

**WOMEN MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH AT THE  
GRASSROOTS LEVEL:**

**A case study of the Anglican Church of Kenya in Ngiriambu  
Archdeaconry of the Diocese of Kirinyaga**

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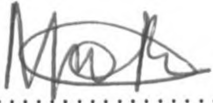


A project submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the award  
of the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Philosophy and Religious Studies.

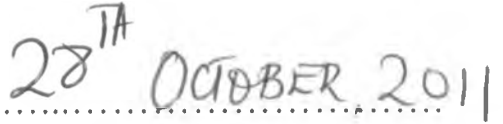
**OCTOBER, 2011.**

# DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university.



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MWANGI MAGDALINE NDUTA



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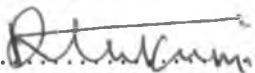
This project has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.




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## DEDICATION

This document is dedicated to my parents, Mrs. Janet Wamutira Mwangi the late Benard Mwangi Njoroge for their love and especially my mother who single handedly brought me up and struggled to provide me with education.

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Many people have contributed in different ways in helping me to complete this work. I can therefore mention only a few of them.

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the ministry of women in the Anglican Church of Kenya in Ngirambu archdeaconry of the diocese of Kirinyaga. It informs that women's contribution and participation in the life of the church at the grassroots level is very important and has enabled it to stabilize. In many congregations there are more women than men and therefore their contribution is more than that of men.

This study shows that in the bible women were involved in the church ministry right from its beginning. It has also traced their ministry in the history of the church. The research indicates how their ministry is diverse. There has been an effort by the church to support their ministry. However the study also reveals that in some cases their ministry is not fully recognized thus women face many challenges and hindrances.

For a long time women have been discouraged to exercise their spiritual gifts fully due to different interpretations and understandings of the bible and cultural prejudices. Today, the ministry of women is evident in every sphere of the church. In the ACK diocese of Kirinyaga women are rendering an important service to the church. They are participating and contributing to both the physical and spiritual needs and the development of the church.

Their ministry include being: leaders in various women church groups and congregations; evangelists; worship leaders; preaching; pastoral work; music; church

stewardship and generosity; supporting the clergy; construction of churches, vicarages, church halls, kitchens, nursery schools and dispensaries; weekly fellowships; singing in choirs; teaching children in the Sunday school; advising the youth; hospitality; cleanliness; charity and social work. They are also serving as ordained clergy in the parishes.

The church needs to identify, recognize and encourage women's spiritual gifts which enable them to fulfill these ministries. The research findings indicate that very few women are involved in the higher decision making bodies of the church. In considering the ministry of the church, gender should not be the determining factor but calling, competence and ability of the persons. Women should be empowered as well as men and equal opportunities for the ministry should be accorded to them without any discrimination.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
ACC	Anglican Consultative Council
AS	Administrative Secretary
ASWOM	Association of Women in the Ordained Ministry
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
CBE	Christians for Biblical Equality
CCS	Christian Community Services
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CPEA	Church of the Province of East Africa
CPK	Church of the Province of Kenya
EAHAIA	Eastern Africa HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa
KAMA	Kenya Anglican Men Association
M U	Mothers' Union
PBTE	Provincial Board of Theological Education
S.SCH	Sunday school
T.O.T	Trainers of Trainers
REV.	Reverend
VEN.	Venerable
VERY REV.	Very Reverend
MOST REV.	Most Reverend

## DEFINITIONS

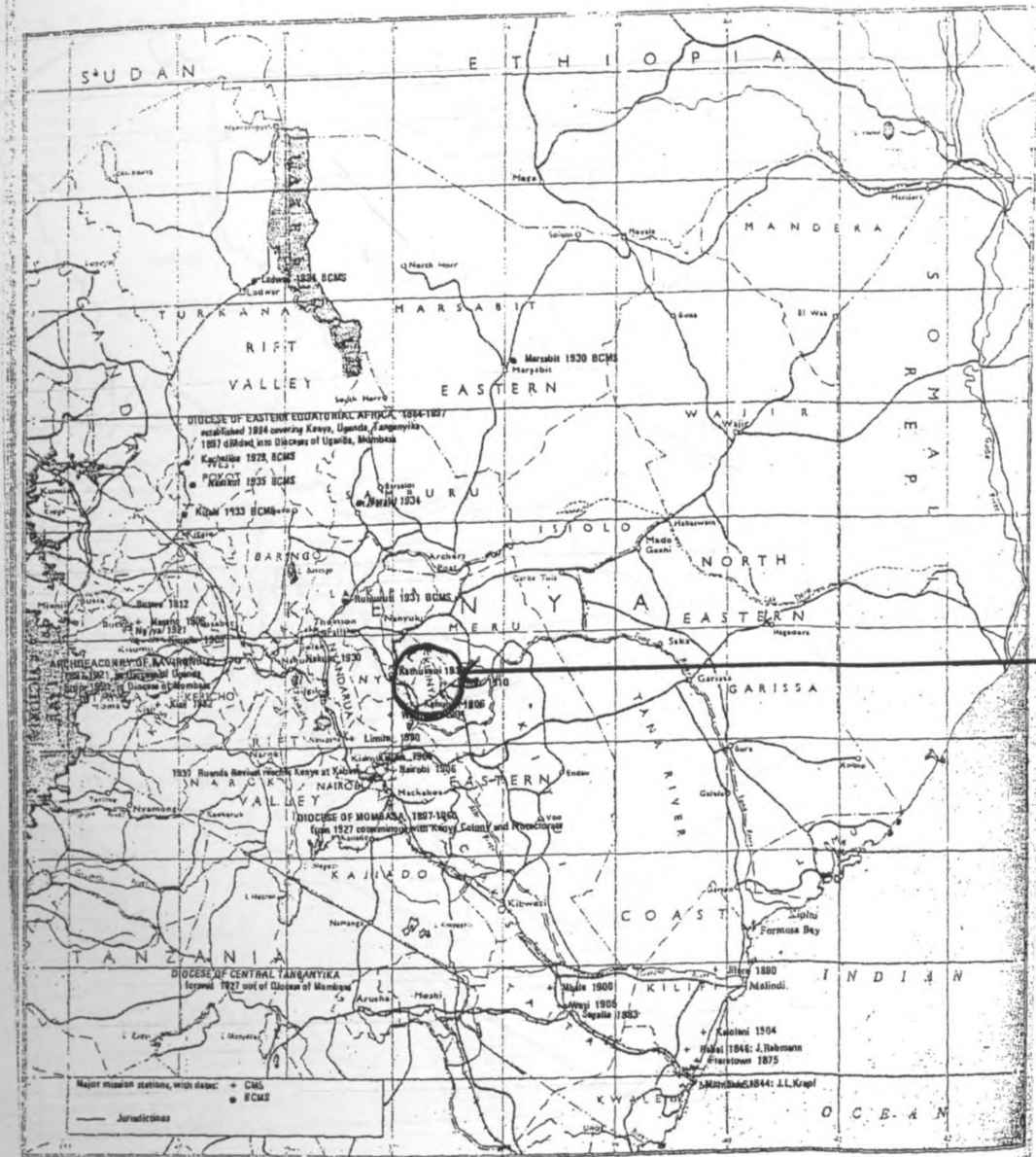
Anglican Communion	The world wide fellowship of the Anglican Church
Archdeacon	The Bishop's principal assistant in matters of administration and discipline in their respective Archdeaconry
Archdeaconry	A jurisdiction within an Anglican diocese overseen by an Archdeacon <sup>1</sup>
Deanery	A jurisdiction within an Anglican diocese but smaller than Archdeaconry overseen by a Rural dean
Diocese	An area overseen by a bishop
Parish	An area which is overseen by a priest which comprises one or more Congregations
Quota	The money allocated to be contributed by parishes and other church departments for the support of diocesan activities
Cathedral	Main church of the diocese which the Bishop's <i>Cathedra</i> or official throne is located from where he has authority to preside over the Church in his diocese. <sup>2</sup>

Synod	The highest decision making body of the diocese
Evangelist	The person who gives Christian instructions to the seekers of faith.
Sister	A Church Army female trained evangelist in the ACK
Vicar	The priest In charge of a Parish
Vicarage	The vicar's lounge
Vicar's warden	Church elder who assists the vicar and serves as a vice chair of the parish or council.
Provost	Priest in charge of the cathedral church
Canon	An honorary title given to an Anglican priest or layman in recognition of distinguished service to the church

# MAP OF ANGLICAN MISSIONS, 1844 - 1959

## Creation and devolution of the Anglican Diocese of Mombasa and its Mission Stations

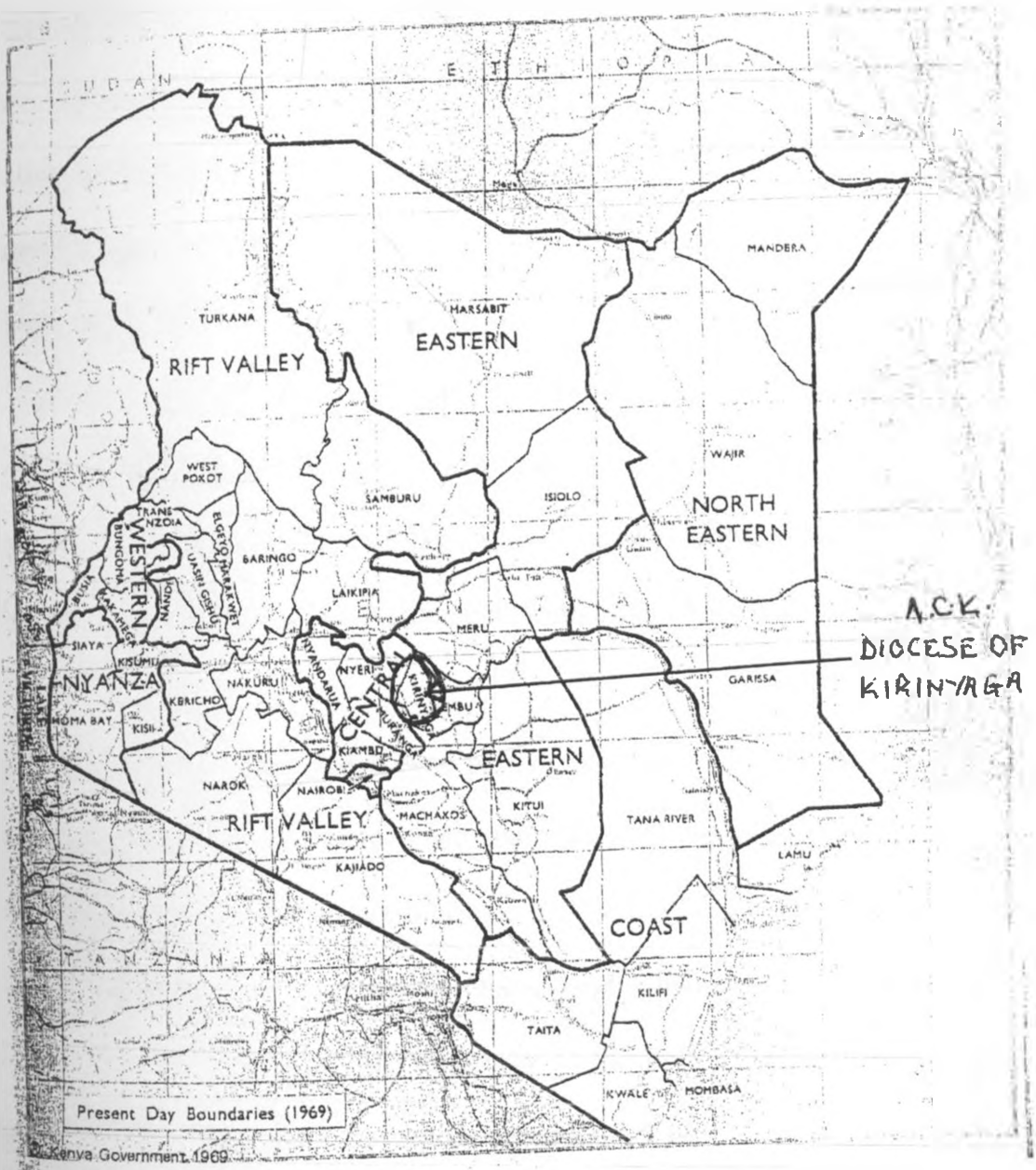
Figure I.



Source: Kenya Churches Handbook

# POLITICAL MAP OF KENYA, 1963 – 1972 Administrative provinces and districts and the positions of the diocese of Kirinyaga.

Figure II



Source: Kenya Churches Handbook

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND

The Anglican Church in Kenya was established in 1844 with the arrival of Dr. J. L. Krapf of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) at Mombasa.<sup>3</sup> He was joined later by Rev. Johana Rebmann in 1846. In the same year the CMS established a missionary station in Rabai in Kilifi County. In 1851 the first Anglican convert, a dying cripple named Mringe was baptized by Rebmann. In 1884 the diocese of Eastern Equatorial Africa was created which covered Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika. The Rt. Rev. James Hannington acted as its first bishop. The first Africans to be ordained in the Anglican ministry were Ishmael Semler and William Jones who were ex-slaves. In 1898 the diocese of Eastern Equatorial Africa was subdivided thus creating the diocese of Mombasa which included all Kenya and Northern Tanganyika.

In 1921 the Kavirondo which was part of the diocese of Uganda was hived off and included as part of the diocese of Mombasa. In 1927 Northern Tanganyika was hived off from the diocese of Mombasa which was then left to cover only the Kenyan territory. In 1955 Bishops Festus Habakkuk Olang' and Obadiah Kariuki were consecrated in Uganda by the Archbishop of Canterbury as the first African Bishops of the Anglican Church in Kenya. In 1960 the church became autonomous from Canterbury forming the Church of the Province of East Africa (CPEA) which united the Kenyan and Tanganyika Anglican Churches.



In 1961 the diocese of Mombasa was subdivided and additional dioceses of Fort Hall (later known as Mt. Kenya), Maseno and Nakuru were created. The diocese of Mt. Kenya comprised the administrative districts of Kiambu, Muranga, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Embu, Meru, Isiolo and Marsabit.

By 1970 the church membership in Kenya and Tanzania had grown sufficiently. Two separate Anglican provinces were established one in each nation. The Church of the Province of Kenya (CPK) was created and headed by Festus Olang' becoming the first African Anglican Archbishop.<sup>4</sup> The diocese of Mt. Kenya comprised the administrative districts of Kirinyaga, Embu, Meru, Isiolo and Marsabit.<sup>5</sup> In 1975 it was divided creating the dioceses of Mount Kenya East and Mount Kenya South respectively.

The church continued to increase in membership and in 1990 the diocese of Mt. Kenya East was subdivided creating the diocese of Embu and the diocese of Kirinyaga.<sup>6</sup> The diocese of Kirinyaga comprised of the administrative districts of Kirinyaga, Meru, Isiolo and Marsabit.

In 1997 the diocese of Kirinyaga was further subdivided creating the diocese of Meru. The diocese of Kirinyaga covered the administrative districts of Kirinyaga, Isiolo and Marsabit. In the diocesan structure the diocese of Kirinyaga as by 2010 had seven archdeaconries, namely; Ngiriambu, Kabare, Mutira, Kiandangae, Thiba, Wanguru and Cathedral.

By 1944 the Anglican Church had 36 African clergy, 16 European clergy, 1,535 African

lay workers, 307 women workers and 70 missionaries with about 20,000 communicant members and between 30,000 and 40,999 others under instructions.<sup>7</sup>

The participation of women as fulltime church workers in the diocese of Mount Kenya is indicated during the first commissioning of Misses M. Dobson and V. Waitherero as Women's and Girls' workers; Misses Batey as youth worker; Miss J. Murry as literacy and literature worker by Bishop Obadiah Kariuki on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1962.

In 1967 the fourth session of the Diocesan Synod was informed that women work was progressing as Misses Priscilla Njoki of Kiambaa, Eunice Marigu of Embu and Hortensia Wanjiku of Kiambaa were being trained at the Church Army in Nairobi.

Miss Virginia Waitherero and Sister Mary Muthoni were working together at Nanyuki (Sister Mary Muthoni was the first female worker hailing from Mutira parish, one of the oldest parishes in the diocese of Kirinyaga diocese) while Miss Margaret Muthoni was being trained at St. John's Community Centre. Incidentally by that time the Centre was being run by an ordained deacon Rev. Ann Barnett.

