

INTERVIEWER: It's whole book (interrupt)

P2: Ja, he, one of his chapters is a non euro greeting of the patriarchs and so he kind of looks at the patriarchs through the lens of sort of people who cheat and steal and lie and hide and run and you know and kind of, like do you know any of these people, like do you recognise them you know and, and that being true for the, for not just for the homeless people but also for those who come from the suburbs who suddenly encounter a different thing so I do think for the and this since it can be anonymous I can say it for like the *Big Church* types too much exposure to a Thursday evening meal might spoil them for *Big Church* I mean in this sense of (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: No idea what you are talking about

P2: You know and it is, it's that sort of homogenous single expression, respectful as I am of so much of what does go on there, the, I think that kind of engagement with the text and we have you know, I have had we have had one of them come to me via P29 to say whether he could, whether he could preach, I think was the, could bring a word. I was, P29 what, what do you mean by bring a word? It is like no he just thought, he is an elder, I was like ja, no not going to happen. The fact that he is asking probably is highlight enough for me you know and I think that would be, and, and then I mean I think doing particularly practising communion has become, when I have the fascinating conversation with R who I don't think has been in the two weeks you have been.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

P2: R is passionate about having communion happen and he is clearly quite versed in Anglican church stuff but has a very strong opinion outside the Anglicanism on that we can't use yeast, so he is quite, that every time we use bread, like where it is somewhere outside,

INTERVIEWER: So you need Matzos it needs to be,

P2: So he arrived with (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: Unleavened.

P2: Ja, so he arrived with rotis.

INTERVIEWER: Oh ja.

P2: The one ja he arrived and (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: It is much more contextual.

P2: And, and ja totally, that was it was good. So he had arrived the one week and I had said, well this is what we have got, and then the next week we weren't going to do communion and he arrived wanting communion and arrived having purchased rotis so we had rotis and grape juice,

INTERVIEWER: Just bring.

P2: For communion that night

INTERVIEWER: And so, so you hadn't planned to have an act of communion that night.

P2: That night that he arrived like with this offering if you wish you know and he, I think he lives on the street you know I, I am aware that we have got a whole, we have got people who live outside very dysfunctionally all the way through with people who, while all the way through to people who live in mansions but in the kind of those who might formed as, as vulnerable or we are sitting with people A has come every week, he is a Mozambican has come every week for - has it stopped recording?

INTERVIEWER: No.

P2: Has come every week for five years pretty much, like A lives in a garage backyard apartment somewhere and just comes does his thing, I mean he hasn't, he is quite resistant to one of the ideas that he is one of the old timers, that he is, ja he is and then E and G now live in a Kombi, they sell The Big Issue I now have, I discovered that they live in a Kombi that parks just over here.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

P2: And they used to be on the street. She certainly used to be on the street. Ja, anyway.

INTERVIEWER: That is great. We have just passed the hour mark so I think that is probably plenty we can keep talking but I think let us bring it to,

P2: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: A closure and then I can follow up with bits I want to kind of chat through,

P2: No that is great.

INTERVIEWER: But thank you so much.

P2: Can I take a picture of that?

INTERVIEWER: You can.

ANNEXURE H

Transcript of interview with P3

INTERVIEWER: You are my first. P3 welcome, this is P3, the Reverend P3, initial questions for this Ph.D. on the community supper. Let's, let's kick straight off, did you and other leaders when you were beginning the community supper, consciously follow this diagram which I am going to show you which you will know from your own background in fresh expressions, is that something that you were consciously thinking about when the community supper started?

P3: No it, it as you say, it is a model with which I have always been very familiar it as I ran, fresh expressions in the UK in my previous parish and had been around that movement for a long time, so I know it very well but there was never an expressed or subconscious intention to turn what we are doing on Thursday nights into a fresh expression at church.

INTERVIEWER: Not at all?

P3: No that was never a plan as such. The desire from the beginning was simply to create a space for people to be in community together because we had observed that Mowbray lacked community in our feeling and particularly St Peter's lacked a sense of community.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: So I suppose you could say that in there was the conscious first step of listening to the community.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: And that, that, that was conscious and deliberate, but it was conscious and deliberate in the sense of we aren't going to listen to the community so we can start a fresh expression it was conscious and deliberate because I always want to listen to the community that I am serving.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, was it, was it under girded with a, were you listening to God I mean, was that part of the process, so you are listening to the community but was, we was that being balanced with saying is, you know God, we sense God's calling us to (interrupt)

P3: Ja I think so, I mean I, I am not, I am not one who is often con, conscious of God speaking directly in that sense.

INTERVIEWER: So who was praying about it?

P3: Me, P1 (Meldrum) it is hard to remember. J and C to a lesser, J and C T to a lesser extent.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: Although they were kind of on the periphery at this process, I think P2 and P8 probably, P2 and P8. There were probably a couple of others, but I can't really remember very well.

INTERVIEWER: Yip okay that is fine. That is really helpful thanks. Where do you sense you, you are in this mission shape flow?

P3: Right, right now?

INTERVIEWER: Ja, today so, so lets, let's I think the first community supper was the 23rd February,

P3: If you say so.

INTERVIEWER: I knew you were going to do that. 2012.

P3: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: That's what I have garnered from talking to people who remember such things.

P3: Okay, I could not have told you that.

INTERVIEWER: But in this, in this kind of this diagram that sort of speaks of the, the mission shaped flow, where, where do you think you are in that space?

P3: We, accepting that this process and certainly when I have heard it taught like people like Graham Cray they have emphasised that it is not linear always a direct as linear as the model presented.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, I think that is one of the weaknesses of this particular model.

P3: A bit I still find it an extremely helpful model.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: On the understanding that it is not always one to two, to three to four but we are somewhere here sort of in the working out what evangelism discipleship and worship mean if you, if I were to lump those two (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: So it is like an intersect between the, the circle of evangelism and discipleship and evolving worship.

P3: Ja, and I would say evangelism and disciple – I would use the word evolving to describe evangelism and discipleship as well.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so, so that you, you have been in that space of, of loving service and forming community that, that (interrupt)

P3: And we are still going through that.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: It's, it is (interrupt)

INTERVIEWER: It is not like you have done that.

P3: No it is always circular.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, ja.

P3: And we because we particularly these days have a quite a high throughput of people coming to volunteer and help out,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: On a one off or occasional basis we need to keep re-emphasising the loving service and the forming community aspect so it is not a food provision program.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, a soup kitchen ja.

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Reflect on, on sort of this, this on liminal space here between the for for me why, why is there a story that sort of jumps out from the last six months, year or that says something about the community supper being in this, in this intersect in this kind of the node between evangelism and discipleship and evolving worship?

P3: Is there a story? I am still kind of re-entering community supper after a long time off due to health reasons so I am still catching up,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: With the shape of things. That having been said, I am very conscious of for instance one of the things that P2 has introduced while I have been off sick and has continued is an increasingly long period of silence in the opening prayer, the grace that is said before the meal on Thursday night and that as I understand it from P2 he will be able to clarify for you much better, grew out of a conversation he had with me wanting to find out what are the basic elements of liturgy communion liturgy and how we could work those into Thursday nights in an informal way and if I understood him correctly he wanted to use that time of silence as a version of confession and a version of,

INTERVIEWER: A pause, ja.

P3: Ja, ja a pause to centre ourselves on God,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: So it is not simply a pre-functionary grace,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: Which we, he just say, which it kind of was to begin with. The first time I remember us so I speak under correction, the first time I remember something and this period of silence was the Thursday around the time that J T was killed and J was very involved in Thursday nights and was very popular.

INTERVIEWER: Maybe just pause there,

P3: So we had a time of silence for him,

INTERVIEWER: And, and, and say something about that because it obviously had an impact on,

P3: On J's death.

INTERVIEWER: Yes or who J was because obviously I can't interview him he is not part of the,

P3: No. So J T was a church warden at St Peter's he had been, he joined in the first wave of people, wave makes it sound much bigger in terms of numbers that it was, it is more of a trickle really in the first kind of small group of people who joined St Peter's from Christ Church at D's encouragement which was always kind of the deal when I came to take the post which was largely facilitated by D who was then the Rector of Christ Church.

INTERVIEWER: Yip.

P3: The understanding was that at an appropriate time which ended up being about a year after I had started here, there would be a small implant of good people not people you wanted to get rid of it but good people from Christ Church who to come and help us resource and being in the input of maturity, spiritual maturity and wisdom and experience and church being more than,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: J was always all about community, I mean you didn't know J at all I don't think did you?

INTERVIEWER: No. He died the day I started.

P3: Oh really is that right okay. So I, I quite vividly remember J saying when we were playing around, that are we going to have a, a kind of a tag line that describes St Peter's, kind of, not quite a vision statement but a kind of a tag line, the one that he wanted that we didn't quite go with in the end, but the one that he wanted was St Peter's the warm heart of Mowbray and that kind of describes his vision for not just St Peter's but for his life actually, to make for the church to be something that was warm and welcoming and community orientated and J also never needed any excuse to get people to gather around food. It was quite a common feature of J's life, that he brought back to St Peter's we would have occasional kind of church big church meals together often at J's encouragement, so community supper was very much when it started something for him that was, that is just that organ don't worry. Community supper for him was very much part of his DNA.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: He was, although he travelled quite a bit for work whenever he was in town he came and he was just brilliant at building relationships with the people there on a very, on an equal basis with no sense of, I am the comparatively rich white guy or the not rich.

INTERVIEWER: Not white people.

P3: Not white people although as you will notice there is quite a few white people at supper. So James was a very popular figure on Thursday nights and he was a very charismatic person not just theologically but in his personality as well he is a very charismatic warmhearted person who a lot of people said they loved and he was killed in, on a business trip to Nairobi in a terrorist attack there and when, it would've been the, it must have been the Thursday after he died he died on the Saturday,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: But we didn't know that he had died till the Sunday.

INTERVIEWER: The Sunday.

P3: Ja. So it must have been the Thursday after that that I had to announce to supper that J had been killed. Now quite a few people knew by then that J had been killed because this is a national news story but even, and word in the homeless community spreads very quickly it is quite a tight knit community and news travels very fast. So there was a, I was expecting as, as with our Sunday community I was expecting on Thursday a profound sense of shock or trauma to the whole community and, what did we do? I think at the beginning of the meal or it might have been after we each spent a bit of time eating I can't remember which, I talked a bit about J and explained what had happened and I got people to, we had pictures of J up around the hall, that is right I remember that, H M organised that, we, I invited people to share words, memories of what J meant to them and that got quite noisy because people kind of shouting out things that J meant to them positive things and at some point then, I lead us in a time of silence and that was I think the first time we have had silence consciously as part of the supper and it,

INTERVIEWER: But you had acts of worship before that.

P3: I don't think so.

INTERVIEWER: So J's death in some ways was, was a, a pivotal,

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Point in the changing of this supper into something that was (interrupt)

P3: Ja, again I speak under correction but I don't think we have had sung worship.

INTERVIEWER: But you had communion at that point, no?

P3: I don't think so.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: It is difficult to remember but I don't think so. And I was just really struck by how well people held the silence, and then since then it has occurred to me and I have had this conversation with P2 how there is for a lot of the people who come on Thursday nights there is almost certainly very few if any of the space in their day where they can be silent and physically safe at the same time.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: But close their eyes be silent and safe at the same time. Where they can not have to worry that because they are being silent and reflective they are going to get have their stuff stolen and when people start, if someone starts to talk during the silence they it tends to get managed by the other people who are there we don't live to manage it from the front. So I think silence has become quite an important part of the Thursday night experience for people.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, ja.

P3: And when we have communion now it is quite a reflect, you will see on this Thursday when I do it, it is reflective - I try and involve silence in that as well it is reflective and peaceful. We have had sung worship, there was a period when we had sung worship every week and that was quite noisy.

INTERVIEWER: I remember.

P3: Ja, have you come to that?

INTERVIEWER: I came to a few.

P3: Ja, and that is okay, that is fine I, I think I preferred it to P2 who wasn't never quite so sure about it I think, will be interesting to hear how he reflects on it but ja, this, this silence is definitely a significant part of the Thursday evening informal liturgy.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: Now.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, brilliant. So you said in the beginning that there wasn't an aim to start a new ecclesial community,

P3: No.

INTERVIEWER: It is just birthed itself.

P3: Ja, which I think speaks to the fact that this process you put on this sheet,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: Which, which I know work very well is an organic one it is not one that,

INTERVIEWER: Each element is a gift in itself.

P3: Ja, that it does happen naturally and I think we have subconsciously followed it.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: In a non fairly non linear way but, P2 I know would agree with that and, and,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, so, you and this is slightly, this is going, carrying on the worship part because I think it is quite important, you have in act of worship through the communion every other week. Has anyone asked to be baptized?

P3: A couple of times we have had people asked to be baptized in fact somebody asked just a few weeks ago now,

INTERVIEWER: Interesting.

P3: And I said, I had a conversation about it with him and I said okay come back and chat to me about it again next week and he didn't. So we have never actually done it but somewhere has awaked something.

INTERVIEWER: So people have expressed a desire.

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: How, I mean if you were to do that, what would it look like in that context?

P3: Very good question.

INTERVIEWER: I am just thinking what, you know what makes church I think you know if you look at something like Lambeth Chicago quadrilateral it is the, the, the sacraments the two or core sacraments would be communion, the Lord's

supper and baptism and so it is obvious that, that communion is happening and it is meaningful and contextually appropriate by, I am just fascinated by the baptism question.

P3: Ja, and it is precisely for that reason that I see baptism as one of two sacraments and the marks of authentic church is precisely the reason that I think we need to find a way to make baptism possible and relevant on Thursday night and I wonder whether, my model of always saying people come back and talk to me next week, which is something that I do when people enquire about a wedding,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, sure.

P3: Or a baptism on a Sunday to make sure they are serious,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, ja.

P3: I wonder whether I am imposing a model from Sunday's that doesn't work on Thursdays. But what, what it would look like I don't know. It would be probably a little messy and chaotic.

INTERVIEWER: I wouldn't expect anything else. I was hoping you would get a Bishop but, let's I think no that is really helpful can we move onto, are you aware of some criticisms of fresh expressions of church and if you are say something about those in the context of what is happening at the community supper on Thursday.

P3: I am not profoundly, I haven't really engaged with many of the critical debates around fresh expressions. I am I think some people fear there is a duming down of church involved.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, sort of church lite as being one of the,

P3: Or I think some people fear that it is church and people who don't like church, so it's, so within that is the fear that it is not really for non-Christians but it is for Christians who are annoyed with,

INTERVIEWER: Disaffected.

P3: Disaffected, thank you that is a better phrase to use, disaffected people. In that latter one there is certainly a danger because we, the Thursday night could tip into that because if you look at some of our people one or two particularly they with my permission come on a Thursday but not a Sunday by and large and call it their act of worship and their engagement with the St Peter's community.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: And they are the sort of people who have been around church and church things for a long time and I am not so much disaffected it is probably slightly the wrong word for that point,

INTERVIEWER: Ja, I've put those words in your mouth.

P3: Ja, but no it is a helpful word but they, they might describe themselves as a little bored of a church, something church,

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: And see this as more, see Thursday nights as more authentic so,

INTERVIEWER: And a bit more authentic expression of church for them.

INTERVIEWER: Ja. But dumbing down I just don't agree with it at all.

INTERVIEWER: So unpack that why? We don't have any sermons, you don't have any (interrupt)

P3: Well, well the sermons happen through, I would argue happen through discussion.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: So which is quite I would argue, is quite a rabbinical model.

INTERVIEWER: Intentionally rabbinical or,

P3: Probably unintentionally rabbinical, but it is something I am becoming aware of as a rabbinical model.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: And when I have employed a more discursive style of preaching on Sundays some people don't like it, but some people who are used to traditional quote unquote church really engage with it.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: And I maybe, it is just because of my role, but when I, if I sit down at a table on a Thursday evening I will very quickly get asked questions and I will try not to give an answer but I will try to start a discussion.

INTERVIEWER: Are people asking you spiritual questions?

P3: Ja, ja. Although, ja.

INTERVIEWER: Because they know you are the minister.

P3: Probably.

INTERVIEWER: Ja. Okay. Is there, is there any sense that the community supper's as an alternative community?

P3: To what?

INTERVIEWER: To like in a, in a, in the sense of the ecclesia is like a called out space, it is people who are gathering because they are gathering in the name of Jesus they are gathering in a place that is not set against the world but has a different set of values and principles and underlying ways of being, in that sense.

P3: I think there is that for some people ja.

INTERVIEWER: What would that, in what way?

P3: I think, I see some people both guests and volunteers who expect a different standard of behaviour on Thursday nights to what they have the rest of the week.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Well what do you mean?

P3: Don't use that language you are in church.

INTERVIEWER: So no "f'ing and blinding.

P3: Ja. Or some people will say to children, don't run you are in a church building which is not something that I, which is not a point of view I would encourage but it is what some people say.

INTERVIEWER: Is it alternative in other ways?

P3: Yes alternative to Sunday worship for some like people like P2 and P8 and ja. It is alternative I think for some in the sense that it equalises power there is that little leaflet that we have got with some of our values on it.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about that equalising the power, I mean is that, is that something you, you are witnessing?

P3: We try to so, the serving, the serving at table, food at table rather than getting people to come up and get their food which is the soup kitchen model.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: So they are very conscious of that, so we are not in a place of, we are being charitable towards you and this is, this is more like a sitting at your kitchen table having supper together.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: And the, the volunteers will also eat with the guests so there no sense of this food isn't good enough for us, the idea is it is good food so I know a number of soup kitchens use ingredients sort of just going past their sell by date, we don't do that.

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: So ja we are always trying to say this is volunteers and guests are on the same footing, they equal footing.

INTERVIEWER: Do they, I mean how do those power dynamics work out, have you seen, have you witnessed times where you see that equalising of power in some particular concrete way?

P3: Ja, so one or two of the long standing Thursday night guests would, would know that the reason I haven't been around for a long time is for health reasons and they all know some of the details of that and they, they check in on me as much as I'd check in on them so that now that I am back on the scene and saying how is your AS what, what stage is your treatment at, they are keen to find out about me.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, so it is not a one-way,

P3: Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER: That is interesting. So in that sense that, that, that speaks of real community where people genuinely care about one another, want to know what is happening in one another lives and journeying together. How do people perform the faith at the community supper, I mean what how you know, is that too open ended?

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Right thanks. You, there is obviously this sense that the, the, there is a liturgical flow whether anyone recognises it or not.

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: It's besides the point because you get the idea that people don't recognise it in the,

P3: Sunday.

INTERVIEWER: Sunday normal Sunday service, or a traditional Sunday service, that there is this point of silence, there is this discursive rabbinical questions and conversations going on at tables and then there is a Eucharistic, how, how are people participating in that or how they, what's the. Are there acts of spontaneity that happen in that very loose liturgical flow I think I am thinking of points where people have spontaneously done things or said things or you know is that, is that encouraged, is that,

P3: Ja, so sometimes people will pray, pray with folk. Sometimes people pull out a Bible and say let's well let's look at this passage together.

INTERVIEWER: Is that round the tables?

P3: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, and I mean is how, is that happening on a regular basis or is that is that like a rarity or is that kind of common.

P3: It is difficult, that is a difficult one to answer I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Thanks.

P3: Sorry.

INTERVIEWER: Share okay so maybe share a story or two of how people view the community supper as a place of participation, belonging and acceptance. We are talking about some of the long term you know people who have been part of the community supper for now five and a half years in existence, there are clearly not very many but there are some who, who have been on that journey, do you think it is a place where they are participating that they belong but they feel accepted?

P3: Ja, I think so. So just recently P5, you know P5?

INTERVIEWER: Ja.

P3: I believe you were chatting to him last week. He arranged a trip I don't quite know how it came about that it was, it was around his table, the table he is at every week, he arranged a trip, trip to the football.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

P3: With guests and volunteers so that speaks to a sense of community and belonging that has developed around P5's table and one or two others.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, do you think people are challenged in their, so, so it is obvious that you know I have been to community supper a number of times it is obvious it is a place where people feel do feel accepted and there is some sense of equalising of power, there is a sense of participation belonging but are people being, is there a sense of challenge, people are being challenged out of their addictions or out of their, their continued long-term living on the street or, or is there a challenge element or (interrupt)

P3: Ja, no it is not conscious and I think the best person to speak to about this would be the P29.

INTERVIEWER: Ja, I will be interviewing P29 at some point.

- P3: Ja, because one of the things that he has brought and this is partly connected to his wider ministry amongst those, is creating the opportunity to move to help people move into rehab or night shelters.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay. So it is like, is, is, is, is a stepping stone out of some (interrupt)
- P3: Ja, if, if people want to.
- INTERVIEWER: If people want to obviously.
- P3: So like, I think it was last Thursday you would have heard P29 give them notice at the beginning of supper saying there is opportunities that have come up, come and see me if you want to.
- INTERVIEWER: That is right ja.
- P3: So, so it is not so much that we challenge people but we create the space for people to take a step if they are,
- INTERVIEWER: Ready.
- P3: If they are ready.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: And you, do, do you see community supper as a, I mean I know over the last kind of six months or so you have included it now in the service register which is part of Anglican requirement and not done, I mean people come each week.
- P3: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: By doing that is it, is it in your, in your mind a legitimate form of church in this place?
- P3: It is becoming that. I know it is, where it wasn't intended to be that beforehand now it is quite clearly an intentional drive that we say that and we have said that from the front of the vestry meeting when P2 did report on it.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay.
- P3: You have heard P2 and others say that from the front on a (interrupt)
- INTERVIEWER: So it is mostly in the vestry minutes, it is, it is spoken about on a Sunday morning. What, what, what congregation the, the, the traditional and I am using parenthesis kind of church's response to that, is that something that (interrupt)
- P3: I haven't heard any complaints or disagreements I am sure there are people who complain or disagree about that but I haven't heard any. I think people are beginning to get the idea that the goal of Thursday night is not to bring people into the church on a Sunday although clearly they are welcome if they want to.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja, if they want to ja.
- P3: But the goal of Thursday is to create, is now to create a worshipping community space that works with difference of the person who are Sunday worship isn't going to work for.
- INTERVIEWER: Do you, do you create when you, you celebrate communion do you have a liturgy that's shaped for the community and has grown out of the community or do you just use you know standard liturgic text.
- P3: I use something very simple so I just take have some silence at times of confession I think, take the words, Paul's words from one Corinthians about the Lord's supper.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: Pass, pass, we pass the bread and the cup around and then I close with a prayer, we might sometimes use the Lord's prayers and sometimes I will use words in the liturgy that I know well and just say them.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: But because it's some of the people who come on Thursday nights aren't not particularly literate.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja, much more oral.
- P3: Ja, I don't give out anything printed.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja, that is quite fascinating. Is there anything you want to ask me? Sorry I pounced that one on you. I do think, I mean I think it is really interesting I do think community supper has been in this kind of inter, this, don't want to keep using the word liminal but that is the best expression I think of, it is on, it is on the cusp of something and I sense that as I come along on a Thursday.
- P3: And I think it is, I think that is right and I think it has been on the cusp or a while and I think it probably needs to start getting off the cusp
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: Into whatever is next I think there is and this is probably something that is not good.
- INTERVIEWER: Well it is all right.
- P3: No you can record that.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay.
- P3: I think there is a tendency amongst some people on Thursday nights, I think particularly of P2 to talk rather than do and what is good about P29 for instance is that he does, he gets he moves into action and I think one, I want to spend a few more weeks just being at Thursday supper again after my time away.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: But once I have done that I can start to be quite proactive about moving, seeing what it might look like to move us onto the next step.
- INTERVIEWER: But what, what is that?
- P3: I am not sure yet but it might be (interrupt)
- INTERVIEWER: Sounds like the whole story of the,
- P3: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: Community supper.

