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Anglican Mission and Liturgy in Kenya

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An Analytical, Critical and Comparative Study of Anglican Mission in the Diocese of Nakuru and Mount Kenya East

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Abstract

Distinctive and common approaches in the local mission theologies of the Anglican dioceses of Nakuru and Mount Kenya East/Kirinyaga, Kenya during the period from 1975 are compared with other Protestant forms and Roman Catholicism, Pentecostal-type churches and African Instituted Churches. Specific analysis of Anglican liturgy reveals that issues of social justice and political concern have had a major impact on liturgical development and pinpoint the link between mission and worship.

The mission of the Anglican Church in Kenya was at its inception Evangelical but has acquired a Catholic emphasis which has affected the use of liturgy. Appropriate theories from Anglican mission and sociology highlight aspects of recent Kenyan history (e.g. independence, decolonialization, ethnic identity, land disputes, development) which influence the course of the CPK (Church of the Province of Kenya) in the areas of Kirinyaga and Nakuru dioceses.

The distinctive expression of the East African Revival Movement (Balokole) constitutes areas of commonality in mission theology between Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians in the diocesan areas. Anglican distinctiveness is also evident in training contexts and expressed in church leadership and communities by means of the theory and practice of wholistic mission and catechetics in relation to urban and rural cultures.

It is argued that a study of the sociology and history of worship aids an understanding of a Kenyan Anglican theory of the church in mission. Various views are critiqued in focussing on the relationship between mission and liturgy. Correlations between the history of liturgical renewal, mission history, and between liturgy and sociology and secularity are examined. These demonstrate the originality of Kenyan Anglican wholistic mission through liturgy.

A practical analysis of processes of liturgical change in the CPK, and other churches (using case studies) signals the extent to which the theory and practice of contextualised African Anglican liturgies in the diocesan areas have become indices of the formation of distinctive ecclesiological communities in mission.

Therefore the CPK is distinctive in mission among the churches of Kenya through a unique combination of theology, training, ecclesiology, and culture-sensitive liturgy.