Bishop Kariuki is reported to have suggested during the 1968 Lambeth conference that Christian men and women could after some training be allowed to officiate at Sunday services, marriage and baptism ceremonies. However, he was not in favour of this practice in his diocese of Mt. Kenya. On the ordination of women bishop Kariuki stated that "if a capable woman presented herself to be considered for ordination there should

be nothing to stop her from going forward for training or being ordained if she achieves the required standards and qualifications.”<sup>8</sup>

The seed of the Anglican Church in Kirinyaga diocese traces back to 1910 when the Church Missionary Society founded its mission work in Kabare and Mutira in 1912. The missionaries established the pastoral and educational work. These two mission centers became the mother churches of the Anglican Church in what is the present Diocese of Kirinyaga. According to Keith Cole the first women who had started going to Kabare School in 1918 were Mariam Wangeci, Hannah Mukami, Sarah Wambura, Ruth Kethi, Esther Mutura and Lizzie Wagatu<sup>9</sup>.

In Mutira the first baptism took place on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1920 and included some women who might be among the five who were confirmed on 23rd June 1921. In 1927, an African female evangelist Jane Edith Asher was sent to Mutira to help in the women's and girls work. It is also notable that the wife of Rev. Johana Njumbi who was in charge of pastoral work conducted classes for women.<sup>10</sup>

This background therefore provides us with the information on how the church came into being in our area of research. It also gives information on the development since the arrival of the missionaries and sets the ground on how the ministry of women began.

## 1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In many churches women form the majority in membership. This also applies to the Anglican Church in Kenya. Their participation in church activities has contributed immensely to the growth and stability of the church. A few of them have been given opportunities to lead in the grassroots level but only a negligible number has been accorded the opportunities to lead in the higher levels of the ACK hierarchy.

The ACK as it is today in growth and stability to a greater extent is as a result of the ministry of women. This contribution has not been fully recognized by the church in order to encourage more women participation and leadership necessary for church growth and stability. This study explores the Anglican Church in Kenya and more specifically the efforts made by the diocese of Kirinyaga to encourage and attract women to render their ministry fully in order to produce a mature caring church that boldly proclaims Christ according to her vision.

Given the opportunity for leadership and with more emancipation, women could contribute effectively in all areas of the ACK thus making it more stable and self reliant.

It is important to establish the extent to which they have or not been given the opportunity not only to participate in the ministry of the church but also in leadership and decision making processes.

The critical analysis of the leadership role of women in a largely rural and traditional environment will make a significant contribution to the quest for a more inclusive leadership in the growing Anglican Church. While the ministry of women has been appreciated by the church, very little opportunities have been accorded to them to fully exercise their role in church ministry. The institutions created in the churches which directly affect women such as Girls' Brigade and Mothers Union do not have enough capacity to create programmes which prepare women for greater participation.

### **1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study examines:

- i. The ministry of women in the church at the grassroots.
2. The factors that make women participate in their ministry as members and leaders at grassroots level.
3. Areas of concern and recommend strategies to enhance women participation and contribution in church leadership.

#### 1.4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The ministry of women in the Anglican Church of Kenya is enormous. Their ministry includes: participation in public worship, financial contributions for the welfare of the church, the formation of spiritual and social welfare groups and participation in church choirs. They are in the forefront in contributing money, labour and time for the work of the church. They lead in advising, encouraging and visiting the sick and the needy. They are in fact the buttress of the church. Despite the fact that women are the majority in church membership, they have not been given adequate position in leadership and where such leadership is exercised it has sometimes been looked down upon.

The pace of encouraging and preparing women leadership in the church has been very slow. They are therefore very few in the church leadership echelons. It is worth noting that in some areas women lead in the local congregations and participates in committee meetings. This demonstrates that their ministry makes them pillars of the church growth and stability in the congregational or foundational level which is then realized at the Diocesan level.

Women ordination to priesthood as part of church leadership is a new but disputed dispensation. Furthermore consecration to the office of a bishop has not even been considered in the ACK although some women could qualify. A few Anglican Dioceses of the Anglican Communion for example, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and United States of America, have consecrated women as bishops. There have been debates about

the ordination of women and it took time before it was accepted in the diocese. More than thirty women have been ordained in the Diocese although this number is small compared to the ordained male counterparts.

There have been challenges facing women ministry in the church. These are based on prejudices, cultural, religious, political and social arguments. The project aims to suggest how these pitfalls could be addressed. Some of the cultural issues include being married off at an early age before completing the universal primary education, secondary and tertiary education and belief in unsuitability of women leadership. Notable is the failure to promote girl and the boy child education and provide forums for preparing and creating awareness of the capability of women leadership. This has diminished the opportunities for women ministry.

## **1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATION**

This study is based on the Anglican Church of Kenya which is part of the wider worldwide Anglican Communion. The Anglican Church of Kenya comprises thirty dioceses namely; All Saints Cathedral, Bondo, Bungoma, Butere, Eldoret, Embu, Kanjiando, Katakwa, Kiricho, Kirinyaga, Kitale, Kitui, Machakos, Maseno North, Maseno South, Maseno West, Mbeere, Meru, Mombasa, Mt. Kenya Central, Mt. Kenya South, Mt. Kenya West, Mumias, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nambale, Nyahururu, Southern Nyanza, Taita Taveta and Thika. The study area focuses on Kirinyaga diocese which comprises of seven archdeaconries namely, Ngiriambu, Mutira, Wan'guru, Kiandangae,

Thiba, Kabare and Cathedral. The study focused on the women ministry at the grassroots level and its contribution to the growth of the church.

Ngiriambu was selected because it is one of the earliest missionary out posts which was hived from Kabare archdeaconry where the missionaries first pitched their tent in Kirinyaga in 1910. It is also one of the largest archdeaconries both in Christian membership and span. The researcher also selected this area because of its convenience. The researcher was serving as a parish priest in Njuki-ini parish which is one of the parishes comprising Ngiriambu archdeaconry. As such the researcher could be able to interview the clergy, church elders, church women leaders, church women groups as well as the youth.

Due to the span of the archdeaconry, it was not possible to interview people from the 16 parishes of the Ngiriambu archdeaconry. It was easy for the researcher to interview the respondents in their mother tongue (kikuyu) which they could all understand.

It was advantageous for the researcher, being an ordained woman priest to interact and interview other male and female priests as well as female church leaders. The distribution of the questionnaire was made easier by the proximity of the respondents. However there were some challenges such as a few people not able to return the questionnaires. This resulted in the researcher to redistribute the questionnaires again. Some informants also could not avail their time for interview due to demand of their work. However, the researcher was not able to interview all the men and women



involved in church leadership but only a selected number.

The researcher was able to visit only St. Andrew's College of Theology and Development and St. Paul's University Limuru which are involved in the higher theological education and in the preparation of men and women for the ministry in the church.

## 1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this research explores the works that have been done in relation to women's ministry in the church in general and in the Anglican Church. Much of it is reflections on the interpretations on the biblical texts that refer to women participation in religious affairs whether individual or corporate.

Although there is more information about women in biblical commentaries, the topical areas which explicitly explain the ministry of women is shrouded in controversy. There is scanty literature on the ministry of women in the Anglican Church. Much of the written materials on the ministry of women focus on the ordination of women. This may lead one to concentrate on ordination thus restricting their ministry to the holy orders which is not the focus of this research.

There is also little literature of the history on the Anglican Church in Kenya. The publications that exist seem to overlook the ministry of women and the actual roles

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There is also little literature of the history on the Anglican Church in Kenya. The publications that exist seem to overlook the ministry of women and the actual roles

played by women in the church which to a greater extent, as this research reveals, has contributed to the growth and stability of the church.

Lydia Mwaniki in her article, 'Unveiling Paul: A Post Colonial Feminist Examination of the Construction of the Roman Family and its Influence on Pauline and Contemporary Christians, 1 Corinthians 11: 1-16' explores Paul's construction of gender hierarchy as patterned after the hierarchy of the Roman family.<sup>11</sup> In the same article, she investigates ways in which the role and status of a woman in the Roman family influenced the role and status of a woman in Pauline congregations. Her overall argument is that the role and status of a woman in Pauline congregations and consequently in the ACK cannot be properly understood without taking into account the role and status of a woman in the Roman family. She hoped to contribute towards feminist postcolonial discourses which emphasize that depatriarchalization is a process that must occur in tandem with decolonization. However, she does not explain the ministry of women in the church at the grassroots and how it is influenced by the Roman structure.

That hierarchical structure is reflected in the basic relationships of the husband and wife, parents and children, and masters and slaves. Within the family hierarchy, she notes, the father (*paterfamilias*) was at the top and had dominion (*patriapotestas*) over all those below him. Second, below him was his wife followed by the children and below them came slaves and other attendants: This then explains why the father's authority could not be challenged. The Roman wife was highly privileged as the manager of the household affairs among other privileges. As such, the roles that women played in the first century

church cannot be conceived outside the new Roman woman. She adds that ‘public participation for women privileged only the wealthy, hence creating a class distinction between the upper and the lower class women.’

Positively, Lydia Mwaniki has lauded empowering women despite being placed in inferiority positions of leadership.<sup>12</sup> The ACK, she observes, allows and encourages women to participate in diverse ways in the church as lay people and has empowered women by ordaining them to priesthood. The ACK began to ordain women to priesthood in the early 1990s. This was before the first ordination of women in the Church of England took place in 1994. But this was only possible after a long period of heated debates. She argues that in so doing, women have been empowered to lead men, an aspect which is contrary to the Christian tradition where the leadership position is a male preserve.

John MacArthur in his book, *New Testament Commentary 1 Timothy*, defends what he considers to be God’s plan for women in the church.<sup>13</sup> He laments that, ‘The traditional doctrines are being swept away by the flood tides of evangelical feminism. Churches, schools, and seminaries are rapidly abandoning truths they have held since their inception.’<sup>14</sup> He claims that biblical passages on women’s roles were being culturally reinterpreted and ignored because of the alleged anti-female bias of the biblical authors, or dismissed as the additions of later redactors.

He writes that this is Satan's plan to entice women away from their God created role in society, in the family and in the church. In MacArthur's commentary on I Timothy 2:9-15 he observes that women's role in the church is to be learners and not teachers especially in the public worship. He says, "It may seem obvious to us that women should be taught God's word, since they are spiritually equal in Christ and the commands of the New Testament are to all (I Peter 2:1-2)."<sup>15</sup> He however notes that first century Judaism did not hold women in high esteem and that most Rabbis refused to teach women likening it to throwing pearls to the pigs.

He supports his arguments by observing that in the Old Testament, there is no evidence of queens or priest in Israel or Judah. He claims that Deborah acted as a judge only in special circumstance.

As for the New Testament, MacArthur argues that there were no women pastor-teachers, evangelists or elders and rejects that Philip's daughters were prophetesses by arguing that their prophecy was never recorded. He further says that when the church gathers, women are to listen to the men who teach. Women could only teach privately in their houses, as probably did Priscilla to Apollos (Acts 18: 26). This collaborates with this study that there are more women followers and learners than men in the church.

John Stott considers the passage, I Timothy 2:8-15 the most controversial verses in the Pastoral Letters.<sup>16</sup> He advises that the conclusions one draws from the text depend largely on the hermeneutical principles. He highlights four unsuccessful attempts which

have been made to soften St. Paul's harshness on women in verses 11-15.<sup>17</sup>

These are:

1. It is suggested that they express only Paul's personal opinion, not his authoritative command,
2. Paul's instruction apply only to wives, not to women in general,
3. Paul's instructions are directed only against noisy disturbances and interruptions by women, not against a quiet and orderly exercise of their ministry and
4. Paul's instructions only forbid a woman to 'domineer' over a man.

Stott suggests that Paul's instructions cover only the universal principle of female submission to male 'headship' and not its changeable cultural expression. Further, he suggests that the principle of cultural transposition would 'save us from wrong solutions and will put us on the road towards right ones.'<sup>18</sup> Stott proposes further theological reflections in relation to complementarity: firstly, the created complementarity of the sexes as whoever creation has established culture can express but not destroy. Secondly the reflection is about ministry after the complementarity of the sexes has been biblically defined. The question to be answered is what are the roles and responsibilities which belong properly to man and not woman, and vice versa. Thirdly is about culture on what are the visible symbols in a particular culture which would appropriately express the sexual complementarities which scripture lays down as normative.<sup>19</sup>

Hanson while discussing 1 Timothy 2: 8-15 suggests that 'Christianity had already given women a fuller part in worship than Judaism ever did, or indeed than Orthodox Judaism

does to this day.'<sup>20</sup> He detects a lot of interpolations by the early church in this passage. He further points out that the Gnostics encouraged women to take a leading role in both worship and preaching.

Donald Guthrie, in *The Pastoral Epistles*, an introduction and commentary, explains that in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 Paul was giving instructions about women's participation in public worship but it cannot be made a universal principle.<sup>21</sup> There were local reasons for allowing women to be learners and yet not to teach. Guthrie, defends Paul from being a women hater since 'he acknowledges some women among his own fellow labourers, such as, Priscilla (Romans 16: 3-5) and Euodia and Syntache (Phillipians 4:2, 3). Further he quotes Falconer who suggests that the prohibitions may have been due to the greater facility with which contemporary women were falling under the influence of impostors. The rabbinical prohibitions which permitted a woman to read the Torah in public but not allowed to teach it even to the children.<sup>22</sup> Guthrie, observes that the teaching of Christian doctrine nevertheless had been confined by Paul to the male, which had become an invariable practice in the subsequent history of the Church.

Howard Marshall from '*The Role of Women in the Church*' explains the contribution of women in the ministry of Jesus in the early church as recorded in the Acts of Apostles, the Pauline epistles and the Pastoral epistles. He says that in determining the role played by women one is guided by the interpretation of the passage.<sup>23</sup> In the problem of interpretation, it could be argued that some passages are different in their teaching and could contradict the others. Some parts are historical while others are doctrinal.

Therefore, the role of women could be applied differently in some churches.

While analyzing the role of women in the gospels, Marshall shows that a number of women followed Jesus in response to his message. Some of these women greatly contributed to his ministry from their own resources, (Luke 8:3). Women are also described as the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. This indicates that they witnessed to his disciples who were men. Jesus himself described the outstanding piety of the widow who sacrificially gave all what she had to temple treasury (Mark 12: 41). St. Luke records the prophetic ministry done by a woman called Anna (Luke 2: 36). John in his gospel also records the witness about Jesus by the Samaritan woman in chapter 4: 28ff.

Marshall discusses other controversial roles as found in various Pauline epistles in particular Corinthians but concludes in saying that Paul's concern is with how some roles should be done but not the questions of whether they should be done and who should do it. This includes women preaching, prophesying and asking questions in the church.

According to Lavinia Byrne in *Women at the Altar* the role of women in the proclamation of the good news is characterized by: -

- a) Catechizing to the catechumens and Christians,
- b) Visiting families, the poor the sick and outcasts,
- c) Involvement in retreat and spirituality sessions,
- d) Teaching religion, to the level of theology in every capacity,
- e) The mass media: press, radio, television.<sup>24</sup>

In church leadership and ordination Lavinia is categorical that the Roman Catholic



Church position is that women cannot be ordained as in “the Catholic system, you cannot, exercise the fullness of any leadership role unless you are male and you are ordained. Only the ordained men may lead.” According to the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in Modern World* p 267 which Lavinia quotes “Women are now employed in almost every area of life. It is appropriate that they should be able to assume their full proper role in accordance with their own nature.”

She pleads upon everyone “to acknowledge and favor the proper and necessary participation of women in cultural life.” This implies that women could make more contribution if given the opportunity. Elsewhere, she notes that all people are born equal and therefore there should be no discrimination whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion which must be overcome and eradicated as centrally to God’s intent. This gives hope to women that they might be considered for important roles in the church.

Anne Nasimiyu-Wasike in her article, ‘African Women’s Legitimate Role in Church Ministry,’ reflects on what she considers to be the legitimate roles of the African women in the Church.<sup>25</sup> Although she has reflected much on the Roman Catholic Church practices, her intention is to reflect on all denominations. She begins by noting that Christian women have for centuries seen the church as a place for service and where they exist for others.<sup>26</sup> she observes;

Most women are finding it hard to accept the traditional, spiritual and religious roles

and models which were given to women by men in the Church. Christian women are reviewing the Church's teachings in the light and awareness of their being full persons and they are asking for equal partnership with men in their response to Christ's call to newness of being or becoming....<sup>27</sup>

She demonstrates the evidence of how women were in all areas of ministry in the life of Jesus and participated as disciples with examples of Mary the sister of Martha and the Samaritan Woman. The Samaritan woman is depicted as a champion evangelist and witness of Jesus. She also describes how other women accompanied Jesus and also as first witnesses of his resurrection.

Nasimiyu-Wasike describes how women participated in the ministry of apostleship and especially when they were commissioned by Jesus to tell the disciples to go to Galilee (Matthew 28:10). She describes these women as the apostles of the apostles.

