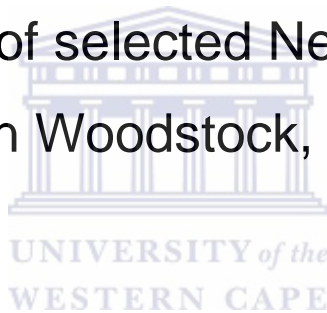


The University of the Western Cape

Faculty of Religion and Theology

The Material Dimension of Religion:
A case study of selected Neo-Pentecostal
Churches in Woodstock, Cape Town



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Abstract

The aim of the study was to establish why the sudden emergence of numerous storefront Neo-Pentecostal churches, in the suburb of Woodstock, Cape Town, were found to be attracting large numbers of members while mainstream churches were closing down or struggling to survive. Over and above the fact that the Neo-Pentecostal churches are flourishing, the sheer number of them, was a further cause for investigation into this phenomenon.

The majority of these congregations proved to have sub-Saharan ties (Nigerian in particular) and attracted membership largely of a similar background. This study looks at this phenomenon from a thorough understanding of the history of liturgy and particularly Pentecostal customs and attempts to place these churches in their social and historical context. The main thrust of this thesis, however, is an analysis of the distinctive and very prominent material features of these churches and their worship services which not only sets them apart from other Pentecostal and mainstream churches, but may offer an explanation of their popularity in this community.

This study is undertaken through the close analysis of the worship services of seven Neo-Pentecostal churches in Woodstock and application of Ninian Smart's dimensions of religious practice, with specific reference to what he calls the Material Dimension. At least one worship service in each congregation was recorded on video and great sensitivity was exercised here in the physical recordings and in obtaining the written consent of the leaders of these respective congregations to use the data obtained.

Although the factors contributing to the popularity of these churches cannot be solely attributed to the material dimension as set out and discussed in this study, I argue that this is certainly one of the prominent contributing factors to explain the sudden

emergence and success of the large (and growing) number of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Woodstock.

Special note: The recordings of the church services under discussion in the mini-thesis, together with the written consents of the leaders of each congregation are available for public record and may be obtained from the author on request.



Chapter 1

The Cradle of the Quest

Sub-brandings, like Neo-Pentecostalism, African Independent Churches (AICs), African Instituted Churches (AICs), African Initiated Churches (AICs), African Indigenous Churches (AICs), Charismatic Movements, and Classical Pentecostal Churches, are brands which are used by scholars who are at their wits' end to provide distinctive demarcation criteria for the conglomerate of Pentecostal movements in the world and in Africa in particular.

Since the Pentecostal movement is by and large regarded as the work of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is, in my opinion, working in eccentric ways in a South African suburb situated in Cape Town, known as Woodstock. Considering that the majority of the residents of Woodstock are Muslim, I was fascinated to observe the emergence of new Pentecostal congregations in Woodstock, almost on a monthly basis. My residence is situated in the heart of the Woodstock commercial precinct and the sudden influx of storefront Pentecostal congregations, with names like Winners Chapel International, Christ Embassy, House of Glory Ministries, House of Praise, Greater Life Ministries and so on, triggered my interest. I also noticed that the majority, if not the totality, of these congregations' membership or attendants were African and of non-South African origin. My interest did not arise from a political or economical agenda, but from the reality that the majority of Woodstock's permanent residents are either caucasian or coloured, with Islam as the dominant religion. The traditional mainstream churches have either closed down, been transformed into commercial enterprises or are operating with a skeleton membership. And yet, despite the dissolution or stagnation of the mainstream churches, Pentecostal congregations are opening and thriving.

The aim of this mini-thesis is to grasp the rather strange phenomenon of the sudden emergence of numerous Pentecostal congregations with strong West African or sub-

Saharan ties (Nigeria in particular), in South Africa, by focussing on the suburb of Woodstock in Cape Town.

In the traditional South African geographical demarcation of denominations, one would, at best, have one branch of a denomination per suburb. By contrast, within the boundaries of Woodstock, in close proximity to one another, one finds at least seven Pentecostal congregations and this number continues to grow. All of these congregations are functioning and thriving in perfect harmony with one another. This phenomenon, in my opinion, engenders curiosity for further research as to why the ratio between mainstream churches losing members and Pentecostal congregations attracting members is so extreme. Some of the traditional mainstream places of worship have since been converted into commercial buildings or barely manage to keep their doors open, surviving on the attendance of older members of the Woodstock community. However, in this very same socio-geographic context, Pentecostal congregations are spreading rapidly and are evidently noticeably more attractive to their adherents. It is therefore a fascinating phenomenon. A simple explanation would be to ascribe it to “the work of the Spirit”, but deserves an academic and critical investigation, rather than subscription to such a naïve approach. This mini-thesis is an attempt to describe and, to a limited extent, explain this phenomenon.

I am an Afrikaner male and a former minister of the Pentecostal, Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, within which I served as a ‘tentmaking’ pastor – not receiving remuneration from the church for a period of fourteen years. I was the minister of the Good News Chapel in Hatfield, Pretoria. During these years I never encountered or experienced any sense that a Pentecostal congregation is synonymous with guaranteed church growth.

For the past ten years, since 2002, I have been part of a family business known as the Mad Group of Companies with its head office in Woodstock, Cape Town. Part of the Group’s vision is the rejuvenation of Albert Road, one of the main roads in Woodstock, into a mixed-use urban environment. This vision entails the redesign and/or restoration of current industrial premises into commercial, educational, religious and residential properties. What attracted my interest in the topic of this research project was the fact that several of the existing industrial premises under

scrutiny were suddenly, with very little renovation and no design, being utilized as Pentecostal places of worship.

During my tenure as a pastor I had experienced the introduction of huge auditoriums, theatre chairs, spectacular stages, state of the art lighting and sound systems with the then new independent charismatic and Pentecostal churches – such as Ray McCauley’s Rhema Bible Church in Randburg and the late Ed Roebert’s Hatfield Christian Church in Pretoria. In the 1980s that was already a major paradigm shift in terms of my perception of what a traditional church should look and feel like. Since I had been reared in a context where places of worship needed to architecturally reflect sanctuaries, altars and steeples, the sudden phenomenon of factories and shops being utilised for places of worship for several Pentecostal congregations in Woodstock engaged my attention even further.

Numerous new independent congregations have been established in Woodstock since 2010. Overtly, these congregations are all Pentecostal in orientation, and most of them function, under the leadership of persons of West African descent or have relationships with churches in West Africa. These local Pentecostal congregations predominantly attract members who are not born South African citizens or are associated with AICs in West Africa. The emergence and growth of such Neo-Pentecostal congregations in a Cape Town suburb, where, as earlier stated, some mainstream churches have closed down and others appear to reflect virtually no growth, invites scrutiny into why such Pentecostal congregations have become so attractive. One factor might be the appeal of their worship services. As necessary background to this study, this mini-thesis includes a brief overview of Pentecostalism globally with particular reference to the obvious disparities in the growth of Pentecostalism (or lack thereof) in different regions of the world. Since Nigeria is displaying the most radical growth of Pentecostalism in tropical Africa, and since the majority of the Woodstock congregations under discussion in this study appear to be connected to Pentecostal denominations in Nigeria, I have chosen to focus on Nigeria and South Africa. This will be further expanded upon in Chapter 2.

This study will explore, more specifically, the distinctive features of one worship service in each of seven selected Pentecostal congregations in the suburb of Woodstock. In order to identify and describe such distinctive features, some

background will be required on liturgical developments in the broader history of Christianity. I will provide a general chronological overview of worship practices in the various Christian denominations and movements throughout the ages, concluding with the dominant features of a Pentecostal worship services. This will be documented in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

To scrutinise these worship services, an analysis of seven interrelated dimensions of religion by widely respected American scholar of religion, Ninian Smart, will be used. Smart distinguishes the institutional, ethical, ritual, experiential, narrative, doctrinal and material dimensions of religious traditions, all of which will be touched on in Chapter 4 of this thesis. Smart developed his framework to address and explain religious practice as a whole, not limiting it to Christianity or any particular denomination thereof. As such, it is useful to view the construction of religion as a whole (with reference to all seven dimensions), rather than limiting it to one dimension only, since elements of religious practice (as we shall see in this study) often overlap. This study will, however, focus primarily on the manifestation and importance of one of these dimensions in the particular churches and services in question – Smart’s notion that the material dimension of religion is visually accessible also to outsiders. Smart (1996:11) observes that “a religion or worldview will express itself typically in material creations”. This is explored in more detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis and will become our main focus in our analysis.

By focusing on the material dimension of religion, this study will include an identification, description and analysis of the distinctive material features of the worship services in the seven selected Neo-Pentecostal congregations, utilising video recordings of these services. The seven congregations in question were all chosen primarily on the basis of being located in Woodstock. These seven congregations are in relatively close proximity to each other and, although not a prerequisite, this proved to be beneficial to extra research detail. The identified seven Pentecostal churches are, listed here in no particular order: the Paran Pentecostal Church, the House of Glory Ministries, the Rainbow Family Church, House of Praise, the Winners Chapel International, the Cape Town Christian Church and the Greater Life Ministries.

The videographers assisting in each congregation positioned themselves in an ordinary seat amongst the attendees. They were instructed to conduct their video recordings in an inobservant manner, meaning that they would remain stationary in one position, suggesting that they were just like those members of the congregation who were capturing aspects of the service on their cell phones, enacting the role of a member of the congregation. Detailed descriptions of the seven services are discussed in Chapter 5.

Empirical data derived in this way from the video recordings of devotional worship services at the congregations mentioned above forms the core of this study. Special attention is given to the role of the liturgical space, musical instruments, audiovisual equipment, the dress code of leaders, participants and members of the congregations, posters on notice boards, artefacts and paintings, interior and exterior branding, available literature and writing materials, offertory boxes, sacred objects like handkerchiefs, balms and oils, the laying on of hands, bodily gestures, laptop computers employed during sermons, holy communion chalices and plates, blankets/cloths and other liturgical objects. The description and analysis of such distinctive features may offer some of the raw material that may be employed to explain the allure of such Neo-Pentecostal services and their swift expansion in Woodstock.

My reflections on those material dimensions (in terms of Smart's observations), and other material dimensions which are common within the confines of the worship services of the congregations under discussion, will serve as the basis for this investigation. Since Smart identifies certain material aspects which are common to religions and religious praxis, I will strive to use this analysis to understand the appeal these congregations generate. I need to here emphatically state that those material dimensions I identify as composing the attractiveness of these churches, do not by any means constitute the sole appeal of these churches. Aspects like liturgical content, here denoting the texts of songs, announcements and the sermons themselves, were not considered as part of this study.

Chapter 2

Global Pentecostalism: A brief overview of its growth

2.1 Introduction

Christianity is at the present time growing faster than the world's population. This is mainly due to the breathtaking growth of Pentecostalism, a growth from zero to over 400 million in less than a century that is unprecedented in church history (Hollenweger, 1998:1). The well-known statistician of Christianity, Dr. D. Barrett, projects that given the current growth rate of Pentecostalism, the number of Pentecostals worldwide is likely to rise to 1 billion by 2025 (Barrett and Johnson, 2002:1).

Scholars differ on the exact place of the origin of Pentecostalism, since various worldwide revivals were reported in the early 1900s. These revivals were distinguished by a Pentecostal character and by the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, such as healings, glossolalia (commonly referred to as "speaking in tongues"), prophecy and other miraculous manifestations. Whether these revivals occurred in India, Wales, Azusa Street in Los Angeles or Africa, the one was not more or less Pentecostal than the others (McGee, 1999:650). The various revival movements were the breeding ground from which Pentecostalism grew and came to thrive during the 20th century. Pentecostalism spread through missionaries. From the Azusa Street Revival alone, missionaries were sent out to 25 nations within the short span of two years (Faupel, 1996:182-186, 208-209, 212-216). Unlike the "obedience to the Great Commission" of the Evangelical missions, the Pentecostal mission is grounded first and foremost in the conviction that the Holy Spirit is the motivating power behind mission activity. The Spirit is "the superintendent and administrator of missions" and we are thought to live in an age of the Spirit, "a time of worldwide outpouring of the Spirit" (McClung, 1986:122). These missionaries were ordinary people who were untrained and inexperienced. Their only qualification was the baptism in the Spirit and a divine call. Their motivation and task was to evangelise the world before the imminent coming of Christ, and, in a sense, evangelism to them was more important

than education. Pentecostal missionaries were, amongst others, sent to China, India, Japan, Egypt, Liberia, Angola, Nigeria and South Africa (Hollenweger, 1972:34). Missionaries emanating from Azusa Street established new Pentecostal revival centres in Hong Kong, Oslo, Sunderland and Johannesburg, including the Apostolic Faith Mission which is the largest classical Pentecostal denomination in South Africa, Lagos, Valparaiso and Belem (Anderson, 2004:115-121,133,136-137).

To regard Pentecostalism as a significant global branch of Christianity is therefore an understatement. Pentecostalism is well-established in North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa and other parts of the world, and statistics confirming this assertion of significance will be substantiated in this chapter.

Three quarters of the world's Pentecostals come from the Majority World. The Majority World here denotes Asia and the Pacific, Africa, South America and the Caribbean. If present trends continue, by 2025, 69 per cent of the world's Christians will live in the Majority World, also known as the South, with only 31 per cent living in the North (Barrett and Johnson, 2004:24-25). According to Barrett, Burgess and McGee (1988:810-830), Pentecostalism is not a predominantly Western movement, but fundamentally and dominantly a Third World phenomenon. In spite of its significant original growth in North America and Europe, currently less than a quarter of Pentecostals worldwide are Caucasian, and this proportion continues to decrease. The Pentecostal emphasis on "freedom in the Spirit" has rendered the movement inherently flexible in different cultural and social contexts.

There is an ongoing debate as to whether African Pentecostalism is the offspring of the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, whether it originated from indigenous roots, or whether it in fact originated from other locations or movements. Cox (1996:228) notes that thriving Pentecostal indigenous churches were established in many parts of Africa without the help of foreign missionaries at all. In the 1970s, partly as a reaction to the bureaucratisation or institutionalism prevalent in the established churches, new independent Pentecostal churches began to emerge all over Africa, with the greater expansion in West Africa, and particularly in Nigeria. These churches were largely independent of foreign churches and were of African origins (Gyadu, 1996:7). Studies have suggested that in the 21st century there may be more Christians in Africa than in any other continent. As Sanneh (1989:188) observed,

“the eruption of Christian forces in contemporary Africa is without parallel in the history of the church.” In 1970 the African Independent Churches claimed to have had approximately 16 million followers in 5,980 denominations in Africa (Barrett et al, 1982:815). Since that time many of the African Independent Churches have become indistinguishable from Pentecostal churches. Barrett and Johnson (2001:7) maintain that Charismatic, or Pentecostal movements in Africa grew from 0 to 17 million from 1900 to 1970, and to 126 million by 2000, and even further since then.

What is clear is the role of a new and rapidly growing form of African Christianity and newer Pentecostal churches are increasingly being recognized. This new form of Christianity is fast becoming one of the most significant expressions of Christianity on the African continent, especially in the cities. Kalu (1998:3-16), designates this phenomenon as the “third response” to Caucasian cultural domination and power in the church.

These Pentecostal churches respond to the existential needs of Africans. Pentecostalism therefore poses an attraction of great magnitude to the peoples of Africa. Hollenweger (1997:23) argues that the attraction of Pentecostalism can be partly attributed to its oral structures rather than to any particular Pentecostal doctrine. These oral structures are comprised of an oral liturgy, a narrative theology and witness, a reconciliatory and participant community, the manifestations of visions, dreams in worship and an understanding of the relationship between body and mind revealed in healing by prayer and liturgical dance. The most important element of these liturgies is that every member in the congregation participates in the worship service. Cox (1996:246), provides another reason for the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism in Africa, saying that Pentecostal preaching in Africa promises solutions for sickness and fear of evil spirits. The great strength of the Pentecostal impulse for Cox lies in “its power to combine, its aptitude for the language, the music, the cultural artefacts, [and] the religious tropes of the setting in which it lives” (Cox 1996:259).

It falls beyond the scope of this study to explore the plethora of sociological reasons for the rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Africa in any depth. To identify a single or collectively dominant causal denominator prevalent in each and every Pentecostal church, is also problematic, and I, for purposes of this study, chose to only examine

the extent to which certain material dimensions prevale and prove to be a drawcard to the worship services of the Pentecostal churches in Woodstock that are under discussion.

2.2 A geographical shift in growth

To embark upon a discussion of the growth of Pentecostalism globally is, in itself, perhaps a misnomer, since statistics, as briefly alluded to in this chapter, would indicate, that one cannot simply deduce that there necessarily has been an 'overall global growth' of Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism, whilst growing rapidly in some parts of the world, has not been growing dramatically in other parts. I deemed it paramount to substantiate the statistics appertaining to the heading of this chapter being "...the growth of Pentecostalism globally..." with at least the most recent accredited statistics. In this chapter I, will therefore attempt to substantiate my premise by providing these global Pentecostalism statistics even though such statistics are not readily available and those that are, often vary greatly. However, what is commonly claimed is that it has moved from its original territory of origin, to new frontiers. Whereas North America was, at the outset of the Pentecostal movement the bastion of its phenomenal growth, recent statistics would suggest that this is no longer the case, with growth patterns shifting to focus on the Majority World (Asia, Latin America and Africa). I wish to note that the statistics, which are public knowledge, also display discrepancies in terms of the actual numbers of Pentecostals worldwide. This may be attributed to the different definitions among scholars as to what a Pentecostal is. I therefore deem it of paramount importance to categorize the various designations of Pentecostalism.

As mentioned before, numerous brandings and sub-brandings are currently accepted, varying from classical Pentecostalism, charismatic Pentecostals, Neo-Pentecostals, Indigenous African Orientated Pentecostalism, First Wavers, Second Wavers and Third Wavers to independent Pentecostals. In the following section I shall attempt to provide definitions from scholars of Pentecostalism on these divergent categories. It is also necessary to demarcate the study into a brief analysis

of the current geographical status of the movement, with specific emphasis on Nigeria and South Africa.

2.3 *The origins of Pentecostalism*

To attempt to establish the exact origin of the global Pentecostal movement is a mammoth, if not impossible, task. Some scholars attribute the dawn of Pentecostalism to the Upper Room (as recorded in the Book of Acts, chapter 2:1-4). Other scholars, like Martin, define Pentecostalism as the offspring of John Wesley's 18th century Methodism (Martin, 2002:7-11). However, the majority of scholars maintain that Pentecostalism originated in the Americas, through the great revivals led by Charles Parham and William Seymour. Parham was acclaimed as the pioneer of Pentecostalism among North American whites and Seymour was heralded as the champion of Pentecostalism among blacks as a result of the 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles (L. Lovett, "The anti-Pentecostal movement" in Synan, 1975: 125-140). There are also African scholars who claim that a type of Pentecostalism originated in Nigeria, with churches emerging in the early 20th century as a result of religious revivals. Examples of these are the churches which were founded in 1916 through the activities of Garrick Sokari Braide, an Anglican lay reader (Isichei, 1995:286-287).

2.4 *What is Pentecostalism?*

The question of how to define Pentecostalism is a thorny issue. As a mode of religious expression it can be unpredictable (due to the intervention of the Spirit). Hence, one is never able to establish a uniform creed or frame of reference, so to speak, since Pentecostalism appears to be experientially driven. At best, one can only attempt to restrict oneself to the overall, elementary tenets held in common by different expressions of Pentecostalism, and use that as a tool to give a workable definition. Adeboye (2004:139), defines Pentecostal beliefs as "doctrines of conversion, Holy Spirit baptism and spiritual warfare," With a conversion experience dealing with a change from an "old life to a new one". The next experience for the

Pentecostal convert is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The convert receives the power of the Holy Spirit with the physical evidence of speaking in tongues (glossolalia). Poewe (1994:12) describes Pentecostalism as experiential, and, consequently, Pentecostalism is not bound to any specific doctrine or denomination since it doesn't have a particular system of theology or one integrating doctrine.

2.5 Pentecostal brands

Although the Pentecostal movement is recognized as a common manifestation within Christianity, it has, over time, filtered out into several sub-brands. As indicated earlier in this chapter, there is no common ground for what exactly constitutes a Pentecostal movement or how classifications should be made, since scholars entertain no consensus as to who belongs in which fold. For the purposes of this study, I will employ the designated categories of David Barrett (Barrett et al, 1988:821), who is regarded as one of the leading experts on the demographic sectors of Christianity in general, and Pentecostalism in particular.

Pre-Pentecostals are individuals who have, in sizeable numbers, over the last 200 years, experienced or demonstrated Pentecostal phenomena. This group can be reasonably regarded as the offspring of the 20th century Pentecostal revival and includes various Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican monks, priests and nuns, as well as Mormons under Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. They also include charismatic groupings in the new movements of the 19th century which have since become denominations in their own right, one of these being the Salvation Army, and another, the Holiness bodies, with special reference to those that arose in the United States that taught a "second blessing" experience together with related Pentecostal phenomena.

Classical Pentecostals are the original Pentecostal denominations in North America. The most well-known amongst this sector is the Assemblies of God, which comprises the Holiness or Methodist Pentecostals, the Baptist Pentecostals, and the "Oneness" or Unitarian Pentecostals.