- P3: It is. I, I mean I have always been very strong with my, and I think you and I have had this conversation before that my style of leadership is more improvisational more like jazz than a symphony.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: But I, but the baptism question is an interesting one because it may be we just need to start offering baptism so who wants to get baptized tonight. Or something like that and offer that more regularly as a, as an engagement with the second sacrament that marks church and it may be that we want to start offering for instance something like discussion questions for my discussion questions at the tables so there is a (interrupt)
- INTERVIEWER: As a, as a guide that you,
- P3: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: Doesn't have to control, it is not controlling.
- P3: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: So, ja. I mean this is, this is another question again we are going off track but this is really important for me in terms of trying to garner the, the authenticity of, of, of community supper is the, there is, you, you will know there has been a lot of research from, from George Lings and the Church Army in the UK around kind of the hallmarks of fresh expressions and as I looked through them and I think the community supper fulfils nearly all of the criteria bar, well this is, I don't actually know is, would you say that the Bishop knows about Thursday nights and acknowledges it and approves of it (interrupt)
- P3: I have no, I have no idea if the Bishop knows about it.
- INTERVIEWER: Have you ever written to him and told him about it?
- P3: No.
- INTERVIEWER: No.
- P3: I don't know if he knows. Graham Cray Bishop knows about it,
- INTERVIEWER: He is the Bishop of a, just for, ja he is the Bishop of another province.
- P3: Well he is retired, he is retired.
- INTERVIEWER: He is retired now ja.
- P3: And he has been you know I have been around the same context of Graham Cray for a while now, whenever I tell the story in his presence Graham is always there nodding and smiling and giving us the thumbs up and saying, no this is what fresh expressions is.
- INTERVIEWER: So you get approval from a Bishop just not your Bishop.
- P3: Ja. And that is partly because of, of of relationship with the diocese.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja exactly and I think this is an important background story in, in narrating what is happening at St Peter's, like St John's there is this complexed kind of parallel universes that the diocese and the church operates in and it's finding those points of contact (interrupt)
- P3: So in a sense even if, if the Bishop did need to know then that will be a different issue but I think with St John's and St Peter's they just take the view well we don't really need to get involved unless they ask us to.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja. And I mean that, that is one of the other, it is kind of the other finer point of tension in, again if we go back to the Lambeth Chicago quadrilateral it is Scripture, the creeds, the sacraments which you know from what I can see the community supper has no problem it is then, it gets to the Episcopal, this is the Episcopal so there is a priest involved in this community do you think if you were not around that the community supper would flourish, not flourish not saying or that it will continue to exist, how much is it dependent on you,
- P3: Well you see it did continue to exist for (interrupt)
- INTERVIEWER: How long were you absent?
- P3: It was about a year or so.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay.
- P3: It would be interesting to know what P2's reflection on that time with my absence would be.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: And I encourage them to try doing communion but just don't call it communion.
- INTERVIEWER: Just a meal.
- P3: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P3: So I don't think it is dependent on me, I try not to be essential for anything.
- INTERVIEWER: Apart from being married.
- P3: Apart from my marriage.
- INTERVIEWER: Let's, I think this has been really, really helpful I just want to ask one final question which is around again you will know the principle of a mixed economy and you were saying that the, the congregation, the traditional congregation is at St Peter's there are two services you have. Is there, would you say there is a, any type of symbiotic flow between those Sunday morning congregations and the Thursday congregations?
- P3: There is a few people from Sundays who come on Thursdays who volunteer and it, it really is part of the rhythm of their week.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja. Do you think that it, so you are saying that the, the Sunday morning congregations you know are happy that it is happening you know would there be a sense that their praying, that their giving, their sewing in (interrupt)
- P3: I know some, so there are some people who give specifically for Thursday nights. If you come, if you would come to the eight o'clock Sunday service you would hear and, maybe between service prayer meetings on a Sunday, Thursday nights are often prayed for. Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: P3 I think that's,

P3: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: That's really helpful I think there is some great things that I can we can take away,

P3: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: And use that.

P3: Cheers.

INTERVIEWER: Got to work out how to stop this now.

ANNEXURE I

Transcript of interview with P4

INTERVIEWER: So here I am at the community supper with P4 and I'm going to ask her a few questions. P4, tell me how you ended up attending the community supper how did you find yourself here?

P4: It happened last year how I did find out about this church is because I moved here to Rondebosch and a couple of friends told me about this church... I didn't know what was it all about. At first I was shy when I heard it and now you go there you have a nice meal and then I came here with them and I started to like it. Every Thursday night I came here, but I also asked questions about what is it all about and so people told me, and after a while I realized what was happening actually here.

INTERVIEWER: So what is happening can you tell me?

P4: I will say it is something I never experienced in my life before it's... I don't know how to say it, the meaning for the Thursday night church is for the people that are not well off and it's actually not only for the people who have struggles, it is for anybody in the...

INTERVIEWER: It's for anybody...

P4: And in a way I did feel off but also it is a good thing because now I can also get related to the church inside it and get to know the people and... what I can say, is personally I like it not just for the food, I have met some people, real people.

INTERVIEWER: So for the relationships?

P4: Yes for the relationships.

INTERVIEWER: Describe your relationship with people who come here, how would you describe the people that you... because you sit at the same table don't you with P5 each week...

P4: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So maybe tell me how would you describe those relationships?

P4: It's like all about how you represent yourself and how I see the needs. Like they really good people and they take me a lot back to... way back and what I see in them is sometimes things that I miss.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about that.

P4: And I feel comfortable with them.

INTERVIEWER: So they are kind and...

P4: Yes they don't... how can I say now... it is something it's like we are all human and we all people it doesn't matter in what situation you are, but when I am here and I am with them I just feel comfortable myself.

INTERVIEWER: So you feel more human?

P4: Yes. I actually to be honest I don't want to come here if I am not in a good mood because for me that moment if I must come here it is like they will also feel something is not right and I know it happened like that, they can exactly see because I know who they are and they know me now.

INTERVIEWER: They can see when you are not... so you can't fake it?

P4: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You can't pretend that everything is okay when it is not they will know?

P4: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That's wonderful. Describe tell me the best time that you have had here at community supper, a time where you really kind of felt that was an amazing meal or that was a great... can you think of one particular time?

P4: Yes, there were a lot of times already, but just the one night when I met them it was a really fun time for me and then just one thing that they did was the night when we all went out to the stadium...

INTERVIEWER: Oh yes, tell me about that.

P4: It was actually my first time also that I went out with them and the thing is that we know each other that I feel comfortable. I know actually also the time I was in good hands.

INTERVIEWER: So you felt cared for?

P4: Yes. And I really enjoyed it because I was here I wasn't on time they would waited for me and so we went there everything was fine and it was like I am now with my family and... then they dropped us off and I was like okay fine now the fun is over and I go my direction now. But most of the time it was nice many times we sat at the table I met friends actually I met this lady from New York we started to get close and after awhile we had to say goodbye... I still remember she sent messages and so...

INTERVIEWER: That was great.

P4: But, I don't have complaints about the church like I said I don't want to come to this church if I am not feeling...

INTERVIEWER: In the right place.

P4: At the moment I'm not feeling so well, but as long as I am not in a bad mood I don't want to come here with those type of things because when I talk to someone and when I smile I don't want to do it out of...

INTERVIEWER: It's not being real.

P4: I want to be real because what I get here is real.

INTERVIEWER: That's great. Does the community supper feel like church to you is it your church?

P4: I had to get used to it yes it is now my church too. I'm born a Catholic but for me it's not about what is my church, I do go to different churches at the end of the day it's the same house the same house of God. There is no difference for me actually because I believe in what I believe, I believe in God. And when you go there you must be clean from inside you mustn't be full of the world's[?] things you must be clean, you mustn't be related to any other outstanding things that is not real.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else that you want to tell me about the community supper that is really important to you that I haven't asked you?

P4: The stuff about the community?

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything about this... what happens on Thursdays that you want to tell me that you think is really important, it might not be.

P4: I don't think actually that only the like it's the same thing happening over and over so I didn't see anything wrong yet or about the church the supper and about the people here there is nothing that I can complain about. If I do see something I will talk with one of them I will sit with one of them and ask them what is that now that I noticed, but I don't come here always, for quite awhile now I started coming here on and off because also about certain things that I must do and stuff that I must make time to come here also.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you P4 that is really, really helpful I really appreciate your answering those questions for me.

P4: No problem.

ANNEXURE J

Transcription of Interview with P5

INTERVIEWER: Okay, today's date is the 25th October, I'm here with P5. Thank you, P5, for making some space to come and talk about your experience at the community supper, and I'm really interested to hear some of your perspective on it and some of your story. I know that you weren't there in terms of leadership right in the beginning but you've gotten involved within the first couple of weeks or the first couple of months. When you and other leaders, were you kind of conscious, and I'm going to show you a little diagram that has been used in fresh expressions, I'm not sure if you've seen it before. Some people who have been part of the community supper have, others haven't, so take a look at this, which is a diagram of kind of, here it is a diagram of starting a fresh expression of church. Did you think that you've consciously followed this kind of flow chart of loving service forming community and then Evangelism and Discipleship and evolving kind of worship, do you see that as being something that has happened in the community?

P5: In the community, the fourth one, evolving and worship is probably not quite there yet but we are doing a form of worship with the communion service and we do forms of prayers at the tables, especially when prayer is requested. So in that form but no format drawn up as a supper worship as yet.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, so where would you say you are if that would be where would you say you are in one of these circles, is there a particular point where you think, well, in the flow of this supper developing, where would you recon?

P5: I think we're right in the middle of evolving worship.

INTERVIEWER: You're right there?

P5: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So you're kind of moving from Evangelism, Discipleship into this?

P5: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, that's great. When you first started getting involved in this supper, were you thinking this is going to become a church? Because it's obviously, it's developing into that but right at the beginning, did you think, ah, this will be a church, I will be recording it in the service book?

P5: I didn't think of that, but my main drive, and I think why I was excited about it was because of the doors being closed so long because of the political system. So doors were closed, a little bit of the history of St Peters is that, you know, in the mid 1800's St Paul's was an extremely rich church.

INTERVIEWER: St Paul's in Rondebosch? Yes, I know St Paul's in Rondebosch.

P5: And St Peter's was almost built to get a bit of the riff raff out of St Paul's to down in the location.

INTERVIEWER: To get them down into Mowbray and get them out the way?

P5: I gave you that document.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, I've read it, J's kind of brief, no, it's very interesting.

- P5: To me the doors opening to the community supper, including a lot of homeless and disadvantaged people, was absolutely brilliant for me. Because I'd lived all those years seeing the disadvantaged, so I was ready from the beginning to get involved, although I wasn't officially invited to the first few, when I was invited and then there was also misconception by the parishioners that they weren't invited.
- INTERVIEWER: So it was a bit of cross miscommunication?
- P5: Yeah, so the invitation actually started going into the newsletter to say everybody is invited. And that excited me, my main grounding is that I always take my theology back to the Garden of Eden and I firmly believe that the whole earth, and that's why we called earth is the Garden of Eden. Everything belongs, we're all in the same garden and we all have to share the same fruits.
- INTERVIEWER: That's very interesting, tell me more about that, and do you see the community supper as kind of doing something to let us remember that we all sharing?
- P5: We're all together, we all together in the creation and our drive is to come back to that creation and that's why Jesus died for us on the cross, to bring us back to that creation, so we haven't left the garden, although looking at all these exciting things in this modern world makes us feel that we're not in a garden and we've got to challenge each other and compete with each other. But we actually still in the garden and it strange that our planet is called earth, so that keeps me grounded whenever I look at that aspect of inviting people in for supper and sharing a meal, I remember that we're all in the same garden.
- INTERVIEWER: You said, I remember the first week because what I'm doing is each week I come to the community supper, I write, I go home and I write down quite an extensive kind of reflection on what I see and what I'm hearing, who's doing what and kind of looking at, I remember the first week I came home because you had said something that struck me profoundly which was, you saw the supper as a place where, what the locusts had eaten was being given back or something along those terms. Can you tell me something more about that because I thought, I wanted at the time to go, that's really interesting, tell me more about that?
- P5: Well, if you look at the majority of the community guests, they're all disadvantaged people from the system of apartheid. So they are descendants of parents that suffered in the middle of the system, and the result that they're on the streets and in the gutter and in that condition is by no means purely their fault. It's a result of the system that brought them to that point, but they've got to survive it and with a little bit of help maybe they'll get there, that's why I regard the supper as a way of Gods because what they do get at the supper, the supper is definitely something bigger than our conventional church. Our conventional church, we can go to, we can all smile at the Priest and all the good but at the supper you're actually challenged to sit with somebody that's maybe looking gross, smelling gross, inebriated and you've got to sit down and actually eat the meal, and that's the important part, that you eat as well so that you're actually sharing the meal with them and eating just in the same manner as they are and sharing it. That's where they feel the dignity and I think that dignity is part of God's grace that he uses through us, which is planting that little seed of faith, and I think that's where the evolving worship comes in. Is that over the six years now, or five years.
- INTERVIEWER: It is coming up to six next year.
- P5: Six next year, I see the seeds of faith, out of the dignity they're getting out of it.
- INTERVIEWER: There is a question I want to ask you, I mean, and your kind of alluding to it is that is there a sense that the community supper is like an alternative community? It's an alternative to the world, I mean, you talking, you mentioned earlier that out in the world people are competing with each other for resources and space and finances, whatever. Do you see what happens at the community supper as kind of an alternative to that?
- P5: Yeah.
- INTERVIEWER: If it is, tell me a story about that?
- P5: I think in the conventional church we all go there still competing, when we walk in we smile but we all want to be better, we all want to be mentioned, we all looking for, on Thursday suppers nobody is looking for that sort of, we're all on the same, we're all right at the bottom, we all sit at the same table, eat the same food. Drink the same coffee and we share the same stories, whether it's from a different level but it's the same stories basically.
- INTERVIEWER: Tell me, describe kind of your relationship with a few people that come to the community supper, you don't have to use their names but any names that are used, I'll change, but just describe a few of the relationships. Because I think they help put flesh on some of the things that you're saying about real people, tell me a few?

- P5: Well, the relationship between the volunteers is definitely something unique and we've built that on a certain group, they have built a good relationship over the years.
- INTERVIEWER: Is that the people that are serving and in the kitchen?
- P5: They serving and they're helping and even the table hosts. I would say that the idea was that we should have a table host and somebody should try and maintain a certain table each week, so that we need to have some sort of connection. So I chose to have the table in the corner and over that period, over the last.
- INTERVIEWER: How long have you hosted that table?
- P5: I think I've been hosting about three years now.
- INTERVIEWER: That's a significant period of time.
- P5: Ja, but in the last year, what happens mostly when hosting, you don't always get the same people but in the last year we, for some reason, the same people started making sure that they would sit at certain tables, so everyone was virtually owning their own table in a certain way, not really strict. But in the last year I've found that I've had about four or five guests which was developing a sort of relationship and it was funny enough that the one guy is a Barcelona Soccer fan, and with Benni Macarthy becoming the new Cape Town Coach, I mentioned to him that I would like to take him to Cape Town Stadium and go watch the game together. But then P2 said, no, he'd like to go along and so it ended up with us being about a party of 13 with about five, six homeless guests along. The way God worked around that was that the neighbour two roads down phoned the office, the church office and asked, she says she feels the need to do some sort of community service, is there anything she can do for the church. And G said no, she can cook, and she wasn't a trained cook, she came in and she started cooking beautiful meals, she owns a business, Shuttle Tours, and she offered to pay the tickets for all the people going to Cape Town Stadium and to supply the shuttle and supply a guide. So we landed up going on a tour first around the Waterfront in the late evening lights, which was a treat for everybody, and then we went to the game and we thoroughly enjoyed it. It was raining, it was storming but we thoroughly enjoyed it.
- INTERVIEWER: Such a great picture of coming together and really beyond just superficial relationships, actually really doing something meaningful together.
- P5: Ja, and strangely enough two of those guests who are actually a couple have now moved on and have actually gone back to family, and they now in treatment, they're actually rehabilitating their lives quite nicely.
- INTERVIEWER: So one of the things that in some of the work around Fresh Expressions that people have written about and saying that Fresh Expressions can be a place of participation, belonging and acceptance but also a place of challenge, and it sounds like there's people in your community who have felt accepted and belong and are participating. But they're also challenged to change their life to be reconnected with their families, that is a fantastic story.
- P5: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: What, describe a highlight of being involved for you, I mean, you are describing that in a way but there are some other stories or points where you've gone, God is really at work here, or I can see God's hand in this. You've obviously just described one but are there others?
- P5: I would say for me is that P4 and S are finding a way back to normal life.
- INTERVIEWER: Are those two people from your table?
- P5: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: Do you want to tell us a little bit about them, I mean, again this will be confidential.
- P5: P4 was from Namaqualand, I think you've met her.
- INTERVIEWER: I've met her a few times, ja.
- P5: S was from Ocean View and they've always had a desire to get off the streets, and Sydney has now found a way of assisting his grandmother in Retreat, so they've actually moved in with the grandmother in Retreat where she stays. He's starting to work to earn his keep as a couple so hopefully.
- INTERVIEWER: So they're together?
- P5: They're together.
- INTERVIEWER: But they still come back to the community supper each week?
- P5: They haven't been here the past week and I was told that they at the grandmother.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay, so that's great.
- P5: No, that is huge. I think a sad part was when J T was murdered, and he was a big part of the community supper, and they knew him well, so it was a sad moment.
- INTERVIEWER: Tell me something about that, how did the community respond to obviously someone who was a larger than life figure?

- P5: Yeah, well, is one of the founding pioneers of the supper, so he was very big to them and initially the suppers were pretty rowdy because we had G, like B L, and played Afrikaans worship songs which was quite enjoyable to the community but rowdy. Because if you had inebriated guests, they were singing those worship songs, it was, and when James was murdered and the announcement was done on that Thursday, you could sense the shock and the loss.
- INTERVIEWER: Both P2 and P3 have told me that that day is almost where the silence started for, you know, for the beginning of the supper, very often there is just a pause, sometimes people pray, but sometimes it's just a moment of silence, just a point of reflection. So I think it is very interesting how J's murder, his death has subsequently actually shaped the community supper's liturgy, their way of coming together, this like pause and it's not a big long prayer, it's just a time to reflect on what's happened in the week. Or maybe giving stuff to God, it's very interesting how no one planned that, it was just something that happened out of circumstances. P5, I mean, you talked interesting, what I'm picking up as you talking to me is just kind of, you've had an experience in church, you've grown up at St Peter's and maybe give me, what do you understand as being church because you're saying that you seeing this evolving worship in the community supper. If you had to say what the bare essentials of church for you, without any, it doesn't have to be related to what the Anglican church does, what does it mean for you when you see church happen? What's the DNA of that, what's the raw kind of thing that kind of happens?
- P5: I think church is in the heart and I think it's, church should always be close to God and nothing should distance yourself from God, so I don't think church should involve prayer, which does happen at community supper. I think the heart generates God and what comes out of the heart is what you will see at church, so to me the main thing is what's in the heart.
- INTERVIEWER: What's happening in people's hearts?
- P5: What's happening in people's hearts and what comes out. Liturgy is good but it's the heart that defines church and how you feel when you leave, and that's why leaving Thursday suppers always makes you feel good because most of what's done is generated out of the heart.
- INTERVIEWER: Real acts of service between people, are you seeing, this is not one of the questions but have you seen kind of people who you would never previously have talked or connected before. Talking together at the community supper, do you ever think, wow, in a normal world those two people would never have a conversation or never have a meal together?
- P5: I've seen that often here, I've seen people that have thrown Bibles at the church before and cursed the church who now sit and feel blessed.
- INTERVIEWER: Because they felt rejected by the normal institution of church?
- P5: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: But feel embraced or part of this new way of being church?
- P5: Ja, a lot of people have told me they don't come for the food, they come for the dignity, and I know it's for the hunger for God but maybe Thursday supper should start finding out a way of actually allowing them to respond to God. We all, at first, weren't easy enough to respond to God as we would want to, its only as we get bolder and that, and a lot of them aren't bold enough to respond. A lot of them are, a lot of them are better versed than I am in scriptures and I don't know if I read your thing, you know. The guy that said deeper and deeper, let's go deeper is Gerald, and I met him a week ago and he's actually cursing God now and that's sad.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, so do you sense that there are points where actually there've been opportunities to help people into a deeper experience of God and that the community supper has kind of missed it sometimes, do you think, do you think or? It's not criticism, it's just a?
- P5: I think in the case of G where he's now so angry with the world, I think he's probably feeling the meal wasn't enough, maybe he needed a bit more drawing into the community. Because we send them away at 19:45, 19:30 and then we don't see them again until the next week, unless we see them in the street. But maybe G feels that we need to offer a bit more than that, and we do have a few that come to the Sunday services, we had R B who was a regular at the N2 robot of getting his earnings and he was a disciplined 08:00, 1652 attendee and he passed away just across the way from the church, laying in the streets. I actually couldn't find his body, I went to all the morgues to look for him.
- INTERVIEWER: What happened, do you know?

- P5: I found that he had left his grant card, SASSA card with one of the store keepers which is the norm because they do it because they buy on credit, so the store keepers keep the cards. Then the body goes missing but R was one of the.
- INTERVIEWER: Did you have a funeral or something for him?
- P5: Well, that was the intentions of trying to connect his family, and J was actually in the process of helping him find his family before he was killed.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay.
- P5: Then we got R who is also a long-time parishioner, he was actually at the recital on Sunday.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay, are there any, I think I've pretty much gone through key questions that I want to ask, is there anything, any final remarks you want to make? You've got to know this about the supper, you shared some great stories, I think it helped put it in quite a different perspective with some of those stories.
- P5: No, you obviously felt that mine is more from the apartheid.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, and that's a very important, that is one of the things that is kind of a healing space, is that true or is that, do you feel that it's like a healing space?
- P5: Restoration, I would like to see restoration.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P5: Maybe generations of those people and their children actually become.
- INTERVIEWER: Pains passed down through these generations?
- P5: Ja, and they can become full members of the community, you know, thriving in them.
- INTERVIEWER: P5, thanks so much for your time today, let me just turn this off so I can make sure it's finished.

ANNEXURE K

Transcription of Interview with P6

- INTERVIEWER: It's the 16h November I'm here with P6 who is one of the volunteers who comes to the community supper. Tell me how you ended up attending the community supper?
- P6: I don't know how I first heard about it, it was something that I was aware of in June this year there was a meeting and a presentation sort of a thing put on I think attached to common ground church or maybe to the Big Church NGO and it was centred around homelessness and how Christians respond to homelessness and so on, and I wasn't able to make the event but a close friend was and she reported back on some of the stuff that she had heard and...
- INTERVIEWER: Kind of second hand?
- P6: Yes and referred to the dinners as well and I think someone from the dinners spoke at the event as well and she gave quite a good report back so that is what pushed me to attend, that was in June.
- INTERVIEWER: And what role have you played since you have arrived?
- P6: I've mostly been involved with the serving of food and drink and then the tidying up afterwards. A handful of times I've sat down and sort of received the supper but mostly I like... I enjoy and I find myself doing the serving side of things and the washing up.
- INTERVIEWER: And has that become your kind of area that washing up stuff?
- P6: Yes I think so I think I mind it a lot less than other people mind doing it so... it has been good, but I don't... like on weeks when other people are there then I don't feel like a need to do it or something like that, it's something I enjoy and when there is a gap then I like to fill that gap.
- INTERVIEWER: Describe your relationship with people who come here? How would you describe the relationships that you deal with... with people?
- P6: I see the open-endedness of that. I think I am still forming relationships with people here. There are some people I see every week and I haven't had a chance to... I might have a chance to know their name, but not to remember it yet, and there are other people that I am able to see outside of the event and so a little bit more relationship is building from that, but I wouldn't...
- INTERVIEWER: Are there particular words you could use to describe that?
- P6: I'm not sure. But, so far relationships have been mostly confined to the Thursday night in all sorts of respect.
- INTERVIEWER: Describe a highlight of your time being involved here?
- P6: I'm not sure. I don't know that I have had an experience of one week or one interaction or something like that being a standout sort of thing... most weeks are similar I get to interact with different people but not a lot stands out in terms of like that was a particular sort of... you said highlight, so I think you're looking for a good thing and I think...
- INTERVIEWER: I mean or something that is kind of been poignant or meaningful or... that sums up reflects what is happening here or do you just come to wash up? That is not a bad thing you might... it might be you're...
- P6: I think it's... it's not hard to see that the dinners have a positive impact on a lot of people it's not hard to see that there's people here who are just interested in food and then they would like to leave sort of a thing. But, there are a lot of people who are very grateful for the human interaction aspect of the community dinner and things like that.
- INTERVIEWER: Tell me more about that.
- P6: Without like getting into very deep interactions with people it's possible to see a bit of the attitude that a person is carrying when they come in and especially after the meal there is often people that choose to tidy up after themselves

or might linger a bit and if I go and take their plates or something I will try and engage with them a bit and ask how their evening was or something related to that. And it is very, very common to see people responding well and warmly and kindly and wanting to engage with you however you wanting to engage with them in a way and there is a lot of people who are here because it's an easy way to a meal on a Thursday, but there are a lot of people who do value what is done here that isn't done typically in a food provision environment. That is I suppose a consistent highlight if I can put it like that it's a good thing about each night and...