She laments the fact that though there is such overwhelming evidence of women participation in the ministry of Jesus this evidence has been downplayed by the Church. The so called Fathers of the Church who came from patriarchal backgrounds quoted mostly from the passages that viewed and confirmed their culture on women as subordinate to men. They based their arguments on passages that restrict women to service of the church rather than those which liberated women.<sup>28</sup>

She gives an example of passages such as Gen. 2:21 and 3:1-7 which are used to legitimize women's subordination. Also in 1Corinthians 11:7-9 men are described as the image and glory of God, which some Fathers used to suggest that women lacked some essential quality which men shared with the Godhead.

After the Biblical era, women's roles in Church ministry became limited to comforters and nurturers. They were portrayed as being less than full adults at par with men. It is in the fourth century, she points out that it is in the fourth century that there existed the order of deaconesses who assisted the bishop with ritual and teachings pertaining to women. In the Eastern Church, these deaconesses were ordained. She decries how women were viewed as people to be protected, separated, observed, supervised and at times mistrusted. They were barred from priesthood and teaching offices of the church. Then there developed the institutionalization of an all male hierarchical priesthood. This, she argues 'impaired the tradition of equality of sexes as achieved through baptism.'<sup>29</sup>

In another article, 'Images of Women in African Religious Tradition' Nasimiyu-Wasike argues that missionaries brought to Africa the male dominated ministry.

The Christian evangelizers failed to recognize the significant roles played by women in African religious tradition, where women were found in all categories of religious leadership roles, for example, 'As medicine people who acted as healers and counselors...'<sup>30</sup>

However, she observes, the Church did not see it fit to empower women to continue in these roles in their new found religion, Christianity.

She further argues that through the new religious movements women are trying to recapture their once religious and spiritual roles. She gives the examples of African Christian women leaders like Marie Dahanon Lalou of Ivory Coast; Mai Chaza of Zimbabwe, Alice Leshina Mulenga of Zambia and Gaudencia Aoko of Kenya who have been inspired by spiritual revelation to start religious movements which are centered on a healing ministry. She asserts rightly that 'women are the backbone of the Church's upkeep and they constitute the majority of those who attend Christian rituals and services.'<sup>31</sup> She asks the Church to legitimize and recognize the fact that in Jesus all women and men are encouraged to be mediators of God's healing power and to seek the conversion of sinners.<sup>32</sup>

She also introduces another important aspect of the ministry and participation of women in playing the role of mothers and nurturers of the Church. Women are encouraged to take this image developed by prophet Isaiah of God exercising maternal love.

She observes that, millions of African women are leading the singing and prayers at liturgical and paraliturgical celebrations. She urges the church in Africa 'to authenticate the ministries of women as re-emphasized by Vatican II which called for the identification of the various gifts of the people of God so that they are fully utilized for

the good of the Church.’<sup>33</sup>

She calls upon the church to reconsider its teaching about women. She also recommends that courses should be offered for both women and men who are interested in the church pastoral service. She hopes that this would help in re-appropriating theological education and ministry to the women and at the same time give a balanced, non-discriminative integrative and holistic education to the seminarians. She calls for women to be allowed to actualize their potential and to freely participate in all ministerial roles.

She advocates for a halt in defining women according to their sexual functioning for that is to educate them into bondage. Finally, she calls for women to be given roles in decision making bodies because leaving that to the ordained men only has left the other church members as passive followers. She therefore recommends that all women and men of ability be made and given opportunities to the decision making bodies in the church.

In *Joyfully Christian, Truly African* John Gatu refers the church as a servant and therefore implies that all the believers must fully participate or be involved, that is, being active and not passive.<sup>34</sup> It is therefore a support for the notion of the priesthood of all believers.

Ruth Whitney in *Feminism and Love* portrays women as peacemakers especially in chapter five where she discusses the potential for violence within us. She demonstrates how the patriarchal system praises women for being gentle and submissive. They are

taught and brought up not to be negatively aggressive and not to react in anger.<sup>35</sup> Though she observes that it is inherent in every human being to act violently, women are an exception.

Richmond – Abbott in *Masculine and Feminine* rightly asserts that religious doctrines have often been used to justify positions of religious authority.<sup>36</sup> He argues that religion has been used to suppress women from taking responsible roles from the church.

However, in the *Through the Eyes of a Woman* published by the World YWCA, which is a series of bible studies on the experience of women; it is argued that “in Jesus teaching it is not the biological roles that matters but the relationship with Christ which compels someone to do the will of God and that will can be done by a woman.”<sup>37</sup>

J. K. Karanja has written a thorough history of the Anglican Church in the Kikuyu land which is a part of the area of this study.<sup>38</sup> However, in his history he has scantily exhibited the ministry of women to bring the church where it is today. The same oversight has been displayed by the Provincial Unit of Research, of the Church of the Province of Kenya (Anglican Church in Kenya), in *Rabai to Mumias A Short History of the Church of the Province 1844-1994*. They have hardly written about the ministry of women except about the Mothers Union which is one of the organizations of women in the church.<sup>39</sup> Keith Cole, in *The Cross over Mt. Kenya A Short History of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Mt. Kenya 1900-1970* has also unfortunately overlooked the ministry of women in detail.

## 1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on structural functionalism as defined by Emile Durkheim 1858 – 1917.<sup>40</sup> This structural functionalism theory attempts to provide an explanation on how human society is organized and what each of the various social institutions does in order for the society to continue existing. The human society is an organism that is made up of structures called social institutions, which are specially structured in order to perform different functions on behalf of the society.

This research is about the ministry of women in the church, which is a social institution with different structures. The ministry of women is not separate from that of men; they are interrelated and interdependent as this theory explains. This theory shows how groups contribute to the welfare of the whole social institutions and at the same time compares them alongside the other. This theory mainly observes the history of such institutions in order to reach the conclusions of the group that is being investigated. Sometimes due to traditional biases and prejudices the contribution of the groups like this one under investigation could be overlooked.

Since this is not a biblical critique project we have deliberately decided not to use the postcolonial theory<sup>41</sup> though we may be influenced somehow by postcolonial feminist hermeneutics which is based in the postcolonial biblical criticism which situates colonialism at the centre of the Bible and biblical interpretation.

We are not ignorant of the fact that the ACK is a product of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) which worked in collaboration with the colonialists and therefore influenced its structure which it had brought from the Church of England. Its theology and structure was based on British Imperialism and looked down upon women. In as much as postcolonial feminist biblical criticism strives to liberate women we have chosen to employ the structural functionalism theory.

This study has experienced bias during the literature review as there were few works that took interest in the women participation which has led to the growth of the Anglican Church.

Nevertheless in the structural functionalism theory they have ably demonstrated the organism and structure of the Anglican Church as a social institution. The church as a social institution and women being full members of this institution have in deep participated and played a very important role towards its upkeep, growth and stability.

## **1.8 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The hypotheses of this study are:

1. The ministry of women and their participation at the grassroots has contributed in the growth and the stability of the ACK.



2. The ACK has been slow in promoting and enhancing women's ministry and their participation in leadership in all church levels in order to fulfill its mission of equipping God's people so that they may transform the society with the gospel.
3. Without women's ministry and participation in leadership, the ACK would remain weak and unstable thus not able to reach her vision of a mature caring church boldly proclaiming Christ.

## 1.9 METHODOLOGY

The study is basically a qualitative research. It includes both primary and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with both past and currently serving women church leaders in the local congregations of the selected parishes of Njuki-ini, Kathunguri, Kiamutugu, Kariru and Gaciongo in Ngiriambu archdeaconry. Special attention was given to the women who are members and leaders in the committees or departments of the church such as Mothers Union, Church Councils, Youth, Boys and Girls Brigade and Sunday school in the parishes, deaneries, archdeaconries, and diocesan level.

Focused group discussions were conducted with Association of Women in the Ordained Ministry (ASWOM) and Mother's Union committee members of Njuki-ini parish. ASWOM had 20 participants who were divided into four groups of five members each. These participants composed of clergy women serving full time as parish priests, departmental heads, rural deans, archdeacons and pastoral assistants. Their age ranged

from 28 to 55 years. They hold theological education of diploma and post graduate level. These are well versed with the ministry of women because they have wider experience in the church work.

The Mothers Union (M U) consisted of 9 members three from each congregation of the Njuki-ini parish. They organize women activities in the congregations. Six of them have served for more than two terms (six years) while the rest three are serving their first term as leaders.

Their age ranged from the age of 40 to 60 years. Three of them are serving as committee members of the MU at diocesan level. They are also members of the Mothers' Union archdeaconry committee. They had the opportunity to discuss the questions which were raised in the research questionnaire.

In order to get a wider view, 75 questionnaires were distributed. Open-ended questionnaire was preferred because it gave the respondents the freedom to respond freely. The questionnaires covered the area on women ministry and their participation in the leadership of the church. The questionnaires were issued to 10 clergy women, 10 MU parish chairladies, 10 clergy men, 10 parish Kenya Anglican Men Association (KAMA) chairmen, 10 young men, 10 young women and 5 senior clergy (three women and two men). Out of the 75 questionnaires 66 were dully filled and returned timely.

Interviews were conducted orally to ten key informants, five men and five women

holding senior positions in church leadership in the ACK. There were oral impromptu interviews with other women members of the church. During the interviews the key informants provided information on the ministry of women and their participation in the growth and stability of the church. They explained how the church has encouraged or in their view discouraged women from discharging their gifts in the ministry. They did also show the challenges women face or has faced in exercising their ministry. They recommended what should be done to improve the ministry of women and their participation in church life.

The literature review was carried out perusing the books written on women ministry in the church. The Bible and individual books commentaries on relevant passages that refer to women work were studied. Bible dictionary articles were also reviewed. Other materials focusing on women ministry in the historical perspective of the worldwide Anglican Church were reviewed.

In this aspect the history of the Anglican Church in Kenya was reviewed in order to trace the contribution and progress of women ministry. Records on the history of the Anglican Church in central Kenya formed an integral part of the literature review. Minutes of the Synods of the diocese of Mt. Kenya East and the diocese of Kirinyaga provided rich information about the ministry of women in the two dioceses.

The research was conducted from March to November 2010. The information collected was, collated compiled and analyzed for presentation.

## END NOTES

1. *The Anglican Church of Kenya Constitution*, Canon IX defines an archdeaconry as a geographical area, precisely defined, within which an Archdeacon exercises his functions. *The Anglican Church of Kenya Constitution*. Nairobi, Uzima Press Ltd, 2002. p 51. The Archdeacon is defined by the same Canon as 'The Bishop's principal assistant in matters of administration and discipline in his/her archdeaconry'.
2. See Article XXIX of *The Anglican Church of Kenya Constitution*, p 33
3. Anglican Church of Kenya, *Church Pocket Book and Diary 2010*. Nairobi, Uzima Publishing House: 2010.
4. D.B Barret., G.K Mambo, MacLaughln, J. M McVeigh, (eds) *Kenya Churches Handbook*, Kisumu, Evangel Publishing House, 1973, p. 238.
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7. Keith Cole *The Cross Over Mt. Kenya*, Melbourne, Church Missionary Historical Publications Trust: 1970, p. 13
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9. Keith Cole, *ibid* p. 61
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11. Lydia Mwaniki 'Unveiling Paul: A Postcolonial Feminist Examination of the Construction of the Roman Family and its Influence on Pauline and Contemporary Christians 1 Corinthians 11: 1-16 in *Journal of Constructive Theology, Gender, Religion and Theology in Africa*; Volume 16, No.1 July, 2010. pp 30-59.
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13. J. MacArthur *New Testament Commentary, 1 Timothy*; Chicago Moody Press, 1995. pp 77-90.
14. J. MacArthur *ibid*, p. 77
15. J. MacArthur *ibid*, p. 83
16. See his lengthy commentary of the passage in John Stott, *the Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, The Bibles Speaks Today Series, Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1996. pp. 73-88
17. John Stott , *ibid*, pp. 83-84
18. John Stott *ibid*, p. 88.
19. John Stott *ibid*, p. 88
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21. Donald Guthrie *The Pastoral Epistles, An Introduction and Commentary*, London ,Tyndale Press, reprinted 1960, p. 74
22. Donald Guthrie *ibid*, p. 76
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25. A. Nasimiyu-Wasike "African Women's Legitimate Role in Church Ministry", in J.N.K.Mugambi, Laurent Magesa eds. *The Church in African Christianity, Innovative Essays in Ecclesiology*, Nairobi Acton Publishers, 1998
26. A. Nasimiyu-Wasike *ibid*, p. 58
27. A. Nasimiyu-Wasike *ibid*, p. 58
28. A. Nasimiyu-Wasike *ibid*, p. 60
29. A. Nasimiyu-Wasike *ibid*, p. 61
30. A. Nasimiyu Wasike 'Images of Women in African Religious Tradition' *Journal of Christian Communication in the Third world*. Vol. 8; 1989. P. 138
31. A. Nasimiyu-Wasike *ibid*, p. 63.
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41. M. Dube 'Towards a Post colonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible' *Semeia* 78, 1997 pp 11-23.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1. BIBLICAL BASIS FOR WOMEN MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

#### 2.1.1. Introduction

In order to establish the ministry of women and their contribution in the church in general it is prudent to start by exploring how they participated in the religious life as provided in the bible especially in the Old Testament and New Testament practices. Arguments about the ministry of women should be based in the bible as the scripture gives us direction on how we should conduct ourselves in the church of God.

#### 2. 1.2. Definition of Ministry

It is important to describe the meaning of the word ministry. This could mean different things depending with the context. In the Anglican Church, the word 'ministry' is used to refer to the service that is rendered to a particular group or by a particular group. Often, the services rendered to the youth could be referred to as, "ministry to the youth" while the service rendered by the youth in the church could be referred to as "youth ministry." This applies to other services rendered to women, men and children.

According to the *New Bible Dictionary*, 'ministry' is derived from Hebrew 'sarat' and 'abad' and the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament (LXX) 'latourgein'

and 'latreuein' which refer to the religious service of the whole congregation or an individual.<sup>1</sup> There is also the Hebrew verb 'piel' which is used to describe service that is not menial.

However, the Greek word 'diakonos' is used in the New Testament both as a general word to indicate the nature of the service to be rendered by every Christian and also as the technical name for one of the orders of ministry, the deacon.<sup>2</sup> The idea of lowly service involved in 'diakoneo' is the fundamental idea in all Christian ministries. Christianity took a term in common use for the most ordinary kind of service and made that its characteristic term of ministering. Leone Morris, in *Ministers of God* points out that 'the basic idea in this term is the service of the table waiter, but it came to be used very generally, though commonly of services of a lowly kind. However, the church took it up and used it as their characteristic word for ministering'.<sup>3</sup>

According to 1 Corinthians 12:7 every member of the New Testament church was endowed with appropriate gift of the Holy Spirit to perform his/her own ministry. God has made all members of the body of Christ, which is the Church, to function for good of the whole.<sup>4</sup> Each, including women, have a ministry to perform and that is why St. Peter urges each one to use their gift well ( 1Peter 4:10). These ministries are enumerated in Romans 12:6-8; 1Cor. 12: 4-11, 28-31; 14:1ff; Ephesians 4:7-12. They include pastors, preachers, teachers, prophets, evangelists, workers of miracles, healers, speakers with tongues, interpreters of tongues, helpers, administrators, bishops, elders and deacons, etc.



The New Testament never gives us a full list of the ministries in the early church or a complete list of functions.

As J.G. Davies points out, it is after the New Testament times that the clergy became increasingly removed from the laity and during the middle ages an elaborate hierarchical structure of priestly offices was developed with the result that the laity came virtually to be regarded as having no priestly or ministerial function at all.<sup>5</sup>

A new understanding of the bible has revealed the importance of the ministry of the laity in the church which supports our inquiry and argument and view on women ministry. This does not however contradict our observation and argument that women should be considered in the ordained ministry and have immensely contributed in the growth of the church in their participation in the holy orders.

Ministry has been taken in a strict sense to be understood to refer to the ordained pastors or priests. But in its broader sense it has covered services of teachers, evangelists, parish workers, deacons and church elders. It may also include charity works of serving the needy, serving visitors in the church and cleaning the church before the worship. It is in this wider argument that we are investigating the ministry of women and their contribution to the growth of the church. As women continue to be the majority in church membership and committed so is the increase of their ministry.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.1.3. The Ministry of Women in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, we have stories of women participating in the religious life in the Jewish community festivals such as Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. They are certainly included in the words, “all the congregation of Israel” (Exodus 12:3). A man’s daughter, maidservants and widows are named in the feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:14). In the Qumran community described in some of the Dead Sea Scroll, the whole group, including women must observe the rules of the order. Women attended religious gatherings and shared in sacrificial meals. At the yearly feast of the Lord in Shiloh the daughters of that place came out to dance (Judges 21:19-21). A woman might be expected to go to the shrine to engage in the festival of the New Moon or the Sabbaths (2 Kings 4:23). She could not serve as a priest. Both her ritual uncleanness and her sexual nature as a woman barred her from serving in this capacity.