Protestant Charismatics were founded around 1960, when members from the mainstream Protestant denominations started experiencing Pentecostal phenomena. Similarly, Catholic Charismatics are members of the Catholic Church who had had a Pentecostal experience. Post-Charismatics are people who have drifted out of the movement for some reason or another. Many still identify themselves as charismatic, although some may have rejected it. Third Wavers are mainstream evangelicals who emphasize signs and wonders, yet do not identify with the Pentecostal or Charismatic movements (Burgess et al, 1988: 810-830).

Neo-Pentecostalism is yet another Pentecostal brand. Some scholars, like Hunt (2002:2), note that despite a common emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit, many departures could be observed between Classical Pentecostalism and the new developing Charismatic movement. One of the departures from Classical Pentecostalism was that, contrary to what the former believed, the baptism in the Spirit was not necessarily verified by speaking in tongues (Hunt, 2002:2). A further distinct feature of Neo-Pentecostalism is that, contrary to Classical Pentecostalism's world denying and puritan roots, Neo-Pentecostalism's membership reflects a middle-class profile, and an affluence typical of the middle-class culture (Freston, 1997:187). Neo-Pentecostalism has manifested itself in various movements since the 1970s. These are the Jesus Movements, the so-called "health and wealth" gospel of the "Faith Movement" and the highly influential network of Vineyard churches (Hunt 2002:3). The term "Neo-Pentecostalism" began to be used interchangeably with the general term "Charismatics" in the 1980s and 1990s when a number of enterprising preachers, such as Oral Roberts, heralded the dawn of a new generation of non-denominational churches. The term came to be used interchangeably also with the later term, "neo-Charismatic". These Neo-Pentecostal churches, from their inception, demonstrated explosive popularity. The networks of independent churches were soon the fastest growing segment in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement in the English-speaking world, spreading to become hundreds of independent global networks (Anderson, 2004:156).

2.6 Statistics on the global growth of Pentecostalism

In the context of the many different classifications and sub-divisions, it is most useful for the purposes of this study to consider the statistics under the generic term of Pentecostalism, as it would be virtually impossible to differentiate accurately over different population samples and chronological periods during which the surveys were conducted. Global Pentecostalism's multi-faceted nature refuses conventional classification and study, so we must choose an approach that is meaningful and purposeful in the context of this study.

For purposes of this study I relied on the demographic samples of Barrett and the Pew Forum. Dr David Barrett is the founding editor of the World Christian Encyclopedia and the World Christian Database. Already in 1988, Barrett in the 1988 *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements on the global growth of Pentecostalism* (Burgess et al, 1988:811), wrote: "The sheer magnitude and diversity of the numbers beggar the imagination! 332 million affiliated church members. Of these, 176 million are Pentecostals, 123 million are Charismatic, and 28 million are 'Third Wavers'." In order to demonstrate growth I deemed it appropriate to provide a chronological growth rate chart. Here I used Barrett's samples of 1988 and his projections based on the growth rate for 2000.

The global statistics in 1988 (Burgess et al, 1988:812-813):

- 268 million denominational Pentecostals;
- 5, 5 million Post-Pentecostals;
- 18 million Protestant Charismatics;
- 53 million Protestant Post-Charismatics;
- 23 million Catholic Charismatics;
- 86 million Catholic Post-Charismatics; and
- 65 million "Third Wavers".

This translated to 518.5 million Pentecostals in 1988 across the globe. Barrett projected that by 2025 there would be 740 million Pentecostals and Charismatics in the world (Barrett and Johnson, 1999:24-25). Synan (1997:281) further provided a chronological growth and projection chart, based on Barrett's statistics. (Note that he

does not specify groups, but simply estimates the number of Pentecostals per period).

- 40 in 1901;
- 16 million in 1945;
- 27 million in 1955;
- 50 million in 1965;
- 96 million in 1975;
- 247 million in 1985;
- 460 million in 1990; and a
- 550 million projected figure for 2000

Peter Wagner (in Synan, 1997:11) wrote: "In all of human history, no other non-political, non-militaristic, voluntary human movement has grown as rapidly as the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in the last twenty-five years." Synan (1997:11-12) says: "When I did my first research on Pentecostalism around 1965, there were barely 50 million Pentecostals in the world. Now as this revision appears, that number has grown to encompass some 217 million 'denominational Pentecostals' around the globe. Added to this, are the millions of 'Charismatics' and 'Third Wavers' in the mainstream churches, who were inspired by the Pentecostals. All together, the aggregate number of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians numbered some 465 million in 1995".

According to the Pew Forum's Center for the Study of Global Christianity, there were about 279 080 000 Pentecostals and 304 990 000 Charismatics in the world in 2011, totalling a staggering 584 480 000. It constituted 26.7 per cent of the global Christian population and 8.5 per cent of the world population. In addition, there were more than 285 million evangelicals in the world in 2011. This constituted 13.1 per cent of the global Christian population and 4.1 per cent of the world population.

2.7 Pentecostalism in North America and Europe

Despite its phenomenal growth in the Majority World, Pentecostalism has not displayed any significant growth from within North America and Europe in recent

years. Recent statistics compiled by reputable and accredited research centers and statisticians such as the Pew Forum and Garrett, show that whilst Christianity in general, and Pentecostalism in particular has grown regionally with specific reference to Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, this has not necessarily been the case in Europe and North America.

According to David Barrett's "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission" in the January 2003 issue of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, there were over two billion Christians (2,076,629,000) "of all kinds" in the world then. This represented 33.1 per cent of the world's population. The other significant factor which Barrett's statistics in 2003 revealed was that there had, in addition to the significant growth, also been a major shift in the regions in which those people who call themselves Christians were to be found. In 1900, 82 per cent of the world's Christians lived in North America and Europe. In 2003, the statistics showed that there had been a geographical shift, with sixty-two per cent of Christians now living outside of North America, in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania (Barrett and Johnson, 2003:25). Expressed numerically, the former statistics translate to 427,780,000 Christians in North America and Europe in 1900 and 93,864,000 in Africa, Asia and Latin America, totalling 521,144,000 Christians globally. In 2003 there were 755,455,000 Christians in North America and Europe and 1,207,871,000 in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania, totalling 2,076,629,000 Christians globally. Note that the discrepancy between the total number of Christians cited above and the 2003 statistics, is due to the latter figure including unaffiliated Christians (Barrett and Johnson, 2003:25). I acknowledge that these statistics apply to Christians in general, and, that I cannot from this geographical shift in the growth of Christian numbers deduce that it, *ipso facto*, applies to Pentecostals. However, by further examination of the most recent 2011 statistics, it will be clear that the greater percentage of the growth of Pentecostalism now vests in Latin America and in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1910, 60 per cent of the world's Christians lived in Europe, whereas this percentage had dropped to 25.6 per cent in 2010. The Northern hemisphere (defined as Europe and North America) hosted 80 per cent of the world's Christians in 1910, as compared to 40 per cent in 2010 (Johnson and Ross, 2009:107). These statistics clearly show a major shift in the geographical distribution of Christians – a shift which has shown effects in South Africa as well and may hold

part of the key to understanding the rise of the Pentecostal churches with sub-Saharan affiliations in Woodstock, South Africa.

My sense is that in sub-Saharan Pentecostalism or Neo-Pentecostalism, there vests a peculiar appeal, which, firstly explains why Pentecostalism exerts such an almost addictive allure in this region of Africa, and secondly, why it is so prominent in a suburb of Cape Town. These aspects will be discussed in far greater depth in later chapters, however, let us return to our consideration of the growth (or lack thereof) of Pentecostalism in Europe.

I experienced great difficulty in ascertaining the growth of Pentecostalism in Europe. Even though Pentecostalism is a sub-branch of Christianity, the availability of recent accredited statistics on Pentecostalism in Europe appears to be immersed in a shadow of uncertainty. The presence of Christianity in Europe and North America is noticeably on the wane. Considering that in 1900, 82 per cent of the world's Christians were living in Europe or North America, by 2005, this presence had decreased to only 39 per cent. Despite this radical decrease there still appears to be a vibrant, thriving Pentecostal presence, particularly in Europe. My research shows that African Pentecostalism, here denoting the influx of Pentecostals from Africa, is making major strides into both Europe and North America. If one considers that ethnic Africans in both these geographical sites are, in terms of legal citizenship, in the minority, it begs the question why there is this antithesis between the waning of Christians in general, and, on the other hand, the increase of Pentecostals in particular. This phenomenon may be explained, by the migration and influx of Africans into Europe. I am not convinced that statisticians are benchmarking the unprecedented influx of Sub-Saharan Africans into Europe and America in their research samples, especially since the bulk of these migrants are in Europe and America on a temporary basis, so to speak, their presence being legally justified through temporary work permits. We are therefore faced with the dichotomy of Christianity losing ground in Europe and North America, while Pentecostalism is making major inroads. Daugherty (2011:1) states the situation succinctly: "Europe is demonstrably not the Faith. The era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes." He continues and says: "Western Europeans do not attend church much anymore." Yet there are, both in Europe and North America, multitudinous and large

Pentecostal churches flourishing and expanding with sub-Saharan preachers leading the flocks. A thorough geographical and sociological investigation of this phenomenon regrettably falls outside of the scope of this study, however, the effects of globalization and secularisation may prove effective inroads into further studies on this subject. We will however, briefly discuss some aspects of this global shift and relevant statistical findings in this regard which are pertinent to our study.

Research shows that Europe in particular has, as stated earlier, been inundated with a new form of African Pentecostalism which is appealing to a migrant influx of a sub-Saharan constituency. This migration of a work force is said to be the consequence of the unfavourable political and economic conditions that manifested in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria in particular. African students, disillusioned with the degeneration of the African education systems, have increasingly been seeking greener pastures in Europe and the Americas. Yet as strangers in these countries, these migrants tend to continue in solidarity with the teachings of their African rooted churches, since these churches focus on issues of relative deprivation and provide an "in-Europe", African sense of community (Hackett, 1993:389-390). An interesting feature of these European African Pentecostal churches is that they did not originate in Europe or other western countries, but were rolled out by mother denominations or churches in sub-Saharan or tropical Africa. One apt example is the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) from Nigeria, which has planted hundreds of congregations in Europe and also in the USA (Hunt, 2002:21). Jenkins (2007:91) says that the demise of Christianity in Europe is mitigated by what he terms the growing "southernization" of Christianity in the global North. Somewhat outdated statistics, yet relevant to this view are, with reference to North America, provided by Hanciles (2008:124). In 1960, 40 per cent of immigrants into the United States were from the global South. In 1990, it was 90 per cent. In Canada, over the same period, the rate increased from 8 to 70 per cent.

The South appears to be moving into the North. In 2005 it was estimated that between 10 and 20 million illegal migrants from Africa and Asia were living in Europe. What is interesting is that migrant Christians, for example, from sub-Saharan Africa, seem to have a much clearer understanding of church-planting in Europe when compared to the European Christians who have lived on this continent

all their lives (McConnell, 2005:25). The African Pentecostal churches which are being established in Europe are virtually as successful as the indigenous London Pentecostal churches, like the Kingsway International Christian Center (KICC) that was founded in Great Britain back in 1861. In 2002, half of London's church attendants were made up of migrant Africans from Africa and the Caribbean (Jenkins, 2002:98).

My reason for providing a brief overview of the phenomenon of Pentecostal growth “from Africa into Europe” is simply to show that the growth of Pentecostalism in Europe and North America might not predominantly be a local, traditional and indigenous growth from within, but the result of the concept of what scholars refer to as a “Reverse Mission.

2.8 The Pentecostal eruption in Nigeria

Pentecostalism is a significant feature of Africa's religious and political landscape. Its growth has been particularly dramatic since the era of decolonization in the fifties and sixties. According to the 2006 figures from the Christian World Database, Pentecostalism then represented 12 per cent, or about 107 million, of Africa's population of 800 million. These included individuals who belonged to classical Pentecostal churches, such as The Assemblies of God or the Apostolic Faith Mission Church, founded in the early 20th century, as well as those who belonged to the more recently formed Pentecostal denominations, such as the Deeper Life Bible Church in Nigeria. Charismatic members of Neo-Pentecostal churches, who in Africa stem mostly from Catholic, Protestant and African Instituted Churches (AICs), tallied up to a further 40 million, translating to 5 per cent of Africa's population in 2006. If one considers that in 1970, Pentecostals and Charismatics constituted a mere 5 per cent of the population, the growth rate speaks for itself.

As the core of this mini-thesis is to try to ascertain why the Pentecostal churches (that emerged suddenly and in significant numbers in Woodstock since 2012) are so successful, with specific reference to their sub-Saharan roots, I chose to devote the

major part of this section to contemporary Pentecostalism in Nigeria, the geographical hub of the activity of Pentecostalism in Africa.

In 2000, statistics showed that there were 83 million Independents and 126 million Pentecostal Charismatics in Africa. What has proved fascinating is a kind of "triumphalism", an expression of "Africa's claim to Pentecostalism" by prominent African and Western scholars. The debate appears to revolve around whether Pentecostalism in Africa is to be solely attributed to the missionary activities of North American preachers or whether African Pentecostalism also boasts a strong indigenous impetus. The scope of this study doesn't allow me to venture into this debate or the idea of a Reverse Mission in any great depth. However, it should be noted that throughout this study I encountered attitudes of triumphalism. Geographical locations of origin would in most cases be attributed to the North. In some other cases it would be attributed to the "local soil", being the South. In other cases it would resort to a "reverse mission" discourse of Africans expressing a desire to evangelise the erstwhile western 'oppressor' that brought its religion to Africa along with colonialism." This attitude was aptly captured in a handset recorded prayer by Pastor Enock Adejare Adeboye, General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), one of the fastest growing Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria. The prayer: "Let somebody shout Alleluya! As I succeed you will succeed! Nigeria you will never be ruled by oppressors again!" (Omotoye, 2011:1).

Mbefo (2001:18) claims that the explosion of global Pentecostalism in Nigeria can be ascribed to the religious and political scenario that emanated from the country between 1950 and 1970. This, he argues, was the result of the Nigerians' goal for self-affirmation and liberation from the clutches of European imperialism. Jenkins (2007:69) says that the independent churches in Nigeria and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa must be considered under the flexible label of Pentecostalism, even though many independents would rather avoid the term because of its Western missionary stigma.

Nigeria, while boasting the largest Pentecostal population in sub-Saharan Africa, also hosts the region's largest overall Christian population. It has more than 80 million Christians, accounting for half of its total population. As such, Nigeria hosts more Christians than any Western European country (Pew Forum: 2006). Some of

the most popular Pentecostal churches in Nigeria are: “The Deeper Life Christian Church”, (Lagos), the “Living Faith Church” also known as “Winners Chapel” (Otta), “The Church of God Mission” (Benin), “The Redeemed Evangelical Mission” (Lagos), “The Sword of the Spirit Ministry” also known as “Christ Life Chapel” (Ibadan), “The New Covenant Church” (Ibadan), “The Ever Increasing Word Ministries” also known as the “Rhema Chapel” (Ilorin), “The Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry” (Lagos), “The New Testament Church” (Ilorin), “The Word Commission” (Ilorin), “The Trinity Household of Faith” (Ilorin), “The Faith Foundation Ministry” (Sokoto), “The El-Shaddai Ministries” (Akure), “The Logos Ministries” (Port Harcourt) and “The Redeemed Christian Church of God” (RCCG) in Lagos (Omotoye: 2006:43). Not to mention the “Christ Embassy Church”, also known as “Believers Loveworld Incorporated”, another international Charismatic church founded by the acclaimed Chris Oyakhilome which has its headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria.

According to Richards (2005:89) the common characteristics of the fast-growing Pentecostal churches in Nigeria are:

- Creation of viable alternative communities;
- Greatest impact among the urban poor;
- Offering a hope-based message;
- Narrative style;
- Supernatural worldview and "power encounters";
- Highly committed to prayer;
- Welcoming and following Charismatic leaders;
- Empowerment of women;
- Mobilisation for Evangelism and Mission;
- Widespread use of mass media;
- Flourishing in times of crisis; and
- Movement of transformation.

This invariably poses the question as to what extent these characteristics can account for why sub-Saharan Pentecostal churches are so attractive, with people literally flocking to these churches by the millions. Gifford (2009:24) attributes the attractiveness and appeal of the Pentecostal churches, especially the newer ones,

to engendering hope, imparting vision, and awakening the sense of destiny through their Success Theology. He, in support of his theory, cites examples of churches like the “Victory Bible Church”, the “Jesus Breakthrough Assembly” and the “Triumphant Christian Centre” in Nigeria. He goes on to say that the branding of their conventions, crusades and conferences invigorate the aspirations of the people. Brands such as "Living a Life of Abundance", "Taking Your Territories", and "Stepping into Greatness" confirm this. In Nigeria, some of the Pentecostal churches even had jubilant annual themes such as "2010, my year of gladness", "2010 my year of divine solution", "My year of divine favor". In addition to these annual mottos and motifs, many of the sub-Saharan churches also have contemporary slogans, based on slightly distorted scriptural promises from the Bible, such as "Surely, goodness and mercy, long life and prosperity shall follow me all the days of my life" (Ademiluka, 2007:116).

In terms of the material appeal of the sub-Saharan Pentecostal churches, as far as the interior and exterior features of these churches are concerned, for example, branding, notice boards, ritual objects like vessels for tithes and other monetary contributions, stages, dress codes, musical instruments and so on, have proved problematic to universally pinpoint. I found it very difficult to identify a common denominator from documented evidence, especially since many of these churches tend to convert any conceivable available space into places of worship. However, common features, particularly among the mega-churches and the medium-sized Pentecostal churches are that they are very economically driven. They produce a huge portfolio of products such as videos, CD's, DVD's, books, magazines, booklets, pamphlets, stickers, key-holders as well as sacred religious or ritual objects like anointed handkerchiefs and olive oil. The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) produces and markets sermons on DVDs, VCDs and audio tapes on a global scale. It has a media hub called Dove Media which transmits satellite and internet television and radio, as well as producing and selling home videos (Ukah, 2007:16). Christian Oyakhilome, popularly known as “Pastor Chris”, the founding president of Christ Embassy, runs three television channels: LoveWorldTV, LoveWorld SAT, and LoveWorld Plus. He runs a global prayer network using social network platforms to transmit messages to his followers. He currently boasts over 1.1 million followers on Twitter and over 5.2 million friends on Yookoos. Many of

these churches host their own book stores on the premises where the literary texts they produce can be bought by church members (Ukah, 2007:14). Some of these churches are also the proud owners of banks, insurance companies, business schools and other forms of profit-oriented enterprises (Ukah, 2007:17).

2.9 South Africa – an introduction

Pentecostalism was established in South Africa from the advent of the modern Pentecostal movement. By 1990, South Africa had more than 6,000 independent African Pentecostal churches (Anderson, 2001:95-97). By the late 1990s, classical Pentecostals comprised 10 per cent of the population, with the largest denominations being the Apostolic Faith Mission, the Assemblies of God and the Full Gospel Church of God. The mostly African Zionist and Apostolic churches, which constitute a majority of South Africa's African Instituted Churches (AICs), then accounted for an additional 30 per cent or so of the population (Anderson, 2001:93).

As we have discussed, one of the distinct features of global Christianity since 1900 is the spectacular growth of Pentecostalism. This undoubtedly also applies in the South African context. Following the spiritual awakenings of the 19th century, the Pentecostal movement led to the establishment in South Africa of the Apostolic Faith Mission, the Full Gospel Church, The Assemblies of God and the Zion Christian Church in the first few decades of the 20th century. In the 1960s this was followed by the Charismatic Renewal that also affected mainstream churches. Although statistics are not readily available, there can be little doubt that Pentecostalism in South Africa continued to grow after 1994. More recently, many churches in urban areas, that would previously have been regarded under the rubric of African Instituted Churches (AICs), have developed Pentecostal orientations. In sub-Saharan Africa, the term “Neo-Pentecostalism” is used increasingly to refer to the confluence of AICs and Pentecostalism. As such, I deemed it necessary to provide an historical overview of the origins and growth of Pentecostalism in South Africa.

2.9.1 A brief chronological synopsis

1890s-1905: John G. Lake, a former Baptist preacher, established a church in Johannesburg in 1895. This church eventually amalgamated with the Christian Catholic Church of Zion, founded by faith healer John Alexander Dowie in Zion City, Chicago, in 1904. By 1905, this church had grown to about 5,000 members, mostly comprised of Zulus (Anderson, 2001:95).

1908: The Apostolic Faith Mission, also known as the AFM, was founded in Johannesburg by Pentecostal missionaries. Many members of the church founded by Dowie joined the Apostolic Faith Mission church. Due to the racial segregation which was practiced in the AFM, some members broke away and formed their own churches. One of these churches was the Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church of Zion. This breakaway church was started in 1910. Another splinter church from the AFM was the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission which was started in 1920. In 1925, Engenas Leganyane broke away from the latter church to found the Zion Christian Church, which today is South Africa's largest church. Already in 1990, this church boasted more than 6,000 Independent African Pentecostal congregations in South Africa (Anderson, 2001:95-97).

1909: American missionaries established The Assemblies of God. In 1932, the South African branch severed ties with their American counterpart. The Assemblies of God churches were divided into autonomous associations which reflected racial differences (Anderson, 2004:109-110).

1962: Michael Cassidy founded African Enterprise, an evangelical, multiracial organization, "open to Charismatic experiences" and modelled on the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Cassidy organized major multiracial Christian events during the apartheid era.

