

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KEY STRATEGIES IN EFFECTIVE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP IN THE AFRICA GOSPEL  
CHURCHES, KENYA: BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP AND HEALTHY  
CHURCH GROWTH

A Thesis Project Submitted to  
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

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Lynchburg, Virginia

December 2012

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DEDICATION

TO MY WIFE

Baciliza Barar

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank God for wisdom and knowledge he has bestowed me with. He has given me the energy to press on towards finishing my Thesis Project. Secondly, I would like to sincerely thank my wife for her spiritual, mental, emotional and her unfailing supportive presence in my times of great need for help. She has wholeheartedly committed her life, time, and energy to taking care of our four children and me. I also owe a lot of gratitude to our four children; Ebenezer, Hep-siba, Eliezer and Joanna for understanding the value of working hard to finish homework and assignments.

My mother did not go to school but she has journeyed with me throughout my time in school. Her inspirational spirit, love and prayers are the only thing she could offer to me. I would also like to thank my Local Church back in Kenya, Laluk Africa Gospel Church, for their prayers and financial support. I would not forget to thank my Bishop, Rev. Dr. Robert Langat for being a good role model in leadership and management of our Denomination, the Africa Gospel Church. I have always wanted to be like him.

Finally, I am very appreciative for the help, guidance, and pieces of advice given by my Chair and my Mentor, Dr. Davidson Charlie Nathan who has encouraged me through two classes on Church Leadership and Management at Liberty University. I feel blessed and privileged to have had him as my teacher, Chaplain, as well as a guide in writing my Thesis Project. He has a heart to help not only me but also other students to succeed. Thanks for being a servant leader to me.

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## ABSTRACT

# KEY STRATEGIES IN EFFECTIVE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP IN THE AFRICA GOSPEL CHURCHES, KENYA: BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP AND HEALTHY CHURCH GROWTH

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012

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The purpose of this Thesis Project is to understand the strategies for effective pastoral leadership based on Biblical foundations necessary for leadership and healthy church growth in the Africa Gospel Church-Kenya. Research will be conducted through questionnaires and surveys of 15-20 Christian Leaders analyzing and evaluating the status of urban churches, rural churches, mission fields, and institutions of the Africa Gospel Church-Kenya. The main objective is to provide key principles for effective pastoral leadership and healthy church growth in terms of spiritual life, leadership, staff development, services, finances, and ministry potentials. Lastly, this project will suggest and outline strategic approaches for healthy church growth and applicable Biblical principles for developing, numerical expansion, and methods for planting more than 100 new Africa Gospel Church-Kenya churches within the next decade.

Abstract length: 130 words

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Leadership should be embraced by both the Christian and secular worlds. As a process of social influence, leadership is a state in which a person seeks for support of his followers and rallies them to accomplish a common goal or task. The position or function of a leader is to guide and direct a group of people with the purpose of producing the most desired results in their endeavors. Leaders in pastoral ministry have the greatest responsibility of serving the body of Christ and his followers as they work together to fulfill the Great Commission in their churches, their communities, and their world. “Ministers who provide effective leadership to churches are most likely to do so by becoming personally involved in the mission of the church.”<sup>1</sup>

A pastor is “the feeder, protector, and guide, or shepherd, of a flock of God’s people in the New Testament times. The term also implied the nourishing of and caring for God’s people - spiritual guidance.”<sup>2</sup> “Pastoral” is an adjective term which refers to the lifestyle of pastoralists, such as shepherds herding livestock in the field.

Pastoral Leadership is one of the greatest subjects taught in the Bible, yet it has become a matter of discussion and debate in churches throughout the past decades. Many books, journals, articles, and magazines have been written on the subject of leadership, administration, management, control, or stewardship, without a clear and purposeful definition for the concept.

Despite the debate or discussion surrounding this subject matter, two questions should be asked regarding any specific church entity: first, Is the church or rather pastoral leadership effective, and second, are the strategies for effective leadership seen in the church in question

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1. Ernest E. Mosley, *Leadership Profiles from Bible Personalities* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 72.

2. *Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “Pastor.”

based on the biblical foundations necessary for true pastoral leadership and healthy church growth?

This project, therefore, is meant to enhance understanding of specific strategies for effective pastoral leadership. “Real leadership happens on the edge, on the boundaries where opportunities and resources meet. On these strategic edges, leaders live by their values and are forced to make choices.”<sup>3</sup> Without question, pastoral leadership must be effective and biblical. A thorough understanding of scripture is very crucial at this point. Also, there must be a proper application and implementation of scriptural principles of effective pastoral leadership. This is an in-depth study of this subject of pastoral leadership limited to the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya. Much information will be shown, obtained through research, questionnaires, surveys, and interviews. A little exploration of the factors for effective pastoral leadership would indicate that, like any other church, this church has experienced authoritative leadership since its inception in the early days of the 1900s. In his book entitled; *7 Practices of Effective Ministry*, Andy Stanley said; “I have always taken comfort in the fact that Jesus said He would build his church while my responsibility as a local church leader is simply to keep in step with the Savior.”<sup>4</sup>

Leaders truly understood the difference between authoritative leadership and dictatorial leadership. In most cases they have embraced leadership as an essential dimension of pastoral ministry. Their unity of mind and effort has assured a progressive mission of this church. “Leaders should be known best in terms of what they stand for.”<sup>5</sup> They have exercised biblical authority in their instructions and the application of the Word of God to the individual and

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3. Robert D. Dale, *Leading Edge: Leadership Strategies from the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1984), 9.

4. Andy Stanley, Reggie Joiner, Lane Jones, *7 Practices of Effective Ministry*, (Multnomah Publishers, Oregon, 2004), 186.