INTERVIEWER: That's a bit of witnessing on a regular basis?

P6: Yes I definitely...

INTERVIEWER: Is this space church for you?

P6: Shoo...

INTERVIEWER: Sorry.

P6: No, no these are good. I think the answer to that is yes, but I think it's also Christianity to me there's church in so far as there are things to be learnt, there is a space to be mindful of God, there is worship and so on, but... the answer is yes.

INTERVIEWER: If it is yes, what is it that you understand is being church?

P6: Well church is fellowship and church is teaching and church is sort of corporately worshiping, corporately confessing, corporately engaging with the Christian faith and for me that is something that happens on Thursday nights. I don't expect its true of everyone, people serving or people attending I don't expect it is true for all of them, but it is a place where God is working in a corporate environment and affecting wives and it is also a way into a relationship like people are met and relationships are formed through the dinner and various things lead to longer relationships and different kinds of provision and different kinds of working out of all of the things that are being worked out on a Thursday night like in a way that you go to a church and then you might be involved in a Bible Study and then you might be involved in the Ministry of that sort of thing people coming here who are homeless or drug addicts or that sort of thing and it's a beginning of a relationship moment and a beginning of a journey moment that's a bit less doctrinally based, but church as well I guess.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you much appreciated.

ANNEXURE L

Transcription of Interview with P7

INTERVIEWER : Well it's the 19th of December, P7, is that right?

P7 : Yeah.

INTERVIEWER : And I'm going to ask her a few questions about her experience of the community supper. P7, tell me how you ended up at the community supper, what...what was the process of you becoming part of that community?

P7 : I know P2 and P8, they're near neighbours and they'd spoken about it, at the time, my community was going through a process which I didn't agree with, trying to get us to form a special ratings area.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P7 : From my observation of G-Cid which is on the main road, Mowbray, they were moving people along who were homeless, rather than doing anything constructive.

INTERVIEWER : Okay, so just trying to get rid of people basically.

P7 : Ja, and so when...when the process started in my community, I was initially quite positive, I thought it was going to be sort of an in-house, Rosebay thing, employing our own people and they were going to get a social worker and what-not and I thought it was going to be positive, then it sounded as though they were going to outsource to G-Cid, which raised my eye, because I just saw moving people on and not a qualified social worker, etc., etc. So at the same time as I was going through...and then I decided to set out and find out for myself because I was...I very rarely felt so anti about something, and being forced to pay rates for something that I could see was not going to solve any problems, it was just moving people on and at the time, I mean I'd spoken to P2 and P8 about this dinner and another thing is I went to Switzerland that year and I only saw one beggar in the whole time I was there. When I came back I was confronted by people at every corner and I just emotionally couldn't deal with it and I just found, if I'm in that situation, I'd rather be in boots and all than just seeing it from a distance. So all these sort of things came together and they had spoken and I said I'd like to come, so I went...[intervene].

INTERVIEWER : How long ago was that? Can you remember?

P7 : That was in 2014.

INTERVIEWER : Okay, so it was like a year...just under, after the suppers started 200...[intervene].

P7 : Ja, so I went with them and I wouldn't say I felt quite comfortable the first time, although I sat down at a table and I still remember B L was there and he said you're like a natural, I mean I just do enjoy chatting to people, at that time it was very different, they had music afterwards, and I found it incredibly moving, the music and the singing and that was also a very special part for me. The second week, I went along and I just saw all these brown...just...everybody looked brown and drab and I think it was probably the third week I felt totally at home and at ease.

INTERVIEWER : Wow, so it was pretty quick.

P7 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : What...what...tell me something about why did you feel so at ease in a...I mean I've been going for the last 4 months on a regular basis...

P7 : I think because I started realising that these people have no pretences, I cannot abide pretentious people, and I think I just suddenly realised that what you see is what you get, and I just felt incredibly comfortable with them, I am not a Constantia type person, I just started feeling very comfortable with them. Also, this...maybe just before that, I'd linked up with K, who was then social worker at the Carpenter Shop, just in the supermarket, I knew her from years back when she was at the Haven in Claremont, and I somehow got involved with the Carpenter Shop, as well, so everything sort of happened simultaneously.

INTERVIEWER : So also different strands that...

P7 : Ja, they all came together and then I met people, the street people's forum and that, so everything came together and I just became more and more interested in that sector, but I...and I just enjoyed the dinners and chatting to the people and ja, and also realised that once you've gone through that barrier, it's like a barrier, you can't go back, you can't suddenly meet these people in your area and pretend you don't know them.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, so it's about relationship building for you.

P7 : Ja, ja.

INTERVIEWER : Because that...seeing people for who they were, beyond all their stigma of being homeless or an addict of whatever it was.

P7 : Ja, and then initially I used to go to the kitchen, you probably know that I'm not a Christian, but I used to go into the kitchen and you know, be with them, when I said their prayers but now, and sort of, align myself with the volunteers, and now I align myself completely with the street people, I go...

INTERVIEWER : Did...would..did you find that kind of being in the kitchen an uncomfortable experience?

P7 : No, I felt...I feel very, very comfortable at St Peter's, I mean P3 will tell you, I mean I...Christmas day two years ago, my family visiting, wanted to do Christmas dinner and I said I don't do this anymore, I'm out of here and I walked to Mowbray and I went to church and I'd been, I think it was the third time I'd been to church, St Peters, that week, for [indistinct].

INTERVIEWER : Geez, that's pretty good.

P7 : I said P3 don't tell anybody I'm here.

INTERVIEWER : Keep it silent.

P7 : P3 is an exceptional person, I feel very comfortable with him as well, so, I've just had a very easy relationship, I mean I was raised Presbyterian, I taught Sunday school in the Presbyterian church and...

INTERVIEWER : In Mowbray? No in...

P7 : No, in East London.

INTERVIEWER : Oh, okay.

P7 : So when I was 18, I decided that I didn't want to be part of a church, I didn't...couldn't commit and I felt uncomfortable and I didn't believe in what I was talking about, but I've worked for a lot of churches, that's where I met Janet, who...I worked for the Baptists and I worked for the Afrikaans Kristelike Vroue Vereeniging in George.

INTERVIEWER : Oh wow, okay, what were you doing in those places?

P7 : I was teaching.

INTERVIEWER : Teaching okay.

P7 : Ja, and...and I feel very comfortable with Muslim families as well, so I feel...I realised that where there are good people, I feel comfortable, it doesn't matter what their religious affiliation is, if I feel that they're doing something worthy and worthwhile and living their faith, I feel totally comfortable there.

INTERVIEWER : So that kind of leads me onto, I think the next question is, describe your relationship with some of the people who come to community supper and then that can be anyone from who you are sitting at the table with or members of the volunteers or...

P7 : Okay, so um, I got to know B L very well when he was very much part of it, and I used to get invited to their functions and whatnot which I went to.

INTERVIEWER : So just for the record, B was...used to play guitar and help the worship for a period of time.

P7 : Yes, the music was...ja, the music was very special because...

INTERVIEWER : Why was that so meaningful to you? Just...I mean, just...

P7 : I don't know, it was just...there were some beautiful songs, the one about the deer, what was it?

INTERVIEWER : That's the deer pants.

P7 : Yes. I think I just...and his voices and the people from the street and just...that was a very special part and then I used to enjoy the communion as well, I used to observe and it was just for me very special to see these people totally integrated in this...

INTERVIEWER : In a...in a world or in a...both world and perhaps a church context, where people often don't feel welcome, is that...was that what...

P7 : Ja, totally accepted, sharing the chalice and...you know that...and then I got to know the...some of the personalities and one of them was N W.

INTERVIEWER : I know N, yes [laugh]. Can't see facial expressions here but...

P7 : Ja, so N...N would obviously...because he's so articulate, intrigued me, he went to Bishops, I established that early on and then he disappeared and then rumour had it that he had been murdered. So we thought that he'd been murdered, he just disappeared for two or three months. Then he re-appeared, very vulnerable, and it transpired that he had actually been in rehab and the person that he was staying with, who was schizophrenic, who is the only person I've ever been scared of, he was the one who was stabbed, Sean, and killed in Pollsmoor, he'd been arrested for sleeping on somebody's...trespassing or something, but he was very, very scary, I had dealings with him over the years, and then Claremont Churches, I am also connected, but then they had a Sunday morning service for U-Turn, and B and I went and

N was there, still feeling very vulnerable and I just thought, looking at him very vulnerably, I said to him, you know what? My husband is away, why don't you come shopping with me and I'll buy you a few things, just to help you, to help you to get back on your feet again, so I should have...the first shopping trip I should have realised, N...filled his shopping basket with things that I wouldn't have filled it with, okay.

INTERVIEWER : Of course.

P7 : So it should have been warning number 1.

INTERVIEWER : [Laugh] but that's great, you're learning as you go along.

P7 : Ja, learning curve, so then knowing that he was Bishops and I do odd work at Bishops, I put out this thing saying that I was going to be working with some people during the holidays and if they wanted...oh and I had breakfast with him in the park, I'd started working with him and he...we had breakfast out of a cut-off Coke bottle, he had the bottom, I had the top and...anyway, it was very interesting, so I wrote this thing called breakfast with Nick and asked Bishops staff if anybody wanted to contribute and I'd be working with him and paying him R25.00 an hour, in public, open spaces, so, so started the relationship with N, until...

INTERVIEWER : Tell me about where that's gone, or what's happened.

P7 : Until I realised he just takes advantage of absolutely everybody, you give him a finger, he takes an arm.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P7 : But we had one incredible holiday, Christmas holiday, it was two years ago, I'd...somebody gave me R2000.00 and it was N and another guy called R who used to sometimes come to the dinners and an old man called N the 4 of us were 2 hours, probably most days, cleaning the river, the cleaning the parks, clea...we had the most incredible time.

INTERVIEWER : And you used that money to pay them, yeah.

P7 : They had to sign for it, they knew it wasn't my money. Then, as I say, then N became, almost territorial, he expected me to give him any and every job, other people didn't matter, he was like the star [indistinct] he'd been to Bishops, and so I sort of distanced myself from him and then I ended up having his clothes in my car and after travelling around with his bags in my car, I met him at Claremont congregational one day and I said N I'm sorry, I'm not...

INTERVIEWER : Take your stuff...

P7 : Take your stuff, but I've learned a hang of a lot from N, I mean I've dropped him off after the suppers, sometimes he's lives under the bridge at Baxter, then he took me one, I dropped him off in Observatory, he was staying...somebody had sponsored him a bed in an 8-room dorm in Obs. And I dropped him off there and I went in, because I'm always...I'm curious beyond speech and he introduced me as...this...meet my...meet my ex-wife.

INTERVIEWER : [Laugh], I'm sure he did, yeah.

P7 : So I've had a lot of amusing times with that, but I've also now...

INTERVIEWER : Ja, sure.

P7 : Ja, I'm very firm with him, so he doesn't get jobs anymore, I now...I've got some more money this holidays, I'll go and look for people like J and J who I also met at the dinners and who I've also done work with along the river, so ja, that was an interesting relationship. I probably let it go too far, too close.

INTERVIEWER : Sure.

P7 : And then learned to back off. Then there was a lovely...another man who was, his name is...I think his name is A, he used to help B put out the chairs, he used to come every week, have grey hair, grey beard and wore a bandana and there was something incredibly powerful and spiritual about him and then he just disappeared, but I've subsequently found him in the city, I go to the city quite often, to the Carpenter's shop and it's like, wherever I find him, he's like a long lost friend, you know a big hug and how are you and there's something very special about him. I think he'll always be on the streets, I think it's almost his mission, like to become a spokesperson for street people and he's articulate and, ja so I learned a lot from him, so...

INTERVIEWER : So do you think that the...that one of the things that the community supper is doing is equalising power between people, do you feel that's a reality? I mean...

P7 : Well for me certainly, ja.

INTERVIEWER : Do you think that's a rare...I mean you can only speak from your own experience but you are seeing that...you're witnessing that with...as a general principle in the supper?

P7 : Within that community, and when I started going there, St Peters was the only...I made a mistake of calling it a project which P8 corrected me and said it's not a project, it's a community dinner, so that was important, and that was the...the first time anything like that had happened in our community, where people were regarded as equals and people just went and had a meal together.

INTERVIEWER : Regardless of status, income, colour.

P7 : Ja, so that was an absolutely new concept for me, with N, I went on Tuesday to the Methodist church because everybody, I realised, gravitates from place to place, I mean I...I know that I can eat everyday of the week, quite happily. So I went to the Methodist church on the Tuesday, to their soup kitchen and they call it a soup kitchen and where you sit in a circle and you get a place of food, also a very nice plate of food and...but it's...it's not the same, it's not like sitting around a table and conversing, you know you can speak to the person next to you and I realised that the people next to me were the flower sellers at Rondebosch, but it's a different concept, it's definitely people handing out.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, rather there's a...we're doing this together.

P7 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : We're eating together, we're neutralising our status or attempting to.

P7 : Ja, and then it's interesting to look back, we had been working in the Alma Park, N and I, and one of these people had come through and I had...I used to take sandwiches and breakfast, at that time, and real coffee, for N, I think that's a thing of the past, and this person had come through and asked for something to eat, so I had sandwiches and I'd given

him a sandwich and then after the lunch, we got sandwiches and he came and asked me for mine, I said no I'm sorry, I gave you my sandwich earlier, I actually need this, so you start learning to...ja. You sort of shift.

INTERVIEWER : Because it's real, the quality, you can say, actually I need this.

P7 : Ja, sorry I gave you my sandwich earlier that I'd made for myself, and I actually need this. So I had all...I mean, N...I had a lot of experiences with N, so I have got to thank him for teaching me a lot, but he also, I just realised when I had to put on the brakes, because he took advantage. So, ja, and then...when we started an organisation called Friends for the Rosebank and Mowbray Greenbelt, then we started doing a lot of cleaning, up along the river, and again, I'd meet these people there and I'd say I've got some money, that I've *skarmed*, it's an Afrikaans term for scrounged, and they absolutely loved working with us because they just found that we were all working together, so I mean I could do that...I could do that permanently if I had time, I absolutely love it. So the relationships...it's not as close at the moment, because I've had a year that I just haven't been able to get involved, but I'd say for a year or so, I really was very close to a lot of the people that I'd met at St Peters.

INTERVIEWER : Would you say it's a place that is kind of...a place of participation, belonging and acceptance?

P7 : Absolutely.

INTERVIEWER : Can you say something...how?

P7 : I feel...

INTERVIEWER : I mean for you but for others there.

P7 : Well for example, I don't know where he is now, there was a man called G, who was living in a part of a house in Mowbray but had had a stroke and he could...he felt that he could come along and he was accepted, and often the people...these women on the street would help him. I've noticed incredible compassion among a lot of the people on the street. Like if there was a dog running along the road, they'd grab the dog and if I was around, call me and then, you know that compassion about people, they know exactly what's going on, especially the ones that sit in Durban Road, C and N, you know they know when G S's wife died and shame she was a really nice lady, very compassionate, but then other people don't see it like that, they see them as just being a nuisance and ja, aggressive and what-not, but I think because my relationship with them is very much the way I would be with a 3 to 4 year old, my boundaries are very firm, I've never...other than N, which was my fault, I let him take advantage, the boundaries are very clear, nobody every comes and worries me at home, I'll always go in, if I haven't got work, I'll go there, I'll go and say hello how are you, how are you doing, so ja.

INTERVIEWER : Is it...I mean you said you're...obviously got a church background, but do you see the community supper as church?

P7 : No, I don't.

INTERVIEWER : No, what would make it church or is that not really an important question to you? It might not be.

P7 : Look what...what they've tried various things, for while they used to have a little service afterwards, if you wanted to go off.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, is that when B's kind of day.

P7 : Ja, during B's day. I mean you...what did they do? They opened in prayer but that's about all, that's...

INTERVIEWER : Then there's communion every other week.

P7 : Ja, ja, but even that is not as...no...it's not a feature as it was, somehow in the earlier days, maybe because there was still music involved and...the music was a huge part.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P7 : Of that.

INTERVIEWER : So did it feel more church then? Did it...would you say...

P7 : It wasn't churchy, it was just something very special.

INTERVIEWER : Maybe church is a bad word.

P7 : Special, it was something very special and unifying for those people, now they sort of eat and a lot of them just get up and go.

INTERVIEWER : Ja. So, during those times when B was leading worship, do...were more people gathering?

P7 : Staying, ja.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P7 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : What else, I mean, what else about the community supper do you think is unique? I mean a lot of people have talked to me about how different it is from soup kitchens that run across the city or others, I mean are there other unique features do you think?

P7 : Ja, I think...I think another thing was initially I said to them I think...look I pay, because I can afford it, I just put money...transfer money every month.

INTERVIEWER : Sure, sure.

P7 : Because it also saves me cooking every...because I used to go very religiously every week but this year's been different.

INTERVIEWER : Sure.

P7 : I said shouldn't we...shouldn't they pay even a little bit and they said no, it's like asking people around for supper, you wouldn't make them pay, and then I got to understand that concept, so I think that's very unique, that we just there to enjoy food together as one would be with your friends, so I think they were absolutely right. But that was one of the things I'd queried. I think it's...you know, some people have been coming all these years and also behaviour has improved.

INTERVIEWER : So is it, so there is a place of transformation in some ways?

P7 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : Would you...say, say something about that.

P7 : I remember initially, when I went, they'd already been going and they'd set the boundaries, so you may not ask for seconds and you may not...what is...you may not ask anybody for anything, for blankets and things, initially that used to happen a little bit, don't you have bus...it never happens now and then apparently there was a lot more aggression at one time before I came, with some fighting, and then the one night I remember somebody was trying to talk to me and the guy who was sitting next to me got irritated and pushed him off the seat, so...so that sort of thing used to happen, and I don't notice any of that anymore, it just seems everybody is relaxed and...

INTERVIEWER : There's a culture engendered in that space.

P7 : There's a culture, ja.

INTERVIEWER : Which is about...what...there are certain things that...like unwritten, even though they've been said again and again.

P7 : Ja, absolutely.

INTERVIEWER : But now it's got to a point where they're unsaid.

P7 : Ja, you don't threaten somebody with your fork or anything like that. It just feels that everybody knows exactly what is expected of them, which is exactly how I work with 3, 4 year old children.

INTERVIEWER : Ja, but it's not conform...but it's not enforced in a way that kind of is...

P7 : No.

INTERVIEWER : This is what you have to do, it's just expected because of what's happened.

P7 : No, ja.

INTERVIEWER : Over the years of...of treating each other in a certain way.

P7 : And I think that the old ones, if anybody new came in and were sort of out of place, they would probably say no we don't do that, I think that's got to that stage. So for me it's...I mean, I don't know if you probably noticed, the other day I...maybe you didn't, but I got there and I was so tired, I'd been at 6, I mean I'd got out of my car, which I parked in the front, and I sat down next to one of them and...on the pavement, or flat on the floor and just leaned against the car and chatted, so...but I'm also quite scruffy, I enjoy.

INTERVIEWER : [Laugh].

P7 : I must say, I enjoy that sort of thing, I can't stand being all dressed up.

INTERVIEWER : Do you feel like it's a place where you don't have to perform? I mean you don't have to...you don't have to be something, you can just totally be yourself.

P7 : Absolutely, ja, absolutely, that's how I feel most comfortable, I would rather be in my holy pants cleaning up the river or something than going to Constantia with the ladies of my [indistinct], I mean I can do it if I have to, but really I...

INTERVIEWER : It's hard work.

P7 : I'm too tired [laugh].

INTERVIEWER : [Laugh] So that...this place, this space, which for...I guess, many people would find a difficult space, or a space that's stretching, that's actually a space that's much more comfortable for you than people would expect.

P7 : Ja, I feel...ja, I feel very comfortable, as I say, the first...twice, I probably noticed that just everybody seemed...dressed in brown and it was probably winter and it...and eventually I also got [indistinct] to call it my burn coat, I got a brown coat, [indistinct] I feel just really comfortable with the whole setup and with the people, the church people as well, like G and all of them, they've been incredibly welcoming, they...nobody is trying to get me to join the church or...

INTERVIEWER : Convert or do something.

P7 : No pressure or, you know I'm upfront and I...this is who I am, I don't go to church, I'm...don't want to join a church, I don't want to be tied down to anything.

INTERVIEWER : But you're respected for being you.

P7 : Ja. And they've been incredibly accepting.

INTERVIEWER : Is that...

P7 : I mean P3 and his wife, let's face it, aren't your average, Anglican priest.

INTERVIEWER : No, they're definitely not, I mean I think...and that's the two-fold thing, it can be very...it can be very embracing for some people and very threatening for others because they don't fit the stereotype but, I was going to ask a question...I mean you say how accepting and embraced and welcome you feel, is that over and against or in contra distinction to other experiences you've had at church? I mean just...I'm just...

P7 : I've tried to back to the Presbyterian church in about the '80's in George, I thought let me try and go...

INTERVIEWER : You try again.

P7 : Let me try again, and I walked in when there had been a change of minister, and there was conflict in the communiqué...in the communiqué in the congregation and I thought you know what?

INTERVIEWER : I don't want to be part of this.

P7 : Not interested, not interested.

INTERVIEWER : Fair enough.

P7 : The Baptists were also incredibly welcoming, sometimes I'd go and sit in the back of the church when I felt like it, and Arthur Falcon who was the minister at the time, always welcomed me, so I would say always I'd hang out with the good people, you know, that's it.

INTERVIEWER : Yup.

P7 : I don't care who they are.

INTERVIEWER : Or what you believe.

P7 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : Jill, thanks, that's really helpful. Is there anything, you know, final thing you want to say about the community supper that you think I really need to hear or know, or a piece of insight or...because from my side I've kind of exhausted the questions I think are appropriate.

P7 : Ja, I just find it's been...and it's happening more and more, but now in our community, not in...I think G-Cid, I'm not a fan of G-Cid.

INTERVIEWER : Just explain what G-Cid is.