1970-1980: During this period, Neo-Pentecostal churches like the Rhema Bible Church in Randburg and the Durban Christian Center, experienced rapid growth. Ray McCauley, a former "Mr Universe" bodybuilder, the founder of the Rhema Bible Church, emerged as one of South Africa's most important Neo-Pentecostal leaders.

In 1985 he became the president of the International Fellowship of Christian Churches, which then was South Africa's largest association of Charismatic and Neo-Pentecostal churches (Burgess et al, 2003:231-34).

1990-2001: Pentecostalism, towards the end of 1990, comprised 10 per cent of the South African population, with the largest denominations being the Apostolic Faith Mission, the Assemblies of God and the Full Gospel Church of God. The African Instituted Churches under the banner of mostly African Zionist and Apostolic churches in 2001 accounted for an additional 30 per cent of the South African population (Anderson, 2001:93).

2001-2012: The number of people who have joined Charismatic or Pentecostal churches in South Africa seems to have grown rapidly in this period. In 2001 membership of South African Pentecostal churches and evangelical movements recorded under 'other Christian' – in other words, unaffiliated churches – rose by 166 per cent between 1996 and 2001, while the traditional mainstream Christian churches did not grow at all (Statistics SA, 2001:25).

In the Pew Forum's 2006 Pentecostal survey, approximately ten per cent of urban respondents in South Africa indicated that they belonged to a Pentecostal denomination, and more than twenty per cent identified themselves as Charismatic. This then constituted the *renewalists* to roughly occupy one third of South Africa's urban population. Surveys indicated that nearly half of South African Protestants claimed that they were Pentecostal, and a third of the members of AICs identified themselves as Charismatic. I have, throughout this study, attempted to access the most recent accredited statistics in terms of the growth of Pentecostalism. This, with particular reference to South Africa, has proved problematic. I attribute the discrepancies to the ongoing virtual impossibility to determine who and what a Pentecostal is. In the South African context one might ask if a Pentecostal is a Charismatic and an Evangelical, a member of South Africa's largest church, the Zion Christian Church, or something completely different?

To substantiate this hypothesis I chose to include in this study the statistics provided by Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2001, released in July 2011. The Apostolic Faith Mission, according to the former sample,

in 2001 had 246,190 members. Other Apostolic Churches had 5,609,070 members. The Zion Christian Church had 4,971,932 members. Other Zion churches had 1,887,147 members. Ethiopian-type churches had 880,414 members. Other African Independent churches had 656,644 members. Christian Churches had 3,195,477 members.

2.9.2 Statistics on the number of South African Pentecostals in 2011/2012

Research of the most recent statistics on the Pentecostal population in South Africa, was of paramount importance.

The World Christian Database shows that, out of about 35.5 million church members, there were 23.8 million Pentecostals/Charismatics/Zionists in South Africa in 2010. This figure includes 1 million Charismatic Roman Catholics. Of the 23.8 million, 20.4 million are in denominations that are considered 100 per cent Pentecostal/Charismatic/Zionist. More recent statistics on the number of Pentecostals in South Africa were released in March 2012 by the South African Audience Research Foundation through their AMPS 2011, SAARF AMPS 2012 released statistics. I opted to feature the appropriate chart below:

Source: AMPS 2012 Main Branded BA (Jul 2011-Jun 2012)
Weight: Adult Population 15+
Table: All
Units: 1000's

		Total
Total	Audience(000)	34 934
	Resps	25 162
	percentCol	100,0
Anglican	Audience(000)	1 604
	Resps	1 314
	percentCol	4,6
Apostolic	Audience(000)	3 563
	Resps	2 085
	percentCol	10,2
Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM)	Audience(000)	1 109
	Resps	786
	percentCol	3,2
Assembly of God	Audience(000)	579
	Resps	415

	<i>percentCol</i>	1,7
Bandla Lama Nazaretha	Audience(000)	718
	Resps	191
	percentCol	2,1
Baptist	Audience(000)	488
	Resps	394
	percentCol	1,4
Catholic/ Roman Catholic	Audience(000)	2 494
	Resps	2 037
	percentCol	7,1
Congregational	Audience(000)	602
	Resps	460
	percentCol	1,7
Dutch Reformed	Audience(000)	2 397
	Resps	3 080
	percentCol	6,9
Ethiopian	Audience(000)	*181
	Resps	98
	percentCol	0,5
Greek Orthodox	Audience(000)	**12
	Resps	18
	percentCol	0,0
Hinduism	Audience(000)	401
	Resps	712
	percentCol	1,1
Islam	Audience(000)	673
	Resps	832
	percentCol	1,9
Jehovah Witness	Audience(000)	199
	Resps	159
	percentCol	0,6
Judaism	Audience(000)	**20
	Resps	33
	percentCol	0,1
Lutheran	Audience(000)	1 084
	Resps	633
	percentCol	3,1
Methodist	Audience(000)	2 735
	Resps	1 809
	percentCol	7,8
Pentecostal/ Charismatic	Audience(000)	1 589
	Resps	1 573
	percentCol	4,5
Presbyterian	Audience(000)	579
	Resps	433
	percentCol	1,7
Seventh-day Adventist	Audience(000)	213
	Resps	183
	percentCol	0,6
Zion Christian	Audience(000)	5 095
	Resps	1 953
	percentCol	14,6
Other Faith	Audience(000)	4 733
	Resps	3 325
	percentCol	13,5
No Religion	Audience(000)	3 694

	Resps	2 492
	percentCol	10,6
Refuse	Audience(000)	171
	Resps	147
	percentCol	0,5

TNT+ 5.0.0 e4.10.1
 Report Date: 06/12/2012
 Notes: * data relatively unstable ** data highly unstable

The South African Audience Research Foundation furnished me with the criteria below which they employ in their research methodology:

- *We only interview adults 15+*
- *If a number is preceded by a * use that data with caution as it is an indication that the sample size was small. If ** even more so.*
- *The audience (data weighted back to individual population) is given in thousands.*
- *You will also note a respondent count and this is nothing more than the sample size. You should however use the audience figures.*
- *The Col per cent is nothing more than the audience size in the specific cell you are looking at re-percentage on the Total audience size on the top. So for example, 4.6 per cent of South African 15+ adult population is Anglican.*

Public statistics, though obtained through strictly defined scientific criteria, can never be 100 per cent accurate, but they do provide a useful starting point.

If one was to accept statistical categories such as “Apostolic and Other Faiths” as being Pentecostal, the total number of Pentecostals in December 2012, according to the AMPS census, was 16,668,000. This figure is made up as follows:

- Apostolic 3 563 000
- Apostolic Faith Mission 1 109 000
- Assemblies of God 579 000

•	Pentecostal/Charismatic	1 589 000
•	Zion Christian Church	5 095 000
•	Other Faiths	4 733 000
	<hr/>	
	Total	16 668 000

Interesting media releases on the South African growth of Pentecostalism also appeared in the April 4, 2012 edition of *City Press* and the December 23, 2012 edition of the *Sunday Times*. I quote:

City Press
 2012-04-08
 Zinhle Mapumulo

“Formal churches lose their flocks”

Traditional Christian Churches are losing their flocks, while their indigenous and Charismatic counterparts are cashing in on their losses.

A new report (see report above), AMPS 2011, released by the South African Audience Research Foundation last month (March 2011), paints a bleak picture of the future of mainline churches including Methodists, Catholics and Anglicans and their dwindling congregations.

It shows that indigenous churches like the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) and iBandla lamaNazaretha, better known as Shembe, increased their membership by more than 25 per cent in the past 10 years.

The ZCC in particular has shown tremendous growth in the past decade. Its membership increased by a whopping 2,4 million between 2001 and 2011.

The census report in 2001 showed that about 11,1 per cent of the country’s population were ZCC members. Last month’s (March, 2012) AMPS report revealed that membership had jumped to 15,2 per cent.

The South African Council of Churches, which represents mainline Christian churches, said it was not surprised by the growth of indigenous Christian churches as the culture of religious belief has changed over the years.

‘In today’s world Christians seem to prefer believing in what they can see and touch,’ said the council’s general secretary, Reverend Mautji Pataki.

‘They are more attracted to churches that preach a physical healing gospel like the ZCC, or those that preach prosperity theology like Pentecostal churches,’ he said.

The Catholics agreed. Father Chris Townsend, spokesperson for the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference, said: ‘There is no doubt that an increasing number of people are joining Charismatic churches rather than traditional ones.’

However he said, ‘what is unclear is whether the growth is boosted by members who leave our churches?’

Townsend admitted that Catholic churches were affected by this shift, but said it would be difficult to define the extent as regions differ.

Both Pataki and Townsend agreed that even though more Christians were shifting towards ‘the seeing is believing gospel’, traditional churches would not follow the same route to attract more congregants.

While Christianity remains the most popular religion in South Africa, with four in every five people reporting to be believers in Jesus Christ, other religions like Islam are enjoying an upsurge in popularity...”

An article, focusing on the phenomenal growth of one particular South African Indigenous Pentecostal church, appeared in a more recent edition of the *Sunday Times*. I quote:

Sunday Times
2012-12-23
Isaac Mahlangu

Phenomenal growth of ‘fast-food religion’ in SA

But an unhappy Apostle Mokoena is discontinuing his TV ministry.

“I asked myself what was the relevance of my church to African communities?”

There’s often talk about Apostle Simon Mokoena’s impressive collection of shoes and cuff-links. But when he sits down for an interview with the Sunday Times in Sandton, he quickly lays down the law”

“I hope your article is not about the bag I’m carrying or where I am living. I hope it’s about the church.”

Mokoena, 50, is the founder of the country’s fastest-growing church, the Tyrannus Apostolic Church, which boasts a million members across 1 000 branches.

Started as a humble gathering in Qwaqwa, in the Free State 12 years ago, the church saw 3 000 new members join its ranks each week and today it is a substantial entity.

The church has a factory which produces various wares it sells. In addition it also re-brands a range of products — from washing powder, fabric softener, bottled water, to toilet paper — all branded “Apostle”.

Mokoena, who trained as a pastor at the Rhema Bible Church under Ray McCauley, graduated in 1986.

His following has by far outstripped that of Rhema, whose membership is at 45 000.

Mokoena uses a helicopter to travel to church branches, including some in neighbouring countries.

Yet, despite his huge following, Mokoena said he was struggling to get better time slots for his TV ministry.

“I’m paying millions [of Rands] supporting the SABC — buying a slot there, shooting my episodes at the SABC studios — but my show is at 5.30am,” he complained.

As a result, he has decided to discontinue his television ministry.

The church has hosted, among others, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini and President Jacob Zuma. Mokoena said his church had to be relevant to the community he served.

“I was perturbed and disturbed in my spirit and asked myself what was the relevance of my church to African communities,” Mokoena said.

“I asked myself if what I was doing was really what God wanted me to do or I was just copying what I saw at Rhema, where I was trained and overseas at churches I visited.”

Mokoena is among a breed of clergymen behind the explosion of churches in SA over the last 20 years.

Whether this growth is driven by the quest for spirituality or is simply a case of “fast-food religion”, these churches have changed the way South Africans worship. Professor Sarojini Nadar of the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s College of Humanities said there was a “search for a higher form of something” from more South Africans.

“I’m just not sure we can call it spirituality. It is a search for instant gratification and these types of churches provide for it,” she said.

Nadar said churches were giving their members the same benefit they would get from being at a rock concert. “I am concerned that these new churches are all part of a quick-fix scheme. They are almost like fast-food religions,” Nadar said.

Other than traditional mainstream churches, the big players are the Zion Christian Church (with an estimated 10 million adherents) and the Shembe Church (Amanazaretha) with more than five million members.

Other churches are growing fast.

The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, which was established in 1977 by evangelist Pastor Edir Macedo in Brazil, is now among the biggest churches in SA, especially in rural areas. After the first mission was started in Bezuidenhout Valley in Johannesburg in 1992, Universal Church now has the Cenacle of the Holy Spirit in Soweto, with seating of around 7500.

The International Pentecostal Church, with an estimated membership of more than three million, was started in Meadowlands, Soweto, in 1962 by Frederick Modise. It has branches in neighbouring countries.

On Joburg's West Rand is the Little Falls Christian Centre, founded by Pastor Harold Weitsz. For first-time visitors, it may seem more like a hi-tech theatre with its sophisticated CCTV camera system, lighting and a R1-million sound system. When the Sunday Times visited recently, Weitsz encouraged the congregation to "give", reminding them that "24 new churches have been built across the world" with their donations.

The Oasis of Life Family Church in Daveyton, east of Benoni, regularly draws prominent people to its services. Founded by Isaac Sithole in 1987, the 3500-capacity building is air conditioned and also boasts a sophisticated CCTV system and an adjoining guesthouse for visitors.

Church spokesman Sir Montle said their members "take pride in the church building because they built it from their own pockets". One of the fundraising tools was the church's "Buy-a-Brick" campaign.



2.10 Conclusion

I am of the opinion that the South African Independent Pentecostal Churches, of which the astronomical membership figures of a few are mentioned in the abovementioned article, might not in each and every instance have been represented in the AMPS census project. This might be due to many of these churches being situated in former homelands, currently referred to as rural areas.

It is, however, given the abovementioned statistics, obvious that Pentecostalism is currently the fastest growing branch of Christianity in South Africa. The sudden emergence of Pentecostal churches in the suburb of Woodstock, Cape Town, might just prove to be one of the natural outflows of the growth of Pentecostalism nationally, however, our focus will be as assessment of the material aspects in the worship services and to what extent that contributes to their success and appeal.

To better understand the origins of the worship services (and how the churches in Woodstock differ from conventional modes), the next chapter contains a brief history of Christian worship, and a discussion of the nature of a typical Pentecostal worship service.



Chapter 3

A very brief survey of the history of Christian Liturgy

3.1 *Worship in the Early Church*

One of the attractions of Pentecostal churches in general might be the appeal of their worship services. If so, the question is, in what ways are Pentecostal worship services significantly different from the liturgies of the traditional mainstream churches? This question can only be answered by beginning with a basic understanding of the history of Christian worship, with specific focus on recent liturgical developments.

There are many words in Scripture that define the word “worship”. A word which aptly describes both the divine and the human participation in worship is *leitourgia* (Senn, 1997:34). In classical Greek, liturgy (*leitourgia*) had a secular meaning. It denotes a work (*ergon*) undertaken on behalf of the people (*laos*). The meaning of this within a Christian community is an action by which a group of people became something communally that they had not been as a mere collection of individuals. The *leitourgia* of ancient Israel was the corporate work of a chosen few to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah. The church itself is a *leitourgia*, a ministry, a calling to act in this world after the fashion of Christ, to bear testimony to him and his kingdom (Fagerberg, 2004:11). Webber (2006) identifies five characteristics within liturgical worship:

- An affinity with the liturgies of the ancient church;
- An order that follows the pattern of revelation and Christian experience;
- A significant emphasis on reading and hearing the Word of God;
- A high degree of congregational involvement; and
- A view of the Lord’s Supper which affirms its mystery and value for spiritual formation.

In order to properly understand and attempt to assess the worship landscape of today, it is important to look at the history of Christian worship.

The Early Church (50-250 AD) very quickly developed a full and rich form of Christ-centred worship. Early Christians thought and worshipped in an ambience which grew out of Jewish worship. They congregated in the temple or synagogues each day and they were inspired by patterns and principles of worship recorded in Scripture (the Torah) (Cabaniss, 1989:41). The continuity of temple and synagogue practices with the addition of some Christian components like the Lord's Supper, characterized the church in its early days. White (1994:16) notes that: "Those who became Christians remained in the synagogue at first and gradually formed worshipping communities of their own". Other than the allusion in 1 Corinthians, chapters 11 and 14, where a "Lord's Supper" and a "coming together" are recorded, there is no order for worship services prescribed in Scripture. Senn (1997:68-69) notes the basic forms of first century synagogue liturgies were:

Invocation – "Bless the Lord who is to be blessed."

The Shema – "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One" (Deut. 6:4). This functioned as a kind of a creed.

The Eighteen Benedictions – Prayers came to acquire the meaning of spiritual sacrifices. The first three blessings are called praises. The last three are called thanksgivings. The petitions in between were originally variable and remained fluid for a long time.

The Priestly Blessing - (Numbers 6:24-26) – This prayer may have become regarded as a substitute for the material sacrifices – a sacrifice of prayer and praise offered by the people.

Readings from the Torah and the Prophets

Homily

Psalms – (originally part of temple liturgy) – These were sung at the beginning of the synagogue service and between readings.

Closing prayer – This formed the first part of a twofold worship service structure. The second part included the Lord's Supper. Worship in the early church occurred in the context of a meal.

By the mid-second century the meal had been replaced by a worship gathering for the ritual of bread and wine (Webber, 1993:60). Baptism, although not seen as part of a New Testament worship structure was essential for the understanding of worship. In the early church, baptism was the ritual that brought a person into the fellowship, the worship, and the Eucharist of the church (Webber, 1994:60).

3.2 The Eastern, Medieval, Reformation, Enlightenment and Revivalist liturgies – a brief synopsis

The Eastern Liturgy (approx. 400 AD) reflected the basic twofold structure of the Word and the Eucharist, but with a strong Hellenistic aesthetic influence expressed in settings of mystery, majesty and awe with icons, processions and incense forming part of the worship service. Eastern worship aimed to bring heaven down to earth and lift earth to heaven (Webber, 1994:99).

Medieval liturgy (600-1500 AD) was structured in the form of the Mass. The church during this period increasingly emphasized worship as a mystery in which God was present. This mystery was communicated through, as Senn notes (1997:6), “an allegorical view of the Mass and doctrine of the bodily presence of Jesus in the bread and wine” (also known as the doctrine of transubstantiation). Another significant change during this period was that the language in which the liturgy had been conveyed was Latin, substituting local languages. This shift in language had enormous consequences on the collective participation of the congregation, since Latin was only spoken and understood by the clergy (Webber, 1994:103).

The Reformation Liturgy (1500–1700 AD) originated in part as a reaction to the medieval Eucharistic practice in which most of the lay congregation had not been able to participate or understand the worship services due to the language barrier. Although reformers approached liturgical changes differently, the common goal

shared by them all, was that the congregation was to have a clear understanding of every word and gesture of the clergy and be able to cognitively comprehend the gospel. Preaching the Word of God remained at the heart of a Reformed service. The Word of God was the revelation of God to them in Christ, and the Eucharist derived its meaning and significance from the Word (Shaper, 1984:131).

From the 1700s up to the present day, distinct developments have occurred in the Christian tradition. These developments have impacted the shape of Christian liturgy and influenced the worship culture of contemporary churches. The essential feature of the Enlightenment Liturgy (1700-1800 AD) was the core importance of the sermon in the worship service, and its edifying role for the congregation. The value of public worship, according to the Enlightenment church leaders, vested in it being “morally edifying to the people” (Senn, 1997:541). Immanuel Kant, who was a key influence in Enlightenment Christianity, held the view that God does not act in worship. To quote White (1993:144) on Kant’s view: “God’s past work in Jesus Christ was to be remembered, not experienced afresh.” Enlightenment worship was more about what a person does for God, rather than what God does for the person.

The rationalism of the Enlightenment prompted responses of romanticism and revivalism. In the 1800s Charles Finney (1792-1872) had a tremendous impact on the structure of worship. A revivalist liturgy, according to Finney, was when the Sunday service becomes oriented to producing converts. Finney led the way in promoting a pragmatic approach to worship and argued that, since worship forms have changed over time, “nothing biblical or historical is normative except that which works at present” (White, 1992:144). Altar calls, where the preacher invites members of the congregation through the raising of hands to proceed to the pulpit to accept Christ as their Saviour, previously unheard of in worship services, formed part of a revivalist worship service.

The tendency that emerged in revivalist liturgies became radicalised with the advent of the Pentecostal movement in the early 20th century.

3.3 Recent liturgical developments

In addition to liturgical developments in various confessional traditions, it is also important to note the impact of liturgical developments as a result of the ecumenical movement, with specific reference to the World Council of Churches.

The World Council of Churches was born at its first General Assembly held in Amsterdam in 1948. The theme of this conference was “Man’s Disorder and God’s Design”. The Council’s aim was for Christians of various denominations to gather together for reconciliation and the pursuit of the common goal of uniting the church globally, and helping those in need, as well as those with the necessity for common worship. The WCC’s discussions on worship have developed, deepened and changed over the years (Berger, 1986:1-12). In the first few decades of the WCC’s history, worship was a bone of serious contention and viewed as the focal point of division. This was a period when the different traditions and perspectives of worship had to be respected and learned. During this period the common worship practice took the form of a rotation of confessional liturgies. The “Faith and Order” movement was assigned the task to compile a comparative study of worship in the ecumenical movement (Grace, 2001:1). At the 1963 Montreal World Conference on “Faith and Order” the significance of worship featured prominently, not just as a help of mutual understanding among different denominations, but as a key to ecclesiology, a key to the understanding of the theological positions of the various denominations and the search for Christian unity (Crawford et al, 1994:85).

The liturgical movement began to see itself as making an important contribution to the ecumenical movement, since this was regarded as a major component of the tradition of the one church (Brand, 1999:187). The worship of the Vancouver assembly in 1983 is commonly cited as the pinnacle of ecumenical worship, where it was no longer a problem to be addressed, but had instead become a vital and vibrant experience (Conway, 1998:76). An elementary form of worship, based on the earliest Christian traditions, forms the basis of worship at ecumenical gatherings.