Huldah the prophetess was consulted regarding the newly found Book of the Law (2 Kings 22: 14). The term “prophetess” is also used in connection with Miriam and Deborah (Exodus 15: 20; Judges 4:4). The wife of Isaiah is called a prophetess probably because she is a prophet’s wife (Isaiah 8:3); a false prophetess Noadiah appears in Nehemiah 6:14 (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; 21:9). The religious influence of women including the unnamed multitude of mothers of biblical homes and those whose names have survived in the bible was a undoubtedly great. The bitter feud between Jezebel, Israel’s queen from Tyre, and Elijah the prophet was based largely upon the former’s effort to establish the Tyrian cult in Israel (1 Kings 21).<sup>7</sup>

During the temple of Herod women were restricted to the court of Gentiles and the court of women. During their menstrual and post-natal times of ceremonial uncleanness they were not allowed to enter the temple area at all. Traditions are divided as to whether women were allowed to participate in sacrifice by laying their hands upon the heads of animals or by waving the cut parts of them.

However, women had only a bit more freedom in the synagogue than in the temple. But their presence together with that of slaves and minors were of no significance. They sat in a balcony or separate place. Their part in the service was only receptive. Even the reading of the scripture was not for women although they were 'qualified' (our Rabbis taught. All are qualified to be among the seven who read, even a minor and a woman, only the Sages said that a woman should not read in the Torah out of respect for the congregation).<sup>8</sup>

The passive role of women in worship is related to the rabbinic estimate of their ability to learn and of the propriety of teaching them. Deuteronomy 31: 10-13 required that women and children be included. According to Rabbi Eliezer ben Azaria 'then men came to learn, the women came to hear.'<sup>9</sup> Therefore women were only to hear the scriptures and the exposition, but were not expected to learn or to gain deep understanding. The rabbis opposed women as teachers in schools and even in homes except as teachers of their children.

Women are relegated to a position of inferiority. This distance led to suspicion and ignorance and then contempt. A woman's praise was found in her service in the home, criticism centered on her sexuality and her ignorance.

#### **2.1.4. The Ministry of Women in the New Testament**

From the beginning of the early Christian church, starting with Jesus, women were important members of the movement. The Gospels often maintain Jesus speaking to women publicly and openly against the social norms of the time. The examples of the manner reveal his attitude towards women and show repeatedly how he liberated and affirmed women. He reached out to the marginalized in the society and thus his appeal was great.

Jesus had female followers who were his sponsors and Mary Magdalene is recorded to be the first person to have the privilege of seeing Jesus after resurrection (Mark 16:9). Many anonymous women appear in the gospel accounts. Those mentioned by name include Mary mother of James and Joseph, mother of sons of Zebedee as well as the 'other Mary (Matthew 27:55-61). There were also Mary and Martha (Luke 10: 38, 42; John 11:1ff), Mary the mother of Jesus "with the women" (Acts 1:14). St. Luke often mentions Jesus speaking to women or helping women publicly and openly contrary to the social norms in the time. This demonstrates that Jesus always had great esteem and respect for women and in particular he was sensitive to female suffering going beyond the social and religious barriers.

He re-established woman in her full dignity as a human person before God and before men. Christ's way of acting the Gospel of his words and deeds is a consistent protest against whatever offends their dignity. Martha's sister, Mary sat at Jesus' feet being taught a privilege reserved for men in Judaism. It is clear that Jesus followers were his sponsors (Luke 8: 1-3.). This reference shows that those women mentioned fall under the categories of those who were healed by him, those who followed and watched over him.<sup>10</sup>

As time went on and the disciples continued to spread Jesus' message by word of mouth groups of Christians organized themselves within the homes of believers. Those who could offer their homes were considered important within the movement and assumed leadership roles<sup>11</sup>. In the life of the early church the Gospel was available to all people without regard to sex. Women received it and helped to promote it. Men and women were dragged to prison for their faith (Acts 8:3; 9:2). However it is recorded that Jews incited devout women of a high standing against Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:50), but not a few joined them (Acts 17:4).

Both Priscilla and Aquila instructed Apolllos in faith (Acts 18:26). Priscilla seems to be the more prominent as she is mentioned first.<sup>12</sup> Women served as deaconesses in the early church (Romans 16:1) and Phoebe is commended by Paul for her services in the church in Cenchrea. The term 'prostatis' means 'one who stands before' and *thus* frequently 'leader' or 'chief'.<sup>13</sup> From this it is deduced that Phoebe was a leader in her church, a ruler or even an elder though this is not very clear. The feminine form which is

used of Phoebe means 'protectress, patroness, and helper.' It therefore indicates a personal helper of many including Paul.<sup>14</sup>

The letters of St. Paul indicates him sending his casual greetings to acquaintances and offer information about Jewish and gentile women who were prominent in the movement. These letters provide clues about the kind of activities in which women engaged more generally. Paul writes that Priscilla and her husband risked their lives to save his life (Romans 16:3-5). Priscilla is seen as a woman who was deeply involved in Paul's labour and of prominence in the church. He praises Junia or Junias as 'prominent among the apostles' who had been imprisoned for their labour. The name 'Junia' is suggested to be of a woman thus Paul recognized female apostles (Romans 16:7). Mary and Persis are commended for their hard work (Romans 16: 6-12). Eudia and Syntache are called his fellow workers in the gospel (Philippians 4: 2-3). He also mentions Eunice, the mother of Timothy and Lois his grandmother as examples of faith (2 Timothy 1:5).

Some theologians believe that these biblical reports provide evidence of women leaders in the earliest work of spreading the Christian message while others reflect their understanding. The evidence also indicates that these women 'ministered' in supporting roles of the church much as the women who followed Christ supported his ministry.<sup>15</sup>

However some say Paul was anti-women relegating them to home duties only. Against the power of pagan cults and customs the Christian community erected a wall of protection in the form of rules and conduct for women. Accepting the biblical view of

woman's subordination to man the writers of New Testament stressed the duty of modesty, submission and piety. Women were not expected to speak or teach in the church because they were created from man and for him as well (1 Corinthians 14:34 - 36).

In other words, women were to be known for their works and their faith other than for their words (1 Timothy 2:14-15). From a careful reading of scriptures, it would appear women were much more involved in the running and functioning of the church than is openly apparent. Of course much of this is implied or left to the imagination rather than stated in scripture. It is likely Paul's constraints on women teaching were confined to communal worship or study situations involving men. We should also take into consideration what was happening in the Corinthian church during Paul's ministry. It is quite probable that Paul had good relationship with women. They certainly were close to Christ; and followed him to Galilee and Jerusalem. They were there at his crucifixion and were the first witnesses of his resurrection and declared it to the apostles.

## **2.2. THE HISTORICAL BASIS FOR WOMEN MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH**

In the apostolic age, women were important members and displayed a great role in church history although some complain that much of the information in the New Testament has been overlooked.<sup>16</sup> Some also argue that it was assumed that it had been a 'man's church' because sources of information stemming from the New Testament church were written and interpreted by men.

### **2.2.1. Women Ministry in the Patristic Age**

From the church fathers or the patristic age the offices of teacher and sacramental minister were reserved for men throughout most of the church in East and West. Tertullian, the second century Latin father wrote that 'it is not permitted for a woman to speak in church. Neither may she teach, baptize, offer, nor claim for herself any function proper to a man, least of all sacerdotal office.'<sup>17</sup> In the early centuries the Eastern Church allowed women to participate to a limited extent in ecclesiastical office by ordaining deaconesses

Origen, (A.D. 185-254) stated that;

Even if it is granted to a woman the sign of prophecy, she is nevertheless not permitted to speak in an assembly. When Miriam the prophetess spoke she was leading a choir of women...For as Paul declares 'I do not permit a woman to teach,' and even less 'to tell a man what to do,'<sup>18</sup>

### **2.2.2. Women Ministry in the middle Ages**

In the middle ages, the priesthood and ministries upon it such as bishop, patriarch and pope were restricted to men. The first council of Orange 441 forbids the ordination of women to the diaconate<sup>19</sup> but the establishment of Christian monasticism and other influential roles became available to women. From the fifth century onwards, Christian converts provided opportunities for some women to escape the path of marriage and child rearing to acquire literacy and learning and played a more active religious role.



Later, women such as St. Catherine of Siena and St. Theresa of Avila, played significant roles in the development of theological ideas and discussions within the church, and were later declared doctors in the Roman Catholic Church.

### **2.2.3. Ministry of Women in the Reformation Period**

The Protestant reformation did not perpetuate female converts which had existed within the Roman Catholicism, which reformers show as bondage. Protestantism effectively closed off the option of a full time religious role for protestant women.<sup>20</sup> Among the many nuns who abandoned the monastic life was the wife of Martin Luther Catherine von Bora. The majority protestant churches upheld the traditional position and restricted ruling and preaching roles to men until the 20<sup>th</sup> century although there were early exceptions among some groups such as Quakers and within some Pentecostal holiness movements.<sup>21</sup>

John Knox (1510 – 1572) denied women the right to rule in the civic spheres, as he asserted in his famous ‘First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women.’ A Baptist theologian Dr. John Gill (1690-1771) comments on 1Corinthians 14:34-35 stating that in Genesis 3:16 ‘thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee.’ By this the apostle would signify, that the reason why women are not to speak in the church or to preach and teach publically or be concerned in the ministerial function is because this is an act of power and authority; of rule and government and so contrary to that subjection which God in his law requires of women unto men. The extraordinary

instances of Deborah, Huldah, and Anna must not be drawn into a rule or example in such cases.<sup>22</sup>

John Wesley, Methodist founder (1703-1291) and Methodist theologian Adam Clarke both upheld male headship. But allowed that spiritual Christian women could publicly speak in church meetings if they 'are under an extraordinary impulse of the spirit' and that such were to obey that influence, and that 'the apostle lays down directions in Acts chapter 11 for regulating a personal appearance when thus employed.'<sup>23</sup> Puritan theologian Matthew Poole concurred with Wesley adding but setting aside that extraordinary case of a special Divine influence, it was doubtless unlawful for a woman to speak in the church. Matthew Henry 1662-1714 in his commentary entertains allowing 'praying and uttering hymns inspired by women as such were not teaching.'<sup>24</sup>

### **2.2.3. Modern Views on the ministry of women**

There are four main view points in the modern debate concerning the ministry of women. These are, Christian Egalitarianism, Complimentariansm, Biblical Patriarchy and Christian Feminism. Christian Egalitarianism and Complimentariansm represent conservative Christianity. Each holds a high view of scripture on the role women in the church. Their point of divergence is the different theological framework that has a direct bearing on how each group interprets the bible.

### *2.2.3.1 Christian Egalitarian View on the Ministry of Women*

Christian egalitarians interpretation of scripture brings them to the conclusion that the manner and teachings of Jesus affirmed by the apostle Paul abolished gender – specific roles in both church and marriage. *Men, Women and Biblical Equality*,<sup>25</sup> was prepared in 1989 by several evangelical leaders to become the official statement of Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE). The statement lays out their biblical rationale for equality as well as its application in the community of the believers and in the family. They advocate ability-based, rather than gender-based ministry of Christians of all ages, ethnicity and social economic classes.

The egalitarians support the ordination of women and equal roles in marriage and a more conservative both theologically and morally than Christian feminists. Some of their key beliefs are; both men and women were created equal by God (Genesis 1: 27); neither man or woman was cursed by God at the fall of man (Genesis 3:16) but were warned by God in a prophetic sense what would be the natural consequences of sin having entered the human race; Jesus radical ‘new covenant view was correctly articulated by Paul of Tarsus when he wrote that ‘...there is no male nor female, for you are all one in Christ.’ (Galatians 3:28).

Therefore, among those ‘in Christ’ there must be no discrimination based on race or national origin, social level or gender. They respect the natural biological uniqueness of each gender, not seeing it as requiring any dominant or submissive applications of gender

to either marriage or church leadership. David Scholer a prominent New Testament scholar at Fuller Theological Seminary affirms this view that Galatians 3:28 is the fundamental Pauline theological basis for the inclusion of women and men as equal and mutual partners in all ministries of the church.<sup>26</sup> It represents the summation of Paul's theological vision, according to Professor Eisenbaum Pamela of Iliff School of theology and Jewish New Testament scholar.<sup>27</sup>

Christian egalitarians hold that the submission of the woman and womanly restrictions in Christianity are inconsistent with the true picture of biblical equality. A conservative theologian Roger Nicole, a Baptist considered an expert in Calvinism and regarded as one of the pre-eminent theologian in America writes that 'the matter of the place of women in the home, society and in the church is not an issue that can be conclusively be determined by a few apparently restrictive passages that are often advanced by those who think that subordination represents God's will for women.'<sup>28</sup> He believes that most if not all the restrictions on women in society have no basis in scripture and that those maintained in the church are based on an inadequate interpretation of a few restrictive passages which put them in contradiction with the manifest special concern and love of God for women articulated from Genesis to Revelation<sup>29</sup>

### ***2.2.3.2 Complementarian View on the Ministry of Women***

Complementarians believe God made man and woman to be equal in personhood and value but different in roles. They understand the bible as teaching that God created man

and woman to serve different roles in the church and at home. In *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, leading complementarians theologians outlined what they consider to be biblically sanctioned definitions of masculinity and femininity:

At the heart of a mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships. At the heart of a mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships.<sup>30</sup>

Some of their key concerns are the cultural uncertainty and confusion of complementary differences between masculinity and femininity, emergency of roles for men and women in church leadership seen as nonconforming to biblical authority, nontraditional reinterpretation of apparently plain meaning of biblical texts and ambivalence about motherhood and home making. They tend to be biblical inerrant. They take a more literal view of biblical interpretation. They hold that man was created with headship over the woman by being created first (Genesis 2:22, 1 Corinthians 11:2-9). Female exclusion from leadership over men is justified due to her deception by the devil resulting to the fall which Adam is also culpable (Genesis 3: 16; 1 Timothy 2:12 -14; Romans 5: 12-15).

Both the Old and New Testaments set a pattern of male leadership. For instance, the priestly and kingly offices of the Old Testament were restricted to males. The apostles of Jesus were all male and Paul's instructions regarding church eldership in the epistles of 1 Timothy and Titus appear to restrict these positions to men. The primary texts which

are understood to support male headship include 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:12 and Ephesians 5:22. The Complementarian's understanding is that both O.T and N.T do prescribe a male priority-based hierarchy and gender roles in the church and in marriage, where women have equal dignity with men but subordinate in roles.

### ***2.2.3.3. Patriarchy View on the Ministry of Women***

Biblical patriarchy maintains that women do not have authority over men in the church and in the home but also deny that women should rule in the civic sphere. They assert that a husband and a father is the head of his household, a family leader, provider, protector and the God ordained. The proper sphere of dominion for a wife is the household and that which is connected with the home. They regard the biblical patriarchy view as full complementarism.<sup>31</sup>

### ***2.2.3.4. Christian Feminism View on the Ministry of Women***

Christian Feminists take an actively feminist position from a Christian perspective. Recent generations have experienced the rise of what has been labeled as 'Christian feminism' a movement that has had a profound impact on all of life, challenging some traditional basic Christian interpretations of scripture with respect to the roles for women. However, they represent the views of the more theologically liberal within Christianity.<sup>32</sup> In contrast to the more socially conservative Christian egalitarians, Christian feminists' tend to support homosexual rights and a pro-choice stance on

abortion, The evangelical and the ecumenical women's caucus, a major international Christian feminist organization values inclusive images and language for God,<sup>33</sup>.

### **2.3. BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS ON WOMEN MINISTRY**

The controversies encountered in the debate on the role or participation of women in the church has been caused by different interpretations of the passages that refer to women especially in Genesis creation story and Paul's epistles in 1 Corinthians and the pastoral epistles of Timothy and Titus. This goes further on the role of women in the family as given by St. Paul. Dr. John Stott has discussed this as explained in the previous sentence in his commentary on 1 Timothy and Titus.<sup>34</sup>

The egalitarian and complementarian positions differ significantly in their approach to hermeneutics, and specifically in their interpretation of biblical history. Christian egalitarians believe that male and female were created equally (Genesis 1-2) without hierarchical of roles.<sup>35</sup> God created both woman and man in His own image and likeness. God made the first couple equal partners in leadership over the earth. Both were jointly commissioned to be "fruitful, multiply, to fill, subdue the earth...And rule over it." (Gen. 1:28). At the fall, God prophesied to Eve that one result of sin entering the human race would be that her husband would "rule over" her (Gen. 3:16).

