



# THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA (ACK)

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### **ARCHBISHOP'S CHARGE TO THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ORDINARY SESSION OF THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD: 22<sup>ND</sup> TO 23<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2021, HELD AT THE ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL, NAIROBI**

**THEME: TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY, 2<sup>ND</sup> COR. 4:7a**

***TITLE: CHRISTIAN WITNESS CARRY THE HEALING POWER OF CHRIST TO A BROKEN AND FRAGILE WORLD***

#### **GREETINGS**

Dear Delegates of this 25<sup>th</sup> session of the ordinary session of the provincial synod, invited guests, observers, beloved in CHRIST, I greet you in the name of our LORD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, Bwana Yesu Asifiwe. It is indeed my delight and pleasure to welcome you to this 2021 provincial synod. Your full participation and engagement are welcomed as we seek to shape the life and mission of the Anglican Church of Kenya (A.C.K.) within and without our province.

#### **PREAMBLE**

The Apostle Paul acknowledge that Christians both as individuals and as the Church (the body of Christ) are weak and fragile vessels likened to Jars of clay: Yet they are sent out to heal a broken and equally fragile World. How is it possible? Is the right question to ask; Paul says it is possible because in each of those believers is a great treasure inside the jars of clay. The Presence of Christ in each one of them manifest in the modelling of the Holy Spirit. They are sent out as witnesses carrying out the Gospel message- the Word of Life, the healing power of Christ to a broken and fragile World (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 4:16-5:1-10).

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this charge is to put the Anglican Church of Kenya in perspective as a witness carrying the healing power of Christ to a broken and fragile World in our context today. To get this perspective, we will look at a brief flash back of ACK engagement in her mission journey, witnessing the healing power of Christ in a broken World.

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Realities of our times both challenges and opportunities; as well as discuss ways and means by which ACK can provide leadership and direction on what needs to be done to participate with Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit to effectively piece the broken pieces of our humanity and creation together.

We hope that this charge will generate a conversation whose focus will be to bring hope to a hopeless society, ravaged by Covid-19 pandemic, conflicts of many kinds, poverty, ill-health and broken relationships among many challenges facing us today.

### **FLASHBACK:**

The ACK traces her mission journey back to 1844 when the first missionaries sent by Church Mission Society (CMS) arrived in Mombasa. The first mission stations they set up in Freetown and Rabai became models of Christian witness strategy which did not only give birth to the expanded church in Kenya and beyond; but it also gave birth to state and private sector service provision streams that define service delivery today.

These mission stations began to respond to the immediate and emerging issues of the time; which entailed how to care for the freed slaves from the high seas at the beginning of the abolition of the slave trade. The two stations offered, shelter, trauma healing, food, capacity building and discipleship programs. Out of these responses the model of the station took shape with a Church as a place for formal education, the dispensary for treatment of tropical and other diseases. Additionally, there was a garden and carpentry workshops for life-skills development in Agriculture, for food security and balanced diet for promotive and preventive health. Skills for building were acquired as well. Out of this model evolved the national Government ministries such as Ministry of Education, Health (both curative and public health), Agriculture as well as Trade and Industries. The Mission agenda of the ACK as we know it today as pastoral and social transformational, as well as programs for sustainability were all modelled in the mission station.

At independence, the mission schools became the national schools we have today, Dioceses expanded with spiritual nourishment of the souls through the parish and local church ministries, while the bishops provided the prophetic messages and advocacy to national life and beyond,

becoming the moral conscience and voice of reason. ADS as we have it today evolved from a small program where the church accompanied African's resettlement in the new settlement schemes with what was known as mission to the farms with the Jesus film; growing to Rural Aid Mission, which provided basic building materials to the rural farmers and basic agricultural skills.

Today Anglican Development Services are involved in many areas of strategic engagement that accompany communities in addressing various needs affecting them. This flash back affirm that the ACK church has been in the business of Christian witness carrying the healing power of Christ addressing brokenness of every generation responding to emerging issues of different times and seasons.

### **TODAY'S CONTEXT:**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century is described in many known terminologies and many more evolving every single day. The first to be used include, globalization, post modernity, transport and communication got separated when communication became instant and transport still takes time. Space also got separated between physical and geographic and digital online space; with the use of technology physical location no longer define space.

Artificial intelligence produced many remote and laser controlled and guided gadgets with a high level of intelligence which perform tasks that human beings performed. This has affected in many ways how human beings think and work; bring both new challenges and new opportunities. The new challenges require new tools to address them. The quest for this new tools put humanity under great pressure, to manage a fast moving non-physical space, with this emerging new challenges of a non-physical space which require no movement. The result are the many life-style diseases, emotional imbalances bringing other complications such as stress, depression, a drop in emotional intelligence, loneliness, leading to spiritual and mental disorder are developed. Today the whole world is speaking of mental health more than any time in the recent past.

Covid-19 has added more stress to an already stressed world. Loss of loved ones, loss of businesses, Jobs, lock downs, domestic violence have gone up, other crimes, early pregnancies are adding up to brokenness at individual, family and community levels leading to a weakening society.

The Church too, which carries the healing power of Christ has been compromised by the lock-downs- diminishing hope.

The Global Youth culture Africa Report of 2021; establish that youth and teens of our time spend 7 to 8 hours of their day online on average. They operate more in the digital space and not in the physical space. How will this affect their social and physical life? The spiritual, physical and mental developments are yet to be fully studied. The same report however has a silver lining in it.