Ecumenical worship has, despite the liturgical victory at Vancouver, not been without its problems. Shortly before the World Council of Churches Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1998, the Orthodox member churches of the WCC were airing their

concerns and dissatisfaction with the ecumenical movement in general, and with ecumenical worship in particular (Grace, 2001:7). Since my aim in this section is to only give a brief overview of liturgical developments in general, thus indicating that liturgy (worship) is not static, but dynamic, we will not examine these debates in detail. Suffice it to say that the trajectory of ecumenical worship development, as it is currently experienced in the World Council of churches, is not without controversy.

In the 20th century various other sources of liturgical renewal may also be identified. One of these sources is the global impact of the Taize Community. The Taize Community originated from an ecumenical monastic order in Taizé, Saone-et-Loire, Burgundy, France. The Taize Community was founded in 1940 by a Protestant monk, Brother Roger Schutz corporeal. In 1941 Brother Roger had published a few small brochures outlining several facets of a Christ-centred communal life. By 2010 it had about one hundred brothers from Protestant and Catholic traditions from about thirty countries across the world. The brothers of Taize devote much of their love for Christ by taking aid to people in both rural and urban areas. They form fraternities of brothers in other cities who obey the calling of being corporeal signs of the presence of Christ among men and bearers of joy. The community strives to include people of all traditions worldwide. They demonstrate their ecumenicity through music and prayers, singing songs in many languages. These include chants and icons from the Eastern Orthodox tradition. The music emphasizes single phrases, derived from the Psalms and other excerpts from Scripture. Throughout the year, young people between the ages of 17 and 30 undertake spiritual pilgrimages to Taize. The Taize Community strives to positively influence the lives of these young pilgrims and to send them each back to their communities as a “Pilgrim of Trust on Earth.” From 28 December to 1 January every year, the Brothers of Taize together with the sisters of St .Andrew and young volunteers from all over Europe, host a spiritual conference in a large European city.

More recently, the Seeker-Service Liturgy (1980s onwards) evolved from the church growth movement which encouraged the development of worship practices based on the perceived needs of those who had been marginalized or estranged from the traditional churches and its worship services or who were spiritual “seekers” (Wainwright and Tucker, 2005:629). These “seekers”, who had not attended a

church since their childhood or were not raised in a Christian home, find the prevalent forms of Christian worship, music and other traditional rituals boring and unattractive. This creates barriers for the involvement in church life (Senn, 1997:687). The seeker-service liturgy leans heavily on relevance- and music-driven worship. Music is generated through state of the art sound equipment and a heavy metal genre of musical instruments. Worship services are growth-oriented and designed towards meeting the needs of the individual (Senn, 1997:688).

3.4 Worship in a typical Pentecostal service

A typical Pentecostal worship service includes collective praying, singing, the sermon, the operation of the gifts of the Spirit, altar intercession, tithes and offerings, testimonies, a rendering of musical items, Scripture reading, baptism, and the serving of the Lord's Supper (Johansson, 2007:60-61). Congregational spontaneity is a key characteristic of a traditional Pentecostal service. In the movement's earlier history, any member of the congregation could initiate a song, chorus or a spiritual gift (Johansson, 2007:50-51). Spontaneous practices, like being "slain in the Spirit" (where a member falls backwards as if in a trance while being prayed for), "dancing" in the Spirit (where a member leaves their seat spontaneously "dancing" with eyes closed without bumping into nearby persons or objects), and collective oral prayer, whether it is praying in tongues (glossolalia) or in the vernacular or a mix of both, are common features (Evans, 2006:87). So also is the "laying on of hands", when a member who is in need of prayer is prayed for. The praying person(s) will then lay their hands on the forehead of the person being prayed for (Harvey and Goff, 2005:347).

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is a post-conversion Pentecostal experience. This is when the Holy Spirit is said to descend upon a believer or believers to anoint and empower them for service (Horton, 2005:139,140). For Pentecostals there is no prescribed format of when and how a person will be baptised with the Holy Spirit, but the experience usually occurs during a worship service (Duffield and Van Cleave, 1983:323-324). Speaking in tongues is regarded by most Pentecostal denominations as physical evidence that a member has been baptised with the Holy Spirit (Duffield

and Van Cleave, 1983:324-326). The manifestation of spiritual gifts is characteristic of a Pentecostal worship service. These manifestations must be judged or discerned by the church to determine whether these are from the Holy Spirit, an evil spirit, or from the human spirit (Duffield and Van Cleave, 1983:340).

The ritual of water baptism is regarded as an outward symbol of Christian conversion. In most Pentecostal churches water baptism is through immersion. Traditionally, Pentecostal churches have their own baptismal fonts, the size of a small pool, which is part of the church's architectural structure. Pentecostal churches in Africa mostly perform this ritual in a river, municipal swimming pool or in the sea. The ritual of the Lord's Supper is seen as a direct command given by Jesus and is usually administered during a worship service, once a month.

In the African context since the late 19th century, another shift away from mainline denominations took place with the emergence of African Instituted Churches (AICs). Schisms in this regard often followed conflicts over leadership, but certainly had an impact on liturgical practices as well. Mbefo (2001) notes: "Their (members of mainline churches) expectations from the churches were not met. The missionaries of the older churches failed to address the type of questions the African situation raised to them, witchcraft, demon possession, haunting by evil spirits, the cult of ancestors, the use of protective charms, talismans, sorcery and the traditional dancing form of worship at the shrines. The tendency among the missionaries was to dismiss these questions as due to ignorance arising from a pre-scientific mentality."

The celebration of the liturgy in the context of AICs cannot be explored in any depth here, given the complexity of distinguishing between various types of AICs. In Nigeria alone there are more than a thousand of these churches. They are characterized by their flamboyancy and their "ability" to solve people's problems. Van Dijk (2000:2) says that the phenomenon of these Neo-Pentecostal churches "can in every sense be considered a religion of modernity itself." However, there are also traditional Pentecostal churches in West Africa which have been operational for decades (Gaiya, 2002:3). The more recent Pentecostal churches pop up in cinema halls, shops, stores, deserted houses, warehouses, bars, brothels, restaurants and night clubs. In fact, it has been observed that churches and hotels are competing for space in the cities. The establishing of churches is one of the most lucrative

businesses in Nigeria (Gaiya, 2002:3). The gospel in these churches is marketed through radio, posters, electronic mail, the internet and mass media, especially television broadcasting. In Nigeria, one can be prayed for through television by placing one's hands on the television set. One can even log on to be prayed for through the Internet (Gaiya, 2002:4).

Contrary to the mainline churches, where the liturgy is enacted in a prescribed order and manner, the situation is totally different in Neo-Pentecostal worship services. While the commonalities between traditional Pentecostal worship services and these churches are prevalent, there are also features in their worship services which are distinct. One of these, that is quite prominent, is "success theology", the idea that the person who cries to the Lord shall be saved from poverty and from personal troubles. Their services, conventions, crusades and conferences proclaim the theme of "Living a Life of Abundance" (Folarin, 2007:5).

The worship services invariably have a "surprise element". This makes it extremely difficult to describe any typical format of the worship services. The liturgist, who in most cases is the local pastor, would attribute the surprise element to "being led by the Spirit". Lindhardt (2009) observes three phases which characterise these worship services. The first phase is a 30- to 60-minute session when members of these congregations sing and dance as people continue to arrive. Live bands, consisting of drummers and amplified electric musical instruments such as guitars and keyboards, are common in these worship services. In addition to this, there would be the praise and worship team, usually consisting of young male and female singers, leading the worship services from behind microphones.

During the first phase, members take turns to come up to the stage, while other participants dance where they are seated, or walk around the church. Prayers, said either in the vernacular or in tongues, are uttered loudly, with some members kneeling while others walk around praying audibly with their arms raised. The pastor utilises a roving microphone (or one pinned to his lapel) to direct the worship service.

The second phase is the sermon, which can last between 20 and 90 minutes. It is not uncommon for sermons to also sometimes be entrusted to lay preachers – either males or females. The preaching style is dramatic and highly emotive, with the

preachers roaming all over the stage and altering their voice tones. Common topics touched on in these sermons often include the great dangers that the congregation faces and is susceptible to (such as satanic and demonic dangers), with the main theme being to urge the unconverted to accept salvation.

The last phase of these services consists of further singing, praying and healing. Those in need of healing or salvation are invited by the preachers to come to the front of the stage where they are then “prayed over” by the preachers and elders, males and females, of the churches. Since it is believed that all non-saved people are held in bondage by demonic forces, in these prayers where hands are laid on people focus on asking for deliverance from demonic forces. During this phase the praise and worship team usually sings a slow song while enacting the words of the song with arms and upper body movements (Lindhardt, 2009:51).

The churches generally use liturgical objects, such as handkerchiefs and olive oil when praying for the unsaved, those who are sick or those who are under demonic oppression. The handkerchiefs, once blessed, are then called mantles. The churches encourage their members to use mantles when praying for their personal needs and the needs of others. Olive oil is commonly used during the services, especially when the sick are being prayed for. The church members are even encouraged to anoint their homes, offices, children and shops, virtually everything, with olive oil (Folarin, 2007:7-8). These church services are usually closed with the taking up of tithes and offerings and a prayer. Tithes, and even giving more than a tenth of one’s income to the church, is a prominent, in fact, almost dominant, ritual in Neo-Pentecostal churches in West Africa.

Why these Pentecostal churches are posing such an unparalleled attraction is a mystery, especially in the environment of Woodstock. One might be tempted to just explain it as the movement of the Spirit. If, however, one wishes to dare to attempt to provide a reason for this phenomenon, one needs to, at least, provide a premise and evidence from which one’s argument is derived. I, for purposes of this study chose to employ Ninian Smart’s dimensions of the sacred, with special focus on his material dimension, to identify possible reasons for the overnight eruption and the attraction of Pentecostal churches in Woodstock.

Chapter 4

Ninian Smart's understanding of the dimensions of religious practices

4.1 Introduction

Ninian Smart's distinctions of the dimensions of religious practices, as they express themselves in a secular format, will form the basis of this chapter. Religion, regardless of its cosmic nature, in the final analysis, needs to be enacted and expressed in secular actions. This implies that, in describing the way people behave, we do not use (so far as we can avoid them), alien, cosmic or "other-worldly" categories to evoke the nature of people's application and actions to understand those acts (Smart, 1996:2). Religions and comparable world views, particularly in the case of the seven Pentecostal churches in Woodstock, should be studied at least as much through their practices as through their beliefs.

Regardless of the doctrinal differences among the myriad of religions, the realization of such beliefs, by virtue of the participants being individuals with the basic senses and faculties of sight, smell, audio, speech, intellect and physical movement, should be enacted in a commonly identifiable fashion, including attributes such as action, laws, symbols and organisations (Smart, 1996:3). While acknowledging that no two humans or no two beliefs are the same, it does not presuppose that there are no common feelings and perspectives prevalent among the followers of the diverse beliefs (Smart, 1996:6).

A tendency in older histories of Christianity was to give exclusivity to doctrines, grossly failing to emphasize the praxis – the human expression and manifestation of said doctrines (Smart, 1996:8). Smart, in his *Dimensions of the Sacred*, strives to achieve a balance (Smart, 1996:9). To assess his dimensions' compendium, one should bear in mind throughout his criteria of "achieving balance". Since this study concerns itself with the sudden appearance of seven different Pentecostal churches, and the reasons why they have become appealing in one particular suburb of a large city in a very short space of time, I have deemed Smart's construct of the

Dimensions of the Sacred, an academically adequate framework, with special reference to his “Material or Artistic Dimension” which is prevalent among said seven churches collectively and individually, particularly since my sense is that people do not just flock to these churches because of a particular doctrine being promulgated, but because of other non-doctrinal dimensions of material desirability. It is essential to grasp that merely applying the understanding of this Material Dimension is not adequate. Smart did not compile his *Dimensions of the Sacred* with any particular view to understanding Christianity alone or any branch of Pentecostalism in particular, not to even mention the new brand of churches we have been seeing in Woodstock. As such, elements of the practice of Pentecostalism and aspects of the churches under discussion overlap more than a couple of the seven dimensions, as set out by Smart, as will be seen in the final analysis and application of these aspects of religious expression. The heightened emotional states achieved in the worship services, the incorporation of a sense of a performance and that (at the bottom line) the church is a business, for example, constitute elements of my overall impression of the worship services which cannot be strictly defined as the material dimension, yet impacts on our understanding of it. For this reason, I cover all of Smart’s dimensions, to give a comprehensive overview of the inclusive system he describes, although, as mentioned, it is not as ‘clear cut’ in the cases under discussion.

Below then follows a synopsis of the six dimensions of the sacred as contained in the text *Dimensions of the Sacred: An Anatomy of the World’s Beliefs* by Ninian Smart, culminating in the seventh, being the Material Dimension. This final dimension will be employed as a basis to establish some of the reasons why the worship services of the relevant Woodstock-based Pentecostal churches have proved so attractive.

4.2 The Ritual Dimension

This is also referred to as the “Practical Dimension”. This is the aspect of religion, and, in this study, of the Christian religion, that involves activities such as worship,

meditation, pilgrimage, sacrifice, sacramental rites and healing activities (Smart, 1996:10).

Worship, in order to be declared as such, presupposes a superior, awe-invoking, personal being. Worship then implies a being towards whom the devotee (worshipper) is liable to direct a kind of feeling and from whom the worshipper may derive a kind of experience (Smart, 1996:70). Worship as a ritual is a behavioral or bodily activity. Worship is often held to be rendered efficacious by exact repetition (Smart, 1996:73). The liturgists, as can be seen and heard from the audiovisual material forming part of this study, would in serene stages of the worship service repetitively employ worship phrases such as “We bless You Lord! We bless You Lord! We bless You Lord...”, “We praise You Lord! We praise you Lord! We praise you Lord...” and “We worship You! We worship You! We worship You...”. As the intensity of the worship service increases, said repetition exhibits phrases and passages which become unintelligible (Smart, 1996:73). This is classically confirmed in the services of the churches under discussion here, when glossolalia are spoken by the liturgists and the congregation. Smart entertains the opinion that worship (ritual), because of its repetitive nature is essentially meaningless in the sense that whilst it evokes increasing emotions, it is analytically inadequate (Smart, 1996:73). While the applicable dimension of this study, in order to ascertain why these local Woodstock Pentecostal churches are flourishing, is a material one, I included these references to substantiate that it is virtually impossible to theologially appraise a Pentecostal service.

Pure worship according to Smart is the utterance of a certain sort of formula of words supported by relevant bodily postures (Smart, 1996:74).

Each one of the church services under discussion here is characterised by formalities being repetitively employed during every service such as: “Good morning, church. I greet you all in the wonderful Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!” and “Those of you who are here for the very first time, would you please raise your hands.” Smart says that said formal repetitive announcements form part of worship. While acknowledging that these utterances should normally not be regarded as part of the ritual, it does qualify as protocol or right behaviour. He suggests that there might be an advantage in adopting the Chinese notion of “li” (or “right behavior”) as

constituting an integral part for the fulfillment of an appropriate manner of conduct (Smart, 1996: 76).

Worship is the core of ritual. Praise or homage rendered to God is said in the opening sentences. Worship is often viewed as a *quid pro quo*. The person or group worshipping can wish to be on God's 'right side' and this will (it is hoped) reap later benefits (Smart, 1996:78). In praising a good Lord one commits oneself to a good life. Because the Lord is the Creator, worship implies certain consequences. It must be contextualised, for its focus has a certain shape which is captured in doctrine by the ethical dimension (Smart, 1996:89).

One needs to distinguish between worship and veneration. When Catholics say or pray an Ave Maria (Hail Mary), they do not strictly regard that as an act of worship, since it is directed to the Virgin and not to God. Likewise, says Smart, it is wrong to talk of 'ancestor worship'. Though ancestors may be invisible spiritual entities that persist like a penumbra around living society, they are not God (Smart, 1996:90).

Smart denotes that worship is given because worship is due, therefore pure worship lies at the heart of the major religions (Smart, 1996: 89).

An Anglican Communion service, for example, includes important elements which even transcend pure worship, these being the consecration of the bread and the wine and its transformation into the body and blood of Christ, constituting a re-enactment of the Last Supper. Those partaking in Communion, share in Christ's life and in His victory over death where He expiated the sin of humanity, reconciling humanity with God (Smart, 1996: 91). This form of worship is framed in the empirical experience of the outcome of this form of worship being expiation or at-oneness (Smart, 1996: 91).

The sense that God is to be worshipped and revered is conveyed by various Biblical passages: the Divine Majesty as it appears to Isaiah and to Job, Christ's transfiguration on the Mount of Olives witnessed by the inner core of His disciples, God's majesty as Lord of creation, and the creation of the world by faith out of nothing.

The natural focus of worship is a numinous, *holy being* (Smart, 1996:92). Smart opts for the term “focus” because it enables one to talk about worship without having to comment on its validity. For a worshipper (believer) the focus is real and this needs to be accepted even without committing oneself to whether this focus exists (Smart, 1996: 9).

God does not only represent power, but also mercy, love and goodness. These virtues constitute holiness. The focus here denoting God, as the embodiment of the former virtues, is the fount of holiness. And since the focus is the fount, the natural consequence is that salvation(that is acquiring holiness) must issue from the focus and from no other source (Smart, 1996: 92). While it is not essential that there should be an imparting of holiness from the focus of worship to the worshipper, the notion is natural. Since ritual itself, here denoting worship, operates as a gate for the transfer of substance (Smart, 1996: 93).

Rene Girard devised the term “scapegoat” to explain the merit of sacrifice in a ritual. He argues that prevalent within human groups is rivalry which develops into tension. These tensions, he says, can be mitigated if aggressive impulses are directed towards a scapegoat. The scapegoat is treated as sacred. The hostility amongst the group is absorbed by the scapegoat and the being sacrificed in its own way becomes a saviour. Smart mentions, however, that Jesus, unlike in cases where humans nominate the object, or where the being is necessary to be sacrificed in order for conflicts to be resolved by the scapegoat sacrificed, took on the role of the scapegoat voluntarily (Smart, 1996:81). One of the most important aspects of ritual is the way in which it can abolish time. Rivers such as the Jordan have become sacred, but the ritual of sacred bathing is not confined to the river Jordan. So any stream, baptismal bath, beach or swimming pool in which a convert is baptised “becomes” the Jordan, in which Jesus was baptised. So the “space” between the distant river Jordan and the location of baptism is temporarily suspended (Smart, 1996:83).

The manipulation of time is even more actual. The ritual scripted by, for example, the story of Easter, redefines the time and space between ‘then’ and ‘now’. The common phrase, ‘Jesus Christ is risen today’, is an example of this, since Jesus Christ rose more than 2000 years ago (Smart, 1996:8).

Smart concedes that Protestant *traditions* may wish to dispense with the notion of sacred places to where Christians undertake pilgrimages since sacredness is concentrated on people more or less embodied with holiness and not on sacred locations (Smart, 1996:85). However, it is fairly typical for religions to nominate certain geographical locations as sacred. It is then good for the adherents to undertake a pilgrimage to the location where the sacred power is.

A typical integral destination, for example, to which, if economic circumstances permit, a pilgrimage should be undertaken at least once in one's lifetime, is Mecca, the hub and origin of the religion of Islam. Classical Christianity has Jerusalem as its pivot, important for both Catholics and Orthodoxy (Smart, 1996:86). Lourdes, although of Roman Catholic origin, is another destination for pilgrimages by both Christians and non-Christians.

There is also the moral and spiritual sense of pilgrimage, where leading this life is seen as a pilgrimage, a journey from here to the heavenly kingdom (a common literary motif as well, as in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*).

Smart (1996:97) maintains that there is a sort of coalescence between meditation and worship. The worship of God leads to the abasement of the worshipper, encouraging austerities which are often part of the surrounding practice of meditation.

"Meditation" in English sometimes denotes a kind of inner contemplation of Christian myth, an inner pensiveness and concentration on the last sayings of Jesus on the cross. This inner concentration might be used to describe the occurrences during Passover, a kind of meditation on the escape of the children of Israel from Egypt (Smart, 1996:97).

In the Hebrew Bible, the prophets link two characteristics. Firstly, they manifest a vision of the Holy One, a numinous experience. Secondly, they, as a result of this numinous experience, prescribe a social and ethical critique of the society and politics of their day. This they commit to because they feel that they are the mouthpieces of God (Smart, 1996:95). Smart resorts to an Indian worship term to explain this dialectic. "Bhakti" meaning "devotion", the connotation of which is not

really fully understood in terms of the strict application of this translation. He says: “We both worship God and partake” in God. Union with God is not easy since it is impaired by human’s defects of sin, ignorance and folly (Smart, 1996:95). This, he says, is the numinous dimension of worship. By contrast, the contemplative (meditative) mode is different. Mystical or contemplative religion, in contrast to other religions which subscribe to Dualism, hones in on the experience of a kind of union between the worshipper and God (Smart, 1996:96).

He further justifies his reasoning by giving his version on the origin of Christianity. He claims Christianity was a fourth century phenomenon which construed a blend of Judaism and Neo-Platonism, resulting in the neo-Platonic motifs that deeply affected the theology of the Patristic period and gave rise to a hardening of Christianity, thus becoming complacent since it was by then the official religion of the Roman Empire. This made it attractive to place-seekers wishing for a comfortable existence. But present within a segment of the Christian faith were those who had opted for the austerity of the contemplative life. This gave birth to the monastic movement, becoming an integral part of the Christian tradition, fusing a type of Jewish worship with a Neo-Platonist mystical or contemplative (meditative) element (Smart, 1996:98).