P7 : G-Cid is the special ratings area, that came in...people pay extra rates, mainly the university and I think they've done a lot of harm, they don't support U-Turn, they are the authorities.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P7 : Ja. So, I'm not a fan of that but lot...and when I heard they were coming to my area, that was...that really sparked me off, let me get out there and see what goes on, so I spent...I took one whole year off, I think it was 2015, and I thought I'm going to prove to myself, what organisation works and what doesn't and so that's when I went and had a shower at the Carpenter's Shop and absolutely fell in love with that place, I mean I still...it...I love going to the Carpenter Shop, even though Karen is not there and that there is a change, I went to U-Turn and I stood in the queue and I remember the first time I got there, the door was closed and I wrote to S F and I said I felt devastated, I was like shut out, I went there, I probably got there 5 minutes later and when he explained that they have to shut the door, because otherwise people will come in dribs and drabs and I went the next week and...you know I had to understand, I had to go through those processes, also I had a lot of negative from G-Cid, they're always bad-mouthing U-Turn, U-Turn was pulled from some council project, and that councillor was also bad-mouthing them and I thought...and then, then you sort of...I also began to feel quite anti U-Turn and then I thought, actually no, I'm listening to other people, I've going to find out for myself.

INTERVIEWER : Rather [indistinct].

P7 : So that's why I had an incredible year in 2015, proving to myself that this whole SRA, special rating area, was an absolute nonsense and that they weren't going to do anything other than just move people out of the area and make your safe...your space feel...and it's happened, and I've stopped them, they have this little van, they stop Black people and say what are you doing here.

INTERVIEWER : Really?

JILL LANHAM : Oh they do, ja. And...

INTERVIEWER : Wonder if actually...that in fact [indistinct] must turning all that on it's head and saying how do we see each other and know each other and build relationships with each other across all those historic divides and...

P7 : Ja, but it's not very many people from my community.

INTERVIEWER : Sure, sure.

P7 : Who come, other than P2 and P8 and P comes and me.

INTERVIEWER : Oh do I know him?

P7 : I think that's about it. So I've felt completely...which is also fine, I've had a complete shift from feeling very part of the community and feeling like I'm almost living in Orania which is like a White enclave.

INTERVIEWER : I know, yes.

P7 : I don't think P2 and P8, it surprises me, don't feel that. But I've also decided that's absolutely fine with me, I've got no issue with it, but I will...will challenge them at every turn, like, but if they move...if I see them moving somebody out of the area, they will hear from me, I won't just leave it, and that's still a regular thing, they tell people that this is a White area. Securitas is...the company that they hired to now patrol, public, open spaces in our area.

INTERVIEWER : This is Rosebank and Mowbray or?

P7 : Yeah, Elim Ridge, ja, so where P2 and P2 live and there's only a very small section of Mowbray there and Little Mowbray joined and it was all very political and it was all about an office block, it goes, it actually comes from the DA politics, so it's quite complex but people don't see it like that. So I...I'm very happy and very comfortable, I will challenge if I see it happening, but I've realised that there's a huge...a huge divide, I've moved on.

INTERVIEWER : You've crossed that divide.

P7 : I've crossed that divide.

INTERVIEWER : Whereas lots of people haven't.

P7 : But it's different in Observatory, now you...the Observatory community, and it's so interesting because P29 and I...P29, who I met there as well, we were asked about 2 years ago, to...by the community, to come and speak about the street people issues and of course I was pushing St Peters and P29's always been an absolute hero for me.

INTERVIEWER : He's amazing.

P7 : Because he's a young person who's taken this on, so I did a whole list of things that I had found for C and N and they've...they've taken what we were doing and they've gone beyond, in fact the Lead South Africa...they have a thing on Cape Talk Radio, on of the people this month who've been chosen as a young leader is from Observatory, who started this pasta kitchen for street people.

INTERVIEWER : Yes I've heard about it.

P7 : And the Weeding Warriors, so they've...they've outstripped us, so all we've got that's really valuable is St Peters and G-Cid still keeps the...on patrol with the police, they work a lot with the...they're very close to the police.

INTERVIEWER : Thank you Jill.

P7 : So.

INTERVIEWER : It's great, I think one of the things...I'm going stop the interview there...

ANNEXURE M

Transcription of Interview with P8

- INTERVIEWER: Okay, so it's the 5th October and it's an interview with P8. P8, did you and other leaders, did you begin the community supper with consciously following this diagram which I am about to show you, there's two versions of it. Which has become kind of a key resource for people pinning a fresh expression of Church started having service forming community Evangelism Discipleship into evolving worship. Was that kind of part of your intention, was it the backdrop of what you were doing as you began those early days five and a half years ago?
- P8: I don't ...
- INTERVIEWER: Sorry.
- P8: No, its fine. I don't think my thoughts were formed enough along this line, so.
- INTERVIEWER: So what were they, as you set out on those first kind of gatherings?
- P8: Mine was to get to know people that were very different than me, especially people that live on the streets. That I would find it hard to get to know, because usually when I interact with those people they asking me for something and.
- INTERVIEWER: So as a way of levelling the, setting the relationship in a new kind of context?
- P8: Ja. And I truly had come to the idea of wanting to get to know people, not wanting to be at my front door. I look back and I don't know why I didn't think I could just go walking around and just hanging out with people wherever they staying, I don't think I knew where people were actually sleeping for the most part. And I was with E C, I think she was still at the warehouse then, to talk to her about actually want to start getting to know some of the people that live on the street around, but what are the appropriate ways to do that. Then she, then maybe you can let the dogs out, we just can't have it be noisy out here, okay, guys. Thank you, thank you for serving us.
- INTERVIEWER: Bless you.
- P8: So then, so we came to the idea like actually a dinner like this would be a great idea, and not talking to P3 and P1 about it at all. This will stop soon and then I'm thinking, well, E and I were thinking, because I'm thinking I'm going to have to do all the work instead of going to motivate for it, it's going to be logistically huge, I just couldn't get the energy up for it, and E didn't have it. The next thing I know there's a dinner starting at St Peters that P3 and P1 were like they're going to start this for the community. And one of the thing I had done is I had gone to my neighbour who lives two doors down, she's lived in that house for forty years or something and she walks everywhere, she's an elderly woman that walks everywhere. She knows everyone, she knows the history of the community, and so she knew all the people in the street, she knew all their old partners, she knew their old husbands, their wives and kids. Whoever she knew, she could talk to you about everyone and then she, I went to her and said, who should we invite, and she went out and invited a couple of people that lived on the street to come to the dinner. And then that started, and my whole thing was just to get to know, like have a place to get to know people, and somehow, I knew at that time and P2 was on board with this like we talked about it somehow, we knew, this needs to be long term, there is nothing about this that's going to a few months, we need to be looking years and that's how it started. I don't know how that fits onto.
- INTERVIEWER: So I think, I mean, there is this principle of listening and trying to follow God's call through prayer and listening, and then that would be loving service. So what you've explained, in a sense, does fall into that framework.
- P8: Okay, then that's that, I don't think I have any formal thoughts.
- INTERVIEWER: You weren't doing that in a, you weren't following a particular?
- P8: No diagram of like, I haven't been trained.
- INTERVIEWER: That's good, that's just proof that you don't need to be, I think.
- P8: Okay, does that answer your question?
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I think it's, what's interesting is it is intuitive investigation into trying to hear God and trying to hear your community, and saying what, who's in my community that is missing that I don't connect with.
- P8: And I think it was so confirming to have this dinner start when I knew it was, I just knew that God was in it, so.
- INTERVIEWER: Where, I mean, there are kind of two diagrams here, they are much the same, where do you sense you are in this mission shaped flow, you know, is there a particular circle that you think you know where we are five and a half years later we're kind of there, you know?

- P8: I think we're between forming community and Evangelism and Discipleship just ensure how like moving, look, I think those are always there.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja, there's a continuing, ja.
- P8: But then I would like, how I've got big questions, I think I read in the paper about how without imposing progression on anybody, how do we Disciple one another. I'd like to know more about that and how do we read the Bible together, and then the evolving worship, I think is kind of there as well, like how do we, I think we have been more bended on knees.
- INTERVIEWER: So you've really been, ja, so circle two and three. So tell me something about your reflections on the evolving worship, obviously it's been in different formats over the last, I mean, I've been sort of, 18-months ago when it was much more rowdy and, dare I say, charismatic on one level. Then to today which is a more reflective shorter, quieter, can you reflect on something like that for me?
- P8: I miss the rowdy, I like the reflective, I like it all, I don't think every evening has to be all, I think it's fine to have different evenings. I remember, so we had the piano in the room, I think we talked about this, remember the one woman, Mary used to come in sit down and start playing. At one point J was around and she was playing one of her jazzy old numbers and he just starts singing across the room, it was just one of my favourite moments, I loved it so much.
- INTERVIEWER: Spontaneity?
- P8: Ja, it was great, and people were singing, and she played really fun, old, moody jazz songs and so I miss, so I don't know if this is specifically talking about some worships. I've got questions about what worship is, but I see it as a corporate giving individual, the corporate space for turning our faces to Jesus and just acknowledging that.
- INTERVIEWER: How many people do you think are acknowledging that?
- P8: Right now, I don't think a lot but I don't know because that silent, I am always astounded, I always think, P2, you carry on that time too long, like right before we praise it goes on and on, I'm like, can we have some words now, I just get nervous. I don't know, I get nervous. But I think it's like, it's pretty amazing that people sit there and are quiet and also, I mean, I have people say stuff to me about it or talk about enjoying the peace of this space, or I don't know, I, so Barry, I think I told you so this would be also confidential, so B, that used to come and you can kind of take leadership of what P2 said. But he took a lot more, like I think what's been wonderful about it is that everybody does a thing and then we get this milled together and it's not super like delegated, like you're doing this. So I love it that we're managing to do it this way but he kind of came in and I would say he has got a reason, and he felt the burden of it so much, but he also did things, like he's left us with some problems that, like having to give people lifts home afterwards. Like we were quite clear because he would pile up his land rover and go and deliver people home, and so now they have this expectation that they're going to get. Actually, we've been very clear from time, we're offering ourselves to you, you get a meal, we're offering ourselves to you but we're not giving you other stuff, you understand. So we've had some people come in and expecting that they're going to get lifts home and places, I feel, wasn't wise. Especially because a number of those are the white people living on the street and I feel that that's not being wise for some of them. Anyway, so he didn't have the same boundaries that P2 had or I had, or a number of others. So he saw himself as a leader and he brought the music though, so he's the musician, he would do it so big that he tired out until the point where he would just break, and he was like, he had to step back. I was sad to see him go but I was also grateful to see him go because it doesn't, we don't, that burden isn't needed here, those crossing the boundaries is not helpful to any of us but the music went with him, so that's what, I have missed him, we didn't need the big bands all the times that he organised them to come, just one guitar would make all the difference or anything, you know, just I think people would love any kind of music there. So I think music, as much as worship, and we talk a lot about worship isn't just music worship, whatever, I think music is very special and I think it's a place of connection that we need to receive from God that he's wired us for the kind of transcendence of music and that. So I think this is something that is important for us to worship back into and maybe. Yeah, but I don't think it has to be the same form all the time, I don't think it has to be the same music all the time, it can be different. So I would love to see that coming back in, I love what we had before times, I miss it and want it again but I'm not a musician and I don't play an instrument, and I think we're just going to have to pray that God provides the right person and that person is probably sitting with us already. I was out front, I wasn't there last week but two weeks ago I was out front, I said, okay,

like who plays the guitar here and one of the guys said, I play the guitar, if you give me a guitar I'll play it.

INTERVIEWER: So it's finding resources and getting people involved and getting someone from outside is much more healthy?

P8: I think it would be fun to see.

INTERVIEWER: I'm going to skip this, I mean, although you know it was the aim to start a new ecclesial community, was there an intention in your mind to start church?

P8: Maybe not right at the start but soon. I think P2 probably had the notion for that before I did.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, I think from my conversation with him it was right from the beginning in his mind.

P8: He called it, he talked about it as being his kind of church service, so gathering a lot sooner than I did.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, why is that?

P8: I don't know. I was uncomfortable.

INTERVIEWER: You were uncomfortable?

P8: Can we really call this church service.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, that's fine.

P8: I have had to do my own progression, can you guys call Lilly away please. I don't want her scratching the door sorry. So, I think I've just had to be having my own thinking about what is church gathered but I'm there now I see it as my church community.

INTERVIEWER: So how long do you think you've been seeing it as your church community?

P8: Let's see, we've been going for five years now, probably half that time or so. I mean, I've loved it from the start, I've been committed, I've loved it, but I think, it takes a long time to get to know people and you get to know some people really well for a while and then they disappear. Like then you don't see them again for a long time, and so I can feel that I am brand new with some people, so I think like is this my community, so that's the way people transition in and out can make me think, gosh, where are we with being a community and getting to know people. teachings

INTERVIEWER: Are you aware of any of the kind of criticisms of fresh expressions if you are, and I say something about those in the context of what's happening at the supper. If you're not, don't worry.

P8: I don't know enough about fresh expressions, I haven't been to any of the teachings.

INTERVIEWER: Is there a sense that the community supper is an alternative community?

P8: What do you mean alternative?

INTERVIEWER: As over and against.

P8: Like showing a different kind of community?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah?

P8: A sense from ourselves, a sense from those involved.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, those gathering into, as David Bosch talks about, the early church being an alternative community to obviously the communities that shape the Roman Empire at the time, so is it like an alternative place to be and to exist?

P8: I think we can be more and more, I think we're on the road, I think that would be like in the old days, I would, like we could be on the continuing towards something. I think we are a safe place for people, I think, like if I talk to C and ask about being safe on the streets, like if I ask them ... so I think that we could become more than we are, I think we've got a good foundation for it, like I think we're definitely moving in that direction. I think we're, for an hour and a half on a Thursday night I think we're providing a place of peace to be together and.

INTERVIEWER: You said something about feeling safe, can you say something more about that?

P8: I do ask, like do you feel physically unsafe living on the streets, every one of them, yes, yes, I do. Like it seems obvious but you still seem to ask and we try to provide a safe, come in there and you are in a safe place. I think given that kind of window space to meet and be together, I think it's important and I think there's a lot more we can do about the community, which I'm excited. I don't think you can rush that and I don't think, I think you'd have to learn and get to know each other, and like I said, we are in this long term so.

INTERVIEWER: How do people perform the faith at the community supper? What is an expression of it, what it means to be a follower of Jesus specifically in that context even if it's a bit messy. Or how do they improvise the faith?

P8: Well, one thing I think sitting listening to people and not letting people share their stories, even if they share parts of it again and again and, listening, I think that's an active Discipleship and we're so busy in our Christian tradition, like telling people stuff, like we're telling people this and that about Jesus and I think actually turning,

and people would say to us you've been too slow to speak about. I think listening is, and so we've got people in that room that are listening but they're willing to sit and talk, and they are some of the most amazing people that are willing to talk about Jesus but, so I can listen, I think like some of the more, the rich one is obviously communion together. So that kind of stuff, I'm loving that bit of quiet at the start of the meal is an important God space. I think giving people a chance to serve each other, I love that when anybody is with, love passing out coffee and tea or even cleaning up after a meal, and I really love it when people that live out on the street get involved in it. We need to push that love more, I need to.

INTERVIEWER:

P8:

Does that not happen to the same extent?

It doesn't happen to the same extent, I think I read about it in the paper, I think it was involved with F when she was in the kitchen, and people would have to clean up and bring stuff to the kitchen and she would chase people out and she could be really scary, you wouldn't want to get on her bad side because she can be very scary in her expression of anger. So she ended up, she took a lot of command of that space and then she controlled it so we had a lot less people, we used to have a lot more people helping and cleaning, I love God and I like to see him take ownership that way. Then now F is not there, she is offended, and there was an interaction that she was offended by P2 and I talked to her and she feels that until she gets an apology, she's not likely to come back, she does want to come back. But anyways, it's the messiness, so I think praying for people, asking people if I can pray for them, I think I've had both. That's good, share something about how people can view the community supper as a part of participation belonging and acceptance, is it a place that people feel they belong to a community, is it a place of?

INTERVIEWER:

P8:

I am seeing more and more of that where people feel that they...

INTERVIEWER:

Can you tell me a specific story where they go, oh, yeah, I've seen that evident in so and so's?

P8:

I see it when somebody does something out of bounds, like tries to behaves badly or is rude. Or trying to steal an extra plate, and I see the other people around get cross, just like no, like that's not what we do here.

INTERVIEWER:

So there's like these implicit rules and ways of being that the community has intended over a period of time?

P8:

Yeah, to say we don't.

INTERVIEWER:

Speak like that, we don't do that?

P8:

Yeah, so I feel like I see it at those kind of moments just getting made that's not, I've seen it recently a couple of times I'm trying to think of more specifically.

INTERVIEWER:

Are there others ways that's kind of people anticipating or?

P8:

It could take a long time, so one woman, so I've been humbled by some of the people I have not seen at that dinner, like when I say see I just really haven't stopped to notice them. One is this man who was drawing for me and when he came over, and there's like nothing on that, there's just eyes, I just, it tickled me so much that I went to him at the end of the meal, so it was really great to get to talk to him that night. The next week we ended up at the same table but when I walked in and I realised he was sitting alone, so I went to sit next to him, he ended up helping me to talk to him and I realised that night that it was the anniversary of J T's death and that was four years ago, and he remembered J there. And I thought I have sat at this meal for four years with this guy and barely noticed him, like he said, I know who J was, he was the big guy that used to come in, I was like yes. So the drawing with him, I just like, you know, and then N across the way that he is such a BS artist, I try not to get cornered by him because he tries to demand all my attention I feel one of the good things from me is to put a boundary with him. Just like, no, you don't just walk in and get to be in my face and have all of my attention and stuff, so then he, and then, oh, and then T was like at one point, I don't know if you heard him say I can't do this much longer, I can't talk to you about all this physics stuff and I can't do this much longer with you right now. But this guy sat there and he started to talking to him intelligently about physics and then they started talking about Jesus, and I felt, oh, if I was a really good Christian I would be jumping in there and I was like, defend but I was like, no, they can talk about it long term, I don't care. Anyway, so like the other person is M, is at the table that P5 is with so he organised a group of us for soccer, so I've gotten to know two people at the table quite well, P4 and S I talk to them quite a lot. I talk to them quite a lot but M I've hardly noticed, so anyway, she went to the soccer game and ever since then she's so friendly with me, I talked to her that night, I spent a little bit of time talking, she was a tough nut to crack actually but now I see her around and I've run into her a few times walking around Mobray, we get huge hugs. I see her sitting on the grass somewhere with a group of people from the dinner

that I know go over to them, she gets up and she comes over and gives me a big hugs and she talks to me, she is so affectionate and warm. She obviously feel connected to me now in a way that, I don't know how many years she's been coming in and I'm sad to say I have not noticed her that well. Anyway, so it's obvious she feels that she belongs there and just like that guy that's been sitting there has been coming, he feels like he belongs, I haven't noticed him, he's been coming all these years and sitting, listening, and anyways, and noticing and stuff. So I think stuff like that, I think the more we can get to know people the more connected relation we're going to feel. Then if we don't have the dinner for a couple of weeks, somebody will say, ah, when is it going to happen again.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you think there's a place in the community supper where people are challenged so there might participating, they're belonging, they're accepted, are they challenged where they are in there?

P8:

Maybe only in individual conversations, they might be challenged, I mean, people have been challenged about being respectful to one another and I think that's been enculturated because when we first started we saw a lot of ...

INTERVIEWER:

Fighting?

P8:

Yeah, and people just being mean and selfish about grabbing that and then just saying, hey, I think we spent a lot of time the first year to like calling out dignity in each other. Like let's treat each other with dignity and let's, you be dignified and I'll be dignified, I think that has been kind of enculturated, so we do get the odd behaviour but in general that's not the feel of the dinner. So I think that's been a way that it's been challenge that's been leading to a safer place and for us to talk, so I think at the end of the conversations, I'm so sorry. In the individual conversations I think maybe there is challenge, like as people get to know each other. I've seen it in some relationships I've had over the years, people have been challenged towards something different but as a whole it doesn't happen, it's not like a behave, belong.

INTERVIEWER:

Yeah. Anything that you want to add, or a story or insight that's come back to you?

P8:

I'm excited about what we have and I'm excited about what can further be developed, it doesn't even have to be an expression of the whole dinner like little, the offshoot things and what can come out of it. I'm excited about that, I'm also nervous about it because people are so busy and like, I think God is ready to do, I think he is creative and brooding over this and there's a lot that could happen. I think we get so busy and it's hard to move on the next thing but he's been gracious to us in it, I think this dinner would never have started, I would still be thinking I need to start a dinner if he hadn't, yeah, I would still be thinking I need to get to know these people that live on the street in my neighbourhood. He made it in such an amazing way, so it is a mixture, I wouldn't mind learning about what some other people are doing in some other place now without saying we're going to copy. Just to see even read about, I wouldn't mind that. I think that, for me, would be helpful at this point but reading like the Bible with damned or that kind of thing is hopeful. I mean, I don't know if we need to go somewhere, it's more just the kind of conversations we're having at the Bible reading we could be doing with each other, that would be Discipleship or would assist us in Discipleship of one another. I think we've got a lot more do about levelling the power.

INTERVIEWER:

Say something about that?

P8:

I mean, I still feel we've got the team serving, ja, okay, so I might have told you this but like A has been coming in from the start, so I think he's from Mozambique, I'm trying to remember, I've asked him too many times now. So he's been coming from the start, he comes every week, maybe he's missed twice in five years that I know of. But I, two times because when we talk about having a group of people to give input, you know, like a list together, I start trying to build up towards that with him saying, A, we've known each other for a long time, you've been coming to this meal with me for five years now. He will say, no, no, I have not.

INTERVIEWER:

Okay, is that just denial or?

P8:

No, I think it's embarrassing for him, I think it's like him admitting that he needs to come for food. So I think that's what it is because the second time I thought, so I kind of approached it in a different way, later same thing, no, no, she's come longer than me, he's come longer than me. Then I realised like I am approaching this as if we're here just as friends but at the end of the day he knows he's coming to this meal because he's needed a meal, and this is not a need in his life for food. I think it's not a need beyond that and he [unclear 0:33:01] so I just realised I don't know how we go about levelling that, I don't know how we do that now that we're five years in, I don't know how to do that, I think we might need some help with that, I think. I think P2 has a lot of good instincts and a lot of good, he doesn't have a lot of time and stuff,

so I'm wondering how we move beyond that or are we supposed to. Am I wrong in thinking that we need to, I don't think I'd like to see more ownership all around and like, people feel they have more say in.

INTERVIEWER:

P2:

Dividing the space as leaders and guests, and volunteers and guests. I like to blur it up, yeah, and so, and I do feel strongly about it needs to happen but I'm not quite sure, P2 probably has ideas, we do talk about it a lot, as I said, I'm just not sure what the best way is right now. I would personally like to start talking more to people about, hey, everybody, we can all be taking our plates to the kitchen, like ownership. But then like maybe if we put out like who's going to play some music for us and or do we want music in this space, and if we do maybe have more say in what happens, I don't know.

INTERVIEWER:

It does feel that there is a kind of strategic point in the life of the supper where some kind of intentional things be plotted, not that that means it's going to be just like this. But it's like popping in some little markers that's going to help the supper in the future?

P8:

I really agree with that, I would like that, I think I am nervous about it because I've watched P8 now finish Sabbatical and we don't seem to be much closer. Although I love what happened during Sabbaticals, I felt like I watched him go into a more natural space of kind of, I don't even know what the word is. I watched him really relax into being there and so being part of my community walk in, but then at the supper I'm seeing him kind of go down into a more natural relaxed person there at the meal, and with who he's getting to know and kind of his oversight of, at the end of the day, there does need to be oversight, I was really aware of that one night I was standing the door, the front door last year and a guy walked up and he had a big metal stick and he walked over to the tree and he just hit the tree very loudly with it like, and it was, I was like, that could kill, he could kill somebody with this stick. Then I panicked, I was standing at the door thinking, oh, my gosh, if he just walks in this room and just starts busting heads, you know, I realised we do have a responsibility to, we have that many people in the room together with that much mental illness and that much substance abuse and that much stress and stuff coming in from the streets, we do have to take a responsibility, like all of us that are holding the space. To make sure that it's a safe and I feel that P2 has stepped into that more in quite a natural way and I feel like P3 does well when he does that, I love it when I watch him come out if he sees something happening, he notices, and he goes and kind of just sits in the space and when he's around.