It established that when the said youth have a problem they trust family more for guidance than any other institution. This demands that we re-think our Christian witness at family level so that at the family space the healing power of Christ is enhanced at the family altar. We must as a church deliberate in developing Christian family programs whose aim is not just good parenting but to make every member of the family a God-fearing person. To do this we must evaluate and review the aims and objectives of Kenya Anglican Men Association (KAMA) and those of the Mothers Union, to focus on the family altar. We need to establish family desk in every diocesan mission department and develop family programs with practical activities at the family on a daily basis. These family programs must be worked out in a way that is capable of connecting the physical space, that parents of today occupy and the online space our children live in.

Allen David in his book getting things done says, ***“This is what is new in the World we live in today. The wired wireless world has both enhanced and exacerbated how we can apply core practices of capturing, organizing, and accessing what is meaningful: while we now have access to lots of super tools and apps that pop up on daily basis and do really great stuff.”*** The challenge we have is how can we stay on top and securely leverage on the ever-evolving technologies. As if that is not enough our children are way ahead of us in the use and command of such new tools. Therefore the dilemma for the Church and the family of today is the ability to choose the types of tools that are best suited to perform a particular task, as well as how to cope with or adopt to the new digital and mobile world which is complex and fast at the same time. Both church and family life is struggling to make sense in this high speed world. It is like we are on a catch up mission yet we have the unchanging truth, the Word of God even in that vulnerable and weak frame- the Jars of clay.

Covid-19 hit hard the physical space that the church and family operate in, we were forced to go online; shop online, preach and interact online: we must therefore now find our footing in not only the use of available technology but become part of technology developers so that we are able to command and give moral direction to what pops up. By this I mean we need church directed software engineering.

### **ACK KEY FOCUS AREAS GOING-FORWARD:**

The Anglican Church of Kenya vision “*A growing and caring Anglican Church boldly proclaiming Christ*”; remains to be what we are anchored on. This has gained impetus through the decade strategy where care-giving has to be wholesome as a bold way of proclaiming Christ, which in turn will enhance the growth of the Church and give birth to a holy society.

The broad theme: *A Wholesome ministry for a wholesome nation*; is broken into thematic areas strategically link together components needed to deliver the overall theme. Those components include; Governance which looks at how that Church is organized and the systems that help functionality by aligning resources, leadership and operation with the vision- which to a large extent is the care-giving mission that demonstrate the love of Christ to His creation reconciling the whole of creation to God. Capacity building through institutional sustainability and wholesome education enable the church to engage and carry out her mission agenda. Wholesome living and wholesome ecology focuses on the quality of life and an enabling environment for the well-being of humanity and all forms of lives as God intended.

Our focus next year will be wholesome living. Covid-19 pandemic and the lasting negative impact it created makes wholesome living a critical area of attention. We must now dig out a deeper understanding of what we mean by wholesome living than we imagined when the decade strategy was written. John 10:10 has been the source of our attempted definition of wholesome living especially the phrase “life in abundance” or life in its fullness. We have been discussing these words of Jesus in relation to addressing poverty- to give people dignified life and pointing people to believe in Jesus for eternal salvation. However, impact of covid-19 has brought out the deeper negative impacts of poverty, fear of loss of loved ones, jobs and businesses, isolations and lock downs. Some of notable issues that emerged include:

Increased crime, under age pregnancies, family break downs, loneliness, stress, depression, homicides, suicides, mental health disorder and many anti-social behaviours. Mental health has now been identified as a big issue in our World today. The above traits are not only mental disorders but to a large extent they are spiritual disorders. Therefore as we develop programs and activities that bring about wholesome living-it has to combine aspects which will address spiritual and mental health.

This must be premised at the family life programs and mainstreamed in all our service line programs- KAMA, MU, KAYO, CHILDREN, ADS, CCMP, FIVE TALENTS and in our Educational Institutions and programs.

Wholesome living must be part of our advocacy and prophetic ministry-challenge and advise the government and church leadership to develop systems that improve the living conditions of our people as a way of addressing mental health, proper management of the economy not by empty talk but by addressing run away corruption, removing inhibiting policies and level the ground for masses to participate meaningfully in gainful activities that inspire growth of the economy. To address the current inequalities not just through hand outs which blind fold for a short time but by availing opportunities for participation.

Konzer/ Posner in their book, the leadership challenge says, *“There is power in connecting what we say to what we do, and what we do to what we say, this gives one a voice, be it a leader or an institution. If you cannot find your voice you will end up with a vocabulary that belongs to someone else, mouthing someone words or mimicking a language from some other quarter.”* As a Church we must find our voice which should not just be in the words we say but connected to what we do.


#### **PRACTICAL MEASURES FOR COMING YEARS:**

As we move to the year 2022 and shift our focus to wholesome living, we must evaluate how we have been doing our work sector by sector, department by department. Part of our evaluation is through our constitutional review which is geared towards reviewing our policies so as to address emerging issues and develop well thought-out programs to address new issues. We must be intentional in continued research that seeks a deeper understanding of our contexts,

but also research for new tools and new ways of responding to new challenges. Part of the expansion of the provincial office to have another senior person to boost our capacity and also form two teams; the senior management- which will look on matters strategy, policy, implementing synod resolutions, supervision, evaluation as well as approval of activities. The middle management, which will develop programs/ activities, oversee implementation, monitoring, prepare reports in time and appraise staff under them. By doing this we shall be efficient and effective.

### **CONCLUSION:**

I call upon this synod to generate a conversation not just in response to this charge but to carry on with it to our dioceses. Let us revisit the words of Paul in our preamble- that though we are Jars of clay- fragile in a fragile world, Christ in us, His presence and the Holy Spirit poured out to God's faithful. Our faith and trust in God is the treasure in this Jars of Clay. Let our Christian witness individually when we gather and in all the programs in the Church bring the healing power of Christ to our broken world today. We are the hope of Kenya in all her confusion as we see it today. Let us ensure that what we say is what we do and what we do is what we say. Amen



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