Monastic Christianity integrated ritual with the daily lives of monks and nuns revolving around the liturgy or mass, where pure worship and the contemplative (meditative) life were blended into the communion ritual (Smart, 1996:98-99). The contemplative life tends, in different religions, to generate holy people (Smart, 1996:99). The holy person is someone who has mastered the inner life (Smart, 1996:99). Meditation brings this person to perceive the light (Smart, 1996:100). So the person who has attained holiness through his or her practicing of mysticism imparts holiness to people and objects around them (Smart, 1996:100). The practitioners of the contemplative (meditative) life are generally withdrawn, “unworldly” people (Smart, 1996:104).

When an individual or a group wishes to purify themselves for fear of some wrath or hostility from God, they offer up something which will be construed as both ethical and ritualistic (Smart, 1996:112-113). A sacrificial act or token allows the worshipper to avoid divine wrath and restore communication with God (Smart, 1996:113). By

giving an offering, the sacrificer hopes to moderate God's numinosity, wishing that grace and favour might emerge rather than anger and fierceness (Smart, 1996:113).

Petition is important in one form or the other since the logic of holistic, theistic causation implies that our worship of God and perhaps sacrifice to Him will influence God's action which could determine the course of natural or human events (Smart, 1996:112). The notion that God can be wrathful gives rise to a fear of God. God's fearfulness is part of His otherness (Smart, 1996:112). Natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes can be attributed to some offence committed by the worshippers.

In order to evoke God's favour people might pledge themselves to undertake some arduous task, such as going on a pilgrimage. In making some sacrifice to God, the sacrificer tries to restore communication, and to ease the divine wrath (Smart, 1996:113).

Traditionally, scriptures were not only used as a source of philosophical, mythical or other material as the authoritative word of God or as the record of the Master, but as a vital ingredient in ritual (Smart, 1996:125). In Protestantism, the Bible came to play an important role in the domestic rituals of the faithful. Households would gather to listen to daily readings of the scriptures (Smart, 1996:125).

Passages from the Bible with a high mythic or narrative content, for example, Jesus' words at the Last Supper, naturally become scripts for seasonal performances. The Christian year is a case in point, combining the advantages of cyclical and one-dimensional time. The story is one-way, but it is recapitulated in a cyclical manner (Smart, 1996:126).

4.3 The Mythic or Narrative Dimension

Smart employs the term 'myth' not to imply folklore or old wives tales, but rather to refer to stories which involve the invisible, divine or sacred world that falls outside the ambit of 'straight' history (Smart, 1996:130). He calls these stories "parahistorical".

Smart uses a classical example to distinguish a religious story from an ordinary event. If an ice-cream van crashes and forty people in the street gather around it to contemplate the accident, and perhaps even to help the driver, such a randomly assembled group is of no particular significance. But, if they were to meet once a year to memorialise the event, and then engage in some common activity, they would begin to acquire significance and an identity (Smart, 1996: 132).

Narrative, therefore, is one way in which identity is achieved. In the case of a religious narrative, the group engages together in sacred activities – going to church, sharing certain books and having a collective ethos (Smart, 1996:132).

Narratives are important because they, firstly, affirm continuity, giving a group greater importance since it is no longer seen as a random collection of people (as in the ice-cream van story), and secondly, by implication, people connect to aspects of their past that they value (Smart, 1996: 133).

Narratives serve as scripts for ritual action, for example, the story of the Last Supper or the birth of Christ (the Christmas story). It further explains origins, whether of the cosmos, certain features of human society, death, or of the immediate environment (Smart, 1996:133).

Mythic thinking or religious narrative also depict how things will be at the culmination of the world (the End times).The sequence from origins to last things represents either a form of salvation or damnation depending on whether the individual or group pleased or angered God (Smart, 1996:133).

Smart interestingly uses ‘myth’ and ‘narrative’ congruently. For the purposes of this study it is then advisable to view these two in tandem. Smart maintains that myths can be relative to a given group or tradition, thus giving them authoritative status among that specific group. Smart senses that we are transcending from the age that was formerly called “fanciful myth”, into an age of ‘factual myth’. So he admirably concedes that Adam and Eve were in fact real people. He refers to this as a given alongside the authenticity of Christ’s crucifixion, which very few historians distrust. He coins for this ‘shift’ the idea of ‘slitting the fish of history’. He cites the consequences of the a-priori acceptance of Adam and Eve being real people, and

Jesus having actually physically died on the cross, to parahistorically imply that Jesus is the Christ, with His death being seen as atonement for the sins of humanity, ultimately deriving from Adam and Eve. He compromises by adopting the stance of: “So two directions are being taken: on the one hand myth (narrative) becomes history, on the other hand myth (narrative) is being split between history and doctrine” (Smart, 1996:138).

A common perception is that God is “up there” (Smart, 1996:139), a heavenly being above us, not below us. We, in our devotional practice, petition Him as the High God and, to quote Cardinal Newman, worship Him in terms such as: “Praise to the holiest in the height” (Smart, 1996:139). Since God is ‘up there’, the sky becomes the heaven where God is (Smart 1996:140). Height plays a significant part in the symbolism of value, for example, high price, high office, high reputation, high score (Smart, 1996:139). Heavens, here denoting “height”, feature in a lot of cultures. The symbol of heaven is almost universal, pointing to the desires of human beings to reach the ‘highest’ goal, the top, the supreme (Smart, 1996:140).

Visions of the immediate earth environment as the “axis mundi”, the Centre of the World, the place where the diverse parts of the universe are in communication with one another, suggest that there is a series of heavens (height) rising above us and a series of underworlds or hells beneath us (Smart, 1996:141).

The cosmos is a kind of screen behind which God is found. ‘Behindness’ suggesting two things: one, that God is a numinous, mysterious Being behind everything, and, two, that He is operative, partially concealed by the cosmos, but keeping it going (Smart, 1996:143). This was classically encapsulated by William Temple when he said: “God minus the cosmos equals God, but the cosmos minus God equals nothing” (Smart, 1996:143).

Fire is also connected with space. It has two properties which are greatly related to the ritual of sacrifice. One is that it “sends” things upwards (Smart, 1996:154). God is ‘up there’. Fire is a means of transporting something, in essence, from this earthly domain upwards to the heavenly domain, where God is. Two, it has the property of consuming what is being sacrificed. Whatever is sacrificed is transformed and transported by the flames (Smart, 1996:154). Fire is also light. Light appears

phenomenological in the mystical, the inner meditational or contemplative process (Smart, 1996:154). The symbol of light is commonly found in devotional practices (ritual) and language, for example, “I saw the light”, “lead me from the darkness into light”, and so on. Candles produce a flame, a light, and are used in ritual to proclaim the glory of God and the candles themselves become a form of prayer (Smart, 1996:154).

Time is viewed as cyclical in many cultures and as such, ritual can cause a kind of time travel, making an event from the past manifest in the present day. The resurrection of Christ is made present at Easter through the ritual and the preaching process. Smart calls this a cyclical representation of an event (Smart, 1996:146). The relative quality of time fluctuates. As with space, time can be bumpy because of the sacredness of some events exceeding that of others (Smart, 1996:147). This can be re-manifested annually, the years exhibiting more or less holy days and events (Smart 1996:147). The quality of time varies. The Jewish and the Christian traditions prescribe to some idea of degeneration from a ‘golden age’. After this there may be improvements (Smart, 1996:147). With divine intervention, as is the case of Christ’s incarnation, God intervened to restore good relations between humans and the Divine. The Church will lead people on until the second coming, which will be a dramatic consummation of history. So the direction of historical change is not seen as degenerative (Smart, 1996:148).

Theistic religions mostly look on the Divine Being as everlasting or timeless. The timeless or everlasting quality of God contrasts with the impermanence of the world (Smart, 1996:149). Death is an evil from which God doesn’t suffer (Smart, 1996:152). The totem simulacrum model, looking on God as impassible, as ONE who is incapable of suffering change, does not fit with the mythic model, which gives God biography and so implies change. It seems logical enough to suppose that God not only undergoes change, but actually suffers too. In Christian terms this is because of love (Smart, 1996:152).

God as Christ, out of love, suffered on the cross for the sake of human beings. If God loves, God surely suffers when loved ones suffer. There is little logic in a loving God who can experience no change (Smart, 1996:152). God therefore has two

aspects: one, being non-personal, timelessness without qualities or gunas, and the other is a Lord that is personal and changeable (Smart, 1996:153).

Death in the Western religions is interwoven with an afterlife. The eternal soul is hopefully destined for heaven, and, the resurrected person will rise to meet the final judgement. This image of the rising of the dead has affected ritual practices, for example, on the whole, cremation was not permitted in Orthodox or mainline Christian churches since the body needed some sort of preservation if it was to be able to rise (Smart 1996:151).

Dreams and sleep are the sisters of death. In early Christianity dreams were seen as a means of divine revelation, thus having important mythic and ritual meanings. In this way dreams contributed to the story of God's dealings with humanity (Smart, 1996:153).



4.4 The Experiential and Emotional Dimension

God is experienced as a *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* – the OTHER (Smart, 1996:167). The numinous generates or matches feelings and attitudes such as fear, trembling, respect and humility (Smart, 1996:171).

While the more dramatic sensations of the numinous are frightening, the logic of the numinous is compassionate, since God is the source of holiness, and so, of salvation (Smart, 1996:171). The revelation of God in the numinous experience evokes worship. It gives one access to a being, in part, defined by ritual, a God is a person whom you ought to worship, towards which one should partake of the appropriate ritual (Smart, 1996:181).

Because the numinous Holy One dispenses grace, He is seen as a loving God and engenders loving adoration from the worshipper (Smart, 1996:186). Christianity has traditionally encouraged modes of giving earnest expression to the practice of worship. Loving worship entails well-known prayers, hymns, lighting candles, prostrations and the veneration of saints (Smart, 1996:173).

Although the numinous experience is generally associated with God, the bearers of the numen have not always been strictly divine, though they may be considered emissaries of God. The visions which give “flesh” to the numinous experience can be figures as previously stated, other than God, most notably in The Catholic tradition, the Virgin Mary. The propensity of the Virgin to recreate herself in various places leads to her polytypic character (Smart, 1996:188).

Recognizing signs of God’s creative activity can be a further extension of the numinous experience, since this type of experience provides a revelation of divinity, which can be applied to one’s daily experience; seeing the divine craftsmanship in the world around us.

The presence of God as Creator in everything we contract in life, helps to stimulate feelings of wonder and gratitude (Smart, 1996:178), with God being the Creator who controls the whole cosmos, whose body is the cosmos and whose power extends to all human and non-human affairs (Smart, 1996:181).

The experience of conversion creates a vivid sense of the presence of the Lord, creating the impulse to respond to the wonders of God’s creation, resulting in worship. This form of worship is not materialistically driven. It is not a *quid pro quo* type of worship. It is worship which can best be described as a marvelling at the handiwork of God (Smart, 1996:181).

4.5 The Contemplative Experience

The contemplative experience is classically embodied in monks and nuns who appear to exhibit lives of dedication to the inner searching, contemplative life, manifested in retreats and teachings, books on self-awareness and humility, and the inner aura of calm prevalent within monasteries (Smart, 1996:173). The contemplative experience delves into pure consciousness. The Christian mystic, for instance, may come to see the world about him/her not just as the handiwork of God, but as glowing with a network of mystical illumination (Smart, 1996:180). The contemplative experience does not necessarily presuppose a link with God, because

there can be a basis in the attainment of pure consciousness for a disposition to see the cosmos *sub specie aeternitatis*, as a network of linked events (Smart, 1996:179).

The contemplative devotional lifestyle stresses self-knowledge and serenity, adopting techniques of calming and the gradual purification of consciousness (Smart, 1996:185). The purification of consciousness entails the removal of all worldly lusts through heroic and austere self-discipline (Smart, 1996:189).

There is a rather widespread correlation between the contemplative life and vegetarianism in Eastern Orthodoxy. Since contemplation also involves a largely passive approach, it fits in well with a gentle attitude towards other living creatures, thus the dietary 'no meat or fish', pacifist philosophy (Smart, 1996:185).

4.6 The Ethical and Legal Dimension

It is problematic to disentangle ethical requirements from legal requirements. Religion and society are usually conterminous in the microcosm (Smart, 1996:197).

Religious Zionism developed from a secular nationalist movement into a distinctive stance in Jewish thought and aspiration (Smart, 1996:208). In the Jewish tradition, the main principles of morality are embedded in a great web of correct ritual and moral behaviour. The embodiment of this web is the Ten Commandments which make ethical behavior and law constant reminders of God's rule and presence (Smart, 1996:199).

Because of the relationship between the Holy Book and the law, there is a strong entrenchment of the rules governing society (Smart, 1996 200).

The Jewish nation came to depend on the laws of God (the Torah) as their passport for existence. The reasons are twofold. Jews have, with the exception of Israel, rarely been in control of society at large, and the details of the oral Torah apply particularly to Jews (Smart, 1996:197). Rabbinic Judaism purports a deep sense of the majesty of God combines with a sense of his familiarity. The Torah defined the

people. The Jews believe that they were, on the whole, not created genetically, but by their loyalty to the Law.

This lends a personal quality to the ethical, a quality of personal loyalty both to the people and to God. This helped to ascertain the continuance of the Jewish community across their nomadic existence throughout history (Smart, 1996:199).

4.7 The Institutional Dimension

A prophet in the Hebrew Bible was someone, who, in a variety of ecstatic reveries, could foretell God's message. The ecstatic experience could manifest itself through a vision or an audial from God. For example, someone who has a numinous experience verbally expresses it in the name of God (Smart, 1996:216).

Prophets also appear in the New Testament, such as Jesus and Paul. Prophets are social critics and mouthpieces of God's message. The revelations stem from the eighth century and were captured in books which formed part of the canonical scriptures, thus conferring literary status upon the prophets who were also, in some instances, the authors of these books (Smart, 1996:216).

The prophet is not treated as divine, but rather as God's vessel or mouthpiece. Although, the sequence of the numinous maintains itself, in that the messenger or the prophet is different from God, the prophet may entertain, without doubt, that the message, the proclamation or the rebuke of the audience was received directly from God, and is therefore an *ex cathedra*, infallible, unwaveringly and truthful message (Smart, 1996:216).

Found in a number of religious traditions, the contemplative is the mystic. While the prophet has a numinous message, the mystic's message is unitive. A mystic can be a teacher, a monk or a nun. Mystics like prophets, are found in all religious traditions (Smart, 1996:218). Charisma is a common feature among prophets and mystics (Smart, 1996:219).

The preacher is analogous to the prophet in so far as he speaks, typically, in the name of God. His aim is to mobilise the church members in relation to a given message. The preacher who regards him- or herself as God's anointed, is usually endowed with rhetorical gifts and is someone who is trained and well versed in the Scriptures (Smart, 1996:219). He or she is the one who tends and looks after the community of believers, as a shepherd tends sheep.. The role of the pastor is, in certain Christian traditions, emphasised as that of the bishop. In Protestant and Pentecostal denominations, it is commonly used as a designation for the head of the congregation (Smart, 1996:219).

One of the primary offices of a priest is to perform ritual. This is what, broadly, distinguishes a priest from other forms of ministry. In the Catholic Church, the priesthood is celibate, whereas in Orthodoxy, priests are allowed to engage in matrimony. In both the Catholic and the Orthodox traditions priests are males. Recent changes in Christianity have begun to recognise women, allowing them to be ordained as pastors, preachers and bishops, but not as priests. The priesthood being exclusively male has for a long time been a bone of contention among feminists who reason that male priesthood exclusivity gives rise to a masculine view of God (Smart, 1996:220).

Monks and nuns normally live in monasteries. Christianity, of the three monotheisms of the Middle East, was the only one that adopted the monastic way of life. At first, monks and nuns were lone individuals or small groups of men and women who lived as wondering recluses. Soon they established themselves in the form of communities living together (Smart, 1996:221). They functioned among different orders with diverse vocations. The chief aim of the monastic is to cultivate the inner spiritual life. Each monastery has to have a priest(s) to perform the Christian ritual (Smart, 1996:222).

A theologian, according to Smart, is someone who is charged with formulating the doctrines or teaching of a tradition or sub-tradition (Smart, 1996:225). Some theologians prove to be rigorous in their strict adherence to the Biblical tradition, but there were and are also schools of theologians who absorbed ideas and values from older philosophies (Smart, 1996:226). Traditionally a theologian had to be a member of the faith or sub-faith that he or she was expounding, but this became particularly

difficult for the church to moderate, especially since so much of the terminology and ambitions of Neo-Platonism were being employed and cultivated by contemporary theologians. The Roman Catholic Church desperately tried to keep modernism at bay in the period between 1880 and 1960, but all its efforts were in vain as the infiltration of modernism filtered through Vatican II. Traditional Christianity has long since stopped trying to exercise ecclesiastical control over thought (Smart, 1996:226).

Major religions have involved themselves in miraculous healing. In Hellenistic culture it was not unreasonable to suppose that a person's charismatic power might effect a cure, especially given the thin line that exists between the bodily and mental manifestations of disease (Smart, 1996:233). Early Christians were often accused of deploying magic and the New Testament bears evidence of anti-magical propaganda against Christ (Smart, 1996:233).

An *ascetic* is someone who is sincerely in pursuit of something other than pure self-denial, such as contemplative experiences. The ill-kempt hermit who tortures himself by half starving could gain a great status of austerity, which in itself bears the accolade of sanctity (Smart, 1996:234). Self-torture could also take the form of choosing to be celibate, since for many centuries in the Christian tradition to stay a virgin for Christ was considered honourable (Smart, 1996:235).

Monarchies, in both the Old World and the New, in East and in West, give a cosmic role to the king. The king is regarded as a divine intermediary between the supreme God, the people and the earth (Smart, 1996:237). In ancient Israel the king was held primarily as the servant of Yahweh, the supreme God (Smart, 1996:238). The king imitated God, ruling over the lower aspects of the cosmos, which was basically a divine monarchy (Smart, 1996:241). The principle *cuius regio eius religio*, that the religion of the ruler has to be that of the citizen, as a result of the rise of modern nationalism linked with the explosion of Christendom after the Protestant revolution, spread across much of Europe (Smart, 1996:251). Thus in Europe, certain prominent nations had populations of overwhelmingly one denomination (Smart, 1996:253). A feature of the Reformation was that churches followed political units, resulting in every official or established church having a national status conferred upon it (Smart, 1996:256). However, there were churches of the radical Reformation that refused to

recognize the connection between citizenry and faith, perceiving faith as a more personal matter (Smart, 1996:256). Part of Luther's revolution was to emphasize inwardness again. Whereas infant baptism included a collective idea of the family and more widely the church, the Anabaptists, Baptists and Quakers (all movements of the radical Reformation) insisted on adult baptism, which resulted in a shift from hierarchical government to congregationalism. The theory being that since if the adult is the only one who can express faith, an obvious emanation from this would be individualism (Smart, 1996:266). These movements targeted the heart of *cuius region eius religio*. They manifested a move against the ideology of the divinely licensed monarch. It opened the path for people to be entitled to rights instead of blindly obeying royalty (Smart, 1996:266).

4.8 The Material Dimension

The material dimension comprises of buildings for worship and ritual, religious sculptures and paintings, the modes of dress of pastors, books and amulets (Smart, 1996:277).

The early Christians worshipped in synagogues and in the Temple, and for a long period in private houses (Smart, 1996:281). Early synagogues did not reflect a distinct religious architectural ascetic since they were no different from secular buildings (Smart, 1996:281).

This dramatically changed when Roman Emperor Constantine converted. Christianity as the emerging imperial religion demanded an official building. Architecturally, fashioned after the basilica, a specific design of a Christian church emerged (Smart, 1996:281). It took the form of a building heading towards an altar and an apse where the bishop's throne was located (Smart, 1996:282).

This developed into even more illustrious architecture in the medieval period with the creation of spectacular cathedrals with high altars. The edifice was designed with a long, vaulted nave culminating in the altar. This particular genre of architecture was known as Gothic. A typical tenet of this plan was that the edifice had to have a soaring view towards heaven (Smart, 1996:282). Height resembles a symbolic

superiority (Smart, 1996:139). God is pictured as “above” and naturally indicates that the sky and the heavens are a symbol of where God exists (Smart, 1996:140). Another style of ecclesiastical architecture during this period were the monasteries. In both East and West the structure of the monasteries consisted of living quarters for the nuns and/or the monks, and a building of worship where the rituals of mass and other liturgies were performed (Smart, 1996:282).

The Reformation, according to Smart, had an ideological distrust of monasteries. They were perceived as enclaves occupied by monks and nuns who were attempting to buy salvation by pious and noble actions. The quest of the Protestant denomination towards faith and the numinous experience contributed towards the dissolution of the monasteries (Smart, 1996: 282-283). Traditional Catholic churches and cathedrals, during this period, were simply taken over by traditional forms of magisterial Protestantism, such as Anglicanism and Lutheranism. The Presbyterians built their own buildings. These were much simpler, dominated by church benches and pulpits. The altar was replaced by the pulpit and the priest replaced by the pastor. This resulted in simpler places of worship (Smart, 1996:283).

By and large, Protestants inherited great cathedrals, but did not create new ones. On the whole Protestant places of worship were plain (Smart, 1996:267).