A Conservative Christian theologian Gilbert Bilezikian points out that throughout the Old Testament era and beyond, just as God had prophesied, men continued to rule over

women in a patriarchal system which he sees as being a “compromise” or “accommodation” between sinful realities a divine ideal.<sup>36</sup> The coming of Jesus is understood as moving forward from Old Testament patriarchy, re-instituting full equality of gender roles, as succinctly articulated in Galatians 3:28. New Testament passages such as Ephesians 5:22-24 which teach submission of wives to husbands are typically understood by egalitarians as a temporary accommodation to harsh first century culture.<sup>37</sup>

The Christian egalitarian hermeneutic has received a highly systematic treatment from William J. Webb, professor of New Testament at Heritage Theological Seminary, Ontario, and Canada. Webb argues that the major challenge is to determine which biblical commands are “trans-cultural” and therefore applicable today, versus those which are “cultural” and therefore only applicable to the original (first century) recipients of the text. His “redemptive movement” hermeneutics is justified using the example of slavery, which Webb sees as analogous to the subordination of women. Christians today largely perceive that slavery was “cultural” in biblical times and not something that should be re-introduced or justified, although slavery was (a) found in the bible (b) not explicitly banned there.

Webb recommends that biblical commands be examined in light of the cultural context in which they were originally written. According to the “redemptive approach”, slavery and women’s subordination are found in the bible. However, the same scripture also contains ideas and principles which, if developed and taken to their logical conclusion, would bring about the abolition of these institutions. According to that ideal, biblical



patriarchy should be replaced by the “all one in Christ Jesus” proclamation of Galatians 3:28 which say, “There is no Jew or Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”<sup>38</sup>

Some other New Testament instructions that are almost universally considered “cultural” and therefore only applicable to the original (first century) recipients of the text include women to wear veils when praying or prophesying (1 Corinthians 11:5, 6), Christians to wash each other’s feet (a direct command from Jesus in the Upper Room discourse, John 13:14-15), and the instruction, appearing five times in the New Testament, to greet one another with a holy kiss, among others.

Complementarians have traditionally held that Christian ministers ought to be men, because of the need to represent Jesus Christ, who was the “son” of God, and incarnate as a male human being. A related position is that while both male and female were made in the image of God, the woman shares in the divine through the man because she was created out of him and is his “glory”.<sup>39</sup>

C.S. Lewis in: ‘Priestesses in the Church?’ Writes,

To us a priest is primarily a representative, a double representative, who represents us to God and God to us...we have no objection to a woman doing the first: the whole difficulty is with the second. But why? Suppose the reformer stops saying that a good woman may be like God and begins to say that God is like a good woman. Suppose he says that we might as well pray to “Our Mother which art in heaven” as to “Our Father”....<sup>40</sup>

## 2.4. ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS A MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

The debate on the ordination of women and their ministry in the Anglican Church worldwide is a large subject which cannot be covered exhaustively in this study. Since we are considering the ministry of women in an Anglican context the subject cannot be ignored. It will therefore be mentioned briefly as it relates to the ACK diocese of Kirinyaga.

The whole debate on the ordination of women could only be justifiably done in the light of enhanced opportunity for women's participation in the church ministry. It is therefore enquired whether the Gospel does not demand that women fully take their part in the ordained ministry as a credible sign of what the community of women and men ought to be. If the church is the sign, earnest and instrument of the Kingdom the partnership of women and men within it should surely be a witness to the world.

It may be argued that, in the created order as God willed it, humankind was given a fundamental priesthood before God and on behalf of the rest of creation. Man in the generic sense was to offer to God the worship and praise of all created things and act on his behalf towards them. In the priesthood man and woman were given a complementary partnership (Genesis 1:27).<sup>41</sup> Even in diverse cultures the essential nature of a human being was seen in being a person rather than male or female. In modern times according to new frontiers of human understanding we now realize from genetic discoveries that women and men are not as distinctively different as was once assumed.

Emphases among the theological issues on women's ordination differ according to ecclesiastical traditions within Anglicanism. The debate also reflects on the use and interpretation of scripture. However, biblical passages do not necessarily provide instant solutions to human problems and divisive issues, particularly in ages and cultures that differ greatly from those in which the scripture first appeared.

A major problem in the debate is the principle of headship. One understanding of headship starts from the conviction that within the man-woman relationship the headship of the male is part of the order of creation, which no development of culture of the new creation in Christ can change.<sup>42</sup> The headship principle is applied to the teaching office in the church, which is taken as part of the body of apostolic tradition which St. Paul received and transmitted to the churches as having the authority of the Lord. That body of tradition, including the Gospel itself, certain standards of conduct, and certain features of church order, it is maintained.

There is also a general disposition to regard any subordination of women to the headship of man as more a consequence of sin than a divinely-given principle of creation, and to stress the changed relationships affected by Christ's redemption within the new order of his Kingdom. Baptism into Christ gives equality of standing before God (Gal. 3:28). St. Paul says 'there is no difference' between men and women. This does not mean the elimination of differences in the characteristics of the gender, but it does at least point the developments in their partnership in Christ.

Supporters of this interpretation of the Bible also believe that where, and to whom, the Holy Scriptures has given recognizable gifts for leadership the church must not deny them but use them, regardless of the issue of gender.<sup>43</sup> Unless it can be proved conclusively that a woman is barred by apostolic tradition from admission to the ministry of the word and sacrament and pastoral leadership, the question of her admission should be determined on the basis of calling and gifts.

Another theological issue is that of representation. Who can represent Christ within the fellowship of his Body, the church? The argument is built on the historical particularity of the incarnation. Jesus was incarnate as a male. Then he chose an all male apostolate. In as much as the ordained priest is seen as an *ikon* of Christ, particularly in the Eucharist, maleness is deemed essential to the sign. They also find support in the creation story in Genesis 2. A woman is described as having been created after man as his helper, and comes under his leadership by virtue of him naming her. St. Paul is appealed to in 1Corinthians 11:7 where he speaks of man reflecting the image and glory of God and woman reflecting the glory of man.<sup>44</sup>

Once again this is a difference of interpretation of scripture and of its application to the issue of women in the ordained ministry that divides opponents and supporters. However it should be noted that Christ ascended with the totality of our humanity to the father. Though male in his incarnation, he bears both male and female humanity in his person at the throne of God. Hence, it is argued, that by virtue of his assumption of our total humanity into heaven both male and female members by redemption may represent him

on earth. Emphasis is laid on the biblical evidence (Eph. 2: 11-22; Col.1:16-20; Gal. 3:20) setting forth God's purpose of uniting all things in fellowship through Christ. Within that purpose, the unity of men and women in ministry is regarded as an important factor.

In the Gospel of John Christ is described as the Word becoming 'flesh' (*sarx*), the Greek word for the weak human condition, rather than male (*arner*), in contrast to female. Those who take these views read the creation narratives differently from those opposed to women's ordination. They stress the complementary partnership of man and woman expressed in Genesis 1:27. Together, they constitute the image of God. Within the ordained ministry, therefore, that image needs to be fully recognized. They also do not regard the 'help meet' role of woman in Genesis 2 as indicating subordination, as the same word is used elsewhere of God. There is also a contrast between naming of animals, giving them a technical description and thus establishing authority or dominion, and describing the woman as a complementary companion.<sup>45</sup>

It is also essential that we consider whether development in faith and order is a significant factor in resolving the issue of women's ordination.<sup>46</sup> The promised presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit in the church until the end of the age provides the basis for believing that the emergence of the Trinitarian doctrine and three fold order of ministry, was in accordance with God's will. It is in the same understanding that we discern God's will concerning the admission of women to the ministry.

However, it is better to avoid the conclusion that all developments and changes in the church history are divinely inspired. The church ever remains a company of sinful and fallible men and women. The criteria to be considered in determining who is correct must include the scriptures. In that case it is expected that new things will happen in the church. New not in the sense of being a total break with the past but a development from it. It is noted that there is a development in the status and expanding role of women in society in modern times as a result of educational, scientific and technological advances. While for the vast majority, the divinely given role of motherhood and nurture of the family continues, opportunities for sharing with men in every realm of human life have greatly increased and will continue to do so. Christians must ask themselves; is this of God willed? If it is, it must be taken as the context in which we determine the issue of women's ordination.

#### **2.4.1. A Chronology of Ordination of Women in the Anglican Church**

The following is a brief chronology of some of the important events leading to the ordination of women in the Anglican Church worldwide:

- 1942: Anglican Communion, Hong Kong. Florence Li Tim Oi was ordained as a priest.
- 1968: The Lambeth Conference recommended that women be ordained as deacons.
- 1971: Anglican Communion, Hong Kong. Joyce Bennett and Jane Hwang were the first regularly ordained priests.
- 1974: Episcopal Church of USA: 11 women were ordained as priests in Philadelphia.

- 1975: Four women were ordained as priests in Washington.
- 1976: The general convention of the Episcopal Church, USA votes to allow female ordination; the 15 illegal ordinations are regularized.
- 1976: Six female priests are ordained in the Anglican church of Canada.
- 1977: Five female priests are ordained by the Anglican church of New Zealand.
- 1983: A woman priest is ordained in Kenya.
- 1983: Three women priests are ordained in Uganda.
- 1987: Women are ordained as deacons in Australia.
- 1987: A woman deacon is ordained in England.
- 1990: Women are ordained as priests in Ireland.
- 1992: Church of England voted to allow the ordination of women. About 470 male clergy left the church in protest; 58 subsequently returned.
- 1992: Australia ordains 10 female priests.
- 1992: Anglican Church of South Africa ordains a female priest.
- 1992: Women are ordained as priests in the Philippines.
- 1994: The first female priests of the Church of England were ordained in Bristol Cathedral.
- 1998: General Assembly of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Anglican church in Japan) approves female ordination to the priesthood.
- 2000: There remained about 1,000 congregations in the Church of England who refused to accept authority of women priests.
- 2004: Bishops in three dioceses in the USA also refuse to ordain women. Many more provinces refuse to consecrate women as bishops.

2008: The church of Wales considered but rejected the consecration of female priests as bishops.

2008: May-22: Australia consecrated its first female bishop: Kay Goldsworthy

2010: The General Synod of the Church of England agrees to consecrate women as bishops.

2010- Five Anglican bishops of the Church of England resign and join the Roman Catholic Church disaffected by moves to ordain women.<sup>47</sup>

#### **2.4.2 Women in the Ordained Ministry in Kirinyaga Diocese**

In 1992 the diocese of Kirinyaga admitted three women to the office of deacon. Thereafter more have been ordained as priests and hold positions as vicars in charge of parishes, rural deans, archdeacons and other departmental heads in the diocese (see appendix III). This was after the diocesan synod discussed and resolved that they could be trained and ordained. However, it must be noted that this was after a period of serious debates in the synods of the former diocese of Mt. Kenya East. The first discussion was in 1979 in the third ordinary session of the synod of the diocese.<sup>48</sup>

The publication of the fifth anniversary of the diocese of Mt. Kenya East records the first motion on the ordination of women, by the diocesan synod which is the supreme decision making body of the diocese. The motion which was lost after two days of heated debate read;



“Women who are called to the sacred ministry and are carefully examined by their respective church committees, parish councils, diocesan selection committee... and are found to have a genuine calling and necessary qualities and who successfully complete their training for the ministry may be ordained to diaconate and priesthood.”<sup>49</sup>

Nevertheless there were women being trained for the ministry. It also adds that the meeting of the Bishops of Kenya had recommended that women who have been trained could serve in the church as deaconesses. Deaconess is not a traditional office, but seemed to be a stop gap as the ordination of women debate was going on. The Anglican consultative council in 1976 had recommended that those who had been made deaconesses by lying on of hands, with appropriate prayer be declared to be within the diaconate, an official step in the Anglican hierarchy.<sup>50</sup> Ten years later there were women who had been ordained as deacons and priests.<sup>51</sup>

The motion and another one discussed in the fourth ordinary session of synod in 1981 were lost. This was not withstanding the advice of a theological consultation held the same year that;

‘...women who are called to the sacred ministry and are carefully examined by their respective church committees, parish councils, diocesan selection committees and where necessary PBTE [Provincial Board of Theological Education] and are found to have a genuine calling and necessary qualities and successfully complete their training may be ordained to diaconate and to prfesthood.’<sup>52</sup>

By August, 2010 the diocesan establishment records indicated that there were 39 women ordained some of whom were serving in the parishes as vicars in charge and a few in leadership levels as rural deans and archdeacons (see appendix III). The congregations have accepted them although there are still some challenges and acceptance of their ministry in some areas.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN IN THE ACK DIOCESE OF KIRINYAGA

#### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

The discussion in chapter two has shown a gloomy picture of how it has been difficult to allow women contribute and participate fully in the activities of the Church in which they are full members. The cause of this has been the different interpretations of biblical passages. This has been exaggerated by the tradition of the church especially from the patristic period immediately after the apostolic age. In situations where women have been allowed to exercise their gifts their ministry has been suppressed and placed in an inferior position. In other cases they have only been allowed to serve as helpers for the bishops and priests.

Unfortunately, Nasimiyu-Wasike reveals that the nuns in the Roman Catholic Church have been made cooks and cleaners in the houses of the male dominated orders of the bishop and priests. Elsewhere, they have been allowed to participate in social activities of the church such as; teachers, nurses, workers and managers in Christian institutions.<sup>1</sup> The church has completely forgotten that women believers have received the same Holy Spirit as their male counterparts and thus they have all the spiritual gifts as enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12. Women could be apostles, prophets, evangelists' pastors and

teachers like those who were in the church of Ephesus for the purpose of “equipping the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-12).

The Anglican Church catechism instructs members that when they were baptized they receive three benefits. First they become children of God, second they become members of the body of Christ and third inheritors of the kingdom of God. Women who are baptized therefore are not half or inferior members of the body of Christ, the Church.<sup>2</sup> They should participate fully in the activities of the church. The principle of “priesthood of all believers” (1 Peter 2:9) must be applied.

According to lay canon Bernard Makanga women may not generally be accepted as leaders of their congregations they participate in other important activities in the church.<sup>3</sup> However, as time went on women in the target areas of the study and in fact the entire ACK diocese of Kirinyaga some have participated in their congregations as lay leaders, lay readers, lay preachers, divine service leaders and members of various church committees from the congregation to diocesan levels. They have also served as Sunday school teachers, evangelists, youth leaders, Mothers Union and other women association leaders as Virginia disclosed. Women participation has contributed to the growth and stability of the church. They need to be appreciated, empowered, encouraged and given equal opportunities in all church levels.

Since the missionaries brought good news to this part of the world, many women were the first converts. It is unfortunate that the service attendance register in churches does not indicate the gender affiliation of those who attend the services. It is observed that

there are more women followers than men attending the church. In the congregations of the target area of our research women make the majority of the membership. The diagram below is an observation of a Sunday service attendance of some churches in Ngirambu archdeaconry on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July, 2010.

### 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2010 OBSERVATION OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN NGIRIAMBU ARCHDEACONRY

Figure III

CONGREGATIONS	WOMEN (including Girls)	MEN (including boys)	TOTAL
Mbiri	229	51	280
Gaciongo	149	28	177
Karuri	51	16	67
Kathunguri	182	35	217
Kiamutugu	177	43	220
Ngirambu	97	31	128
Kegua	61	25	86
Kariru	127	39	166
Ngariama	127	57	184
Giconjo	36	16	52



### **3.2. THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH**

In our research interviewees were requested to respond to what they considered to be the women ministries and activities in the church. The respondents had the following to say which in our opinion justified that women are the pillars of the church. The work of women in the church cannot be narrowed to one type of service. This argument was confirmed during our interview with the Provost of St. Thomas Cathedral, Kerugoya, The Very Rev. Venerable Winfred Munene and Rev. Canon Naomi Waqo, who is in charge of St. Nicholas Children's Home, Nairobi. However, they specified certain categories of ministries in which women participate and contribute directly. Rev. Ben Kanina, the executive director of the Christian Community Services of Mt. Kenya East said that those categories are determined by the levels of empowerment, education, income and social background of the women concerned. He further argues that what people do in the church has a link to the cultural stereotypes and this can mostly be overcome by empowerment and education.

#### **3.2.1. Women as Chair ladies in the congregations**

Women serve as chair ladies in the local congregations and as Vicar's wardens. According to the ACK Constitution these are the vice-chairmen of the congregations. Rev. Rose Murage, informed us that these churches where women lead there is fewer squabbles unlike the ones led by men. The language used by many women church leaders is more polite, appreciative and inclusive. The activities in these congregations

are well planned and financial contributions are better compared to some congregations of the same number in membership and social-economic status where men are leaders. The projects supervised by women are successfully completed in time. In an oral interview, Naomi Waqo asserts that women are better managers, administrators, stewards and excellent in resources mobilization. She finds women to be more accountable and transparent in their work. Their able and appealing leadership attracts more converts to join these congregations.