INTERVIEWER:

Good, thank you, I'm going to pause it there.

ANNEXURE N

Transcription of interview with P9

INTERVIEWER: I here today with P9 and I'm going to ask him a few questions about his experience with the community supper. Tell me P9 how you ended up coming to the community supper what brought you here or what is the story of how you got here?

P9: Well I became homeless which was three years ago in fact the 18th November now it will be three years I have been coming to St Peters and it is through word and mouth I heard it from other guys who are outside if ever you are hungry on a Thursday go to St Peters that was three years ago and I'm still here regularly every Thursday.

INTERVIEWER: Do you come every Thursday?

P9: Every Thursday I have never missed.

INTERVIEWER: Wow, so you are one of the most faithful attendees[?].

P9: Yes, you must understand that what they do, I think they are fantastic people for many of us, myself included, it's the first meal of the day so we are truly grateful.

INTERVIEWER: Describe your relationship with some of the people who come here... how would you describe your relationships?

P9: I know most of them but my closest mates are P11 and J and L and LA those are my closest mates we are all from outside but in general with the other people we know one another and we greet one another and we get on, and they also like me who have fallen on hard times but we understand one another and the respect level is there.

INTERVIEWER: So you described the relationships as respectful?

P9: Yes in general yes.

INTERVIEWER: And how do you feel about your relationships with maybe the table hosts or the people like P3 and P2 and people who work in the kitchen.

P9: They are number one brother.

INTERVIEWER: And people...

P9: Also based on honesty based on respect which works for me and just great people to talk to.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel like it's place where you get heard, where people listen to your story?

P9: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And is that different to other places or...

P9: Yes sometimes we're at other places where we didn't really get heard but here we do. I mean P29 for... P29 is an A1 guy that is guy is A1... I mean they are all great, but...

INTERVIEWER: So tell me why is P29 so... what is it about him or what he does that makes you say he is the A1 guy?

P9: The things he has done for me where he bent over backwards to help me.

INTERVIEWER: Give me an example?

P9: I have an alcoholic problem and he put me in the rehab and it didn't cost me a cent and then I had a relapse and he put me in another rehab and that rehab also didn't cost me a cent he covered it all. I don't know how, but twice he put me in rehab he came looking for me to give me the news and when he met me I was under the influence but he overlooked that.

INTERVIEWER: So he found you on the streets or wherever you were staying?

P9: Yes and the one night he also found me in the church not this one.

INTERVIEWER: In another church?

P9: I respect lots of love he is a good guy, but they are all good guys but I put him above the others. And not just me, he helps a lot of guys here so I'm not just saying he is helping me.

INTERVIEWER: He has helped a lot of people.

P9: He helps on a daily basis.

INTERVIEWER: So I mean you have done that sort of... describe a highlight what has been kind of a highlight moment of being part of the community supper?

P9: I would say the highlight of the community supper is our end of year Christmas party.

INTERVIEWER: So tell me about that?

P9: Wow... nothing to beat it I think it is the best ever. We have top class Christmas meals and they have even had braais here for us they had two litre cool drinks on the table, we've had... there is another guy B he is no longer here, but he was part of the church I don't know I think he has got some brain operation that he had and he came here with a band and it was all good and that. The Christmas parties for me are the highlights yes the food is great.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me is the community supper a church for you? Is it like church?

P9: Yes because they give the Thursday after the meal those who want they get together and they have communion.

INTERVIEWER: Do you stay for the communion?

P9: Sometimes I have already yes.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me what that means to you?

P9: Well you've got to know that communion is something great I mean you look at what Jesus has done for us, and what he did at the last supper and what were the words... this is my body and my blood given unto you whenever you eat or drink do it in remembrance of me that is communion.

INTERVIEWER: So you remember? Do you like the way it is done at St Peters?

P9: Yes it excites me I look forward to it brother yes I have done it quite a few times.

INTERVIEWER: Fantastic and you feel like it's a... you have been spiritually connected to God through that?

P9: Amen brother amen to that yes and it is good it's all good here.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you want to tell me about the supper that you really...

P9: Well the food is always tasty it's always on time, it's always warm, it is fresh, it's clean. The people are doing great jobs here we have never had to stand in line for the food, it gets brought to us which is sit down at many other places you had to stand in the queue. Many other places after you have eaten you have to wash those dishes but not here.

INTERVIEWER: So it makes you feel loved?

P9: Yes definitely loved here and lots of it. They are all good... the beauty of it the time is 18h30 the doors get opened at 18h00 everything is done on time, everything is well planned and there is lots of love basically we come in we have a seat coffee, tea, gets brought to us. What would you like coffee or tea? Once that is done, the food gets brought to us we don't have to stand in queues and it is done with love, and it is a healthy portion. I can feel...

INTERVIEWER: You've got a good meal?

P9: Yes tonight we got cottage pie one of my favourites.

INTERVIEWER: Mine too.

P9: I just love that so yes God bless them they are doing good work here like I said for many of us myself included it is the first meal for the day so God bless them thank you St Peters.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you much appreciated P9 That is great done.

ANNEXURE O

Transcription of interview with P10

INTERVIEWER: I'm here with P10 at the community supper, and it's the 26th October. P10, tell me how you ended up, uhm, attending the community supper. When was the first time you came?

P10: Just a few months when they opened it.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

P10: It was in 2012.

INTERVIEWER: In 2012.

- P10: It was around Easter.
- INTERVIEWER: Around Easter? Okay. And, uhm, what, describe your relationship with the community supper? I mean, who, what did you do? Did you start working in the kitchen straight away?
- P10: No, I first sit and listen to the conversation to the people.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay. And how long did you do that for?
- P10: No, I did that just a few months, maybe two months.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay. And then you started working in the kitchen?
- P10: Then I moved to the kitchen.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay. How did that happen?
- P10: No, I just went in the kitchen and then I just help. I just help first to dry the dishes, and then after that when I see that there is enough people in the kitchen to wash dishes. So, I see also the service for the food, they are short. So, I also help because they normally take the people from the table, so it was confusing. Those people come to eat and then they also have to also have, so I find it's a little bit confusing.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay.
- P10: Because some of them, they came, they are under the influence, so.
- INTERVIEWER: Oh, because they've been drinking.
- P10: Yes, exactly. They just do anything. It was a chaos.
- INTERVIEWER: So, was it quite chaotic those first few months?
- P10: It was chaotic when they started there, those people came for supper/dinner. So, I just helped.
- INTERVIEWER: Describe and, uhm, describe that kind of highlight of your time here. What has been some of the best things that you have seen happening here? When you think about the community supper, what are the things you go, wow, well, that's been amazing?
- P10: Compared to the one in Langa, called the soup kitchen, it was different because there they give people, they take, they come in and put their names in. They do it Monday's, Wednesday, and Friday.
- INTERVIEWER: In Langa?
- P10: In Langa. It was Anglican but they call it soup kitchen. First it was like Fikalela. It was [?] think. So, they change it, so there what I didn't, I don't say I don't like the way they do it in Langa. Because people come in, they write their names, they go back home, come in and take.
- INTERVIEWER: Ah, okay.
- P10: So...
- INTERVIEWER: So, they just like to get stuff, there is no community?
- P10: So, there is no conversation, they don't ask them if you, what's your problem, whatever. But here I see they give them fresh food, and we eat together. And it's like.
- INTERVIEWER: Have you had really good conversations with people around the table?
- P10: A lot, I did, I did. Some of the I don't, some of them I don't see them then they don't get worried. I think the one was B, I don't see B anymore. I used to ask the questions why she's outside. A lot of them are asking there's family problems, abuse and everything.
- INTERVIEWER: Does this feel like Church for you? I mean, is it?
- P10: Yes, it is. Because we pray first and then they also pray after they eat. Like they do Holy Communion, and they used to sing also.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, do you miss that?
- P10: I miss that, I do. I was talking about that, I told the other lady who sang for us, I said, oh, she used to dance and dance. And then when the guitar's playing and the way they sing, they don't sing, their voice shaking.
- INTERVIEWER: Does this feel like, more like Church than on Sunday morning?
- P10: Ja, it feel like really, ja, yoh, this is a warm Church.
- INTERVIEWER: This is a warm Church?
- P10: Warmer than Sunday.
- INTERVIEWER: Warmer than Sunday?
- P10: Uhm.
- INTERVIEWER: Tell me why, if you can, warmer than Sunday?
- P10: Because they are free, they free.
- INTERVIEWER: People are more real.
- P10: They more, free. Sunday people are frozen.
- INTERVIEWER: They stay?
- P10: They stick together because we are used to the...
- INTERVIEWER: Of course, of course, yeah.
- P10: We mothers, we not, you know.
- INTERVIEWER: You dancing, and singing, that's an expression.

- P10: Ja. And then I feel like I carry the plate because I come from my own pocket and I carry the plate, and I put it on the table although I mess up, I did not have money, so I put it, it's like I heard someone say that I feel glad that I at least give something, something.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah.
- P10: And I like it cause the food is fresh and it's good.
- INTERVIEWER: It's good food?
- P10: It's like a takeaway.
- INTERVIEWER: Is that different to other soup kitchens? Have you seen other soup kitchens because the food quality is not good, or?
- P10: Ja. Food quality is not good. Some of it, if it's donated, it's expired from the shops.
- INTERVIEWER: Oh, okay. So, it's food that's gone past its expiry date?
- P10: Yes. That's why the shop, they just give, they think, no, I don't want this food, it's expired. So, I must give it away.
- INTERVIEWER: Give it away to poor people?
- P10: Poor people, yes.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah.
- P10: Here is fresh, you can see it come from the shop. Now freeze meat, you see, you cook it now, it's finished, they don't keep you much.
- INTERVIEWER: Does it feel like in the community supper, the people are because in Church on a Sunday, often it's very hard to have conversations with people?
- P10: Yes.
- INTERVIEWER: Because we so caught up in saying the words on the screen, or singing the hymn, or does it feel like people know each other better here?
- P10: They know each other better here. Although there is no name tag but they know each other a lot here.
- INTERVIEWER: They have name tags on Sunday?
- P10: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: But they don't need ...
- P10: I still forget.
- INTERVIEWER: They still forget even on Sunday?
- P10: Yes, ask them what's your name again but the name is here. That is much for me, yoh.
- INTERVIEWER: So you come every week and now your job, tell me about what your role is here, it's obviously developed since you first arrived?
- P10: I'm a volunteer, I just volunteer in the kitchen, I make coffee, I prepare. Not the games making, I prepare coffee, and I prepare the tables and everything.
- INTERVIEWER: But you seem, I mean, when I've come, and I've been coming each week and it seems like you kind of have quite an important role in the kitchen, you're like the owner. Yeah.
- INTERVIEWER: Because it's so important to you?
- P10: Ja, because for me I don't like when they come and we're not prepared for them. They must just come and sit and everything must ready.
- INTERVIEWER: Is there a story that you have of, or a memory for over, from over the last five years that the community supper has been running that's really special to you? Is there a point, you know, something that happened or a story that you can recall for me about what's happened here?
- P10: There's no story, it's only, I like when it's closed in Decembers because it's the party.
- INTERVIEWER: Oh, the big party, tell me what happens?
- P10: We braai.
- INTERVIEWER: We braai?
- P10: And we sing, and there's some speech.
- INTERVIEWER: Oh, so you braai that day?
- P10: Some of the people who are cooking, they make speech and also the people coming for dinner, they also have something to say.
- INTERVIEWER: Okay, so it's like a time to share?
- P10: Ja.
- INTERVIEWER: What type of things are they saying?
- P10: They say they, like when they eat and we also eat because it seems the food is fresh and then they, way, because we, they also use fork and knife because other places, they use fingers. So they like it because they feel like they're respected.
- INTERVIEWER: So it's an important thing. So it's like a dignity thing?
- P10: Dignity, they like the dignity, ja.
- INTERVIEWER: Do you think, I mean, I haven't visited, I've visited soup kitchens in KZN but not here in Cape Town, is that different?
- P10: It's different, you must go to Langa, except 09:00 to 13:00 you must just go in and see.
- INTERVIEWER: And I'll get an idea of how different it is?

- P10: Then you'll see how different it, you'll see, you won't even see, it is very different, I can't explain.
- INTERVIEWER: Yeah, no, you have explained, it's good. Is there anything else that you want to tell me about the community supper and why it's special to you?
- P10: It's a lot to me, it's like when you give these people, they feel like, they don't feel like they don't have family, they are like our family. They are like our brothers because on the street, even if I don't see them, they still call, they say, sisi or mama, whatever they call the greet but before they never greet because we didn't have that contact.
- INTERVIEWER: So now you're like friends?
- P10: Yes, even if they see me on the street when it's holidays, they will ask, Sisi, when are you opening, then I feel so, I've got sisi all over and brothers, yes.
- INTERVIEWER: That's great, so some of the key things are like this dignity aspect, the dignity, in a way it's become like a family for people who?
- P10: Yes, they are like extended family now.
- INTERVIEWER: Often I imagine lots of people who come each week don't have family or have broken relationships with their family, that's why they?
- P10: Yes, the moment you start to speak about the family they froze and then you say, okay, rather let me focus on this one. Because they think they even come, even if you tell them next week we're closed they still come, they sit.
- INTERVIEWER: Ja.
- P10: At the door. I have seen how two or three they come on Sunday, they also still come.
- INTERVIEWER: Andy sometimes comes also, hey?
- P10: Andy, yes, and the other one, I don't know, I forgot his name now. Maybe he is going to come today.
- INTERVIEWER: Thank you, P10. That's really helpful, thank you for just giving me your insights into your transition into the kitchen, and then also how you relate and how obviously this is a really important space for you?
- P10: Yes.
- INTERVIEWER: So thank you for allowing me to interview you. Bless you.

ANNEXURE P

Transcription of interview with P11

- INTERVIEWER: I'm here with p11 and I'm going to ask P11 a number of questions about the community supper. Tony, tell me how you ended up coming to the community supper, how did you begin to attend?
- P11: I was actually brought along by a friend of mine in Observatory and he told me about the Thursday night community dinner at St Peters and ever since that I have been here that is almost about a year now.
- INTERVIEWER: So you have been coming about a year now?
- P11: Yes, about a year.
- INTERVIEWER: Describe some of the relationships that you have with people here? Have you got to know people?
- P11: Yes, I've got to know a couple of guys, a couple of good people, people who are a caring and kind they show interest in my life like what kind of a week I had where I am at in my life, what are my goals for the following week or what do I do with my time. How do I spend my time, do I waste my time or do I do something beneficial with my time and to me that means a lot to me that there are people out there who are concerned about how I spend my time.
- INTERVIEWER: It's a genuine relationship?
- P11: People are just like open to they will tell me they won't criticise me, but they will more or less give me guidance or advice in certain things and that is what I appreciate mostly of the community dinners that for the hour that I am here then I am human... there are people who are interested in me.
- INTERVIEWER: Are there other places where you feel you are not human?
- P11: Yes, that happens most of the time during the day, during the week wherever you walk where you can see just by the looks that you get on the street from people is more like an outcast more like you are the dregs of society and things like that so nobody has got time to find out where do you come from, what happened to you, why are you and things like that, to them it's just like you want to be like that and nobody knows how I came that I ended up in that situation.
- INTERVIEWER: Describe kind of a highlight of your time here. Is there a kind of an event or a moment that you can think back on and think that was really...
- P11: A highlight for me was like when I was approached by some members who are volunteering that they would like to assist me with accommodation and getting me into a shelter and all the things and I had the opportunity to go to Kimberley...
- INTERVIEWER: Oh wow... what would you do there?
- P11: At that very moment of course because of a shelter life and I could like use it like a stepping stone for me for something else or so, but at that moment I was already in a shelter out in Kenilworth in Claremont but just the mere fact that people were prepared to go to that length to take me off from the street and walk alongside me and get me to a place

where I can really have like say... now I can start focusing on how to pursue my goals further in life like I said, that was amazing for me.

INTERVIEWER: Yes that is. Do you feel like the community supper is church for you?

P11: To me it's fellowship yes. To me it's because currently I'm only like involved with one cell group during the week and then Sunday I go to church which to me is like I'm not enough in the word, I'm not enough with fellow Christians or how can I say... where people speak truth you see that is one of the things I love of the community dinner it's all about truth, I don't have to attend or I don't have to perform, I can just be...

INTERVIEWER: Yourself?

P11: Yes and truthful and sincere.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find it hard in other places that are not really acceptable?

P11: In other places like outside you will that you've got to hold back because you can see this person is not being sincere with you so why must I be sincere with you... so instead of going that path I rather just clamp down and I walk away I'm not going to sit and still entertain anything here with this person because I can see he is not being truthful, it's all about wearing a mask whereas here at the community there is no mask, everybody is being you, so I don't need to have a mask.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you. Is there anything else you want to tell me I mean these are my questions, but is there anything that you want to tell me that really stands out at the community supper for you.

P11: To me it's like this man, there isn't a week you want to give up the rest of the week it's like you have your back against the wall and then come on a Thursday and then you find yourself for one hour I can be human... for one hour I have dignity I sit at the table I'm not sitting on the pavement on the street and having a meal. I'm having a meal that is made with love it's not scrap that I'm eating.

INTERVIEWER: It's good food.

P11: It's good food, it's food that is made with love because they could have just left it at anyway which they want to, but simply because of the fact that these people have got, so it is this love that is being given to you and I take it for myself when I step into love like that, it tends to stay with me for a long, long time I have a good night's sleep I wake up tomorrow morning I feel good when I think back the conversations I had or the people I saw and that is amazing for me because at that time I have dignity, I have respect... I feel precious especially when you have people who care about you that are interested, and that is what it means for me.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you that is really, really great I have recorded all that and I appreciate the way you have given me these answers they are wonderful. Thanks Tony.

P11: You are more than welcome.

ANNEXURE Q

Transcription of Interview with P12

INTERVIEWER : So I'm here with P12 today, it's the 19th of December, which is her husband's birthday, just for the record. P12 tell me a bit about your...your coming to the community supper, how you ended up being part of it, I mean I know you...you....it's slightly different in that you're a church warden and you've been...had a role at St Peters over many years, and have a history at St Peters, do you want to say something about that? In relation to the community supper?

P12 : Yes, I think that's important to know where St Peter's was and where they are now.

INTERVIEWER : Yes, can you tell us something about it, through your...through your own personal experiences, that's really important to me.

P12 : I just, I mean I've been at St Peters all my life, I was born there, married there, had my children baptised you know the long story, and throughout the years it was always a very close community you know, so we didn't really open our doors.

INTERVIEWER : Okay, so you closed as in closed-in...

P12 : In terms of...it was just the community of St Peters church that attends every Sunday, so the same people would attend prayer meeting on a Wednesday and we would have...when I was a child, it was tiny lights, so the youth would meet on a Friday night, you know and have fun and...but it was the members of St Peters and that was it. So when P3 came along and he introduced the community suppers, everybody was aghast, you know.

INTERVIEWER : [Laugh] was that how you felt initially?

P12 : I thought where are we going with this you know? How does this work? How does it get funded you know?

INTERVIEWER : So practical.

P12 : Yes, yes. Because I was the treasurer for so many years [laugh].

INTERVIEWER : [laugh]. There we go.

P12 : Ja, and...but I had faith in P3 you know, and he said he's done this many times you know in the UK, he...that was his journey and he felt that was his field of expertise and he could introduce it. So for the first few, I don't think I attended the first few.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P12 : I know P1 and P3 ran it and you know they had...it was very few and then we started joining slowly.

INTERVIEWER : Tell me about some of those early...I mean what was your early experiences?

P12 : It was difficult, you know, because you didn't how to relate, you didn't want to be condescending in any way you know, and you felt, how do you fit in, you know, where's your role in this.

INTERVIEWER : Sure.

P12 : Ja, and but lots of prayers you know, went out for it and I remember the first time, I just didn't quite know what to do, and how to...where am I in this and then we had people like Irma who said no we've done this in the UK many times, but they all spoke about soup kitchens, you know, when I spoke to people who were there, who were helping, some of the volunteers, they spoke about no we did soup kitchens here and we did soup kitchens there, but I knew that P3 didn't want it to be a soup kitchen, you know, so I thought now, where are we with this? Then slowly you know, you started integrating and I watched H especially.

INTERVIEWER : H.

P12 : M and C T and how they would walk the streets and you know, listen to these stories and...and bring them, you know and sit at the table and we would pray for them and that caught me, you know, I thought here we are, we're listening, you know, and people have problems and they can't help themselves you know, and all they need is someone to listen and care, so that really you know, got my attention, I thought you know, now we are doing something, you know, really worthwhile here, we're not just feeding the body here. We're feeding the soul as well, and that, in those beginning times, were only a few people, you know.

INTERVIEWER : Can you remember how many people were coming around?

P12 : I think initially there were only about 30.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P12 : Ja, that first year, and even then we'd go like sporadically you know, we'd miss a Thursday and go the next Thursday, but the way it grew was absolutely astounding you know, year after year and so they couldn't cope with the cooking anymore, I mean even at that stage hey, I mean P3 and P1 used to do the cooking themselves, it was amazing, I thought how does she know how to cook for so many people? You know, I would die myself, but she made it work you know, they cooked and they fed everybody and they listened to stories, we prayed, sang.

INTERVIEWER : Your...one...when I interviewed P5 your husband, about the supper, one of the things that really struck me, that he said, was that what the locust had stolen or eaten, this was being kind of given back, like a...can you...can you say something about that, I mean in terms of what happens at the community supper, he...he really framed it in the...his own experience under apartheid and how he saw this..this opening up of St Peters was actually about a whole re-balancing and seeing people and connecting in ways that hadn't been possible before, do you see...is that just P5's thing or is that something that you see, the reality of that?

P12 : I think it's more P5's thing, I'm not that sensitive to the past.

INTERVIEWER : Not...[indistinct].

P12 : Because I've [indistinct] much of the prejudice, I know my sister did because she's darker skinned than me, my dad, my dad was a French Creole, so very dark skinned, you know, so I'm aware of it, but I never felt that you know, there was only one occasion at church and because you go through life like that, you know, with blinkers on, so you don't really see the hurts of people, you don't realise hey I've got to sit at the back of the church because I'm coloured, you know, I never even thought of that, it didn't bother me, you know, the only time it bothered me was when we went out to Sunday picnics and we couldn't go with, you know, because it was a White's only beach or you know, that sort of thing. But even then, you know I thought agh, it's just part of life you know, it's just another hurdle, that you have to overcome.

INTERVIEWER : So you don't see the community suffer as a way of kind of reconciling any of that or that's not really how you've agreed it, that's fine, I'm just projecting what...I'm just reading it from Graham's...

P12 : That's...ja, that's P5's thoughts.

INTERVIEWER : Which was really [indistinct].

P12 : I think he...he experienced it more than what I did you know, because he had more...a lot more hardships in his life as a child, I was a very protected child in terms of my mom and my dad, we were a very stable family you know, whereas P5's family wasn't and they moved several times and...so he's experience a lot of hardships so therefore that will come out ja.

INTERVIEWER : He brings it in a different way, no that's helpful. Can I show you a little diagram which...that we've been using in fresh expressions over the last kind of 10 years, which sort of shows how a fresh expression might develop, you can see these 4 circles, that it's all underpinned by listening and prayer and you've already alluded to listening, loving service, forming community, evangelism and...and discipleship and evolving worship. Where would you say the community supper is today, in this little journey of circles?

P12 : You know, we've actually done the full cycle and then the [indistinct] again.

INTERVIEWER : Okay no, you tell me where that is.

P12 : That's just what I'm...

INTERVIEWER : How you're saying it.