Christian methods of spreading the word en masse to non-Christian communities have, due to the technological engineering of bulk printing, enjoyed phenomenal success (Smart, 1996:286). Whereas compared to the Middle Ages, a copy of the Bible was difficult to produce, since it had to be printed on vellum which was a very expensive material, coupled with the intense quantitative labour involved (Smart, 1996:285). The evolution of the printing press gave rise to new genres of pious and polemical literature produced in the form of hard/soft cover books, booklets and tracts. While some of these publications were exclusively missiological in nature, other publications were more inclusive, compiled to prevent members of a particular group, movement or denomination from falling victim to the persuasions of foreign missionaries (Smart, 1996:286). Christian methods of evangelising appear to have been most effective among non-literate people (Smart, 1996:286). Christians used the printed word to spread education especially in the colonised countries (Smart, 1996:287).

Smart recognises an interesting connotation between paintings and sculptures and the ideology of cosmic kingship (Smart, 1996:287): “.....the richer the ritual and the stronger the demand for art works to decorate religious buildings, the greater the importance of wealth for rulers who patronize religion and the greater the need for contributions to sacred causes” (Smart, 1996:287). Some Christian traditions are aniconic and others partially so, but there are those traditions with a developed taste for painting and sculptures which have burgeoned (Smart, 1996:287). The anti-icon tendencies of the Protestant traditions resulted in a secularization of art, the creation of Dutch interior art, still life and landscape painting. However, the Baroque thrust of Catholicism, through the Anglo-Catholic movement, filtered through to some Protestant traditions, where, especially in Britain, no expenses were spared to revive church architecture during the second half of the nineteenth century (Smart, 1996:287).

The material dimension is an artistic expression of ritual through religious garb, relics, jewels, glittering divinities, glorious statues and soaring buildings (Smart, 1996:288).



Chapter 5

A short description of each of the recorded worship services as produced in the seven churches under discussion.

5.1 Format

I chose to provide the material dimensions of the worship services of the respective churches in the form of a story, a narrative. Since the material dimensions, as per Smart, appertain to tangible and visible objects, I deliberately refrained from including detailed dialogue, speeches, songs, announcements, ritual verbal or sermon contents. These verbal aspects can however be listened to on the video recordings that form the basis of this study (available on request). Even though it proved problematic to provide a synopsis of the liturgical orders of these respective Pentecostal churches, I, in every instance attempted to ascertain the flow. Hence this flow will serve as the opening construct.

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5.2 House of Praise



Liturgical order

- *The praise and worship team perform from the outset without any formal announcements.*
- *The members of the congregation arrive in drips and drabs with no apparent concern for the official commencement time of the worship service.*
- *The resident pastor is a member of the worship team, playing the guitar or the keyboard.*
- *The genre of gospel music is pulsating, fast and very loud.*
- *The congregation participates enthusiastically, following the lyrics as projected on the video screen.*
- *No official opening prayer is said.*
- *Prayers are collectively uttered by the worship team and the congregation.*
- *The mood in the church is exceptionally informal.*

- *The worship team then changes to a genre of slower, more emotive singing.*
- *The gift of tongues and the visible use of bodily gestures is now prevalent.*
- *The pastor recites a range of titles which the Lord is known by.*
- *The sermon is delivered.*
- *An altar call is made, followed by the dedication of the child of one of the male guitarists and his wife. Several other children are also dedicated to the Lord for a second or third time.*
- *A collection is taken up while the worship team continues to perform.*
- *The pastor pronounces a dedication.*
- *The congregation then leave the premises with the worship team still performing.*
- *The scene at this stage is extremely social with people hugging each other almost to the extent of being reluctant to leave.*

This church is situated at 40 Plein Street, Woodstock. Its location is in a part of Woodstock of ill repute, where crimes such as drug dealing have, until recently, been rife. The church building was formerly occupied by a business called Pro Star. The building was designed as a warehouse. Its exterior is painted in a dark brown shade. The main entrance is secured by steel gates painted in a light brown shade. The brand, *House of Praise*, is signwritten on a steel surface and affixed above the main entrance. The logo which appears on the sign is a lion's head, artistically depicted like a watermark. A further exterior sign reflects the name of a Bible school called *Jeremiah's Training Centre*. There is also another exterior sign which reflects the heading, *Kingdom Finance*, and forthcoming dates, presumably services where the focus would be on financial contributions. There are approximately six parking bays in front of the church building with both adjoining properties, on the left and the right, being semi-detached houses.

There is a banner in the foyer of the church with a heading that says "*Holiness unto the Lord*". The building is approximately 225 square meters in size. The flooring which is vinyl tiles is grey in shade. The walls are painted in a cream/beige shade.

There are no artefacts affixed to the walls other than a sign on the front wall behind the stage stating “*PASSION*”.

The stage which is more like a mini podium is approximately 250 centimetres high and approximately eight metres in length and four metres in width. It has no pulpit. There are three electric guitars, together with amplifiers, positioned on guitar stands on the stage. In the right-hand back corner of the stage, in front of the “*PASSION*”-signage, is a fully equipped drum kit. In the other corner is a African bongo drum kit. Next to the drum kit is an electronic keyboard with music sheet stands both in front of the keyboard and the guitar stands. Powerful speakers, through which the speaking and singing and preaching are amplified, are positioned on both sides of the stage. The worship team consists of three male guitarists, a female keyboard player, a female bongo drummer, and one female solo singer. All of them are standing behind microphones. The congregation participated in the singing with vigour and dedication.

Affixed to the rear stage wall is an electronic screen upon which the lyrics of the songs are projected. At the right rear back of the hall is the video and sound production desk, equipped with mixers and video projecting devices. This desk is operated by a male wearing a set of headphones.

The congregation is cosmopolitan, consisting of Africans, coloureds and one white couple. The dress code is casual. Denim jeans, sneakers, dresses, t-shirts and shorts appear to be popular.

The chairs are upholstered in a red fabric. The church can accommodate approximately 100 people. At this particular service there were about 30 people in attendance. They all brought their Bibles which from the shapes and sizes appeared to be a range of different translations. The members of the congregation all had notebooks in which they jotted down the main points of the sermon.

No collection or offering was taken up, so one could not ascertain what the collection objects look like. There is no baptismal font. An infant dedication formed part of the service. The father is one of the guitarists. The pastor then invites families with small children to the front and prays for each child individually.

The preacher meandered up and down on the stage while preaching, and also steps down from the stage roving through the space with a microphone. The general structure of the service was quite casual and relaxed.

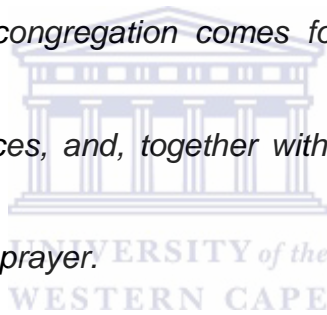
5.3 The Paran Pentecostal Church



Liturgical order

- *The service is opened by a female pastor.*
- *The worship team then ascends the stage and performs a song with keyboard accompaniment.*
- *The worship team at this stage of the service renders songs containing a lot of repetitive phrases.*
- *The nature of the genre then switches to pulsating music with a heavy beat and lyrics.*
- *The fast pace is continued and compels the congregation to join in and who participate with excitement and spontaneity.*
- *One member of the worship team proceeds to read a passage from scripture.*
- *The worship team engages in a dancing ritual known as “dancing in the “Spirit” while leading the praise service.*

- *A male member of the congregation, possibly an elder, then officially welcomes everybody present.*
- *This is followed by a prayer rendered by another male member.*
- *The microphone is handed to a female member of the congregation who utters a passionate intercessory prayer.*
- *This is succeeded by another lively chorus led by the worship team.*
- *A male member delivers a message in tongues, which is translated by both a male and a female member of the congregation.*
- *A new member to the congregation is then welcomed by an elder.*
- *The pastor encourages the congregation towards discipleship at this stage of the service.*
- *Another member of the congregation then reads a passage from scripture.*
- *The pastor then proceeds to deliver a charismatic sermon.*
- *After the sermon the congregation comes forward to make their financial contributions.*
- *The worship team dances, and, together with the congregation, engages in lively singing.*
- *The service is closed in prayer.*



Two services are held on a Sunday. The worship service is at 10h30, and a second service at 13h00. The church is situated on the corner of Wright and Station Streets, Woodstock. The Paran Pentecostal Church, also commonly known as the PPC is a double storey building built out of brown face bricks. The exterior signage comprises a vinyl board on which the brand “Paran Pentecostal Church” is graphically depicted. The copy reads: “Paran Pentecostal Church – Passion for the lost”. It further comprises the times of the services and the contact details. The logo is an opened Bible with a wooden cross featuring above it. The sky is depicted as golden lightning with a dove flying next to the cross. To the left of the building there’s another sign advertising a different business.

The interior comprises a square with a vinyl tiled floor. The walls are painted white. The church has an exceptionally low ceiling with fluorescent light fittings. The ceiling is decorated with light blue striped draped fabric and beautifully painted Christmas balls. The windows are large with blue curtaining. One of the large windows towards

the back of the church is artistically fitted with a combination of blue and white embroidered anglaised fabric.

The front of the church features a lectern covered with an embroidered tablecloth, with a red embroidered cross overhang facing the congregation. Next to the lectern is a table, also bedecked with an embroidered tablecloth, with a vase of fresh white flowers on it.

To the right of the designated worship team area is a room divider furnished with four upholstered chairs. This, which appears to be an area designated for a prayer room, was not being utilised at this particular service. The church chairs are white and plastic. The seating capacity is about 50.

Like all of the churches reported on in this thesis, the worship team occupies the central role. This particular team consists of two male and two female singers. The dress code of the men is smart casual, with the one at the back wearing white casual shoes, blue denim jeans and a blue and white check shirt. The male singer to the right of the lectern is donning a pair of African jeans, white shirt and smart African leather shoes. The two African female singers next to the latter male singer are dressed in long embroidered dresses which have a traditional look about them. An African woman, dressed in a long red dress, appears to be fulfilling the role of a praise singer and trots from left to right, exclaiming messages in a language which appeared to be glossolalia. Amplified sound appears vital to their performance with all the participants performing over microphones. Huge speakers are strategically placed from which the amplified voices emanate. The front also features an electronic keyboard which was unoccupied during this particular service. The music appears to be generated from backtracking compact discs.

Two African men are positioned immediately in front of the worship team. They appear to be the leaders of the church. They are both suavely dressed in beige and African suits respectively, complete with designer shirts, ties and shoes. Their estimated age is 40. Both of them participate in the worship with their arms raised. The one has a small note book in his hands while the other one is holding a large Bible covered in brown leather. The congregation's dress code is smart casual.

5.4 The Rainbow Family Church



Liturgical order

- *The service is opened by the worship team.*
- *The tone of the first part of the service is pulsating, vibrant, lively and fast.*
- *The congregation joins in with vigour while people are still entering the church.*
- *The entire congregation then gathers around a table upon which there is a birthday cake. It's the celebration of an elderly female member of the church's birthday.*
- *The pastor extends his and the church's well wishes to the birthday lady while the band plays and everybody sings the traditional "Happy Birthday" song.*
- *The worship team thereafter continues to lead the congregation in "praise" and "worship" The reason why I expressed the latter in inverted commas is because even though the phrase is commonly used, I am not certain as to what the difference is.*

- *The worship team now switches to a more serious genre of music and lyrics recognised by a tangible slowing down in rhythm and beat.*
- *The congregation's body language is characterised by their arms being raised and their eyes closed.*
- *The pastor delivers his sermon.*
- *At the close of his sermon the worship team sings while members of the congregation come forward, some waving "holy" cloths like handkerchiefs and towels.*
- *People are prayed for in the front. This to receive salvation or deliverance from sickness and other woes.*
- *The worship team leads the closing part of the service.*
- *The pastor concludes with an inspirational speech.*
- *The service is closed.*



This Pentecostal church is situated at 83 Albert Road, Woodstock. Albert Road is currently the hub of arts- and cultural-related industries in Woodstock. It is a popular attraction for non-Woodstock residents and tourists, particularly on a Saturday. Venues like The Old Biscuit Mill market, a famous restaurant named The Test Kitchen, The Bromwell Boutique Mall, Bread Café, The Woodstock Exchange Mall, a Madoda Braai, The Foundry shopping centre, art galleries, antique shops, bric -a - brac outlets and fashion stores have propelled this street into popularity, possessing all the ingredients to become Cape Town's version of 5th Avenue in New York. Albert Road boasts one of Woodstock's oldest mainstream churches, an Anglican Church. The Rainbow Family church is situated virtually in the heart of this commercial hub. It is located in a former warehouse or factory. Parking is an acute problem in Albert Road. Most of the churches under discussion do not have any parking facilities as is the case with the Rainbow Family Church. Its members who own cars are restricted to off-street parking. The church building is a heritage site, which poses huge restrictions on any proposed alterations.

An exterior billboard reading "Rainbow Family Church" is mounted against the street-facing wall. A further exterior sign immediately below the latter reads "Rising Sun

Ministries”, with brief information on the ministry, including counselling. The contact details are also present on the signage.

Upon entering there is a further billboard on which the Mission and Vision Statement of the “Rising Sun Ministries” is printed.

Mission of the Rising Sun Ministries

To restore colour and dignity to humanity by the power of God’s Word

Vision

“You have repaired machines enough (as a trained engineer), it is time to repairmen and women”

Below the Mission and Vision Statement sign is a red noticeboard which displays the leaders’ names and the addresses and dates where and when counselling will be given. Next to the notice board is a prayer request deposit box. The other entrance walls feature glossy posters with the following copy:

“God’s presence. Expect a miracle”

“For I am the Lord I change not” – Malachi 3:6

“To them that believe all things are possible” – Mark 9:23

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” – Matthew 6:33

Inside the foyer, one wall is bedecked with a grey and golden curtain. Mounted against the fabric backdrop are the words:

February 2013

Our month of undeniable Proofs (Acts 1:3)

There is a reception area furnished with a wooden table and a white plastic chair. Several religious and motivational books are on display for sale. The themes vary from praise, life, prosperity and children. David O. Oyedepo's international books are in dominance and in great demand. CD's on various themes ranging from sermons, lectures, motivational talks and gospel are also offered for sale in this area.

The area where the worshippers congregate, the actual church, is square, with a stage, elevated 40 centimetres, in front. Grey and golden draped fabric tapering to the left and right bottom of the stage from the ceiling conjures the look and feel of a theatre from the fifties. The stage floor features a bright velvet carpet. In the left corner from the congregation's vantage point is a white steel table upon which a white vase with a fresh flower arrangement is positioned. In front of the stage there are two African boxes which are utilised for tithes and offerings. At the centre of the stage there's a glass lectern with a chrome tube vase containing another flower arrangement. The worship team, consisting of the band and the singers, electronic musical instruments and microphone stands, are on the right side of the stage, again seen from the congregation's perspective. The musical equipment comprises of electric guitars, drums, an electronic keyboard, amplifiers and large speakers. A round wall clock is affixed to the wall behind the stage. The ceiling is painted white and the lighting is fluorescent.

The worship team open the service with lively gospel songs with a fast beat. To the left of the performers there is a bongo band. The worship team which consists of both males and females are very smartly dressed. The congregation is exclusively African and of predominantly Nigerian descent. Their age profile is 30 years and older. They are dressed immaculately with the males wearing suits and ties and the ladies wearing designer or traditional dresses and jewellery. The congregation dances, claps and jumps up and down to the beat of the music, singing the lyrics which are displayed on a big video screen. It appears obvious that the congregation, the worship team and the bands are thoroughly enjoying the service.

The pastor is seen behind the lectern, armed with his laptop. He is impeccably dressed in a designer African suit and a red and white striped shirt. He radiates charisma. A strange celebration or ritual is being enacted in front of him. Members of the congregation are dancing around a table upon which there is a cake littered with

small lit candles. An elderly lady proceeds to cut the cake. Since the language medium is a Nigerian dialect, one is not able to grasp what the occasion is. This is followed by a projection of the anniversary date of the church on the big screen.

The worship team ventures into more reserved, slower types of worship songs. The congregation, many of whom have their arms raised and eyes closed, engage in this more serious part of the service with great reverence. The lyrics of the songs are displayed on the big screen.

The pastor proceeds to preach the sermon using an i-pad device and wearing a lapel microphone. He is also carrying an expensive leather bound Bible. He waves a white cloth or handkerchief in the air while he is preaching.

On the left and the right corners of the stage are two white woven baskets for purposes of containing the tithes and offerings.

5.5 Greater Life Ministries



Liturgical order

- *The service is opened by the pastor in a melodramatic manner. He then immediately proceeds with the sermon.*
- *He is waving what looks like a white fabric cloth while speaking.*
- *A female member of the congregation goes to the front enacting a type of ritual, singing “Thank you Lord” repetitively with the congregation clapping to the beat of the song.*
- *The congregation is then addressed by a male member of the worship team.*
- *This is succeeded by the taking up of the offering in the form of the members of the congregation going to the front of the stage and dropping their contributions into a golden basket.*
- *The worship team is performing a slow song with keyboard accompaniment.*
- *The pastor says a prayer.*
- *The worship team leads the congregation in singing of a joyous song.*
- *The service is closed and the members leave the church.*

The pastors of this church are a Nigerian couple, whose names are Pastor Lucky and Maria Bepete. The weekly activities roster of the Worship Service is: Sundays, 10h00-13h00, Prayer Warfare - Mondays, 18h00-20h00, Bible Study -Wednesdays, 18h00-20h00 and Night Vigil - Fridays, 20h00 till morning.

The church building is situated at 41 Albert Road, Woodstock. The general condition of the building is derelict with the exterior a beige shade of paint that is peeling off. The exterior walls are full of cracks. Suffice it to say that all of the church buildings referred to in this study are leased from landlords.

The exterior branded sign reading “Greater Life Ministries International” is approximately 2x4 meters in size. It’s affixed to the exterior wall, facing the street, immediately above the main entrance. A poster featuring a photo of the pastor and

his wife proclaiming, “Apostle and Prayer: Lucky and Maria Bepete”, features on the right hand wall next to the main entrance. On the left hand side of the main entrance there is another sign depicting a lion and a lamb lying in front of a white cross with the inscription: “Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Lion of Judah”. Yet another sign at the entrance reads: “Welcome to the Family Worship Center” with the titles and dates of the weekly services as mentioned above. The access door is green with a translucent sign reading: “Jesus loves you”.

Although there are parking bays in front of the church building, these bays are not for the exclusive use of the church members.

The church inside is square. The walls are painted blue with the floor being green vinyl tiles. The stage, which is accessible by a step, spans the whole width of the church. The stage is about 20 centimetres high. At the back of the stage there is a white bench upon which all the microphones, amplifiers and speakers are positioned. In the right corner, from the congregation’s point of view, is a flower arrangement with a huge African speaker next to it. A blue and golden drape adorns the wall.

Next to the step is the pulpit. It is made out of steel, painted white, looking more like a lectern. A glossy poster reading: “Jesus loves you” features immediately behind the pulpit. In the left corner of the stage is a set of drums. In front of the drum kit is a small round table covered with a table cloth with some glasses on it. Behind the drum kit, the wall is again adorned with purple drapes.

5.6 Winners Chapel International Cape Town



Liturgical order

- *The pastor, positioned on the stage, is engaged in prayer with members of the congregation as they filter in.*
- *The pastor, backed by the band, leads the congregation in a highly emotive series of songs dominated by strong bass.*
- *This continues for a long period of time with the congregation dancing, singing and clapping hands.*
- *Members of the congregation go to the pulpit and testify of their “spiritual” encounters. This is done at the prompting of the pastor.*
- *The pastor then says a prayer.*
- *This is succeeded by a slow, much more reverent song, performed by the worship team, with the congregation joining in.*
- *The pastor gives an altar call with people responding by the raising of their hands.*
- *This is succeeded by a second sermon delivered by a different pastor.*

- *The service is closed and the congregation socialise in the church, at the bookstore, or outside the church building.*

The Winners Chapel is a branch congregation of one of Nigeria's largest Pentecostal churches. It's located on the corner of Roodebloem Street and Main Road, Woodstock, immediately opposite the Cape Town Christian Church. It is situated on the third floor of a commercial building with a shoe store on the ground floor. ABSA bank is on its left when viewed from the street. The building is one of the best maintained buildings in this precinct and is owned by a Jewish family who live overseas. There is no parking on the premises. All parking is off-street.

The main entrance is unpretentious and small and access to the church is via a service lift or a staircase. On the first floor there is a clothing factory. The signage is towards the right of the building. The logo appears to be the globe with a red crown or flame on top. It proclaims: *The home of Signs & Wonders. Programme: Sunday 9am & Wednesdays 5:30 pm. (021) 447 7080 076398 7838. wmacapetown@gmail.com / www.winnerschapelcapetown.org.* The church has a huge foyer, which comprises of a reception area, a book and cd store, and a prayer room. The desk is tastefully decorated with vases filled with beautiful fresh flower arrangements. The reception desk is permanently occupied by a Nigerian receptionist during office hours. The entrance door is made out of bullet proof glass and the floor is carpeted. To the left of the reception area is a long passage with the resident pastor Pastor Prince's office situated right at the end. His office is huge with the back wall fitted with book shelves in its entirety. The books are all softcovers and the titles predominantly reflect abundant living. A framed photo of the pastor and his wife plus a further photo of the bishop of the organisation decorates one of the walls. The books on sale in the book store are all related to similar topics. The other rooms in the passage are Sunday school classrooms.