Social activities carried out by women to the less disadvantaged are well planned and services reach those who are in need. Winfred in her questionnaire explained how women are more caring, loving and concerned about the welfare of the children and therefore would very much like to reach the less fortunate in the church and society. Her view was confirmed by Rev. Phylis Kibira who is in charge of ACK Utugi Street Children's Home in Kirinyaga. She asserted that women are the majority of Christians who visit to donate to that home after having done the same in their respective congregations. She describes women as more merciful and concerned to the welfare of children. This is in agreement with sentiments of The Most Rev. Dr. David Gitari, the former ACK Archbishop; who described women as the carriers of life hate to see a woman carrying a gun which destroys life.

### 3.2.2. The Ministry of Women as Evangelists

Evangelism, according to Ven. Ephantus Muriuki, an archdeacon in Ngiriambu and who once served as the director of stewardship in the diocese of Kirinyaga, is the core to church growth.<sup>4</sup> It is in fact the major activity of the church among others such as pastoral care. According to many informants women have become the best evangelists who have contributed to the growth of the church. They are engaged in both personal and public evangelism. Women are not shy to approach people and share their faith and appeal to them to accept that faith. They do this even when they are doing their private work or in any opportunity that arise. This can be compared with the story of the Samaritan woman who after her encounter with Jesus went on and announced her faith to the villagers and appealed to them to accept the Messiah (John 4: 28 – 42).

Indeed, because of their social nature, women fit very well in personal evangelism which includes door – to - door witnessing. Some parishes like Mirichi, Mutiithi, Gatwe and Rurii have employed women as full time evangelists. The Church Army association, which is an ACK arm of trained evangelists, was the first to engage women as full time evangelists. The women are given the title of a 'sister' and men as 'captains' after training. Due to the opening of the door to women ordination now many ladies are opting to train for ordination which is a higher level and provides more opportunities for evangelism.

In most parishes in the diocese one week is devoted for missionary work which involves

intensive evangelism in the parish area and its environs. During this time, the parishes usually organize evangelistic public rallies, referred to as 'crusades.' Most of the attendants are women of all backgrounds. They give their testimonies and counsel the new converts. Interviewing most clergy in the Ngiriambu Archdeaconry they described how they 'wrestle' with men convincing them to attend these rallies which indeed they participate in planning.

The East African Revival Movement is one of the most effective evangelistic enterprise of the mainline protestant churches such as the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Methodist Church of Kenya (MCK) and Anglican Church of Kenya. The Movement is interdenominational and ecumenical in nature. It spread to these churches after its beginnings in Rwanda and Uganda in late 1930s. According to Lay Canon Nathaniel Miguongo, a leader of the movement and licensed lay reader in Ngiriambu archdeaconry most of the followers are women. He says that women who belong to this movement are more committed and consistent in turning up for their weekly fellowships more regularly than men. Once individuals get converted they automatically become evangelists or preachers of the good news irrespective of having attained any training at all.

Informants who are aligned to the Revival Movement said that the church's evangelistic work has grown due to this movement which has encouraged many women to be itinerant preachers and evangelists. Their ministry is accepted without any gender discrimination. This Movement kept the 'fire' of the church burning even during the *Mau*

*Mau* period when the Anglican Church was viewed as a collaborator with the colonial administration and its members persecuted by the nationalist independent fighters.

### **3.2.3. The Ministry of Women in Music**

Music is one of the important ministries in Christian worship. Through music there is personal inner inspiration and uplifting of the worshippers. Music is used to teach, preach, inform, build, correct, guide, and console the worshippers. In other cases it is also used to entertain thus attracting many more to the church. The ACK derives its music from the Psalms in the Bible, hymn books. Other songs are composed by individual members to address different issues and circumstances affecting the lives of people. Women have been very active and instrumental in music in the ACK as well as in other churches.

Rev. Evans Karanja the archdeaconry choir coordinator and a musician, strongly asserted that women have actively participated and excelled as choir members in most congregations. During the interview in March 2010, he said that music keeps the church lively. Most of choirs in the target area are composed of women members. For example, at St. Stephen's Mbiri Church, out of the forty five active choir members there is not a single man. At St. Dorcas' Kegwa church, there are twenty nine active choir members and no man. Therefore they have not been able to participate in the diocesan choir festivals in the last two years due to lack of male voices. However, there are some church

choirs with very few men compared to women. For example, at St. Faith Kathunguri there are twenty five choir members and only seven are men. At St. Polycarp Gikonjo out of thirty one members only six are men. This pathetic case applies in many other parishes in the diocese of Kirinyaga. In fact, out of 26 congregations of Ngirambu archdeaconry only seven choir groups participated in the diocesan music festivals in year 2010. The main reason is that men are not forthcoming to join these choirs in order to balance the voices in the set pieces and folk songs.

In many parishes in Ngirambu archdeaconry, women form the greatest number of the entertaining groups especially during evangelistic rallies, church functions such as weddings, burial ceremonies, thanksgiving services and fellowships. They have made the church services live and appealing to the members of the congregations. Many women have joined the church choirs and singing groups as hobbies and this has helped them to become committed members of the church willing to participate in all other activities of the church. In a discussion with Mbiri Church women choir members on the reason why they like singing, some of them responded that it keeps them fit and relieves them from family stress which they encounter back at home. In other words, participation in music gives peace and helps them forget the struggles they experience at their homes thus making them stable and better members of the church.

Lena Mchungu, the chairlady ACK Karuri choir, said that women have also sung in other important occasions such as during graduation ceremonies, in women self help groups' forums and community gatherings where religious rituals are involved. This has helped

to pass over important information which contributes to a healthy church and society.

Music plays an important role in the liturgy. Through music people are instructed. Most of these messages are composed to help the audiences to learn more about God and to grow in the faith. Other music is to challenge the audiences on how they could support the work of the church.

In the year 2009 the diocesan themes for the choir festivals were as follows:-

- a) Folk song class D, "One body." I Corinthians 12.
- b) Folk song class B, "Environment, God's creation and conservation" Genesis I.
- c) Set Piece, "Water baptism." John 3: 1 – 21.

In the year 2010 the themes were as follows:-

- a) Folk song Class B, "Be a good shepherd of the flock of the Lord"  
1 Peter 5: 1-10,
- b) Set piece was about faith.
- c) Hymnal class C2, Deuteronomy 17: 19.

Also in the year 2010 from May to August the diocese had centenary celebrations where different choirs participated in singing and dancing. The theme was "The word of God will last forever".

Therefore, this is a clear example that through music the message about God and faith

is disseminated.

Indeed this is in consonant with the trend in the country where the churches are involved in spreading the gospel through music. In fact in a research carried by St. Paul's University, Limuru, theological students in 2008, on the rise of Charismatic/Pentecostal movements in Kenya, it was explicit that most of these churches are characterized by high class music and singing. This has entertained and attracted many young and middle aged people who are the majority members in those churches.

#### **3.2.4. The Ministry of Women in Church Stewardship**

Christian stewardship involves giving towards the welfare of the church. This includes contributing money, energy and material resources. In the ACK, various methods are used to raise money. Among these are general offertory, tithing, first fruits and jumble sales. Sister Susan Kariuki in her response to the questionnaire indicated that women have contributed more in the areas of raising funds for running the church programmes. They have followed the examples of women who have supported the work of Jesus during his ministry on earth and like that of Priscilla who used to be a tent maker (Acts 18:3) and Lydia who dealt with purple goods (Acts 16:14). They organize and decide on a project for the church. These projects include contributions towards constructions of churches, houses for the priests, church halls, kitchens, dispensaries and even some income generating buildings for rent to the community. Sister Susan Kariuki gave an



example of her parish, Kabare where they have a church dispensary.

Most women do not have salaried jobs or businesses where they could get the money to contribute to these building projects or for other church activities. They therefore have formed various groups to work for money which they in turn contribute to the church. Such jobs the informants said include, picking coffee and tea, cultivating in the farms or fetching water and firewood. Those who are employed and do business give generously towards the agreed church and women projects. Most of those businesses they are engaged in are small scale like shops and small kiosks, salon shops, selling vegetables and cereals, new and second hand clothes. In many congregations there is always a jumble sale or a form of fund raising every Sunday in support of church work. This includes paying and maintaining church workers, especially the clergy. Women bring their farms produce especially during harvest seasons for sale to the congregation. The contribution of women in giving through offertory, tithing and other forms of financial contribution surpasses that of men due to the fact that they are the majority and most active members in the church.

Women have volunteered in the church to do a lot of work and services without pay. For example, during an oral interview with Virginia Karani former Mothers' Union coordinator in the diocese, women would clean the church, plant and tend flowers in the church compound, wash and iron the church linen, cook for the church visitors, provide food for the clergy, type and design church bulletins and programmes, instruct catechumens. Women, she adds are known to sacrifice more of their time and energy for

the church work more than men.

### **3.2.5 The Ministry of Women in Sunday School and Youth Work**

In the ACK, Sunday school is the ministry in the church that is devoted to the teaching of young children. In this ministry, children are taught the Bible and its application to their lives. Usually, they are divided according to their respective ages, that is, 3 to 5, 6 to 8 and 9 to 14 years. Sunday school work is the basic Christian foundation for children as they grow to be active members of the church. This is core in the Christian life and a guarantee for the future of the church. If these children are well taught and properly handled they will ensure the stability and future of the church. It is based on the biblical principle in Proverbs 22:6 “Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

Jane Kariuki, a Sunday school teacher in Mbiri church, described teaching Sunday school as one of the most important work that women do in the church. According to the diocesan statistics, it also reveals that most Sunday school teachers are women and young ladies. For example, in Mutithi parish out of six teachers only one is a male; in Kiamugumo parish out of six teachers only two are male.

The youth and children are the potential future of the church. This ministry to the youth must be handled with a lot of care. Many churches have lost their youth members due to mishandling. Churches which have downplayed their ministry to the youth have found

themselves with very few members and weak in all ways. In most churches, the youth members are female like in Ngiriambu and Kathunguri parishes. However, there are exceptions like St. Stephen's Mbiri where there are more male youthful members especially especially in the boys' and girls' brigade girls.

Women have played the role of counseling the youth in godliness matters, sexuality, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS and boy/girl relationships. Women form teams to visit secondary and primary schools to counsel students during what the 'talent week.' They are also available during school programmes as arranged by the priest in the sponsored schools, for example, Njuki-ini parish.

In fellowships and prayer forums, various prayer needs are offered to God. Most of those who attend and lead these groups are women. During this time, they discuss issues affecting the elderly, the orphans, the poor and the welfare of the community in general. At the same time they discuss and plan how to participate and support weddings of their fellow church members. They contribute towards the same and organize how they would entertain, cook, travel and donate to the newlywed couples. This has immensely contributed to the growth of a dynamic, stable and caring church.

### **3.2.6. The Ministry of Women in Hospitality and Church Cleanliness**

In an interview with the Mothers' Union chairlady in Njuki-ini parish, Mrs. Nester Karura, the church has always been known for its hospitality to strangers and to one

another. In all the parishes where respondents came from, there is a hospitality vote head in their budgets. This also applies to all other departmental budgets, such as, KAMA, MU, Youth and Sunday school. Mothers' Union exceed in this activity. The respondents clearly explained how hospitality purely lies with women. They said that it is the responsibility of women to feed the visitors in the church. Every Sunday, women are well organized on how to welcome and feed the preacher and the leader of the service. In Kiamutugu, Giconjo, Kariru, Gaciongo, Kanjuu, and Njuki-ini parishes they have a duty roster specifying how women could be provide the hospitality services. This includes bringing food from home. Women also organize themselves in teams to visit their priests in the vicarage. They bring baskets of food and set aside some money to support the priest. They also organize who would preach and pray for the priest. This is expected to happen at least once per year in every parish.

Women take the responsibility of cleaning the churches as well as the church linen. Winfred said that women are perfectionist and therefore uphold cleanliness even in the churches. They clean the church compound, utensils of the church, arrange the furniture and decorate where the people would sit.

The diagram below shows the ministry of women as lay readers, Sunday school teachers, evangelists, choir members, and vice chair persons in their congregations.

**NGIRIAMBU ARCHDEACONARY (a table indicating the number of male and female participating in some church ministries)**

**Figure IV**

Parish	Lay reader		Sunday School Teachers		Choir Members		Evangelists		Vice Chairpersons	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Njuki-ini	3	4	1	1	3	60	1	0	1	0
Kithara	2	1	4	2	6	16	0	0	1	0
Kiaumbui	1	0	6	8	0	13	0	0	0	1
Giconjo	2	1	1	6	4	12	0	0	1	0
Kanjuu	2	1	2	4	5	14	0	0	1	0
Ngiriambu	1	2	1	7	9	15	1	0	1	0
Mirichi	1	1	0	4	1	8	0	0	1	0
Kariru	2	3	2	11	7	32	1	0	0	1
Mburi	1	1	1	6	8	28	1	0	1	0
Kiamutugu	2	1	2	9	0	19	0	0	0	1
Githure	4	2	3	8	5	27	1	0	1	0
Kathunguri	3	3	0	7	8	21	0	0	0	0
Gaciongo	1	1	0	9	2	10	1	0	1	0
Ngariama	2	3	1	12	1	22	0	0	0	1
Kiandumu	2	3	2	13	0	10	0	0	1	0
Kiamugumo	2	2	1	9	5	26	0	0	1	0

### **3.2.7. The Ministry of Women in church Fellowships and Social Work**

Fellowships are the mid-week meetings of Christians. They are held at various homes and in the church. Women visit the sick, needy and people who have experienced a tragedy. Three clergy respondents from Giconjo, Gaciongo and Kiamutugu parishes gave the experiences from these parishes where men hardly attend the fellowships. These fellowships strengthen members as they share in the bible reading, singing, testimonies and prayers. They also donate generously to the relevant needs of the home. It is also at this time when important notices of the church are made in regard to what will be happening in the following Sunday service.

### **3.3. THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

We asked the respondents to explain the areas where women contribute most in leadership of the church. Women are in the forefront in most the activities in the church. Their commitment is shining and incomparable. Their leadership is evident in the following areas: unit fellowships, prayers and intercessions, church attendance, evangelistic work, teaching and counseling in Sunday school and youth, ushering, raising funds, praise and worship, choirs, hospitality, attending to the sick and the elderly, supporting the needy, orphans, widows, and widowers, supporting the clergy, initiating physical development and maintaining the church. Respondents agreed that one of the areas which has provided women with the opportunity to excel in service and provide leadership and proved that women are the pillars of the church is the Mothers Union.

### 3.3.1. The Mothers' Union (A Case Study)

The Mothers' Union (M U) is the world-wide society of ladies of the Anglican Church, under the patronage of the archbishops and bishops of the Anglican Communion. It was founded by Mrs. Elizabeth Sumner in 1876. Its headquarters is in London at Mary Sumner's house.

The Mothers' Union in Kenya was started by Anglican English women members in 1918. It was then extended to the Anglican African women members in 1956. It has spread in all the Anglican dioceses in Kenya. <sup>5</sup>

The Mothers' Union is assigned with the responsibility of family welfare in the church. Its main objective is to strengthen marriages, encourage mothers to bring up children to Christian life and to care for families met by adversity. The Mothers' Union contributes to the growth of the church through worship, projects and entertaining the visitors. Its activities include:

1. Caring for the sick, the elderly, and the needy in the church and the community.

For example, buying blankets and beddings for the aged as Christmas gifts; building houses for the aged who are neglected by their families and those whose houses have been burnt and they cannot afford to rebuild them, supplying food, clothing and money to the most needy.

2. They organize burial ceremonies for unstable families giving support, labour and resources.
3. They are expected to work hand in hand with the widows and single parents in their different needs. In the beginning, they had overlooked the needs of the widowers which they are now much involved.
4. They also encourage those who have not had their marriages solemnized in the church to do so. In some cases, they organize for mass wedding services and also provide requirements such as entertainment and paying for the marriage certificate. This attracts many people to come to the church and especially men.
5. The Mothers Union plays and organizes for educative dramas which portrays how a good Christian woman and a mother should be God fearing, active in the church activities and a role model.
6. They offer counseling to families encouraging them to live a Christian life. This role is very important to the church because they have helped many families that have been broken by drunkenness and drug abuse to be mended thus making strong congregations and communities.
7. They hold seminars for women in the congregations and parishes where teachings are done on issues affecting the family and the church. Nowadays, those seminars include men. Other times they hold seminars specifically for married couples. Some churches like St. Stephen's Mbiri have gone ahead and organized and sponsored seminars for men where the men department, KAMA, is not strong. This is actually one indicator of the key growth of the church.
8. In order for the messages of the seminars to be spread further and across they hold



training of trainers (ToTs) in every parish where one woman is trained in order to train others. Most of the chairladies of the congregations are the ones who receive this training.

In the last week of September and the first Sunday of October every year they hold major fundraising in their congregations specifically to cater for their development projects and quota allocation from the diocese to support the MU workers. This is after a week of exercising their talents by extending their Christian services to the church and the community. Later, they hold a diocesan public spiritual rally where they also collect funds towards different church related activities at the diocesan level. Although this is similar to what other departments, such as, KAMA, Youth and Sunday school, do in the church, the M U department surpasses them. According to the MU calendar of activities from the Diocesan to the parish level every third Sunday of the month is dedicated to the Mothers' Union. In collaboration with the parish priest they should hold a seminar inviting a speaker on a relevant subject though this may not be strictly followed in every parish.