P12 : We've started with loving service, there was no doubt that was there, we've formed a community, the community is definitely, I mean, you know it's similar people, it's more or less the same people that come every Thursday, there are

a few stragglers, then we...the evangelism and discipleship, was introduced and it became...certainly evenings became very spiritual, you know and lots of prayers at tables and that. Then there was the evolving to worship, you know, when B came along and we had the guitar and we sang and you know, lots of joyous moments and worship and praise to God. Then we went slightly backwards, you know, the music stopped, the communion stopped for a while as well, I think because Dave wasn't well.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : Ja, you know, so, now we're kind of...ja, we're kind of still stuck between these two here, but more forming the community...the community if formed already.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, so you're somewhere in...in sort of there.

P12 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : Okay, that's helpful.

P12 : Ja, because I think we've done the full cycle, we really, you know, we hit it on the head there and you know the worship took place and, ja and then things just...I think things got a bit crazy, for P3 as well.

INTERVIEWER : Ja, sure. Tell me something about...describe your relationship with people who come to the community supper, give me some examples.

P12 : I've got a special relationship with P38

INTERVIEWER : Okay, who's P38, tell me about her?

P12 : P38 is...I call her the bag lady, because she's always got all these many bags.

INTERVIEWER : Oh I know P38, yeah.

P12 : You know P38, she lives at the Rondebosch police station, that area. But because I'm not experienced enough to cope with you know, the social injustices and what's happened in her life, you know, it's very difficult, I can only listen you know, and it's very difficult for me because she needs help, there's no doubt about it, but she can't have that help unless she's willing to admit that she needs the help, you know, so the moment you offer and...like her ID, something as simple as an ID, you know, she never makes the appointment, we set the time, set the date, and she never ever gets there, you know and then it's the trains were late or that and...so I find it very difficult but we've got a special bond you know, she...she looks out for me, we give her a lift.

INTERVIEWER : Do you sit with her at the table?

P12 : I sit with her at the table, most times when I'm not rushing around you know.

INTERVIEWER : How long have you know her? I mean, how long is that relationship?

P12 : It's about 3 years now, ja, it's a long time.

INTERVIEWER : That's quite a long time.

P12 : When I worked in Rondebosch, you know, then she'd also be around at the FNB branch, you know, then we'd talk and spend time with her as well.

INTERVIEWER : So that says its not just a community supper thing, its extended out into your own space, were you at FNB Rondebosch?

P12 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P12 : For about a year.

INTERVIEWER : Okay, so she'd come and visit you?

P12 : She would always be around here.

INTERVIEWER : Was that difficult or was it?

P12 : No, I'd go and buy her something to eat and have a chat and then off she'd go again. Because she knows I have to go to work. Sometimes she'd be there before I even get to work you know [laugh], I can't talk to you now, I need to open the bank.

INTERVIEWER : Describe a highlight of the time, I mean, that sounds like you've got a really special relationship with P38 there, can you think back over...I mean it's been 5 and a half, no, coming up to 6 years in February, that the community supper, describe kind of a highlight, a point in the life of the supper that you were like, we've it right today, this is what we're doing is pleasing to God, we're making connection with people, is there a point that you can remember?

P12 : There's one evening that really, really stood out for me, and I think it was T's birthday, but we decided we are going to celebrate T T's birthday.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P12 : In the garden, we put the chairs out and we sat under the tree and there wasn't a breeze and we sang and we prayed and it was just such a beautiful evening you know, and I just felt God's presence there with us...

INTERVIEWER : Was that a spontaneous thing or is it just...that it was just of kind of lets do this when we were gathered.

P12 : Ja.

INTERVIEWER : Okay.

P12 : Ja it was just spontaneous I think, it was lovely.

INTERVIEWER : Who's T? Tell me about T.

P12 : T's the other warden.

INTERVIEWER : Oh sorry, yes.

P12 : Ja, you know Tim, ja.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : I think it was either his or M's birthday, they were also very involved in the suppers initially.

INTERVIEWER : Yes.

P12 : A lot of people have come and gone, you know, like H is not there anymore, C's not there anymore.

INTERVIEWER : Because people's circumstances changed in their own lives.

P12 : Yes, they've got other, other projects that they work on, you know, like M's heavily involved in home from home.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : So I think you know, you come to a stage in your life when you say okay you've got to let go of one or the other you, and I think they let go of the Thursday suppers because it can be very chaotic.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : You know...

INTERVIEWER : The one's I've been to have been...I've been coming for nearly 4 months, I think, you know, they're...they're not that chaotic, I mean I think they've been much more chaotic in the past than they are...than they are today.

P12 : In the past ja. P5 puts it down to the varnishing of the floor and setting the tables like a restaurant you know.

INTERVIEWER : I think something about the way the tables are configured, yeah.

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : It does change...

P12 : He puts it down to that because he says they're so well behaved now, [laugh]. I mean before we had to arrange for someone to come in and clean afterwards because you know, the toilets would be messed up, you know, I mean all the things that happened in those toilets...

INTERVIEWER : So it's a journey, it's a journey of the community of people, from I mean...I've...you're the I think 11th, 12th person that I've interviewed, it seems there's a journey of people that being respectful of one another has grown, it wasn't there from day 1, but now there's in the culture of the supper, is...we...we speak to each other in a nice way, we don't grab, we don't fight, we treat other as human beings, is that...have you seen that grow over the years?

P12 : Yes, yes, I think initially it was just a place to come and eat you know, and...

INTERVIEWER : So it's breaking that cultural...which is the other kind of places are, you get your food and you go.

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : Whereas this is a whole different thing.

P12 : Yes, this is stay you know, come, tell us your stories, you know, let's listen, let's talk. I think when it started it was like that.

INTERVIEWER : Ja.

P12 : Because there were only a few people you know, and the people that came were the people that they'd worked with on the streets, you know, so then [indistinct] you know, those...they were heavily addicted people, so...and so they worked with them all the time you know, journeyed with them.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : But then they left and new people came, you know and then it became...it could get quite out of hand at times you know because were so hopelessly drunk you know, so it would get rude and raucous and then...but that has changed.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : That's definitely changed, you still get the occasional person that comes that's had a bit too much.

INTERVIEWER : But I think, yeah, for me, one of the things that's fascinating is that even if people do come like that, they're still accepted, they're still welcomed, it's only if you get really out of control that you kind of...

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : Do you...I mean do you see the community supper as church?

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : Tell me about that.

P12 : I think it's church for people who...who can't stand rules and regulations, you know, of...of a regular church, so it's coming and being amongst God's people that makes them feel safe, so to me that's church, I've...you know when I leave Thursday nights, I feel so inspired, and so refreshed you know.

INTERVIEWER : What are the things that inspire you, it is the conversations that you're having?

P12 : Yes and just the community and...and being and doing and sharing, you know.

INTERVIEWER : Do you think that's something that lacks on...in some settings and Sunday morning, that's not to be critical of what happens on Sundays mornings, I'm a minister, so...

P12 : I'm not critical, I mean to me, we're such a diverse nation, I mean South Africa, especially Cape Town, extremely diverse you know, and so, I'd say there's different levels for different folks, so your 8 o'clock go on different strokes for them

INTERVIEWER : [Laugh].

P12 : So the 8 o'clock service would attract more of the elderly, that wanted peace and solitude and quiet and that and then the 10 o'clock, P3's taught us praise and worship which we've never had that, you know, we've just had the organ music, we now have diverse type of music.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, and then the Thursday supper is...

P12 : The Thursday is just you know, come all you vagabonds, you know, I remember J's music, you know, that was brilliant, ja this...it is just fitting beautifully here, you know, come as you are, it doesn't matter who you are, it doesn't matter who you are or what you are, what you've done, you know, you've just accepted, and...[indistinct], let's talk and that just refreshes me you know, I can listen to the one gentleman, I think his name is G, he has so many stories, he's been on the sea for years and years you know, and I [indistinct], he doesn't stop talking when you sit at his table, you know, because he just tells you so many things and it's just amazing.

INTERVIEWER : Do you think people that kind of...the traditional services, the inherited services, see what happens on Thursday night as a genuine expression of the life of the church or is it still kind of a weird thing some people do on Thursdays or is it...do you think other people in the other congregations...I'm just thinking of the one of the things in Fresh Expressions is this idea of mixed economy, that the...there's the kind of formal inherited church and there's Fresh Expressions of church and how they relate to one another and how they're...would you say...yeah...what would you say about that?

P12 : I think over the years the...the community, the Sunday community, let's put it that way, have become more accepting of the Thursday community...

INTERVIEWER : And obviously people like yourself who played the role as church warden are comfortable in both spaces and then involved in both spaces.

P12 : Yes, yes,

INTERVIEWER : Which is really important I think.

P12 : Yes, but a lot of the St Peters that started coming have fallen away, so they obviously felt that's not where they want to be, you know, so that's a bit disappointing, and then you've got people that just come in on Thursday and they don't come to the Sundays even, like P2, he says Thursday's his church you know.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah.

P12 : You know, he doesn't fit into a Sunday set pattern type of community worship you know, which is beautiful, it just shows, I mean and then you get the youth you know, who does their own thing and...but the Thursday, youth is even more marvellous, you know, you've got all these little kids running around, happy, free and enjoying themselves you know, and you've got these volunteers that are willing to care for them and make them feel special you know, on the night, so, a lot to be said about the Thursday, I think it's actually far more involved than the Sunday, you know, and also because it's attracting not only St Peter's church.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, it's got people from all over the city coming to view it and some people to be involved which is very exciting. Those...those are basically most of my questions, are there...I mean there are...other things you want to tell me about the supper or anything that you like...I've got...you know, this is really important that you know?

P12 : That I know?

INTERVIEWER : Yes.

P12 : Ja...I'm just...how long are we now? 6 years, 5 and a half, 6.

INTERVIEWER : 23rd February I think, is...is...I'll be the historian.

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : Is 6 years.

P12 : Yes, and I'm just amazed at like you know, how it's going to evolve because it does, you know, every...every year there's a different...

INTERVIEWER : Something changes or somethings shifts.

P12 : Something, yes, yes, and it's not that we plan it you know, it just happens and, unless someone is planning it, but I don't know about it.

INTERVIEWER : No I think...I think he might be planning it, but I think that's one of the things that's fascinating for me, is that how...yeah...it looks accidental.

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : The work of community supper, but I don't think it is, I think it is really profoundly led by God's spirit because there are people who are...they don't have a...this is where we are going, but their openness to God and their openness to people means that Gods allows things that look accidental actually to grow and become...I found that really interesting.

P12 : To give this space here.

INTERVIEWER : Yes, about giving space.

P12 : Shoo. Ja. So that's basically community suppers and then when [indistinct] we used to have our end of year function, and then it wall fall normally Graham's birthday you know.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah because it's like the...

P12 : So now we're closing earlier and earlier.

INTERVIEWER : Yes, so he doesn't get to enjoy his birthday with everyone.

P12 : He doesn't get to enjoy it with them, ja, but he loved it, I mean one community supper we did a snoek braai you know, and we just thought okay lets have that and then my daughter got involved and you know, so, you draw people in and say come you know, come with us, come help us, you know, come and see what it's like, come and feel God's presence here.

INTERVIEWER : Does it feel like a place that you could invite anyone to?

P12 : Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER : More than perhaps Sunday, where you feel like mmm, there's only certain people who would be able to deal with certain things.

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : Whereas...whereas...

P12 : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : P12, thank you very much for your time, it's been really helpful.

P12 : Pleasure.

INTERVIEWER : Yeah, I will get that transcribed and send it of to you, much appreciated.

P12 : Now I can take my hubby to breakfast.

INTERVIEWER : Yes, sorry, you had to be waylaid by this, but I'm...I really appreciate you.

P12 : No, no, It's fine....

ANNEXURE R

Transcription of Interview with P29

INTERVIEWER: Ok it's the 6th December. P29 tell me a bit about your journey being part of the community supper, how did you end up attending?

P29: Ja it was about two years ago where P2 and I..... I'd kind of heard about these community dinners, I'd been involved in shelters and street ministry since 2010 pretty much, and I'd heard about it through the grapevine. You know, I knew the S family, I knew P8/35 and P2, as.... as a very vague acquaintance, nothing more than just hello's...

INTERVIEWER: Fringy contact

P29: Ja, and I remember P P, he was a kind of mutual friend between P2 and myself and P P suggested that I get in touch with P2 and check out what they were doing, and so eventually I managed to get P2 to a breakfast. I got through his PA.

INTERVIEWER: (laughs) Well done

P29: and eventually managed to secure him, after like two cancellations managed to get him into a breakfast. And we chatted and we kind of shared a little bit about each other's passions and visions and he invited me... I must come check out Thursday night dinners and so I went pretty much on my own and at the time we were still... had a shelter ministry at Wynberg Haven night shelter every Tuesday night. And so that was still a commitment that I was involved in and we had a small team of both Big Church people and a different mix of volunteers, both church goers and then secular as well, and I checked out Thursday nights and really loved what they were doing. It was this hybrid between street ministry and shelter ministry almost because it was street ministry in the confines of a safe space which was something that I had never really seen before. Like most soup kitchens that I had attended were very much outside and they were very impersonal and quite...you know they were quite like...

INTERVIEWER: Service orientated, get your food and leave...

P29: Exactly, and they were more about feeding people than anything else. So it was quite a cool thing to see, like a revelation of 'wow this is what it could look like, or, this is what it looks like. This has been happening and this has been going for... at the time it had been going for about three, four years.'

INTERVIEWER: Yes it's been coming up to six years in February.

RICHARD: And so we were at the end of the year already, I think it was around September, October when I went to go visit, and I decided to just keep going on Thursday nights and then keep going to the shelter on the Tuesday with the usual team and was kind of thinking about it, praying about it and felt God push our team to go..... Let's join, let's actually lift ourselves from Tuesday night shelter ministry. We'd been in Wynberg Haven for four years at that time, going every single Tuesday and we'd formed a great relationship, we were very sad to say goodbye to a lot of our friends in the shelter. I mean with shelters you have a high turnover, someone's only there for three to six months and then they move on. We managed to find this gap where all the people we were close to had left and so we felt God pushing us then, going, let's make the move now. So I told the team, we gave a month's notice to the shelter and said we're only going to come for another four more weeks and we had a nice little farewell and then we made the move.

INTERVIEWER: And so who came with you? So you were going to the community supper for a period on your own for a few months?

P29: Ja

INTERVIEWER: Who consisted of the whole team?

P29: That is what was quite funny. The whole team decided this was going to be an opportunity to step down. We had a solid team of about 8-10 people coming regularly and about 1 or 2 of them said they're keen to come over, and about 8 of them said 'I'm reading my season and I feel like this is also a time to step down and the two people who said they'd come over never actually came over. And so we pretty much started afresh, and it was a miracle that within about a month of starting afresh in the New Year that we started having much more Big Church people than other churches. I started sharing to friends and family and colleagues

INTERVIEWER: So it was relational connections rather than institutional ones...

P29: Yeah, Word of mouth and before we knew it in under 3 months we had a full team of about 15 people that considered themselves new to Thursday nights, that were attending regularly. With Big Church it's an interesting dynamic because you've got Big Church Now, which is the NGO attached to the church, they're always looking for volunteer opportunities for Big Church members to get involved and at the beginning of that year the Rondebosch evening congregation decided they wanted to earmark 4 initiatives to push for that year, as initiatives that the 600 plus congregation could get involved in, and so we somehow managed to be in that.

INTERVIEWER: Ok so you were one of those....

P29: We were one of those 4 initiatives. And so we ended up getting a constant trickle of volunteers coming. We'd often get these groups, home groups of about 15-20 people coming once off and then out of that group of people something would click and they would stick around, and we started to then grow this core over the last two years, of a core membership of people that would then come.

INTERVIEWER: How much are they connected to the life of St Peter's and the existing volunteers?

P29: Zero to 10 percent, I don't know how to quantify. Very, very little to do with St Peter's at all.

INTERVIEWER: Do people see it as an ecumenical partnership or as something that they're coming in to do, do they see it as there's a church already in existence and they're coming to walk alongside?

P29: I don't know, I've never pushed people to give that type of explanation of what they feel.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think?

P29: From the way that P3 and P2 speak about it I've adopted their language around it being a congregation of its own, like it being a separate church community that is part of St Peter's but with a different congregation.

INTERVIEWER: So it's because of your relationships and because of your journey you've bought into that you see it as a valid space. It's interesting I asked a number of people, "is this space that you're coming into, is it church for you?" Most of the St Peter's volunteers say yes it is church and quite a lot of the guests say yes it is but they feel uncomfortable because it's not in a church building and because of all their own religious baggage. You say you're buying into P3 and P3's thing but does it feel like genuine church for you? You said some interesting things, you said 'This is a place of mutual transformation, this is a place where we can eat together where we can hear each other.' Does that mean its church?

P29: I think for me it is.

INTERVIEWER: I want to know from you, you don't have to give me an institutionalised Big Church answer.

P29: For me, I think my whole faith journey has always been a slow drip feed rather than a revelation moment. My understanding of Thursday night being a church has been a slow drip feed rather than an 'oh my gosh what a revelation, this isn't our church'. Over time it's changed from an initiative I've been involved in to a church community that is part of the body of Christ. My wife and I were speaking last night about what is our future in terms of the church community and my colleague and friend whom we started the street ministry with, J, he said to me.... yesterday we had a beer and were just chatting about life and faith and he said you're pretty much part of two churches, you're part of St Peter's on Thursday nights and you're part of Big Church, and I was chatting about that with my wife last night and we kind of agreed that Thursday night is more of a church for us than this radically institutionalised version of it on a Sunday. I think over the last couple of months I've become slightly disillusioned by the so-called church model as we know it and longing for something radically different.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find that at St Peter's? Do you see that radical, whatever you're longing for, groping for?

P29: Partially

INTERVIEWER: What is it about St Peter's that you can answer 'partially'? Talk about some specific things.

P29: L and I were saying last night how there is, in terms of musical worship, there is not much at St Peter's so if we had to take church fellowship or attending a church as a holistic type of model, musical worship would form part of that holistic model, and it isn't really evident on a Thursday night. And therefore, L and I feel somewhat that that's missing and therefore we cannot wholeheartedly call it church cos it's missing in that aspect, which is funny in a way. I'm revealing this to myself as we're talking, and then there's no scriptural input and Leila and I were debating last night whether or not we get much of that anyway at Big Church because the messages are so seeker friendly and watered down that we arguably get more scriptural input through.

INTERVIEWER: An argument with a homeless guy across the table....

P29: Exactly, and I think both of us are mature enough in our faith to be able to.. we understand the foundations of the gospel and we understand the foundations of what it says in the word and there are other means of scriptural input that are not in a Sunday night preach, that we could glean from and gain from so it's from last night we started having this realisation that maybe this is the start of the end of a typical Sunday church rigmarole', and maybe this ...I mean it coincides with me reading Shane Claiborne's *Irresistible Revolution*. This is the second time I'm reading it and the first time was about a year into our street ministry and everything was quite elusive and idealistic rather than being achievable. And now reading it six years later it's suddenly a lot more achievable and I'm suddenly starting to think now, in the context of marriage, in the context of a community that exists...I mean most of my community exists outside of a Sunday evening. I imagine something as small as ten percent or less of my close community actually attend Rondebosch Sunday evening service, and therefore we could quite easily leave Rondebosch evening service and still maintain 90 percent of our usual community, which six years ago it wasn't the case when I was reading this book. It'll be very interesting to see what happens next year. L left a verse this morning for me to read. It was in Psalms, I can't remember I was half asleep when I read it, but it had something to do with God's timing is perfect and he will instigate the move when we're ready. That's what I understood it to mean. And God spoke to Leila this morning about something that is a reflection of last night, the things we were talking about and hey maybe God is gearing up a move for us you know, and we just need to listen to him on the timing. What that move looks like we don't know. We've debated long and hard last night on whether that is a full commitment to a Thursday night. I mean, what does a full commitment look like anyway? I mean, we're pretty full committed anyway.

INTERVIEWER: I see that, since I've been around most weeks. Can I pause you there? I want to show you this little diagram. This research is about Fresh Expressions. The community supper is, I think, one of the authentic representations of Fresh Expressions happening here in South Africa. It's a movement that grew out of the UK. Look at this little diagram, I mean, this is one of the key concepts or diagrams that is used in the movement. You can see it's underpinned by listening and following God's call, prayer and there are these four circles. Where would you say in the life of the community supper you think you are? Or think the supper is?

P29: Does this have to be independent of each other or can there be a cross over?

INTERVIEWER: They can be intersects between the two, there can be a liminal space between the two, they could all be in process.

P29: I think the first three resonate more than the last, for reasons I've given before. There doesn't necessarily need to be guitars and drumming or organ playing but in a sense worship for me is involved some way in calling out or praising.

INTERVIEWER: And that's what you're feeling ambiguous about.

P29: Yes, I see that that doesn't resonate with me on a Thursday night. Maybe it's evolving in a sense but it's still in its infancy.

INTERVIEWER: Were you around in the days of B? At that point there was quite a clear worship time. It was a bit messy and there were quite a lot of drunk people singing but there was definitely a sense of sung worship.

P29: Yes and I think that's been missing for the last year and a half or so. There was this Big Church volunteer who came with a guitar a few times but he kind of slipped under the radar and moved on. I think we've lost the sense of that type of worship but in terms of loving service I think that's what we're probably the strongest in. If service can be explained as hospitality, food, loving services, and opportunities to be placed in shelters... we're nailing that. Forming community, I think there is the sense of people sticking to the same tables. I think specifically of a guy named N. He sits closest to the kitchen door but on the opposite of the kitchen door where the piano used to be and he continually says to me every week he doesn't come for the food. He comes for the community, for the fellowship. He loves to sit here and talk. The social worker of the service dining rooms in Roeland Street in town wrote a little one-pager of what an ideal shelter looks like in Cape Town. I printed that out and asked 'Do you think this is an ideal shelter or do you think this is absolute bull crap'. And N especially was loving it and said if a shelter like this will exist we would see people transforming and changing. We had this really amazing sense of debate and communication together. And it really felt like we were a little community around that table.

INTERVIEWER: Are you sitting at that table every week?

P29: I try to. There is another guy called M A who sits at that table as well and if he isn't there I will usually try sitting there and if he is there I'll see if there's a space available. Especially if I'm leading the announcements I could sometimes miss the opportunity but I will always check in with N. We actually had a very interesting experience with N last week. He came in looking different, very flustered and frantic. He's usually very relaxed and smiley. And he come frantic and the first thing he asked was for R200. He had saved up R800 and needed to pay R1000 fine for his driver's license. He hadn't been driving for two years and suddenly the urgency of this driver's license fine was bizarre. Whenever someone asks me for money I go into investigation mode and try to prick holes in their stories. He couldn't hold a story together he kept changing and making different excuses. For some reason I never managed to sit him down and say N tell me the truth here, there's something else that you're getting at here, there's something wrong. It was the first time we'd ever seen him in this type of character and I guess I just didn't have the balls to confront him on it. And I regret it. I'm very keen to ask him tomorrow what was the actual real issue and in what way can we assist you. So yes, if there was no community I don't think this would even have happened. And it would just be forgotten about. In terms of evangelism and discipleship I think this is where Thursday nights and New Hope will converge. New Hope is a voluntary association that we formed which comprises of ten board members. We get about R20000 a month in funding (lots of noise, talking) so this convergence between New Hope which gets this funding and...

INTERVIEWER: Where's the funding coming from?

P29: Basically just private donations.

INTERVIEWER: From individuals

P29: Ja people who've heard about what we're doing and decide to give committedly.

INTERVIEWER: Has New Hope specifically dovetailed into community suppers?