To the right of the reception/bookstore area is a huge auditorium with a seating capacity of 500 people. The church is immaculately neat and, with the exception of Christ Embassy, is the largest Pentecostal church in Woodstock. The chairs are polypropylene and in mint condition. The auditorium is fully carpeted. At the back of

the auditorium is a DJ booth which is fully equipped with state of the art recording equipment and sound mixers. The booth has a large table with a white table cloth. It's slightly elevated in order for the sound engineer to have a complete view of the congregation and the stage. The DJ is an African person wearing a designer jacket.

The auditorium has a white ceiling with discreet lighting. Because of the enormous size of the auditorium, concrete supporting columns are scattered throughout. The wall facing Roodebloem Street is decorated with high quality curtain fabric. The chairs are arranged in a straight and tidy manner with sufficiently wide aisles between the rows.

The auditorium is inundated with high quality speakers mounted against the concrete columns. DVD screens are also mounted against these columns to afford the congregation projected images of the activities transpiring on the stage. The auditorium is fully air conditioned.

The stage floor is covered with a red carpet. The stage is gigantic with a four legged gold marble pulpit positioned slightly off centre. A huge flower arrangement is perched between the two front marble legs. The rear stage wall is gorgeously decorated with expensive red, white and grey fabric. A massive flower arrangement on a gigantic stand is positioned next to the pulpit. Above the pulpit is a huge laurel made out of leaves. Towards the left front of the stage is a glass enclosed recording studio equipped with video recorders and monitors. This studio is occupied by another recording engineer, making recordings of the services which are then sold at the bookstore in compact disc format.

The congregation is exclusively of African descent with Nigerians constituting the majority. The members of the congregation are elegantly dressed with the males wearing designer suits and the ladies wearing designer or culturally traditional dresses. What was very apparent is that an informal dress code is taboo at this church.

Every member of the congregation has a Bible and a notebook. Notes are meticulously taken of the words spoken in the church. The worship team consists of eight female singers positioned behind six microphones. They are uniformly dressed

in African skirts, white blouses, and white scarves. The band consists of a drummer, a keyboard and a bass guitarist. All the instruments are amplified. The common genre of the music is what is called a “deep house” or “dub-step” style, where the sole emphasis is on a monotonous repetitive bass effect created by the bass guitarists and the drummer. The congregation participated enthusiastically with arms raised and some singing in tongues. The first half of the worship service is fast beat, then petering out to a slower beat, as the time for the sermon approaches.

Three pastors are engaged as liturgists during the service with the main sermon preached by Pastor Prince.

The offering objects are wire baskets. Envelopes are circulated before the taking up of the offering by the ushers. The congregation is instructed to insert their offering in the envelopes received. No notes or coins are visible in the baskets, only envelopes.

5.7 Cape Town Christian Church



Liturgical order

- *The worship team performs without any formal announcement while the congregation pours in.*
- *Members are welcomed by an elder upon entering the place of worship.*
- *Neatly dressed female ushers show members to designated seats.*
- *The pastor's wife, Pastor Judy, is seated in the front row of the church.*
- *The music is lively, loud and exuberant with the congregation participating enthusiastically.*
- *Two lead worship female singers take turns in motivating the congregation to praise the Lord.*
- *The pastor enters the church from his vestry which is situated on the ground floor. He occupies a front seat next to his wife.*
- *The church treasurer enters after the pastor.*
- *Another elder ascends the stage and welcomes the people. Those who are attending for the very first time are requested to complete visitor's cards which are collected by the ushers.*
- *The worship team's musical performance is still on the wild side.*
- *The pastor ascends the stage. He is handed a cordless microphone. He proceeds to encourage the congregation to switch from praise to worship. This he does by employing repetitive doxological phrases. The worship team now switches to a more revered style of singing.*
- *The offering is taken up.*
- *The pastor delivers the sermon.*
- *The altar call is made with the worship team singing a soft, devout song.*
- *People are prayed for and then directed to the prayer room.*
- *The worship team sings a concluding song.*
- *People leave and others socialize.*

In the case of this particular Pentecostal congregation, I presume to take the opportunity to elaborate in more detail the location and the area that surrounds it. The Cape Town Christian Church was the most affluent of all the seven that I visited. It is embedded right in the core of Woodstock. Even with another Pentecostal place of worship literally a stone's throw away, the assembly of CTCC thrives with seemingly hardly effort at all.

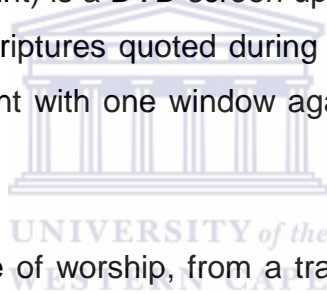
The Cape Town Christian Church is situated close to one of the largest intersections, in a commercial building, on Victoria Road, Woodstock. It is owned by the owners of the Roodebloem Butchery, which is situated in the same complex as the CTCC (the brand by which the church under review is known). Adjoining the church premises, facing it from the street elevation on the right, you will find a pool tavern, a bric-a-brac shop, an internet cafe and a ladies hairstylist. Next to the church, facing it from the street, to the left, is a parking area, which is part of the church premises, followed by a used car sales business. On the opposite side of the road is Absa Bank, situated in a large commercial building, which incidentally also accommodates Winners Chapel International, the church previously reviewed. The closest traditional functioning church complexes are those of the Anglican Church, situated in Roodebloem Road, approximately 800 meters from the CTCC and the New Apostolic Church, situated about 700 meters from the CTCC, also in Roodebloem Road. Both of these churches are stagnant, if not, as is the case with The New Apostolic Church, virtually catering to, in an active average church service, an attendance of only approximately 15 people. Around the corner from the CTCC, in the same Roodebloem Road, is the former Methodist Church complex; approximately 80 meters away. This building was sold in or around the year 2000 to a TV Commercial Production Company known as Jan Verboom Productions, a company which, amongst others things, produces food display footage for Woolworths, a prominent food and clothing retailer. The Methodist Church, Woodstock, referred to above, officially closed down in 1998 as a result of next to no active membership.

At 7 Milner Road, Woodstock, approximately 40 meters from the CTCC is a building that used to be the place of worship of The Salvation Army. This building had been standing vacant for years and was in fact an illegal shelter for "bergies" (a "bergie" is

the equivalent of a "tramp", someone who roams the streets being job-and homeless). I purchased this neglected, desolate building in around 2005 and converted the building into an apartment. Other businesses within close proximity of the CTCC comprise a KFC outlet, a liquor store known as Roodebloem Bottle Store, a pie shop, a locksmith, a furniture store known as Verblun's, a shoe shop, a cafe, and men's outfitters. The modes of transport used by the members of the CTCC are 20 per cent cars, 70 per cent public transport and taxis and 10 per cent pedestrians who live within walking distance of the church. The percentage members who live in Woodstock or a neighboring suburb are approximately 35 per cent. The other members come from as far afield as Goodwood, a northern suburb of Cape Town. The resident pastors, Pastor Ntsiki Masonga and Pastor Judy Masonga, his wife and their three sons, reside in Goodwood.

A common feature of all the churches under review in this study is the gross absence of any form of architecture traditionally distinguishing a place of worship. CTCC as previously mentioned is situated in a commercial building, predominantly utilized for office space or shops. The outside elevation is straight-lined with a huge non-neon lit sign, displaying the brand of the church affixed to the wall of the first floor exterior (see attached video). The copy on the outside signage is "*Cape Town Christian Church Proclaiming Christ, Building Lives. Sivkalisu uKkrestu. Sakha iimphilo* (Xhosa translation) *Verkondig Christus. Bou lewens.*" (Afrikaans translation). The exterior and interior are painted white. Just before ascending the staircase there's a sign in African font against the roof reading: "*God is calling us to action.*" In a corner there are some book shelves containing brochures, books and a flower arrangement. The titles vary from "How can you be led by the "Spirit of God", "Choices - Deciding right and wrong today", "How far can you go?", "Straight talk about sexual purity", "Please do not do what I tell you!" and "The work of the Spirit" by Andrew Murray. It is a single story building, with the ground floor comprising of a church office, toilets, and an open area with tables and chairs, a book and tract table, a notice board and a picture/photo board entitled "Church Leadership Board". Photos of the resident pastor and other church officials are attached and there is a "Business" notice board where church members can advertise their business services. I would presume that there's a fee payable here, since this board contains a poster "To advertise here". There is also a second-hand clothing rail with prices affixed to the items on the rail.

Some members of the congregation relax and socialize sitting on the chairs. The first floor, being the actual place of worship, is accessed via a concrete staircase. The place of worship has laminated flooring, no air conditioning, and, unlike traditional church architecture, very low ceilings. The chairs, approximately 250, are polypropylene plastic chairs. There is a stage, the full width of the floor, which houses the band, the worship singers and the pulpit. The interior is very plain with no artefacts against the wall. A weekly fresh flower arrangement seems to be the only colorful decoration. The sound engineer's mixing desk is situated in an elevated booth at the back of the church to the left of the preacher facing the congregation. The place of worship is equipped with two mounted speakers, microphone stands with cord microphones and cordless microphones used by the preacher, the translator and two of the worship singers. Mounted against the left back corner (from the congregation's vantage point) is a DVD screen upon which the lyrics sung during worship as well as the key scriptures quoted during the sermon are projected. The cross ventilation is non-existent with one window against the non-street facing wall only.



Contrary to this ordinary place of worship, from a traditional church design point of view, the now redundant Methodist Church around the corner boasts two huge gabled halls built out of hewn granite stone, reminiscent of the Herbert Baker architectural era. The Anglican Church previously referred to, also boasts the traditional tower and gable shaped church building and hall. The interior of the Anglican Church comprise a carved wooden pulpit, a baptismal font, solid wood church benches, high ceilings with decorative chandeliers and biblical icons. The New Apostolic Church typically, as is the case with the former Methodist and Anglican churches, perched on a corner, is a deviation from the traditional tower architecture, and has a normal church hall shape. The latter church was built in the seventies whilst the Methodist Church was built in the thirties, and the Anglican Church, in the fifties.

The CTCC has no official dress code. Yet the church attendants are distinguished by the smart and tasteful manner in which they dress. The overall impression is that its attendants, who are predominantly between the ages of 20 and 35, resort to their

smartest available outfits when attending a church service. The worship and praise singers are dressed in matching colors outfits. The male church officials, inclusive of the pastor, wear ties in every instance and presiding female church officials wear smart, yet conservative garments. The female attendants go to great trouble with their hair styles and the donning of braids seems to be very popular. The female attendants wear eye-catching jewelry. Stilettos also appear to be highly fashionable.

In the right back corner, from the vantage point of the band, is an elevated sound engineering booth from where images are projected onto a large DVD screen on the stage and from where the volume of the microphones are controlled. At the front of the stage there are two big speakers on either side as well as in the middle of the church hall. The windows are draped with red curtaining. The band members, being exclusively young males, wear ties but no jackets. However, given the context, where the 11h00 service includes a translator, translating from English into Xhosa, and from the spontaneous response from the congregation, one can conclude that the greater percentage of the attendees' have Xhosa as their mother tongue. Africans, here denoting ethnic Africans, with a great number of members from Tropical Africa, excluding coloureds, constitute 95 per cent of the congregation. The balance is coloured, with myself being the only white attendant on this occasion. There is a contingent of the CTCC leadership who stem from Zimbabwe. Pastor Ntsiki Masonga is a tent-making pastor. He occupies a part-time position as a producer with SABC TV. Pastor Judy Masonga, Pastor Ntsiki's wife is a qualified school teacher who is currently not teaching. She is endeavouring to venture into business, specialising in the selling of unisex cosmetics. From personal encounters with these pastors it would appear that they are both extremely sensitive to encumbering the church financially and have preferred to earn their keep through part-time occupations. Their academic qualifications are undisclosed to me due to the extreme sensitivity, but one can assume that Pastor Judy Masonga boasts a Higher Education qualification by virtue of her being a qualified school teacher and that Pastor Ntsiki Masonga boasts academic/technical qualifications of note by virtue of the position he occupies at the SABC. Pastor Ntsiki Masonga is also a former director of the Christian radio station, known as Radio Tygerberg, where he used to be a regular presenter. It further would appear that Pastor Ntsiki holds a diploma with a theological seminary since he has referred to that in his sermons. He also, during

his sermons, quotes the Hebrew and Hellenistic translations of Biblical terminology which can also be construed as denoting a theological academic background.

CTCC Sunday School children attend the Worship Service up until the commencement of the official sermon. They then adjourn to the Sunday School classes downstairs for their Sunday School lessons (see the video). The ages of the Sunday School attendants vary from 4 years to a maximum of 12 years. These children are well versed in the liturgical rules of the Worship Service and spontaneously leave at the prescribed intermission. Their designated teachers promptly leave at the same time. It would appear that the youth constitutes a part of the body of believers at the main Worship Service and like all the other attendants remain in attendance throughout the entire duration of the Worship service. As the attendees start to occupy their seats the Praise and Worship Team (singers) introduce the liturgy. People arrive with bottles of water for consumption during the service, since this place of worship gets very hot.

The choir (so-called because they normally tally six singers or more) are positioned on the stage prior to the entry of the members of the congregation. Dressed, as mentioned above, in colour matching outfits, they stand behind microphones. To their right, from the vantage point of the preacher facing the congregation, is the church band. The praise and worship singers during this specific service consisted of five females and one male. The band consisted of two keyboard players, one bass guitarist and a drummer. The lead keyboard player is immensely gifted, but sadly suffers from a physical impediment and is blind. The average age of the praise and worship singers together with the band is estimated at 24. The praise and worship singers informally start singing songs of praise with a fast beat, unlike what is traditional in mainline churches (an opening word of welcome), while the attendees stream in. An interesting phenomenon at this particular service was that the "take-off", which is approximately during the first 15 minutes of the Worship Service has a high tempo with pulsating beats. The congregation joins in spontaneously with the exuberant off-beat, clapping of hands and participation in singing. The atmosphere in the place of worship is relaxed and liberated. The lead singers, at this particular service, were two young ladies. They would skillfully, vocally, chant a line from the praise song, to which the congregation would repetitively respond. The American

Negro gospel influence is obvious here. This highly emotive and extremely audible part of the service is characterized by the clapping of hands, the exclaiming of "Amen", "Hallelujah" and "Glory" from the congregation. Festive, jubilant and victorious best explains this first 15 to 20 minutes of the service. The lead singers, fulfilling the role of liturgists, dictate this early part of the worship service through testimonies, doxological declarations and praise chorus initiation. The choruses sung during this part of the service were: "Heh, heh, heh! My God is good" (This song was composed by a Nigerian pastor for Joyous Celebration, a famous South African gospel ensemble under the title "God is a goodo - A Nigerian English lingo). The cantors exclaiming: "Hallelujah!" and the congregation responding with whistling,(known as "mlozi" in Xhosa), with everybody dancing to the music. The next chorus was "Wamonthula Umthwalo" translated "HE took the burden off my shoulders", here referring to Christ's carrying of the cross, followed by "Umoya wami" (the Xhosa for "My soul"). The choruses were repeated several times.

A coloured church elder fluent in Xhosa, who is also a lay preacher, then occupies the pulpit together with a Xhosa translator as the official language used is English. The translator is a young Xhosa gentleman who occasionally preaches when the pastors are away. The elder's opening welcoming words were: "This not a Xhosa church. Not a White church. It's the church for the people, Proclaiming Christ. Building lives" (This being the denomination's slogan). "Welcome! Those of you, who are here for the very first time, please raise your hands." The church ushers then hand out contact details cards for completion to those who had raised their hands. These cards, once completed are then during the taking up of the offering, collected by the ushers for inclusion in the church's database.

The next chorus introduced by the worship team is: "We bow down and worship Him now. How great how awesome is HE. We stand and lift up our hands. For the joy of the Lord is our strength. Holy is the Lord God Almighty! The earth is filled with His glory." At this juncture there is a tangible vocal change in the worship format. Whereas the first part of the praise and worship featured rhythmic, fast paced songs, the mode and mood now changes to slower songs with the earlier loud exuberance now being replaced with a more sacred liturgical content. Everybody's eyes are closed. The lead worship singer (cantor) moves left to right with a cordless

microphone occupying the full width of the stage. The pulpit/lectern is unoccupied at this stage. The worship team switches to a new chorus:

*In the presence of the Lord
There is love, healing and peace
I stand in Your Presence with my whole life*

*With my whole life
I will serve you x2
I will serve you my Lord*

An elder of the church then reads a passage from scripture relating to the giving of tithes and offerings where after the ushers, armed with plastic litter bins, proceed to take up the offering. This ritual is performed while the congregation is singing a chorus.

The lead singer (cantor) is well versed in striking the correct musical note, since she starts *a cappella* and then the organist establishes the tune on the keyboard, the base guitarist and drummer follow suit and the congregation joins in. It is at this part of the service that the pastor occupies the pulpit. Pastor Ntsiki Masonga this is. The singing of the chorus, "I will serve you", continues. He urges the congregation to make the singing of this chorus a prayer. It is evident that he is the leading liturgist. The pastor starts singing in tongues with certain members in the congregation following suit. His liturgical authority exerts a tangible influence on the congregation. Everybody is uttering praises either in the vernacular or in tongues.

*Pastor: We worship you Lord x6
We worship you Jesus x6*

The band is continuously playing and the worship team together with the members of congregation, engaging in worship. The pastor prays in tongues between expressing the doxology, "We worship you Lord". He introduces a chorus called Hallelujah.

Chorus: Hallelujah x6

*For the Lord Almighty reigns
YOU are Lord Almighty
Holy is Your name!*

The atmosphere is electric and very moving. The word “holy” is sung with a distinct reverence. This chorus is repeated for several minutes. The pastor recites the words of the chorus whilst the band is playing and the worship team and congregation are singing. The manifesting of speaking in tongues is audibly evident from the pastor, some members of the worship team, and some members of the congregation. The rest of the worship team and the congregation are reverently singing the chorus. The pastor whispers an instruction to the organist who switches to a song.

The pastor proceeds to preach his sermon. He employs a cordless microphone for this. He frequently, to emphasize aspects of his sermon, would step down from the pulpit and walk up and down across the width of the stage and even down the aisles. At the conclusion of his sermon he engages in what is commonly known as the “altar call”. People, upon the pastor saying: “While every head is bowed and every eye is closed”, invite those who are in need of salvation or ill to come to the front of the stage. Designated elders then line up to together with the pastor lay hands on those who have responded and pray for them. During this service it happened that one person was “slain in the Spirit”, an expression denoting that the person fell to the floor. The person who happened to be a lady was immediately covered with a blanket by one of the female elders, in order for her body not to be exposed. Those who were prayed over are then pronounced ‘*saved*’, whereafter they are led to the prayer room for further counselling.

The meeting, which lasted two hours, is then closed in prayer.

5.8 House of Glory Ministries

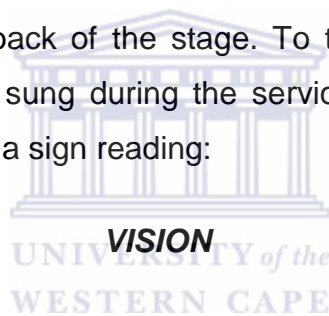


Liturgical order

- *The service is opened by the pastor who then proceeds with his sermon in an extremely emotive way.*
- *The stage is occupied by a second pastor who reads a passage from scripture and the first pastor comments on the passage read.*
- *The scripture reading is accompanied by a keyboard player.*
- *The worship team leads the congregation in the singing of choruses with the pastors joining in.*
- *Members of the congregation raise their hands while engaging in worship.*
- *The worship team continues leading the service.*
- *Members of the congregation go to the front and kneel, engaging in serious, emotive praying.*
- *The pastor, after the kneeling members having returned to their seats, engages in another sermon.*
- *Upon the closing of the sermon the worship team leads the collection ritual.*

- *An anointing ritual is then performed by the pastor with members of the congregation going to the front to be prayed for and anointed with oil.*
- *Upon this ritual being performed, the service is closed.*

This church is situated in Albert Road on the first floor of a commercial building. The ground floor is occupied by a car radio installation workshop. The top of the building features a huge white billboard reading: "House of Glory Ministries", with the church's contact details, services roster and counselling dates underneath. Access to the first floor is via a staircase of which the walls are painted white. The hall is painted yellow with white polypropylene chairs. In the front of the church hall is a stage with a sign against the back wall reading: "Thank God for Jesus Christ". Brown and white fabric adorns the back of the stage. To the left of the stage is a DVD screen upon which the lyrics sung during the service are projected. The church's vision features prominently on a sign reading:



VISION

People all over the world come to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus

Christ especially those that less priviledged. To see the poor,

Orphanages, sick, prisoners, street people, market people, etc, fully

Empowered "Spirit"ually and physically through the power of our Lord

Jesus Christ and by the grace of God we will get there.

Below the vision statement is a sketch of a Bible. The stage is approximately 500 millimeters high and is covered with a grey carpet. The main pulpit is made out of glass with a smaller wooden lectern next to it. The pulpit features a golden cross with flower arrangements on either side of the pulpit. The windows are draped in green. A

shelf filled with books is positioned at the back of the church. A sound engineer, as in all the other churches described herein, is operating a mixer placed on a table.