In order to successfully carry out the work of hospitality, every parish MU is advised to construct a kitchen, as the most important project. Many parishes in our target area have constructed these kitchens for example, Njuki-ini, Kathunguri and Gaciongo. Some of them have proceeded on to construct dining halls whose primary activity is to receive visitors and church members. The halls are also used for wedding receptions and other social gatherings.

The MU has other projects which help church members meet their physical needs as well as contribute to the welfare and growth of the church. Such projects include:-

1. Merry – go - rounds where members contribute money to help each other in their financial needs. In other cases, they jointly buy utensils, furniture, water tanks and other household vessels and encourage one another to have a kitchen garden. A financially healthy family which sustains itself will always make its members participate well and contribute to church activities.
2. Goat rearing and poultry keeping.
3. Nursery schools e.g in Kathunguri parish.
4. Handicraft items, e.g. at St. Dorcas Kegwa church in Njukiini Parish.
5. Construction of rental housing for income generation for the church, e.g. Ngirambu archdeaconry which has a joint project at Kianyaga market. Kiamutugu and Njukiini parishes have joint rental houses at Mbiri market.
6. Dispensaries e.g in Githure and Mburi parishes

Through these projects and the trainings they have undergone, women have rapidly built a strong and credible constituency for development that has achieved an increased level of self-sufficiency and improved capability of planning and implementing projects earning considerable respect both within the church and in the community at large. The Mothers' Union is a clear example of the ministry of women in the church and a proof to the argument that women are pillars of the church.

### 3.3.2. Ordained Women in Church Ministry and Leadership

The Association of Women in the Ordained Ministry (ASWOM) on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2010 at St. Thomas Cathedral, Kerugoya, reflected on how women have held leadership positions and participated in decision making organs of the church. These include; being lay readers, vicar's wardens, chairpersons, church council members, parish council members, patrons (matrons) of Sunday school and youth. Women also serve in the ordained ministry as deacons and priests. Some of them have been appointed as vicars in charge of parishes while others have been made to head diocesan departments of Sunday school, youth and street children. A few have of them have been appointed as rural deans, archdeacons and provost recently

Former archbishop Gitari, who was the first to ordain women when he was the bishop of Kirinyaga diocese, holds the egalitarian view that there is nothing that a man can do that a woman cannot do. This view is also held by Professor John Mbiti who during an interview in Nairobi in May 2010, declared his belief that a woman can rise to any leadership position and perform perfectly. Gitari gave an example of Rev. Stella Muringo who was among the first ladies to be appointed as Rural Deans. When she was posted to Ngariama parish where they had difficulties in raising funds to pay diocesan quota she surprised the bishop by devising methods to clear the debts and sustain the parish.

Gitari says that he was always happy to witness the feminine aspect in the church

ministry as it brought special talents. He elaborates by observing that women have a positive part to play and in every leadership they must be involved in order to bring a balance. He cites Article 81 (b) of the Kenya new Constitution which provides that ‘not more than two-thirds of the members of elective bodies shall be of the same gender’. The *Constitution* in Article 100 provides for gender mainstreaming and affirmative action by directing the Parliament to enact legislation to promote the representation of women in Parliament.<sup>6</sup> The table below indicates how women are represented in the diocesan decision making bodies

#### MAIN DIOCESAN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES AS IN 2010 AUGUST

**Figure IV**

BOARD/ COMMITTEE	M	F	TOTAL
Members of Synod	102	43	145
Standing Committee of Synod	32	8	40
Board of Finance	15	8	23
Board of Education	15	5	20
Pastoral Committee	31	9	40
Bishop Examining Chaplains	11	1	12

### **3.4. FACTORS THAT MAKE WOMEN PERFORM WELL IN THE CHURCH MINISTRY**

In order for women to perform well in the church ministry as described in the previous paragraphs, the respondents described some of the factors and attributes that enable women to make such contributions. According to Virginia Karani, women compare themselves with the women who followed Jesus who happen to have been called to serve God irrespective of cultural, historical, traditional, religious barriers and stereotypes. She described women as more caring, merciful and more concerned. To support this Gitari narrated how Rev. Pauline Wanjiru, currently serving as the coordinator for the Ecumenical HIV/ AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) who when she was a parish priest, removed jiggers from an elderly woman while on her pastoral visit. He also observes that women have a positive heart to the ministry not because of vigor and passion but because they can penetrate where men cannot. Other respondents indicated that women have special compassion towards the children, and it is not strange they attend the sick and orphans.

Women are found to be committed in their work as well as in the church. They offer themselves selflessly for the betterment of their families, society and the church. They are able to attend to many activities at the same time. Respondents gave examples of how women fulfill their duties at home while at the same time they are effective in the church work. They are also more accurate and to have sharp memories which makes them to reach realistic decisions. Rev. Kanina described women as like giraffes. They are able to

see far and detect the likelihood result and thus make the appropriate decisions or interventions unlike men who see only the immediate benefits. He referred to the Kikuyu proverb, '*Kia mutumia gitikagio kiarara*' which means that a woman's idea is hardly accepted until it has come to pass.

For those serving in the ordained ministry, they have received equal theological and pastoral training like their men counterparts. Some of them have attained higher theological degrees while others are also pursuing further theological qualifications in Masters Degree level. They are also exposed to leadership courses and seminars organized by the church and other institutions. In all the parishes of Ngiriambu archdeaconry, it was observed that women attendance in various seminars organized by the church was very high as compared to men. These seminars make them enlightened and equipped for church work and leadership.

In an oral interview, Rev. Naomi Waqo, said that women are good managers and stewards of resources. They also mobilize and influence people to participate and contribute to the development of the church. Women being the majority in the church they support one another and thus they are able to do much. They are also alleged to have natural skills. Some of the lay women are trained as leaders in other areas like education, health and business among others. They are actively committed to attend other civic education seminars and other courses which make them better leaders.

### 3.5. SUGGESTIONS ON HOW WOMEN MINISTRY CAN BE IMPROVED

The respondents made several suggestions on what could be done in order to improve the ministry of women in the church ministry. According to Rev. Kanina, women should be given the same opportunity as men to be prepared for church ministry and should not be discriminated on gender basis because they can fill every gap just like men. Interviewing Rev. Jephthah Gathaka, the executive director of the Ecumenical Centre for Justice and Peace who once served as the Administrative Secretary of the then Diocese of Mt. Kenya East, he said that this preparation and training of the girl child should begin at the formative age. He complained that in many cases because of the discrimination of the girl child this preparation and training comes very late while men are already exercising their ministry and assumed leadership positions. He cited the *ACK Constitution* Article IV which forbids discrimination “based on grounds of racial, tribal or gender difference.”

According to ASWOM Women should also have access to financial management skills as well as being exposed to current affairs which can make them render better services in the church. Women should engage and link up with other women in other professions in order to share, learn, empower and challenge each other.

Women must be encouraged to offer themselves for leadership positions without fear. Ven. Joyce Cendi, an Archdeacon in the diocese of Kirinyaga says that encouragement should be viewed as part of empowerment. They should be allowed to exercise their ministry and leadership roles freely. The top church leaders should recognize, appreciate

and support women in their roles. This has not been the case and thus it suppresses and hinders women from making further and more contributions.

Nyambura Njoroge, in her article, 'Hannah Why do you Weep? 1 Samuel 1 and 2: 1-21' advises women not to allow themselves to be intimidated by men while exercising their ministry in the church. She shows this when describing Hannah praying in the temple and answering the priest on duty, Eli not to, 'regard me as a worthless woman'<sup>7</sup>.

ASWOM found that it is important and urgent for the ACK to adjust its leadership structures which is a set back to the women ministry. In their reflection, they noted that although the diocese of Kirinyaga was among the first to ordain women in 1992 it has taken twenty years to have a woman appointed as an Archdeacon and Provost which are higher ranks in the ACK hierarchy. They recommended that there was need for social deconstruction which could help to eliminate the mentality that women are inferior leaders.

Lydia Mwaniki says that involvement of women in the higher decision making bodies in the church would help to improve women ministry.

### **3.6. CHALLENGES AND HINDRANCES IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN**

The study questionnaire also sought the main challenges that women face in their ministry in the church. Some African cultural beliefs, values and practices consider



women as being inferior in the society and church. Therefore they can only make good followers. Some cultures for example, Kikuyu culture have followed the biblical passages that describe women as the weaker sex thus taking this mentality seriously. They therefore deny women opportunities to lead and exercise their special talents in the church.

ASWOM observed that inadequate theological training of women leads to wrong interpretation of the scriptures thus subordinating women not to seek their rightful involvement in their ministry in the church. This also makes higher church leadership which is composed of men not to support women in their roles in the church.

Lack of leadership skills in women in the local congregations hinders women from playing perfectly their roles. It makes them stagnant and less innovative. Respondents observed that where women are not well exposed churches lack development and spiritual growth.

The ASWOM members pointed out that many women suffer from inferiority complex. They fail to take up their responsibilities. Some develop shy attitude when they are challenged and lack confidence when asked to participate in various duties of the church. This is evident during church council leaders' elections in the parishes at every end of the year. The vicar in charge of Kathunguri parish Rev. Rose Wambui strongly stated that although women are the majority in the congregations they nominate and vote for men to be elders of the church and disqualify their fellow women who in many instances

are eligible. She said many parish councils have higher number of men against women as is the case in her parish.

According to the former archbishop Gitari, women can be a problem to themselves as sometimes they do not like to be led by their fellow women. They decline to support their fellow women in contributing to church growth. He says that stereotypes applied about women, for example, the belief that women are jealous of one another hinders women from fulfilling the roles in the church. Sometimes they despise themselves because of age factor whether young or old.

Many respondents had observed that men do not appreciate and at times support very poorly the ministry of women. They fear gender equality where women can shine more than their male counterparts. Gitari revealed that during four consecutive ordinary sessions of synod only men clergy opposed and rejected the ordination of women because they feared to be overshadowed by them.

Ann Mwangi, observed that family responsibilities kept the married women away from performing the expectations they have towards the church ministry. Sometimes they are hindered to attend to important meetings and duties. At other times they can even be denied permission to attend to their obligations by their husbands. According to Kanina, the many domestic roles that are assigned to women are indicators to a kind of exploitation because the spouses should help women in household matters in order to allow them to participate fully in the church affairs.

Lack of involvement of women in the decision making bodies of the church eliminates women views which are beneficial to build women for better and effective participation. This also discourages them from participating fully and willingly. Lydia Mwanki observes that in the ACK women have been allowed to participate in diverse ways. However, she complains about the gender balance in these higher decision making bodies as they are dominated by men. She notes that there is an underrepresentation of women both in the house of clergy and the house of laity in the provincial synod. There is no female representation in the house of bishops since there is not a woman bishop in the ACK. <sup>8</sup>

### **3.7. HOW WOMEN MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH IS VIEWED**

When we asked respondents to explain how they viewed the ministry of women in the church, the response was in two dimensions, some were positive and negative while a few were neutral.

The majority felt that it was effective and had great impact in the church. According to Gitari, women ministry has been a great success despite a few challenges. He does not see the reason why a woman cannot be consecrated a bishop or rise to any other higher rank in the church or in the country. Wilson Njuno the KAMA chairman in Mbiri Church and other respondents viewed projects run by women as being more viable. For example, all the Parishes have kitchen projects initiated and supported by women Church

members. Waqo explains women ministry as excellent and says that given an opportunity they could do wonders. She adds that unless a woman is sick she cannot abandon her work.

Some respondents viewed women ministry as caring and compassionate. This is explained by their involvement and commitment to social work. It is inclusive because it is wide, diverse and touches on all areas of church ministry.

According to Winfred, women are known for humility which helps them to be effective in their ministry. They slowly assert their ideas in a polite manner unlike men who sometimes could be harsh and hostile. Women are also outgoing and have attractive qualities which pull men to their attention.

Negatively, Virginia Karani, associated women ministry with petty jobs such as social work of visiting the sick and the elderly. Ann Mwangi, the Principal of Kianyambo Secondary School said that women are equated with children. Some of the respondents held the patriarchal view that men dominate everything and therefore do not appreciate women's contribution especially if they excel beyond them.

Rev. Dorothy Mbui, the vicar of Kiandumu parish says that women lack self esteem and unless they are encouraged and supported they cannot perform. She observed that those who are in high management positions are said to be harsh and furious. Since it is held that women do not have physical strength they tend to assert their authority. Alois Njiru

the Evangelist of Njuki-ini parish held a neutral position. He felt that the ministry of women and men were equal. Rev. J.B Mwangi the vicar of Gaciongo observed that the ministry of women was somehow wanting.

### **3.8. THE ANALYSIS OF WOMENS' MINISTRY CONTRIBUTION TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH**

Many respondents were of the view that the ministry of women has contributed immensely to the growth and development of the church and made the following analysis.

Gitari, believes that women make two thirds of the Christians in all the churches. Due to their majority in numbers they contribute much in terms of finances, material and labour. He argues that "there is no doubt that it is women who have made the church to remain strong financially and spiritually all the day long." In their proclamation of the Gospel, he adds that they have contributed to the growth and expansion of the church. As such there has been a tremendous planting of new churches.

Through identifying the needs of people in the church and society and by taking necessary actions, women have made the church to move to greater heights. This indicates that they have fulfilled the mission of the church as per Jesus Nazareth manifesto (Luke 4: 18- 21) which states:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
And recovery of sight for the blind  
To release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

Rev. Grace Mugo, observes that women leaders have been keen to invite preachers and speakers who are competent in different professions to address the congregations on different issues which affect women and families. Such issues include health, socio-economic, agriculture and good governance. This has resulted into having healthy families and society which sustains itself and this has made the church to grow rapidly.

Women have supported both male and female priests in many ways while they are serving in the parishes. These priests who are the shepherds of the flock would not be able to exercise their pastoral duties and ministry without their support. As observed earlier in this study, women have always fed the clergy in their parishes. They also often visit priests, pray and encourage them. When the clergy have fundraising in the church for further studies women have supported them by bringing all types of farm produce for sale.

The entertainment done by women has attracted many people in the church. Their dynamism has pulled many young people to join the church. At home women also encourage their husbands to attend church services. ASWOM members also added that women are the carriers of life. They bear and nurse children thus increasing the number not only in the population but also in the church. They should therefore be viewed as the mothers of the church.

When it comes to physical development in the church, many respondents argued that due to their majority in membership women have contributed more to the construction of

permanent churches. They have also constructed social halls in the church compounds, for example, Njukiini, Ngiriambu, Giconjo and Kiandumu parishes. They have also contributed in the construction of nursery schools, vicarages and dispensaries operated by the churches. Women have also installed water tanks and provided utensils for usage in the church, for example, Gaciongo, Kanjuu, Ngariama, Kiamugumo, Githure parishes among others.

The Immanuel Fellowship, (a gathering of young women clergy in Kirinyaga diocese) in a focused group discussion cited some parishes where women have initiated income generating projects. For example, Kiamutugu and Njukiini parishes own rental houses which they collect funds for the welfare of the church. Some have other businesses like making clothes and selling them to the Church members and community in order to get funds to run the church, for example, St. Dorcas' Kegwa and St. Philip's Mhuri. The commitment and availability of women to render their ministry has enabled them to contribute to the growth and development of the church.

The table below indicates how the clergy are deployed in the diocese and their gender parity.



**DEPLOYMENT OF CLERGY IN THE ACK DIOCESE OF KIRINYAGA  
AS AT AUGUST 2010**

**Figure V.**

<b>OFFICE/TITLE</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Administrative secretary <sup>1</sup>	1	0	1
Archdeacons <sup>2</sup>	11	2	13
Provost	0	1	1
Rural Deans <sup>3</sup>	17	7	24
Vicars in charge of Parishes <sup>4</sup>	75	26	101
Curates	12	3	12
Heads of departments <sup>4</sup>	8	3	11
Bishop examining Chaplains <sup>5</sup>	9	1	10

1. There is an administrative secretary who is male.
2. Some archdeacons also double as vicars in charge of parishes.
3. Rural deans also double as vicars in charge of parishes.
4. Most heads of departments work full time in those departments while a few work as vicars in charge of parishes as well as rural deans and archdeacons.
5. Bishop's examining chaplains are senior clergy of the diocese holding other offices as heads of departments or archdeacons.
6. The number of other clergy, namely, retired, seconded, on study leave or sabbatical are found in appendix III.