P29: So we form our pool of benefactors from the community dinner, so we essentially find that people who are looking to move into shelters will come to community dinners alone. We try to restrict our pool to that. We find that consistent Thursday night commitment is the perfect way to form that relationship and trust before moving someone into a shelter or rehab. And so in terms of evangelism and discipleship, how our structure works is every board member/volunteer from New Hope gets paired with a person, mostly on the streets. Maybe I can bring it up quickly, we've got a model which I could audibly explain.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, you could e-mail it to me and I could use it as documentary evidence

P29: And you can see here the role that community dinners plays in the *Abundant life* structure. The first model is here. You have the street on the far left and community dinners is the gateway to *Abundant life* services and so it becomes the only source. So through New Hope there is placement into shelters, into rehab, into job readiness programmes and into medical services. And then as well we do training on how to help business, churches, individuals engage with homelessness and how to be a sustainable help and we also provide resources, like we've got maps and graphs and whatnot. So then this is the same model but explained differently where you go on this journey when someone's on the street and that's step one, they're coming to community dinners. They go into rehab to get free of any substance addictions from there they move into shelter placement and then eventually into work placement and then beyond there is independence. And so we are always working on a model where our end goal is independence. Co-dependency is a suitable compromise so if we can get someone back into a family environment you know that is a healthy co-dependency. And so evangelism and discipleship play a key role in that we walk a journey in which we are continually evangelising and discipling guys. I'll give you a good example of a guy that we met on Thursday night and who's been coming to visit me on Thursday nights and in my office here. We sent him twice to District Six shelter, there's this little Haven passport have you seen that, and then they bounced him twice from District Six shelter saying the shelter's full. They're not supposed to do that they're supposed to find him and alternative shelter that has room, but that's a discussion for another day. And so he came back this week and said 'can we try out another shelter' and so I phoned Wynberg and spoke to the social worker their and she said yes, send him through. This morning we put him on a train to Wynberg shelter and he'll be living in the Wynberg shelter till the new year when all our job readiness opportunities open up again for the year, 'cos they're all pretty much closed down now. And then we'll start him on a journey towards job readiness and get him into the open labour market.

INTERVIEWER: I love the model, it's fascinating. Can I ask a relational/relationship question?

P29: Yeah

INTERVIEWER: So this is independence, but do you see this journey as still the community supper where people will be coming back? So you're building relationships but the idea is not to expel them through the system. That's the common denominator.

P29: I would say even greater than that. Both of these models is wrapped in a bubble of community. So that's where the relationship starts. We've got four guys now living in a rehabilitation centre in the Northern Suburbs called Inner Peace. They obviously can't come to community dinners but our relationship is strong with them and we still liaise with them, e-mail them. We have a guy just come back now. He's one year clean from a 15 year heroin addiction as of the 12th December. We met him here and he's now living with his sister in Mitchells Plain. The transport fee would be too high for him to come to community dinners. Even though now he's living in a co-dependency state he's still in the bubble of the community and you never will graduate from that community unless you want to. We have a full spreadsheet of our benefactors who we'll never delete. They'll always be there and we'll always check up with people. Sometimes it's harder to keep in touch especially if there's no cell phone or constant e-mail address. I've got a million stories of examples of people that we've journeyed with over the years.

INTERVIEWER: Is there a sense that the community supper is an alternative community?

P29: Totally, 100 percent

INTERVIEWER: How would you class that, what makes it an alternative community

P29: I think the structure of how people view communities in day to day living is very much these isolated bubbles, especially in Cape Town where segregation is still usually rife, the cross overs between the poor and the middle class, or the poor and the rich is essentially between security gates, car windows..

INTERVIEWER: So how does the community supper change that?

P29: It creates this new environment, this merger of two cultures, not even cultures, worlds, social economic classes, it's a common ground as such where there's no security gates or car windows. And the power roles shift, I mean the power roles are still there.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about the shift

P29: I think the aspect of the table, the fact that you're sitting around a common table is something that creates the shift. There's physical shift and the physical shift prompts a mental and emotional shift as well where now there's a sense of being equal. A sense of sharing exactly the same meal enables this new dialogue to take place, this new conversation where each person around the table can ask the other person how their day went, without the sense of power. And on both sides of the table essentially. Those from middle class backgrounds and those from poorer backgrounds. You have to be intentional about this mental shift where we as the middle class have to try and dissolve our power mentality that we have, and for the poorer class to embody this sense of power. They have more power than they think, around this table. If both parties can do that. That's what I find with N. He obtains this amazing authority at the table, being an elderly gentleman who is much older than those around him, he assumes this authority that is deserved, as someone who has had more life experience than the rest of us. Whereas in most examples in society, if he had come to a door or a security gate, asking for something, even if it was a 20 year old student, they would probably assume the power role. Whereas this shift happens now because we're at this common table.

INTERVIEWER: That equalising of power is happening on a regular basis at this table.

P29: And look it's still not 100 percent right, it's a work in progress. I've seen it more at the tables at St Peter's than I have anywhere else.

INTERVIEWER: Share a story of how people view the community supper as a place of participation, belonging and acceptance.

P29: In terms of belonging I think those who were living on the street and have moved into a shelter and a rehabilitation, the most common theme within all those people is; I want to come back into community dinners and encourage others who are on the street to start the journey. So, there's a sense of homecoming and belonging where people view the community dinners as a starting point for something good in life. And there is that sense of belonging there, and homecoming. Practically it doesn't always work out because of public transport issues, and proximity. It's tough. Mowbray still exists within a middle-class community and therefore those exiting rehabilitation struggle to get integrated into that middle class community. And then in terms of participation and acceptance, community dinners is something that people want to participate in from both sides of the spectrum. In the sense of people looking for an opportunity to serve and an opportunity to share a meal. It's welcoming, it's safe, there's order and manners which is something that is huge within the street community. I've heard so many people say that they won't go to a particular soup kitchen because it's chaos. And because people don't say 'thank you' and 'please' there. Still the majority of people come to just eat and leave, but there's this growing percentage who come to participate in the community aspect of the meal as well. And then to participate in the cleaning up and the communion. And there's street people who bring their kids to participate in the kids programme. In aspects of acceptance, I think where we fail is in this ability to manage numbers. It's always a difficult thing where we have to close the gates if the numbers are getting too full, and then people who haven't got there on time feel like they're not accepted because they're late. We've got so much room for improvement there. Like, is there a model where those people who come late can still be accepted, but also protect the community that was there on time, how do we do that? That's probably a comment on acceptance I have on how we can improve. I mean I don't feel that there's anyone, even different faiths (who doesn't feel accepted) are all accepted. I feel there's a sense of universal acceptance there, regardless of where you stand. Maybe those who are middle class and rich probably struggle more to be accepted there than those who are poor. Just because we say if you want to assume a power role here you're not

acceptable. And so if you're coming here as a big group as a once off exhibition event then you're not accepted. In that sense, there's good and bad acceptance.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you want to tell me about the suppers, or any other comment you want to make in the flow of our conversation? You touched on most of the things, I think you slightly re-phrased or re-worded some of the questions.

P29: Ja, I've got lots of things to touch on, you'll probably have to restrict me.

INTERVIEWER: Going back to the church thing. Would the leadership at Big Church see what you're involved in as a genuine ecclesial community on a Thursday?

P29: No

INTERVIEWER: Do they see it as your outreach thing? It's not a critique of them, I think it's a genuine question.

P29: God protects his church, keeps his own reputation. One can critique, I'm by no means shy of critiquing the institution of church. I feel like if St Peter's was seen as ecclesiastic representation Bog Church would start pushing the brake a bit on it. If I look at the history of Big Church an example is when P P was part of Big Church but was part of another quite charismatic movement called The Deep River. So when Big Church saw that P was putting a lot of people into this movement they put breaks on massively. They basically said 'You need to choose a theological standpoint here, it's either within this charismatic movement or it's within Big Church, we can't have you confusing people. So I feel that if the eldership found out in a way that....

INTERVIEWER: ...you saw that as church you might be in trouble. In the New Testament were people involved in one church only?

P29: There weren't denominations as such in the New Testament church and therefore one body was represented by one body. I think it's a sad thing that we have denominations, and the segregation within the body. I'll give you an example

INTERVIEWER: This is all anomalised, this is all totally confidential.

P29: I speak freely. If someone wants to kick me out of their church they by all means can. We having a social justice event this coming Sunday and we're supposed to have it in the upstairs café, which is a very nice communal space that a lot of the student communities like to go to. And it was this amazing opportunity to intersect this social justice event with this holiday event. Which has happened every Sunday after the service there's like this specific event that happens like they'll go play putt putt, they'll go get ice cream. The social justice event was supposed to form part of that and then this week we found out that they're separating it. They're pushing it into the small hall because they don't want to force people

INTERVIEWER: ...to engage with social justice.

P29: Ja, I like lost it a little bit. Luckily I lost it to my wife and my friends instead of at the authorities within the church. I don't see that separation of social justice within the Bible, in the New Testament and the word.

INTERVIEWER: It's not there!

P29: It's not there. Their words were 'we want to protect the people and not force them to...' And it's like, 'what are you protecting them from?' You're protecting them from this bubble, this middle-class bubble (keeping them in that bubble) that is so far from how God wanted the church to be, and it made me so sad. I said to L last night it's arguably the straw on the camel's back. Like it's quite a small thing in the light of everything else but it's this building up and this continual segregation of social justice that Big Church displays. It's one of their five pillars, they have these five pillars, and it's always segregating, and always chucking it away. No matter what we try there's this constant battle, yet when someone wants to hold a board games evening in the café it's met with absolutely zero fight back. The more secular something can be the easier it gets accepted. I love community dinners, I think it's the best expression of church I've ever seen. That, and Fusion Manenberg, and Tree of Life. They are wonderful examples of what the church should be. Sharing a table in a simple way. It's got its problems, but I think the idea, the simple way, is amazing. I'm sure there's lots of church communities that embody what St Peter's are doing. Look, St Peter's on a Sunday is arguably as bad as Big Church. Like I've been to a few things and it's very set in this religious rigmarole and there's this deafening silence a lot. I think Thursday night's is an amazing congregation.

ANNEXURE S

Transcription of Interview with P37

INTERVIEWER: Ok I'm here at St Peter's. It is the 19th April and I'm here with P37.

Allan tell me how you ended up attending the community supper

P37: I needed a place to stay, in my second year, studying in Muizenberg at False Bay College

INTERVIEWER: What are you studying?

P37: Tourism. Been doing it for three years, and a friend of mine knew this family called the M's who lived right next to Mowbray St Peter's Church, P3 is obviously the pastor of the church. Then I started seeing there's homeless people coming to the church on a Thursday night, and I thought well, let me ask the questions. They said they're coming for supper and I asked, 'what is this supper all about'. Then I got introduced to the Thursday evening suppers. So I joined, came the first Thursday and it was quite interesting to see how everyone could come and have a meal. It was really interesting and I think what really drew me...it was really hard, the first supper, really drew me to it because I lived on the street myself with my mom. It was about a year back, no three years.

INTERVIEWER: How old are you now?

37: I'm 27

INTERVIEWER: So at what point were you living on the street?

P37: Probably like from the age of 5 till about 13. My mom suffered with alcoholism as well. Anyway so I was drawn to the supper and I wanted to find out more, how does this work where you're sitting with people that have less and that sometimes not comfortable to have an interaction with. So I'm sitting, and I came back ever since. I find myself coming to every Thursday's supper.

INTERVIEWER: Describe your relationship with people at the supper. You said just now that its uncomfortable but in the same way you have this incredible experience of what it's like to be in that position of being homeless. Do you find you're drawing on those experiences to connect with people?

P37: On some level I am. On some level I understand the process. I understand the pain behind it, I understand wanting to connect but can't because you feel inferior to people that have.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think the supper kind of changes that?

P37: It changes that perspective yes.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

P37: First of all you're sitting next to a person that might smell because they haven't washed for two or three days. You're sitting next to a person that's probably had a lot of pain in their life and you don't know their story.

INTERVIEWER: It's a place to tell stories, you're hearing people's stories?

P37: Yes, it's a place to tell stories, especially when you're feeling comfortable enough to do that. And you find level ground, I think there's level ground at the supper.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me more about that. What do you mean?

P37: You end up not seeing people's statuses, you end up not seeing who's the volunteers and who's homeless. All you look at and all you see is human beings coming together that all experienced pain in a certain way and all have a story to tell. And whether that story is that you've been brought up in a really good family or that you haven't, you know, there's a story. And I feel people's stories are important. So that's where the level ground comes in. You end up finding yourself cos then what's the difference.

INTERVIEWER: Have you been sitting at the same table?

P37: I have.

INTERVIEWER: So you've built relationships with those people. Are you a table host?

P37: I'm not a table host. The whole idea behind it is there's so many people that it's nice to build a relationship with a table. You can come back every Thursday and ask them how they're doing and if a story was told you can recap or reiterate on that story. I love that part of it. You know when I lived on the street we use to go to suppers, not suppers but to places where they gave food. So you'd get handed food and you'd walk away.

INTERVIEWER: How is this different? Is it completely different?

P37: It is. In a sense handing out food and just walking away was just that, giving food. But this? It allows you to find humanity again. Especially to people who are homeless. It allows you to open your mind to other aspects and have conversations that you wouldn't normally have had.

INTERVIEWER: Is it affecting your humanity? Do you think the connections you're making with people are changing you?

P37: Absolutely, absolutely, because I'm reminded. I'm remind of how grateful I am. Always of how the little we have we can be grateful for. Allows me to be humble and so that's what I find the beauty in, and also because my story..... I don't tell my story often to the table, I allow them to be open and then when they start asking questions then I open up about my story. It's just beautiful.

INTERVIEWER: Is there a highlight in the last year that you think back on and think, that was a really good evening or that was an amazing conversation?

P37: Ja, there's been a few. There's been one guy that I just talked to about six months back now, a captivating guy I think his name's J. He started telling me his story and about how he ended up on the streets. And we just kept on talking about it and I saw a very vulnerable side to him which guys don't often do, especially living on the street. So I was kind of captivated by that, the fact that he could be so vulnerable to a person that hardly knows him. He ended up saying, 'I'm finding my way back, and I'm finding my way back.' And he kept on saying these words and it kind of went past my ears and then I recaptured it and I'm wondering what does he mean by saying 'I'm trying to find my way back'. So I asked him and he said 'I'm trying to get back to where I was and I'm building a life for myself. He says 'I'm creating things out of my own'. And so a few days later I was walking down in Obs and there he is in a coffee shop, working, and he was making coffee. He had this skill that he could make coffee, really good coffee with smiley faces and the foam on top. I see him in this coffee shop and I'm ecstatic and he's like 'yes I found this job, I'm working here from Monday to Friday, this guys really great'.

INTERVIEWER: A story of transformation

P37: Yes, and it just shows me how fast things could change for a person, how fast they can make a decision and stick to it. It was amazing. That's one of the stories.

INTERVIEWER: Does it feel like church?

P37: Not really.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

P37: Conversations are had about God but not too often, and I understand that in a sense because it's really hard to be in a space where you're struggling, to look at a higher power and say 'He's got my best interests at heart, but I'm still here. But it doesn't feel like church in a sense.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think its church for any of the people at your table?

P37: I think so. I think a lot of homeless people have the knowledge of the Bible. They have knowledge of what the Bible says, what Jesus says, and they want to have a relationship with him and I think that's why they come. But it's a

faith that's strong inside of them, so when the conversation is had they say yes I am a Christian, hey we actually at church we not just having supper in a hall, there's a church right next door. But ja many of these people I don't think they go church on a Sunday.

INTERVIEWER: And is that because they would just feel totally unwelcome?

P37: Yes, and out of place whereas here it's still a church but they still feel in place because they sitting amongst their own and they're welcomed. It's hard, this is a personal story. My mom struggled with that, the fact that she was an alcoholic and she lived on the street with me. And once I got off the street I used to go to a church in Obs, Jubilee, and she would come visit me there but she'd feel so out of place and I could see the discomfort in her face.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think it was? Was it because of her own personal struggles?

P37: I think it was her own personal struggles, but also just the sense of feeling that you're not clean enough cos in church there's a certain standard whether you want to know it or not. You come with clean clothes, you have a good conversation with someone else ...

INTERVIEWER: You know the right time to stand up and sit down?

P37: Exactly it's all those sort of things. She felt very uncomfortable and I can understand why homeless people don't often go to a Sunday service. But then Jesus never sat in a church. He went with his hands and feet and sat on the street with people and preached in the road. That's what he did. So this place is an amazing concept and it's somewhere people can come, not just for the food but for the conversation and the hope it brings for them.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you P37 that's great, thanks so much for giving me your time.

ANNEXURE T

Transcription of Interview with P38

INTERVIEWER: So I'm here with T L . It's the 19th April. T tell me how you ended up coming to the community supper

P38: Like I said it was through somebody I knew, they brought me here, and what I saw at first, the people that were here that time, this is going back about six years ago, were different to the group now. They were more wild then, than they are now. Everybody has settled down.

INTERVIEWER: What was it like in the early days? What was happening?

P38: There used to be fights, seriously, nobody had patience for the next one. And everybody wanted their food and if they didn't get their food it was like, your fault. You would be bashed up. But it looks like everybody now has a bit of manners and sensitivity for the next one

INTERVIEWER: Describe your relationship with the people who come here.

P38: I know a few that come here but because of where I sleep and where I stay I'm a bit cut off from them. When I come here it's just like, there you are, I see you. (interruption, noise)

INTERVIEWER: Sorry go on

P38: So I don't have like an intimate contact with everybody here. But I know the Mowbray group that comes here.

INTERVIEWER: When you say the Mowbray group you mean people sleeping on the streets?

P38: Yes

INTERVIEWER: Is that a group of people who know each other?

P38: Yes, and there's a little bit of Obs that also comes here, that's also sleeping outside. Then there's about 1 or 2 people from where I sleep, that's in Rondebosch. They come here. But most is from Mowbray.

INTERVIEWER: Describe a highlight of your time here. You obviously come regularly every week because you like it.

P38: Like I said the most highlight is the change in the people.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me something about that

P38: Over two years, actually, part of the six years that I was here. I was on the street because of my ex and then two years after I was in the shelter and then two years ago I was back outside. But then I was this side and I was able to come here again. I could see the difference from six years ago to two years ago. What I can say is, the guys that administrate this, they make sure that the people know this is not a soup kitchen. When you come here you can relax and feel at ease, you sitting at a table, you got your tea or coffee with your food, which is nice, and what makes it all nice is that it is an evening meal. Lots of people go to bed hungry in the night which is not comfortable. I think now people have gotten to appreciate this, that is why everyone now understands one another.

INTERVIEWER: They created these values.

P38: Values yes. And because it's a community meal we're all sharing. You know we all have an equal share. That's the main thing.

INTERVIEWER: Is it like church for you?

P38: No. It's nice that it's run by church people but they don't instil that you know. Though they do sometimes have the Passover meal that you can stay for.

INTERVIEWER: Have you stayed for that?

P38: I have stayed for it sometimes. And there's a few that do stay afterwards.

INTERVIEWER: Thanks so much for giving me a few moments of you time P38, that's great.

ANNEXURE U

Participant observation fieldnotes 1-16

Reflexive journal entry 4 (PO 1)

Date: 7th September 2017 5.45pm-7.15pm

Location: Community Supper St Peters

Participant Observation week 1

It's chucking it down with rain and has been all day. When I arrive a few guests are lining up outside the hall and I'm shown the back door route by a longer term member. All is calm the kitchen is empty bar a middle aged woman earnestly messaging on her phone. I wander round and look outside the gate. Two young 20 somethings who look like students are asking if this is the right way to the Community supper. I'm an insider already it seems as I show them where to go. Other new volunteers arrive. All from a local non demoninational church in the city that has links to the supper. Everyone does the usual greetings, where are you from etc.

P2 (leader) arrives and gathers the volunteers into a circle to give some input. All new members are given a simple A6 piece of paper which outlines what the Supper's intentions are. The opening sentences read, "A weekly celebration where we journey over a meal from isolation and ignorance to encounter, from encounter to relationship and from relationship to transformation."

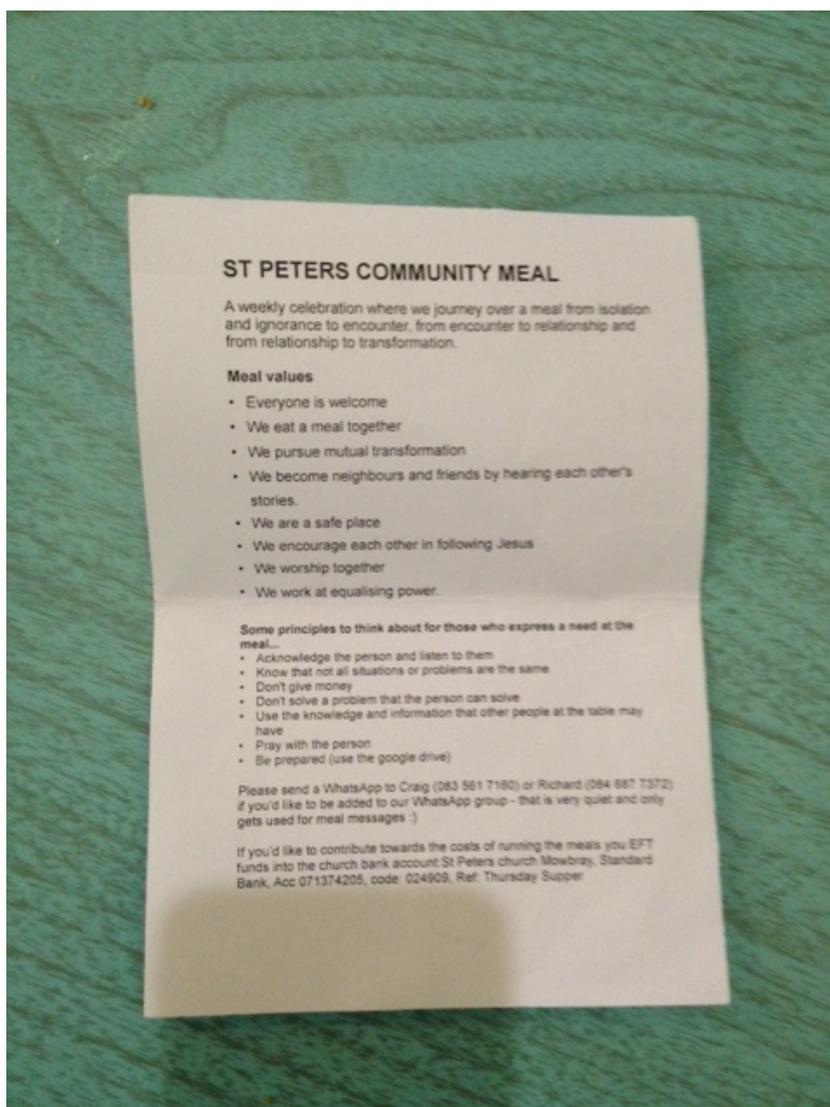
P2 is relaxed, easy going...magnanimous even? He also introduces me as someone who is doing research, observing and listening to stories. But I get the sense that having a large group of well dressed exclusively white young people in the space may be occurring more regularly than he would like. P2 uses the phrase, "this meal is an opportunity to lurk." He also uses the phrase this is a place where we practice being human together several times in the evening. He reminds the volunteers, "the only thing you've got to offer is your curiosity." There is a list of principles to think about for those who express a need at the meal. I'm intrigued by his use of the phrase, "We always have communion but sometimes we celebrate communion as the Eucharist."

We are told to pray for the supper in groups of 3/4. A young man in my group prays "help us to be guests."

P2 tells the new volunteers to go outside and line up with the guests waiting to come in. This remark causes some consternation. As we walk through the kitchen to the front of the hall some volunteers are confused that they have been made to stand in line with other guests. They think there has been a mix up and they should be serving! The idea of equalizing power seems some way off.

I choose a table in the corner and am introduced to P4, JE, P5 and one or two others. Although its been raining all day and many people are obviously quite wet the atmosphere is jovial. P4 shares a bit of her story. She comes from Springs in the Northern Cape has brothers and sisters but can't go back home because of her situation. She formerly worked at the Mount Nelson in the kitchens.