The worship team consists of four singers, three females and a male, standing behind microphones. The females are elegantly dressed in long dresses and the male in a African pants and shirt. The musicians consist of a bongo drummer, a drummer, a guitarist and a keyboard player. The congregation is smartly dressed with most females wearing dresses and males wearing suits. They all have Bibles and notebooks.

The music tempo as is the case with all the churches kicks off with a fast beat and the congregation either claps or raises their arms while singing enthusiastically. As the worship service continues the musical beat and tempo become slower. At this juncture the members of the congregation extend their arms forward with open palms creating the impression of wishing to receive.

The pastor is wearing a traditional Nigerian suit with white shoes. He, equipped with a microphone, parades up and down the aisles amongst the congregation. Being extremely charismatic, he delivers his sermon with a loud voice. Upon the conclusion of the worship service people in need of salvation are, through the altar call, invited to the front where they are anointed with olive oil. The pastor and elders apply the oil to the people's foreheads and their palms. A trumpet plays and more people are anointed by the pastor and the elders. The oil is applied in the shape of a cross on their foreheads. Those having received the anointing return to their chairs making a symbolic cross against their chests. The band plays while people come to the front dropping coins, notes and envelopes into braided baskets. The service is closed in prayer.

Chapter 6

An identification and description of the distinct features of the material dimension of the selected worship services

6.1 Introduction

Although each and every one of the services attended and recorded, displayed varying material dimensions, there, nevertheless were material features which were not only common among all, but apparently crucial to the successful accomplishment of the services. We will discuss these common elements in this chapter in an effort to come to a suitable conclusion.



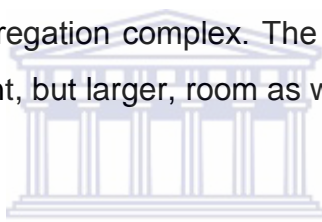
6.2 The liturgical space

Since these congregations are places of worship the liturgical space denotes the interior and exterior venue within physical structures which are deemed necessary for the enactment of the various aspects of worship. All of these congregations are situated in what is known as industrial or commercial buildings. The traditional architectural sanctuary 'look and feel' is non-existent. Low ceilings are a common feature. These storefront congregations, in each and every instance, share the overall premises with other industrial or commercial tenants. None of the congregations, as per this study, own the premises from which they practice their worship. The spaces are leased directly from the landlords. Furniture and fixtures are very basic. Seating at these congregations are polypropylene chairs, of which ownership vests in the congregations. The buildings have obviously been let "voetstoots" with very little, if any, maintenance being affected by the landlords. Lighting is very basic since these buildings were never designed as places of worship, but were intended rather as factories, warehouses, workshops or offices. Ventilation is grossly inadequate and the large occupancy generated by the congregations makes it even worse. Contrary to the mainstream church complexes,

parking exclusively provided for the congregation attendants is non-existent. Since these congregations' main requirement in terms of premises is vacant space, a new church can virtually be operational within one week.

In opposition to the mainstream church buildings where the altar occupies the pivotal position, an elevated stage features in each and every one of these congregations. The only fundamental physical differences amongst the various constructed stages are the height and the length. In every instance the stage captures most of the central area of the extravagance of the liturgical performance. The common mood and feel is that of a theatre within which stage productions are performed. The stage is almost a sacrosanct area and only those who are part of the liturgical or worship team are allowed to avail themselves of it.

Most of the congregations contain prayer rooms which are usually a side room not forming part of the main congregation complex. The congregations' Sunday School activity is operated in a different, but larger, room as well.



6.3 Audiovisual equipment and musical instruments

Mounted speakers designed as a powerful source of output for the sound system are, in all examples, positioned on either side of the stage, or immediately below it. Sophisticated mixers are positioned at the back of the church from where the sound is controlled or manipulated by a sound engineer. Microphone stands equipped with microphones are prominent features on the stages. These microphones are utilised by the members of the worship teams. The pastors, in most instances, use cordless or lapel microphones enabling them to move around a lot during their speeches or sermons.

Every one of the seven congregations has a band. The band members' musical instruments are guitars, keyboards, drum kits and bongo drums. The guitars comprise of bass, rhythm and lead guitars. In some of these congregations there are two sets of keyboards. The musical instruments are amplified through amplifiers, similar to those used by rock and pop bands. The pulsating and repetitive percussion effects are created by the bass guitarists and the drummers. Whereas, normally,

such sophisticated sound equipment is usually prescribed by sound engineers at events held in large auditoriums, this, on the contrary (with the exception of the Cape Town Christian Church and the Winners Chapel International), is not the case in these congregations. These average-sized commercial edifices cannot accommodate, nor do they warrant, such sophisticated equipment and such high decibel levels.

6.4 *The band and the worship team*

These two human components constitute a duo of integral factors of the worship services. The combined performances of the band and the worship team, time-wise, in most cases, occupies more than fifty per cent of the duration of the services. Ably equipped with microphones and amplifiers, they, from the outset, create an enthusiastic and sacred atmosphere. The bands are well rehearsed and would, for example, in the event of a lengthy session of ‘speaking in tongues’ play monotonous, repetitive tunes over and over again. The lyrics of the songs performed during the worship service are projected from the sound engineer’s booth onto the video screen positioned on the stage.

6.5 *The physiognomy and dress code of the leaders and the congregation*

Even though the physical conduct of the members of these congregations does not form part of my original material dimensions, I wish to here mention that it is common for members of the congregation to clap and dance to the beat of the band and the worship team during the first part of the service. This part is commonly known as the *praise* session. In some cases the congregation would form a human chain singing and dancing up and down the aisles. The second part of the service which is known as the *worship* part is when the congregation’s physiognomy would change to raising their hands and closing their eyes. Sometimes a member, when “moved by the Spirit”, would run to the front of the stage and fall prostrate on the floor. Note that I have used italics for the words “praise “ and “worship” as there is a great controversy as to what the difference and significance between these two actions involves.

The dress code with the exception of two congregations can only be described as very smart. Generally it is safe to say that the attendants lean towards more formal attire. Men wearing designer shoes, pants, shirts and ties, and women dressed to kill in posh outfits with matching stilettos and handbags. An interesting note can be made here that in not one instance was it observed that a woman was seen to don a hat of any kind. Jewellery in the form of earrings, necklaces, bracelets and decorative rings seemed, however, to be extremely in vogue. The wearing of make-up is popular, but because of the attendants being predominantly African, it was less obvious. Braids and wigs are very popular among the female attendants.

The band and worship team members were in most cases dressed in a uniform manner, with the males wearing dark pants and white shirts and the females wearing blouses with black skirts and stilettos.

The pastors and their partners were in most instances dressed like prominent corporate business people. The men usually donning designer suits, bright shirts with glittering cufflinks, silk ties and sharp-pointed designer shoes. The partners were either dressed in traditional Nigerian dresses or in contemporary high fashion. The wearing of casual clothes, here denoting denim jeans and sneakers, were only witnessed in two of these congregations.

6.6 Bibles, notebooks, posters banners, books, laptops, cell phones and video recordings.

The attendants in general take great pride in carrying Bibles. What proved interesting was that in most cases the versions were of a very expensive leather-bound nature, and large in size. Notebooks and the jotting down of notes were common in all of these gatherings. Members of the congregations were frantically trying to almost verbatim take down what the pastor was saying during his sermon. What I found interesting was that the traditional hymnal or chorus books were non-existent in these congregations. Those who were unacquainted with the lyrics of a song could, as mentioned above, follow the projected lyrics on the screens positioned on the stage. In some congregations it was common for members to record certain parts of the service on their cell phones.

Posters containing motivational scriptural verses were also common. Pulpit cloths were popular together with banners spanning the width of the stage affixed to the rear stage wall. Book stores and book shelves covering a wide range of Christian themes were situated in the foyers. The most common themes among the books on display were motivational in nature. These books and in some cases CDs and videos were available for sale.

6.7 Liturgical objects

The offertory objects and procedures appertaining thereto differed from congregation to congregation. In some cases the members would, during the taking up of the offering, go and deposit their tithes and offerings in baskets or buckets placed on a table in front of the stage. In other cases ushers would circulate up and down the aisles with the members passing on buckets or baskets into which they deposited their tithes and offerings. The ushers would, upon completion of this ritual, form a straight line, and followed by the treasurer; proceed into an adjoining room where the money would be taken into safe custody by the treasurer.

Sacred cloths are pieces of cloth fabric which are often waved by some members of the congregation, particularly women, during the services. In the case of one of the congregations under discussion the pastor was waving such a cloth incessantly throughout his sermon. In other cases, members of the congregation, especially females would, during “spirit filled” parts of the service, wave these cloths. From what I was able to gather it did not appear as if such cloths were of a specific design, colour, size or fabric. Cloths would, in some instances, also be used to cover the exposed parts of women’s bodies when they were “slain by the spirit”.

A certain type of oil, which I assumed was olive oil, would in some instances be applied by the pastor(s) or the elders, to the foreheads of members of the congregation who proceeded to the front of the stage for prayer.

Altar calls, even though not originally anticipated as common material aspects of these congregations, appeared to be a common denominator at all of these services. Members of the congregation are urged upon having raised their hands, to go to the

front of the stage to be prayed for. Pastors and elders would then place the palms of their hands on the foreheads of those in need of prayer. In most cases there would be another person positioned at the back of the person being prayed for. It would appear that the latter person serves as a safeguard, in case the person being prayed for, be “slain by the Spirit” during the prayer and collapse to the floor.



Postscript

“Churches were giving their members the same benefit they would get from being at a rock concert. I am concerned that these new churches are all part of a quick-fix scheme. They are almost like fast-food religions”. Professor Sarojini Nadar (*Sunday Times*, 23 December 2012: 6).

Assessing the theological quantifiable merit or authentic justifiability of a religious phenomenon is to say the least “a standing on holy ground” endeavour, especially since one is here dealing with phenomena that is supernaturally ascribed. My aim with this study was empirical of nature. Therefore I included live recordings of enacted services of the congregations under discussion as the foundation for my assertions. Copies of these recordings may be made available for perusal by any interested persons.

One of the primary reasons which prompted and inspired me to engage in this study was the strange phenomenon of shops, bars, factories and offices being utilised as places of worship. I opted here distinctly for the term ‘utilised’ rather than ‘converted’, because it is clear that a group of worshippers, seeking premises, would simply, much like commercial tenants, rent vacant space from a landlord and move in. No structural or architectural demands were deemed necessary for the applicable space to become a place of worship. The criteria required by these congregations, appears to be location-driven. As long as the premises are situated in the hub of suburban residential and commercial activity, factors like ecclesiastical aesthetics and consecrated liturgical space seem to fall by the wayside.

Having been reared with the mindset that a church has to have a particular architectural look and feel, making it sacred and distinctly unique from any other building, be it residential, industrial or commercial, seeing vacant spaces not even remotely resembling my perception of a church building came as a cultural and spiritual shock to me. I would wonder, how can Christ be worshipped in a building which formally produced car tyres? I also discovered that there are multitudes of

people in the market square who agree with me. This, I will substantiate with the following example.

The building in which I reside, in Woodstock, is, as previously mentioned, the former Salvation Army church hall. It has a conventional church look and feel to it. It has strictly defined high exterior walls complete with decorative pillars. Its interior boasts high ceilings and Oregon wooden floors. In the six years that I have lived in the church, numerous people have expressed their horror saying to me: “But how can you live in a church? It is God’s house.” Some have even predicted that God will punish me because of the sacrilege I’ve committed by living in a church. This example serves to confirm the conditioning many people have with regard to what a church should look like, and what it is to be used for.

I chose to employ Ninian Smart’s material dimension criteria as an assessment of the material dimension offers some of the clearest differences between the churches in Woodstock discussed here and traditional places of worship. Since these churches flourish where older churches are failing or have closed down, it suggested an answer to some of the reasons why these congregations, operating in what was formerly bars, shops, factories, warehouses, workshops and offices, now constituting these liturgical spaces, prove so attractive. These congregations are all strategically situated in plain view. High visibility due to them forming part of industrial, commercial and office complexes might conjure an impression in the mind of anyone passing by that God is to be found where one buys one’s groceries, fills one’s car, draws one’s money, buys one’s shoes and clothes, order take-aways, buy airtime, access the internet and go for entertainment. The founding pastors furthermore do not have to have sleepless nights on where to find especially council-approved zoned premises and how to raise the funding for the construction and equipping of a church building.

The liturgical space, in this case a storefront venue, poses the attraction of being a “home from home” social environment where people from the same foreign country can interact with one another in the name of God. The members of these congregations predominantly live in bachelor or one-bedroomed overcrowded apartments. Belonging to a congregation within walking distance from where one lives could also pose the further attraction of uniting with fellow foreigners in a

spiritual manner, affecting a front of solidarity against imminent threats of xenophobia. Such places of worship furthermore appear to be perfectly legitimate from a Biblical point of view.

“Early synagogues cannot be identified, no doubt, because they were no different from secular buildings” (Smart, 1996:281). My perception of a church having to have steeples, pulpits, stained glass windows, wooden pews, and altars, are all features which came into fruition centuries *after* the founding of the early church. Church buildings, as per my perception, were late in emerging, since the early Christians worshipped in synagogues and in the Temple, and for a long period in private houses (Smart, 1996:281) and the radical reformers created plainer chapels and meeting houses (Smart, 1996:283).

I therefore concede that the utilising of whatever premises for places of worship is in perfect keeping with the gathering practises in the early church, and that their storefront format could be one of the reasons why these congregations prove so appealing and successful.

Unlike a symphony orchestra, where the instruments employed by the various musicians are not amplified, the resident bands at these congregations, all with the exception of the drum and bongo drums kits, make use of powerful guitar and keyboard amplifiers. Dramatic bass sounds created by the bass guitarist, beats from the rhythmic guitarist and high-pitched effects created by the lead guitarist, together with the thumping and pounding percussion beats created by the drummer, produce the gradual emotional build-up which climaxes in the pastors employing their amplified microphones when consolidating, focussing, and climaxing the charismatic oratory, culminating in the sermon.

While Smart does not refer to any of the above in his exposition of the material dimensions, I rate these as the most powerful drawcards of these congregations. These places of worship are arranged like theatres and the mood that one experiences is of a very dynamic and successful show.

The stage is set for a supernatural audiovisual experience. Members are in most cases ushered to where they should sit in the church. This was another revelation to

me, since I had grown up in an ecclesiastical environment where the members were allowed to sit where they wish. I distinctly remember the many occasions where the pastor due to the scattered nature of the seated congregation would appeal to the congregation to occupy the vacant seats at the front; often to no avail, since the congregation stayed glue to their original seating positions.

The worship team and bands in retrospect perform, much like a warm-up band at a rock concert that, before the headlining band hits the stage, work up the members in preparation for the entrance of the pastor as the key liturgist, both in terms of the leading of the worship and the delivering of the sermon. Amplified sound transmitted through mixers, speakers and microphones are apparently indispensable tools for the impact on the audience or the congregation. As stated earlier in this study, these industrial and commercial buildings now used for places of worship do not, from an acoustics point of view, warrant such sophisticated sound equipment, or, for that matter, any sound equipment at all. My sense is that the primary reason why such equipment features prominently in all these churches is for the creation of an emotional effect and response.

The members, upon arrival, are faced with a band and worship team engaged in a pre-performance sound-checking test session. This part of the service is characterised by the gross absence of a liturgist. The performers appear to have their role cut out for them; that being the affecting of a highly emotive build-up for the final appearance of the “main act”, which is the performance of the pastor which proved to be either a male or a female. The band and the worship team “ministry” is to get the congregation’s participation worked up from an initial fast beat gospel swing party, gradually through the introduction of slower, highly emotive worship songs, preparing for the grand entrance of the charismatic pastor. The pastor in this case could be the resident, local pastor, or a visiting preacher, but is nonetheless, definitely the main act.

At an extremely volatile stage of the service, where the band and the worship team have masterfully generated the grand entry of the key liturgist, the pastor would, equipped with a microphone take captive occupation of the stage with the praise and worship team manifesting a tangibly subservient position in terms of their general performance.

For me, the liturgical space can here be viewed as encompassing the entire physical place of worship, by integrating the stage with the musical instruments employed, the audiovisual equipment applied and that part of the liturgical space which is the stage. My reasons for doing this are because these three entities are generally, at any venue of performance, regarded as an integrated unified platform.

Another liturgical object would be the Bible. As previously stated impressive large leather-bound Bibles are common features among the members of the various congregations. A quick overview showed that there did not seem to be a preference for a particular translation. The large, paraphrased modern versions appear to be very popular. The traditional, smaller-sized Bible, as distributed by the Bible Society, was nowhere to be found. Most members were carrying Bibles with extensive verse for verse commentaries. It would appear that the larger the Bible and the more costly it is, the greater the blessings the reader would enjoy. These illustrious and expensive Bibles were carried by both male and female members. The evolution of the printing press had, according to Smart, an obvious effect on piety, giving rise to new genres of pious and polemical literature during the Reformation period (Smart, 1996:285).

Apart from the carrying of a Bible, prosperity, deliverance, healing and motivational Christian literature was available at most of these churches and also appear to be indispensable aids in their discipleship. These include easy and accessible Bible commentaries, theological treatises and propaganda material. Authors like William Folurunso Kumuyi, Idahosa, E.A. Adeboye of the RCCG, Oyedepo of Winner's Chapel, Kenneth E. Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, T.D. Jakes, Chris Oyakhilome, and T.B. Joshua appear to be very popular at most of these churches.

Smart notes that publications and pamphlets were some of the techniques used by Christian missionaries to spread the Gospel (Smart, 1996:286). Indigenous churches often create series of books and booklets to persuade their own members to not fall victim to the argumentation of other schools of beliefs (Smart, 1996:286). Holy books is a term which Smart employs that is very broad. I choose to define it as those books regarded by the church members as indispensable to their membership. Prevalent among the churches featuring in this study, I would cite four types of literature: one, their Bibles, two, their contemporary versions of what the Bible

teaches, three, their note books, in which they religiously record what the pastor is preaching, and four, the published Christian literature for sale, available at the local congregation's bookstore.

It is obvious that the richer the ritual and the stronger the demand for artworks to decorate religious buildings, the greater the importance of wealth for rulers who patronize religion and the greater the need for contributions to sacred causes (Smart, 1996:287). Defining an artwork is a difficult task. If artwork is taken to mean an image painted on canvas, against a ceiling or a wall, then let it be known that such material dimensions are absent in the congregations under discussion. The same applies to sculptures, tapestries, stained glass, altarpieces and statues. The reason for the gross absence of the latter in the physical church buildings under discussion here is, as previously mentioned the fact that none of these buildings were designed as places of worship, nor even as auditoriums for corporate gatherings. The focus has shifted from places of worship being traditionally designed with an even spread of the sacred to, in the case of the Woodstock Neo-Pentecostal churches, the stage, the sound, the worship team/band and the pastors/preachers being the objects and people of attraction.

The closest to what Smart includes as material dimensions of artworks I could identify in these congregations are banners and posters. Smart, whilst acknowledging that religious art has throughout the ages expressed itself in a more formal manner, notes that material dimension "just as often incorporates the kitsch and the aesthetically deficient: plain chapels in Bradford, posters in the streets of Banaras, ex-veto paintings in Mexico, and so on" (Smart, 1996:19). These posters invariably consist of motivational passages of scripture or statements conjuring confidence among the members. Below follows a collage of some of the posters and banners featuring in these churches. These posters and banners reek of materialism and prosperity almost being beneficial bonuses promised to the members. I chose to not disclose the name of the church in which a particular banner or poster featured.



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On the matter of dress, Smart does not elaborate much more than to say that the dress and vestments of priests constitute another material dimension. The churches featuring in this study are not led by priests, but by pastors. A church pastor can be either a male or a female. Very often both the pastor and his wife perform preaching functions in the church. None of the churches I discussed in this study was characterised by an official dress mode distinctly differentiating the pastor from the congregation. What I did find interesting was the elaborate designer-orientated manner in which the pastors dressed. The typical American television evangelist suaveness was mirrored complete with designer suits, shoes, shirts and ties. Being fashion-conscious and practising it appeared to be deemed of utmost importance for most of the pastors. The worship teams and band members also in most instances lived up to contemporary fashion trends, yet not quite at the same level as the pastors.

The pastors are masters of manipulation, employing a cordless or a lapel microphone, retaining eye contact with the sound engineer at the back in order to ensure loud volumes. The pop and rock music industries are living examples of the effects created through state of the art sound equipment. The magic of genres such as “house music” lies in the excessive transmission of monotonous base sounds. Many of the sermons, as can be listened to on the video recordings my assistants and I made, are characterised by such high levels of sound and amplified emotion.

The stage is another vital material dimension in these churches. It in most cases occupies the entire width on the front of the building in an elevated format. The elevation aspect creates a psychological and physical demarcation between the band, worship team, liturgists and the congregation. The norm applied at most of the churches is that members of the congregation wishing to give a testimony do so at the front, but below the stage.

While Smart does not refer to any of the above in his exposition of the material dimensions, I, in conclusion, rate these as the most powerful material dimensions that contribute to the success and popularity of these Pentecostal churches in Woodstock. I concede that there are other aspects which equally, if not exceedingly, contribute to the attractiveness of these churches. Since the Spirit is the driving entity behind these churches I, for one, choose not to venture into the theological exercise of validating or criticising the effects of the work they do. Furthermore, since the objective of this study was to identify whether material dimensions, using Smart’ criteria, were some of the reasons why these churches prove so attractive, this I believe I have achieved.

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