### **3.9. ATTITUDES WHEN WORKING UNDER A WOMAN IN THE CHURCH MINISTRY.**

There were mixed feelings when respondents were asked to say what they felt while working under a woman church leader. Many women said that they were comfortable, felt happy and are being uplifted. They felt okay and appreciative of their services. Rev. Judy Gitari, who was a pastoral assistant in one of the parishes headed by woman, said that she felt comfortable working under a woman if that woman leader understands her and the situation therein. One (identity withheld on request in an oral interview) felt that women are proud even to their fellow women. Immanuel fellowship members pointed out that some women felt jealous when being led by other women. They gave an example of how in the Mothers' Union committees sometimes women despise and look down on each other. Rev. David Muriithi, who once served as an assistant priest in a parish under his wife, said that some men would feel inferior when being led by a woman. Manasses Kariuki, an archdeaconry church youth leader stressed that he views a woman leader just the same as the one who is subordinate to her husband at home.

Gathaka said that as long as that woman is competent in her work, he does not see the reason why he cannot work under her. He emphasized that a woman leader must demonstrate that she has the same qualities as the men leaders. Since women have proved to be capable leaders in other fields which include supervising men he added that there is more encouragement to work under a woman leader. This view is supported by

Kanina who said that leadership roles have nothing to do with gender but what determines a successful leader is being well versed and equipped for that particular area of leadership.

## END NOTES

1. Nasmiyu Wasike op,cit, p. 66.
2. Catechism of the people to be confirmed as it is written in the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Anglican Church of Kenya and taught to the catechumens or candidates for confirmation.
3. Lay Canon Bernard Makanga is a former district administrator in the government of Kenya, he is one of oldest Christian leaders in the diocese of Kirinyaga and a founder member of Ngirambu archdeaconry, the oral interview held in his house.
4. Oral interview with the Ven. Ephantus Muriuki in charge of Ngirambu archdeaconry, on April, 2010.
5. This is based on the report of the Mothers' Union to the 7<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of Diocesan Synod of Kirinyaga held at Kabare from 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> April 1988.
6. In Article 98 the *Constitution* provides for the nomination of 16 women to the Senate through the political parties. It also provides in Article 177 (b) for another nomination in the County assembly to ensure that no more than two-thirds of the memberships of the assembly are of the same gender.
7. Nyambura J. Njoroge, 'Hannah, Why Do You Weep? 1 Samuel 1 and 2: 1-21' in Grace Wamue and Mary Getui, (eds) *Violence Against Women*, Nairobi, Acton Publishers, 1996, p. 24.
8. Lydia Mwaniki op,cit, p. 52

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINDINGS

#### 4.1. SUMMARY

This study has established that the ministry of the women in the church is so wide that it covers almost all activities of the church. It has been analyzed that from the grassroots level women serve as Chair ladies in the congregations; Evangelists; in music ministry as choir members; generously contribute towards church building constructions; development activities; Sunday school teaching and youth ministry; leading congregational fellowships; social work including visiting the sick, the elderly, orphans and widows; hospitality to the clergy and church visitors; church cleanliness; general welfare of the church through the Mothers' Union and in the ordained ministry as priests in charge of parishes and deacons.

It was demonstrated that women have played many roles in the church despite not being included in the holy orders. A Christian by his/her baptism is a member of the body of Christ and is committed and ought to render his/her service to the church without any hindrance.<sup>1</sup> The study also shows that women's tireless labor in the church, creativity in fundraisings and development of the church activities, proper organization and commitment to their faith and their families are testimonies of their contribution.

The commitment and dedication of women to their ministry in the church is an obedient to the New Testament where there is evidence that some of Jesus followers were women who also contributed greatly to his ministry. These women were reported to be the first witnesses of his resurrection. The study has indicated that women have indeed taken evangelism and witnessing as a major activity in their ministry in the church. In the early church women believers were among the many converts and begun home churches, for example, Lydia, Priscilla and Dorcas. The study demonstrates that women are the founders of many congregations. They are then committed to building one another and the church members spiritually through the fellowships and the regular Sunday services. The study also indicates that women are more caring and carry a heavier burden for the church work. They also highly consider the welfare of the clergy which enables them to be effective in their parish ministry.

In as much as women can be seen to be successful in their ministry they face many hindrances and challenges. Some of these were found to be cultural beliefs which makes them unacceptable; less education which means they are not well exposed and learned; limited opportunities and family responsibilities. Women were also described as the weaker sex and thus unsuitable for church leadership.

Biblical hermeneutics has shown that the Roman and Greek family patriarchal as well as Jewish system influenced Paul's teaching. This kind of biblical interpretation has largely penetrated to the today's church where men are predominant in church ministry. In the ACK, women have not been allowed to take up their full leadership roles and other

positions. This is in contradiction with the early church practice where women participated as members and leaders like deacons, teachers and prophets.

The posting of women clergy into parishes has also emerged to be an area of concern because of the security and living standards. In parishes where there is no shelter women clergy are faced with hardships which make it impossible for them to render and perform their duties and service to the church more effectively.

During the study, it was clear that women could have rendered their ministry in the church more effectively were it not that in many cases they are financially unstable and disempowered. Their generous attitude is hampered by this hindrance.

In history of the church, the study has shown how the medieval church perfected the discrimination against women not to exercise their roles in the ministry of the church. They were relegated to working in the priests' and bishops' houses and cleaning the church. The reformation period did not appreciate and allow women to exercise their ministry fully. Their position was viewed as inferior just as how some men respondents said that they view women as subjects who should be serving them in their homes.

The study further indicated that women have been allowed to exercise their ministry in the church at the grassroots level despite the fact that they have not been fully involved in the governance of the church as members of the highest decision making bodies such as Diocesan and Provincial Synods. They have also not risen to the level of being elected

as Bishops.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that this will not take long before women reach to this level as it would make the church very strong and win many people to the flock of Christ.

## **4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

One of the objectives of this study was to identify the areas of concern in women's ministry and make recommendations and strategies which can enhance their ministry. These recommendations could not be reached without first analyzing the ministry of women in the church in its present form and also enumerating the factors that help women to participate fully in the church. From the findings, several recommendations have emerged which if implemented would make the church grow. It is the responsibility of each organ in the church structure to see what improvements it can make to enable more women participate fully in church ministry.

The church is urged to appreciate, recognize and uphold fully the ministry of women which has contributed to the growth and development of the church. More opportunities should be provided for women to participate fully in the activities of the church. This is the only way it can realize its vision of a mature, caring church boldly proclaiming Christ.

Every effort should be made in preparing the girl child to become an active member of the church. The church should train the youths and especially the female youth in their formative years to exercise their gifts in the church. In secular education, more emphases



should be made to encourage and promote the girl/ boy education. This will help them to grow intellectually together thus accepting one another in their roles.

The church needs to open and widen the opportunities for women to participate in every area in the church life. Such opportunities should also be given on equal basis depending on qualification, capability, talents and competence. By this, the church will be exercising its mission of equipping God's people to transform the society with the gospel.

More training should be provided in order to equip and expose women in the current and modern trends so that they can be able to offer relevant ministry in the modern church. More seminars on the church ministry, family and leadership skills should be provided to women. This should start in the early ages for both girl and boy child.

Equal opportunities have to be provided for equipping and training men and women for the ordained ministry. When opportunities for further studies arise, women should be considered alongside men in order to strike a balance.

Proper bible studies and interpretation be conducted in the churches in order to eliminate and avoid discrimination based on gender. Theological education by extension should also be provided at local and higher levels in the church. The use of male pronouns, ideas and connotations should be discouraged.

The church is expected to give more enlightenment to its members and the society on the negative cultural, multicultural and traditional barriers that discourage women participation and contribution in the church. Culture and prejudices therein needs to be revisited to create room for social deconstruction, especially in domestic responsibilities which for a long time have challenged and hindered the efficiency of women ministry in the church.

When women have an opportunity to lead and serve in the church, they should prove their capability and perform duties assigned to them more efficiently. They should encourage and uphold one another in their ministries, regarding one another as sisters and not competitors in ministry.<sup>2</sup>

Ways and means of empowering women to become economically stable must be explored so that they can contribute more generously towards church activities and social welfare.

There is a need to change the church structure in order to ensure women are more involved in the decision making bodies' right from the grassroots to the top organs.

The ACK leadership is urged to live, and operate according to its church Constitution especially Article IV 'On the Value and Dignity of Man' which forbids discrimination based on ground of racial, tribal and gender difference. Her members need to be educated

on the provisions in the church and the country *Constitution* on the gender discrimination.<sup>3</sup>

The church should emulate the new Kenyan *Constitution* which has placed gender mainstreaming in the forefront and demands for women representation where they have been marginalized.

Special needs for women especially during posting of clergy should be considered in order to avoid any hindrance which can prohibit better participation in their church ministry.

#### **4.3. CONCLUSION**

The foregoing analysis clearly shows that women are participating in all spheres of the church ministry at the grassroots level despite the hinderances and challenges they encounter in their ministry. The study demonstrated this when analyzing from the respondents the roles that women have played in the church. This has contributed to the growth, development and stability of the church as it is today.

The study has shown how women in the diocese of Kirinyaga, in Ngiriambu archdeaconry have participated and contributed as both lay and ordained members of the church in the grassroots level. By allowing women to serve at the glassroot levels, the diocese has encouraged women to play their role in building a strong and growing

church.

By using their talents both spiritually and materially, women have built and sustained the church. The church has been a source of inspiration to its members and the community at large not only in spiritual matters but also in socio-economic and political sphere.

Therefore, in determining and supporting the ministry of women in the church the gender aspect should never feature unless if it is taken from the egalitarian point of view. In that view the roles should be taken from humanity perspective but not maleness and femaleness apart from those that are biological roles.

However, women have not received enough support and encouragement from their male church leaders. Their ministry even though being so outstanding and important has not been fully recognized and appreciated. They have not been involved in the higher decision making bodies in the ACK, such as synods which means they have been denied equal opportunities with men to exercise their gifts.

Women must be prepared and willing to liberate the church from male domination. As such they should firmly but cautiously and wisely strive to get their rights as human beings.

Despite all the hindrances and challenges women have asserted their ministry in the church in a way that if this contribution is withdrawn the ACK, would definitely collapse from the grassroots to its top most level. Therefore, women are the buttress of the

church.

## END NOTES

1. See *ACK Constitution*, Article VI, On the Ministry, p7. The Article employs inclusive language (his/her) when describing the roles of the priest and the deacon. The Article elaborates by stating that, 'The Anglican ideal for the Church and for all its members is perfectly set forth in the Second Collect for Good Friday: "for all estates of people in Thy Holy Church, that every member of the same in his/her vocation and ministry may truly and godly serve Thee, through Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. AMEN"'
2. Ruth Muthei James, 'The Church in Africa and Violence Against Women' in Grace Wamue and Mary Getui (eds) *Violence Against Women*, Nairobi, Acton Publishers, 1996, p. 75.
3. Though Article IV of the Anglican Church in Kenya states that the Church "...allows no discrimination in the membership and government of the Church based on grounds of racial, tribal or gender difference." The Constitution does not envisage a female bishop or Archbishop as the language used to describe their roles is male. See Article VIII – On the functions of the Archbishop.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

#### WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

Women are the majority in terms of membership in the ACK. Their participation in church activities has contributed immensely to the growth and stability of the church in Kirinyaga diocese. A few of them have been given opportunities to lead in the grassroots level but only a negligible number has been given the opportunities to lead in the higher levels of the ACK hierarchy.

Therefore, it is evident that ACK as it is today in growth and stability to a greater extent is as a result of the contribution of women participation and leadership. This contribution has not been fully recognized by the church, so as to encourage more women participation and leadership for the church growth and stability. Has the Anglican Church in Kenya and more specifically in the diocese of Kirinyaga done enough to encourage and attract women to participate fully and make more contribution in order to produce a mature caring church that boldly proclaims Christ according to her vision?

In order for us to satisfactorily answer this question, I am requesting you kindly to spend a few minutes and answer the attached questionnaire. I thank you so much in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Magdaline Nduta Mwangi

## APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Name (optional)

Church/organization

Position

Male/Female

Age (optional)

1. What do you consider to be the women ministries in the church?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In which areas in leadership in the church do you think women contribute most?
  - i. Why do they contribute well in these areas in the church?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - ii. How could it be improved?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the main challenges that hinder women participation and contribution in the church?

4. Describe women leadership in the church?

5. Analyze women's contribution to the growth and development of the church.

6. Please give your assessment on how you feel when working under a woman leader.

### APPENDIX III: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

Professor John S. Mbiti, Professor Emeritus, University of Bern, Switzerland

Most Rev. Dr. David M. Gitari, The retired Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Kenya

The Very Rev. Winfred W. Munene, Provost of St. Thomas Kerugoya and Archdeacon of Cathedral Archdeaconry

Ven. Ephantus Muriuki, Ngiriambu Archdeaconry in Kirinyaga Diocese

Ven. Joyce Cendi, Archdeacon and Vicar in Charge Kutus Parish

Rev. Ben Kanina, Executive Director, Christian Community Services of Mt. Kenya East

Rev. Jephthah K. Gathaka, Executive Director, Ecumenical Centre for Justice and Peace

Rev. Canon Naomi Waqo, Manager, ACK St. Nicholas Children's Home, Nairobi

Rev. Phyllis Kibira, Priest in charge of ACK Utugi Children's home

Rev. Rose Murage, Priest in charge ACK Kathuguri Parish

Rev. Dorothy Mbui, Priest in charge ACK Kiandumu Parish

Rev. Rose Wambui Gatuai Priest in charge Kiamiciri Parish

Rev. Grace Mugo, Priest in charge of Gatwe Parish

Sister Susan Kariuki, Pastoral assistant, Kabare Parish and a master's student at St.

Paul's University

Reuben, Mothers Union Chairlady, Ngiriambu Archdeaconry

Liza Gota, Mothers Union Travelling Secretary, ACK Kirinyaga diocese

Virginia Karani, former Mothers Union chairlady, ACK Mt. Kenya diocese

Rose Nyaga, Mothers Union Chairlady Njuki-ini Deanary

Nester Karura, former Mothers Union chairlady, Ngiriambu Archdeaconry and retired

lay reader

Ann Mwangi, Principal Kianyambo Secondary School

Nicholas Njuno, KAMA Chairman, Ngiriambu Archdeaconry

Wilson Waweru, KAMA Chairman Njuki-ini Parish

Benard Makanga, Lay Canon Diocese of Kirinyaga

Nathaniel Miguongo, Lay Canon Diocese of Kirinyaga

ASWOM (Association of Women in the Ordained Ministry)

Immanuel Fellowship (Young Women Clergy Fellowship) Kirinyaga

Jane Kariuki, Sunday School Treasurer of ACK Mbiri

Lena Mchungu, Choir Chairlady ACK Karuri

Manasses Kariuki, Youth Chairman , Ngiriambu Archdeaconry

**APPENDIX IV: DIOCESAN ESTABLISHMENT AND GENDER****REPRESENTATION (As at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010)**

<b>DIOCESAN OFFICE</b>			
<b>Designation</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Vicar General</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Administrative Secretary</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Secretaries</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Drivers</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Watchman</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Registration Clerk</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Gardener</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>BOARD OF FINANCE</b>			
<b>Accountant</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Accounts Clerks</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Cashier</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Maranatha Sacco</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Director of Stewardship</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES</b>			
<b>Department of Development</b>			
<b>Development Secretary</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Bookshop Manager</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>



<b>Colporteur /Driver</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sales Person</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Social Welfare</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Utugi Children's Centre</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>BOARD OF MISSION</b>			
<b>Mothers' Union Secretary</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Youth Coordinator</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sunday School/Brigade</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DMA Coordinator</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>KAMA Coordinator</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>BOARD OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>			
<b>Department of Education (formal)</b>			
<b>Education Secretary</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>St. Andrew's College of Theology and Development</b>			
<b>Principal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Vice-Principal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Director of Pastoralia</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Dean of Studies</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Director of Academia</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Tutors</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Head of Secretarial Department</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Tutor</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Accounts Tutor	1	0	1
Librarian	0	1	1
Library Secretary	0	1	1
College Bursar	1	0	1
Cashier	0	1	1
House Keeper	0	1	1
Principal's Secretary	0	1	1
Cook	0	1	1
Farm Supervisor	1	0	1
Ground's man	1	0	1
Watchmen	2	0	0
Cleaner	1	0	1
Lab Technician	1	0	1
<b>Theological Education by Extension</b>			
Director of Lay Training	(1)	0	1
<b>CLERGY PASTORAL DUTIES</b>			
Archdeacons	11	2	13
Canons (clergy)	4	0	4
Rural Deans	17	7	24
Vicars in Charge	75	26	81
Curates	12	4	16
Pastoral Assistants	0	6	6
Sabbatical leave	4	0	4

<b>Retired</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>St. Paul's University Limuru</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Other Colleges</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Secoded</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Canons (Lay)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>28</b>