P5, across the table from, begins to talk to me. He tells some of his story. He was married in the church 39 years ago, his wife is a lay minister. He says, "This place restores what the locusts have eaten." I'm not sure exactly what he means at first but he begins to narrate more of his own story.



Forced removal because of the group areas act in the mid 1960's. I'm struck how quickly and transparently people share being very unselfconscious.

I notice some people eat without interacting much and once the meal is done leave fairly quickly.

Self-reflection

I find myself feeling very at home in the setting. I know many of the main leaders but as much as I want to believe this is a space where all come together equally I'm not convinced. May be when there is an act of worship every other week it will change things.

Interpretation and investigation

I'm reflecting on P5's words, "this place restores what the locusts have eaten." Perhaps this is linked to one of the meal values on the slip of paper I'm given which says, "We work at equalizing power". I want to believe that this equalizing of power is possible but when the volunteers are overwhelmingly white, middle class, and obviously affluent it's difficult...especially when I overhear comments that suggest lining up with the other guests is some kind of a mistake. Counter balanced to that it's clear there are some genuine relationships that have been formed. Being served together at table (some exceptionally sweet tea) is a great equalizer.

Reflexive journal entry 4 (PO 2)

Date and Time: 14th September 2017 6.05pm-7.25pm

Place: St Peter's community supper

Participant observation week 2

Tonight the weather is clear so when I arrive there are a few more people gathered at the hall door. I let myself into the kitchen. P29 (leader and member of *Big Church*) is briefing a few new volunteers (different from last week) I sit some distance away and make notes. He uses the phrase "equalizing power" again. Whether that means anything to his listeners I'm unsure. He also shares that tonight there will be communion which he describes as "Anglican".

I meet another volunteer who happens to be living in my parents hometown of Exeter in the UK who is doing post doctoral research on food justice. It turns out we were both ordained in Natal diocese. We agree to share some academic resources around theology and food.

P2 gathers the volunteers. He tells those who are new that the Kingdom of God gets expressed through meals but he doesn't go into more detail than that. I want to ask him more about his understanding in a more formal interview setting. He says this is a different type of community. Not about feeding people although people who come are hungry but actually the purpose is to create a space. He asks us to be present. To be curious. He adds that there will be communion tonight.

I sit on a different table this week. One volunteer has brought coloring sheets and pens. I meet G who is from Uganda and living in a shelter in Parow. She is very softly spoken and it's hard to hear exactly what she is saying. It's her first time to the supper. She says she escaped from Uganda (I was freed she says). I'm unsure if she means she has escaped some form of slavery? Others at the table include P38, A and M. M is talkative, articulate but confusing. A man stumbles over and asks to draw a picture. He takes a green pen and scrawls all over the page and gives it to a volunteer. She gets the giggles.

There are about 80/90 people present (I need to check the service register) but when it's time for communion (around 7.10pm) only 11 of us gather round the table. I strike up a conversation with a man. He tells me God is always faithful to him but he has been very unfaithful to God. Communion is simple following 1 Corinthians 15. Small squares of bread on a silver platter and a silver cup with grape Juice are passed round. It's simple and short. Only guests and long term volunteers gather.

I'm struck by the two types of volunteer. Those from St Peters who tend to be older (ie not 25) and more diverse in race (white, coloured and black). Then there are the Common Ground volunteers (young, white, well dressed, slightly bemused look on their faces - or am i just stereotyping?) Do they see this simply as place to come and do a good deed for the week or to really grow into the community. It also throws up a question about the ecclesial nature. Is this an Anglican FXoC? If only 11 out of 80 people receive communion is it church? Is it growing into an intentional disciple making community. It's clear there is community, it feels like people are connecting beyond the superficial but it doesn't feel intentional...I think P2 and P3 are in a transitional space into something new. Also need to investigate the whole area of theology and food, shared meals

Reflexive Journal entry 7 (PO3)

Date and Time: 21st September 2017 6.00pm-7.15pm

Place: St Peter's community supper

Participant Observation week 3

Feeling tired tonight and not thrilled about the prospect of spending an evening at the community supper. I arrive at 6pm to find Gladys who I met last week waiting at the door.

P2 gathers this evening and helps clarify the issue of new volunteers. There was some issues around new people wanting to "help" or to provide a service primarily rather than be at tables with the guests (homeless) people. Serving needs of volunteers or of the people who you are called to help create community with. Questions? One person asks about finances. P5 reminds people that money has never been an issue. P2 says, "it's been a holy mystery that we have resources." He also reminds volunteers that part of the expression of hospitality is not getting the worst food but people belonging to a buying club add money to their bill and meat is free range/fair trade. Reserves used to buy plates etc. although anyone is free to give. Upgrades to the kitchen. P5 is very self effacing but I get the impression he has a very real influence on the life of the supper. He has taken notes over the past few years on who is in the room. What volunteers to what jobs. He knows for example a new volunteer has been helping for 3 months washing up. I think P5's interview could potentially unlock some hidden things at the Supper. I am also aware that P5 is the only non white leader I'm hoping to interview.

P2 reminds volunteers they can pray for people at table should the need arise. No need to play with the religious formula. Many soup kitchens invite the homeless into this religious dance whereby they feel compelled to say religious things or make religious claims.

I'm struck by a comment that P2 made in our interview this week. I get the sense that the community supper is a space that functions as a detox from religious talk and modes of religious posturing and some soup kitchen's unwittingly (or perhaps not) enforce on people through their doors. They only get to eat if they have prayed a certain prayer etc. P2 tells me that in the homeless there can be these elements of charm and deceit because thats a way of staying alive in some extent.

After two visits at tables I decide to sit and only observe tonight. Are all the table hosts (apart from P in the corner) all white? It seems clear that many people really do know each other.

N interrupts me and it seems I need to be on a table to really observe. I'm sticking out by placing myself in a corner. N monologues tonight - with a little help from me. He narrates his life. Again I'm reflecting on that fact that in 3 weeks of being at the Supper I have heard more about a few peoples lives than I have in a conventional church setting where there is limited space to hear stories. I guess the problem may be that we hear each others stories but that we are not being intentionally invited to find ourselves in another story - the grand narrative of scripture... I also manage to get some pictures of the service book with numbers of those who've attended over the past 12-18 months.

Time and date: 5th October 2017 6.05pm-7.20pm

Place: St Peters, Mowbray

Participant Observation week 4

I arrive at what I consider to be late but only a handful of Big Church people including P29 are gathered. No P2 or P3 means that the gathering of volunteers feels quite different. I sense a leadership vacuum in a way. P29 gathers the volunteers but the language and tone is very different. I am used to hearing P2 theologizing quite specifically which sets a tone about encounter, being humans together, being curious. This is completely absent. P29 seems to feel he encroaching on the "head honchos territory." During the volunteer gathering a young homeless man A who I've met once or twice before comes to sit by me and tells me he is angry. I end up praying for him briefly.

I wonder to the front today so I can enter with the guests. Its quieter tonight. Maybe only 60 people or so. The doors are opened and G (the church secretary) greets people initially but then wanders off to attend to some other needs. I slide along the spectrum from observer to participator tonight and seeing a few people unsure make myself the door duty person shaking hands, welcoming people, finding out names directing people to tables. I'm moving definitely along the continuum from outsider to insider. To cement this idea N, who I've sat next to for dinner twice, arrives and asks to borrow my phone to make a call to a friend of a friend. I oblige.

Tonight I choose a table I've not sat at before and instantly fall into a conversation with C. She is Rwandan but lives in Cape Town. Over the next 20 mins she narrates her life story which involves escaping the war in Rwanda and traveling through Africa over 10 years. 5 in Mombasa Kenya, a few months in Tanzania, a year in Malawi, a few months in Mozambique and finally to South Africa. Opposite her on the table is J P who is from the Songo tribe in central Congo but has a similar story of studying, living and working in Uganda, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Both have jobs, both are well educated, self effacing, and delightful company. It's a reminder of the inclusive nature of the Supper and that everyone and anyone really is welcome.

Ethical considerations

I am aware that after today's supper I need to be careful. I'm seeing that just a few changes to the way things are done could make the supper a lot more effective and help it grow into something more authentically ecclesial. That, however, is not much job or role. I'm there to observe, participate, excavate, listen, muse but NOT to lead.

I interviewed P8 who has been part of the supper since day one. Both she and her husband P2 have mentioned the book *Reading the Bible with the damned* by Bob Ekblad. It's clearly a book that has shaped their imaginations but I'm wondering why there hasn't been an intentional decision to embark on using that work as a principle to create deeper discipling community. It feels like discipleship is an accidental by product. But perhaps that's part of the curious nature of the Supper.

I kept thinking today - when P2 and P3 are away there is an unease from some of the volunteers (both Big Church people) and the indigenous St Peters leaders. But actually maybe that's an opportunity for others to lead. But the default tonight was a young Big Church volunteer who did not lead in a way that helped to express the intention or the spirituality of the Supper.

Reflexive Journal entry 9 (PO5)

Time and date: 12th October 2018 6.10pm

Place: St Peters community Supper

Participant observation week 5

Week 5 in the observation tonight and I purposely try not to get involved in anything and sit at a distance especially since last week I was on the door and essentially acting like an insider. Tonight I make sure I'm lurking in the kitchen area and watch what's happening in the children's rooms. Again the absence of P2 and P3 is felt. I find myself being slightly irritated by the fact that P3 isn't attending tonight because he's going to a pub quiz when it seems there is a rhythm of communion twice a month.

In the kitchen I end up having a brief conversation with one of the teenagers who has been. Coming almost every week since the beginning. He prefers being with the children who meet and eat separately as opposed to being with the adults. "sitting with the adults is harder" Another long term volunteer (a medical doctor) tells me she has been helping predominantly with the children since October 2017. I ask if she prefers being with the kids. She tells me when she worked at a clinic in Khyalitcha it was difficult to come to the supper in the evening. "All day I'd be hearing about how bad peoples lives were and then I found it too much to hear that again in the evening."

P8 leads the gathering of volunteers - again affirming that the evening is about eating together and seeing one another. P5 leads a moment of silence and prayer before the meal begins. I try to avoid getting involved in anything by hanging around the kitchen door but it doesn't work. I asked to collect more plates, help bring the next pot of rice through.

I'm struck this week by the fact that if the volunteers from Big Church (Under 20, white, middle class) didn't attend it might be difficult to run the supper logistically. Whilst the core team can sort the kitchen work and other things there would be little help with managing tables. But then again all the tables sort of get hosted by white males. This bothers me profoundly as it seems to undo some of the other excellent work the supper does. For all the talk of equalizing power (which does happen) allowing white, middle class men to host the tables works against that. I find myself frustrated by the lack of leadership over a few things like this that P2 and P3 could really turn around with a few conversations. I get the sense that the language of emerging, accidental and seeing what happens can, on one level, be used as an excuse. The only way of undoing and reversing past imbalances is to call them out intentionally. Also without the well structured silence at the beginning and the communion I'm wondering if this is really church or just a well run soup kitchen.

Reflexive Journal entry 10 (PO6)

Date and Time: 26th October 2017 5.47-7.25pm

Place: St Peters community Supper

Participant Observation week 6

I arrive early at the supper today and since the weather is warmer there is already a larger contingent of people waiting outside. I realize that several of the guest know me and greet me. Inside it's empty apart from P10 a Khosa woman who is a stalwart of the kitchen and really makes the practical side of the supper function. Before any of the other volunteers arrive I take 15 mins to interview her. I know that she is part of the Mothers Union in the Anglican Church at Langa so I'm interested in how she will answer the final question about the supper being church. She surprises me with her answers - she seems to consider the supper more authentically church than Sunday mornings at St Peters! Again the notion of dignity comes up - it appears to be a theme for everyone I've interviewed - in a world of dehumanizing tendencies the supper offers a space of genuine human dignity.

I spend sometime getting to know names of the kitchen volunteers. P6 and A both come from Big Church are in their mid twenties, white and either wash up or help serve food. They have both been coming for 4 months and prefer the kitchen

duties than sitting at the tables - where they both say conversation is sometimes hard work. Up until now I've been quite cynical about the involvement of the Big Church folk but the more I'm present the more I see that actually these young people are playing strategic roles in humble and self effacing ways.

P29 (from Big Church) leads the prayers at the beginning of the supper this week and welcomes news people. For the first time I feel like he has articulated the essence of the supper properly. He uses the phrases like "being community together" "not rushing" "seeing each other".

P3 the original leader is there tonight. Around 7.10 just as the food is being cleared away he announces communion. A few later comers arrive so it's getting more rowdy. Around 15 people gather around the table - a talkative woman next to me says louder than necessary, "Come and eat and receive your healing." I ask her what she means. She explains that when she took communion at a Catholic church she was healing by taking the body and the blood.

The communion really is pretty simple in terms of liturgy - just based on 1 Corinthians 15. It's obviously profound for a number of people gathered around the table. I'm struck by how much it embodies Luke 14 and Jesus parable about the wedding feast. The poor, the blind, the crippled really are gathered around this table and despite the noise of people waking past or shouting and a bit of jostling for food I sense this is a holy moment. It's church.

Reflexive Journal entry 11 (PO7)

Date and Time: 9th November 2017 6.35-7.35pm

Place: Community Supper

Participant Observation week 7

I arrive late today; intentionally as I do want to be behind the scenes but just arrive along with the rest if the guests. I arrive a bit late. The doors are about to close. I'm beginning to feel like the supper is a place where certainly all the leaders and volunteers know me and increasingly I'm know by a handful of the guests. This is my 7th week at the supper and I've interviewed about 6 leaders/volunteers.

P2 is back and it's interesting that he is really the natural leader. He is the one who consistently theologizes for the supper. I missed last week but there seems to have been an incident of some kind which Craig refers to...and he gives quite a long preface to the meal (he even calls it the closest thing to a sermon that has happened at the supper). P2 essentially speaks about the ethos behind the meal. It's not about eating and running about but about communing, sharing conversations, listening, showing dignity towards one another.

I sit next to P11 who talks easily. He speaks of life in prison, of being sentenced to life but finding himself up for parole early which he sees as a gift from God. He talks about speaking on gangsterism and addictions in Sweden and the US. He knows many of the guests. He launches into a long theology of how God is not good but holy and then quotes verbatim most of Matthew chapter 1.

Earlier in the day I interview P1 who I think has articulated the stories of people's lives changed most clearly. I'm also wanting to interview P6 who washes up every week and is part of Big Church and a few guests next week...

Reflexive Journal entry 12 (PO8)

Date and time: 16th November 2017; 6.05-7.30pm

Place: St Peters community Supper

Participant Observation week 8

It's been over two months at the supper now and although all the leaders, volunteers and guests know I'm here to do research that seems inconsequential to most people. I arrive knowing that today I want get some interview with the guests done. As I enter the back door a young girl is handing out invitations to her birthday party. She is turning 9. Invites are thrust into anyone and everyone's hand meaning I get one. The kitchen is bustling. It's clear that this is another level of community - people who have been serving together week in week out for several years not only know each other they do things together - like birthday parties.

Reflexive Journal entry 13 (PO9)

Date and time: 30th November 2017 6.05-7.30pm

Place: St Peters community supper

Participant Observation week 9

The longer daylight hours means that by the time I arrive there are a large number of people waiting round outside enjoying the sunshine. As I slip into the back door of the kitchen the usual crowd of volunteers are beginning to prepare

things. Kids mill around some new faces I've not seen before. I'm a familiar face by now. Interestingly the young (20 something) group all from Big Church arrive for the usual pre brief. A core of these guys are table hosts but they are by and large white men. Women are conspicuous by their absence. Although there is talk of mutual transformation by P29 at the pre brief it's hard not to be slightly cynical about quite how mutual the transformation is?

I don't get to the meal tonight as I'm engaged in a conversation(s) with a number of people who seem to slip between being guests and volunteers. I'm interested by the kind of range of theological views and spiritual understandings at the Community Supper. I speak with P, the brother of an Evangelical Anglican minister. I ask him if this is church - he says it definitely is. Much more so than a normal Sunday service. "This is much more real. There are ways we can serve here." P explains that traditional church wasn't really cutting it for him anymore. He's been coming for a year. Another guest/volunteer is T who strikes up a conversation with me saying that if only Jews had been able to conceive of God in any other way apart from as father. God is in each of us. He is here present in our midst, not out there somewhere. I ask him if he has theological conversations at the tables. Yes he says but often other guests are trying to evangelize him or correct his faulty theology. It really doesn't appear to bother him.

Reflexive Journal entry 14 (PO10)

Date and Time: 7th December 2017 6.00-7.25pm

Place: St Peters community supper

Participant Observation week 10

Extremely hot this week so when I arrive P10 is cooling herself off with an ice pack to her head. She always wants to call me Umfundisi but I gently reminded her I wanted to be called Ben which she finds very amusing.

I had a significant interview with P29 this week. He is currently part of another church but the interview seemed to turn into a confessional/speaking out about how he was increasingly seeing the community supper as his primary worship/church. It's a reminder how unformed or unreflected upon people's understanding of church is and often in the ZAR context how conservative ideas of church are - probably a lingering Christendom issue.

Today is the last gathering of the supper for about 6 weeks. There is an annual closing down over Christmas which breaks up the expectation that the supper is a feeding or a soup kitchen but primarily a meal - table fellowship is the dominant reason for gathering.

I also made sure I got the contact number of P7 who has been coming to the supper for about 5 years. She is an avowed atheist which makes interviewing her really important because after last week it's obvious the supper is made up of people with divergent theological views or no particular views at all. If being human together is a central theme it seems theological persuasions are very much secondary. Having said that there is a very real spirituality being grown at tables. Tonight I see two people being prayed for having shared something of their week or their story.

I've also recorded the pre supper volunteers prep talk from P29 and CP2 and the opening prayer or theologizing. In many ways this is actually an emerging liturgy. It's an emerging liturgy that on one level grew out of the death of J T 4 years ago. It's a creative improvisational liturgy that has grown out of the context, that avoids formalism but reaches into the tradition and reinvents it. This week for example P2 re-appropriates the prayer of humble access (APB 1989:127) 'We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord trusting in our own righteousness.' That one phrase is used to help guests and volunteers again see that value to sharing a meal together - communing in the larger sense of the word, is invitational.

Reflexive Journal entry 15 (PO11)

Date and Time: 13th April 2018 6.10-7.30pm

Place: Community Supper, St Peter's Mowbray

Participant Observation week 11

I arrived at the Community Supper after a break of nearly 4 months. As I park my bike and go in through the back entrance I'm greeted heartily by the familiar face of P10 who restrains herself from calling me Umfundisi. It's quiet inside but a large group of people have gathered out the front. The atmosphere is subdued. Craig gathers the volunteers around 6.15pm. Smallish numbers tonight. There are always new visitors on the volunteer front. Today an American couple and their three children. I need a catch up with P2 to find out what has been happening in the months where I have been absent from weekly gathering.

As usual P2 gathers and reminds the volunteers of what they are called to do. "I know we know these things..." There is a formational and habitual reminder of the values of the meal for the team. P2 says that the communion table is always in the background. I'm struck again by how P2 and P8 and a few others see the whole meal as a eucharistic act. By the way in which the liturgical flow of the supper is becoming more concretised. P2 speaks about the idea of the *Imago Dei* and the aim to call that out in each other.

Just before 6.30pm the doors are opened. The room is full but the atmosphere is subdued. It's strange that just one or two rowdy people can change the atmosphere of the supper. Some weeks its been very jovial. I try to arrange an interview with a young coloured man called P38 who P2 thinks has a particularly interesting story.

I stand next to the kitchen entrance and enjoy greeting many of the volunteers. I'm sure nobody sees me as someone doing research but just hanging round. That's helpful on one level. A woman sitting on her own next to the kitchen wants to tell me about her recent sickness. She is one of the usual crowd. Baseball cap, salt and pepper hair pock marked face. She is difficult to hear because she possibly slightly drunk and jumps from English to Afrikaans.

P2 explains that the supper has had some ups and downs. In the early February the service team decided to open the doors early at 6.00pm to allow guests the opportunity to gather, talk and generally be more sociable. It was difficult as a lot of new people had arrived in Cape Town during the January holidays and the rhythm of the supper got broken up. This had an impact on the service team gathering together to prepare and pray. P2 explained that after a few weeks the team stopped the supper to reassess things. They are working on a trial and error principle. This resonates a lot with the idea of improvising your way through church

I'm seeing that there is a distinction between the volunteers as such and the service team. The service team really are directing the life of the supper organisationally and in some ways liturgically although its P2 and P3 who hold that task. There have been other developments. In my interviews I noted how the idea of using Bob Eckblad's *Reading the Bible with the damned* popped up. The community supper has now birthed a twice a month bible study in a cheap local cafe led by P8 and P29 which between 8-10 street people attend. The children's supper which runs at the same time as the supper each week has around 15 children and organises games and bible verses to share. As I stand outside later in the evening I can hear them celebrating a birthday. There is a definite sense of elements of the supper solidifying and a feeling of permanence.

I try to sit quietly in the corner and note the flow of the evening.

Welcome: P2

Announcements: P29 - takes the form of openings in shelters, courses around job readiness, anew food provision in Woodstock and local government plans for a homeless shelter in central Cape Town

Silence: P2 reminds people this is a time to turn, repent and reflect.

Prayer: Again P2 weaves an improvisational intercession on the line of text from the eucharistic prayer. "We who are many, are one for we all partake of the one bread." He says "By all rights we shouldn't be one body".

The Meal is served

Reflexive Journal entry 15 (PO12)

Date and Time: 1st August 2018 2.15pm-3.35pm

Place: St Peter's Church, Mowbray FUNERAL

Participant Observation week 12

It's a bright but cold Cape Town afternoon. I've come to be present at the funeral of PT a long term community supper member who was living on the street and died of TB. The wife of P had come to the Supper on the previous Thursday to discuss having some kind of service.

Its good to see old faces and I'm warmly greeted by P2, P3, P8/35, P10, P29 and P5. I'm reminded again of the team who really hold the Community Supper and are committed. The service is due to start at 2.30pm but only gets going around

2.40pm. About 24 people have gathered. Someone explains that today is the day people pick up their SASSA grants so it will be quieter than they hoped or expected.

Pioneer leader P3 starts the service explaining that it will be conducted in English and Afrikaans. The majority of those gathered are probably first language Afrikaans. He explains that the whole church, the church that gathers in Thursdays and the church that gathers on Sundays are together in remembering PT. Is this a sign that there is growing recognition of a kind of symbiotic relationship between these ecclesial places. It's feels like the mixed economy is working to some extent.

P3 uses the opening sentences of the funeral service in the 1989 prayer book the rest of the service is informal. P2 swaps between Afrikaans and English inviting people to come and share stories of P. As the service runs some people arrive. The stories are mostly in Afrikaans, a few in English, one is Khosa is translated by P10. PT's nickname was Green Eyes. He was obviously well know in the Mowbray area but grew up in Ocean View. He'd been living on the streets for about 20 years. P2 explained to me how he'd had a long conversation with PT 3 weeks ago about being known and being remembered. P2 gives a mini sermon floating between English and Afrikaans. PT's wife is visible appreciative and makes comments back and forth. During the prayers she is weeping openly.

I know from speaking to leaders of the Supper that over the years there have been funerals for people living on the street who had a made the Supper their home. This feels like an important ministry in itself.

Where to the poorest and most vulnerable street people go when someone dies. I'm guessing some churches might not be very interested. I am also reflecting on how P2 and especially P3 held a space and didn't impose the full Anglican Prayer book service on this group of bedraggled and broken people. The formality of a normal requiem mass that is often standard fare in the diocese would have been so inappropriate, confusing and possibly bewildering for those gathered. But P3 used some key sentences and phrases lifted from the prayer book that fit well. But it's the improvisation often parts of the service that really spoke to the congregation.