5. Mosley, 73.

corporate activities of the whole church. Not only have they shown authoritative pastoral leadership in the entire church, but also they have achieved greater progress by participating in planning and the organization of church activities. They have well-defined goals and objectives for the progress of the church as it seeks to honor God in all its activities and endeavors. “The exercise of authority is designed to serve the well-being of those under its care. Certainly, in the Lord’s flock, leadership among God’s people is always servant leadership. This authority is to be directed by God’s word.”<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, its mutual organization is desirable. They participate in organizing the whole congregation, teaching and helping them to live, learn, love and labor together as one body for Jesus Christ. “Shepherd leadership is concrete, participative, involved leadership. Shepherds are with the sheep.”<sup>7</sup>

Once leadership is defined as a relationship of influence, it is evident that everyone exercises leadership; everyone seeks to influence the people and circumstances around them. The burden of leadership no longer rests on the shoulders of the leader. It is a shared responsibility in which everyone participates. “Organizations – churches – may grant us the responsibility to lead, may hold us accountable for missions and outcomes, but they do not eliminate the leadership influence of those to whom we are roped.”<sup>8</sup>

That is what effective pastoral leadership is all about. Most of the leadership of Africa Gospel Church, Kenya has been people chosen of God and endowed with the aspiration to lead and feed the flock of Jesus Christ by exercising biblical authority. They have lived exemplary lives worthy of emulation by their peers and other churches around them. They have been men

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6. Timothy Z. Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2010), 89.

7. Jay E. Adams, *Pastoral Leadership: Shepherding God’s Flock* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), 6.

8. Ibid.

and women with great spiritual influence and sacrificial love to the membership and their calling to ministry. They have faithfully served the church and created a huge following.

They have preached Christ for decades, so that many souls have been won to him. Many believers have been transformed and turned into reverent worshippers and bold witnesses for Jesus Christ. Hence the whole church has matured and grown healthy in grace and in the love of God. The leadership of Africa Gospel Church, Kenya is grounded on a biblical foundation and instructions necessary for leadership and healthy church growth. The entire church is basically made up of two teams of leaders: elders and deacons. This is a strategy that has held the elders accountable with the responsibility of shepherding the flock. They are the ones who are exercising oversight and being worthy examples to the believers. Their most important role is to pray, guide, and counsel the church membership. They teach the scriptures, disciple believers, lead church services, and also direct the church to see and follow a single vision for ministry. “The one characteristic common to all leaders is the ability to make things happen. The ultimate reason God assign leaders to any position was because He could best use that position to accomplish His purpose of shaping them into the image of Christ.”<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, the deacons assist the elders by taking care of the flock and leading the church’s different kinds of ministry. “Besides talents, it demands persistence and the opportunity to practice.”<sup>10</sup> They are the ones who have been involved with the general pastoral responsibilities of the church. Pastoral leadership has been effective because of their work of collecting funds and distributing relief, as well as acting as the Lord’s agents of mercy. Learning to become an effective leader is like learning to play music. Effective pastoral leadership is

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9. Jeff Iorg, *The Character of Leadership, Nine Qualities that Define Great Leaders*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 5.

10. Dr. Phil Prigle, *Top 10 Qualities of a Great Leader*, (Tulsa, Oklahoma, Harrison House Publishers, 1982), 76.

incredible due to their hearts of helping the poor, the jobless, the sick, the widowed, the elderly, the disabled, and all those who are struggling amongst the sheep. They also assist the elders with the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. As if that is not enough, the deacons also take care of the functions of the church buildings and other church property. If St. Paul was still alive, he would remind the whole church of Christ of what he said in the book of Romans 12:7-8: "If it is serving, let him serve, if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; ... let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."<sup>11</sup> This means that laboring and leading the church to achieve healthy growth requires seriousness of purpose. "Being a pastor is a tough, demanding job, one that is not always very well understood or appreciated."<sup>12</sup>

Another characteristic of effective pastoral leadership within the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya, is that it is spiritual. Other than staff development, services, finances, and ministry potential, effective pastoral leadership ought to be looked at in terms of spiritual life. Coupled with being spirit-filled and spirit-led, the current leaders and pastors of this church possess appropriate skills as well as a wealth of experience. As it deeds essential and important qualities of pastoral leadership, this has been their driving force to effectively lead the church and maintain strength to withstand some of the challenges through which the church has gone.

Pastors of local churches must have realized that the spiritual life of the church should be closely geared to that of its pastor or leader. These pastors are well tuned to the fact that they are the ministers of Christ and therefore the ministry should be centered in the person and work of Christ whose character they must demonstrate. They have learned to connect. As John Maxwell

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11. Romans 12:7-8

12. Jackson W. Carroll, *God's Potters: Pastoral Leadership and the Shaping of Congregation*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 2.

states in his book, *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect*: “Connecting is the ability to identify with people and relate to them in a way that increases your influence with them because the ability to communicate and connect with others is a major determining factor in reaching your potential.”<sup>13</sup>

As opposed to autocratic rule, these pastors have learned to lead the flock in love and in obedience to the Word of God. Their main work is to supply spiritual organization, spiritual leadership, and spiritual energy in the church, which is a clear demonstration of true spiritual concern for others. Acts 20:28 says, “Keep watch over you and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with his own blood.”<sup>14</sup>

As this project continues and attempts to suggest and outline specific approaches for healthy church growth, one more aspect of effective pastoral leadership is that it must be sacrificial. First of all, pastors are called into ministry which in essence requires wisdom and grace from the Almighty God. Often there is an assumption that everyone in pastoral leadership knows what it means to be a spiritual leader, or rather that one knows how to exercise appropriate control of his own knowledge and abilities in leading others. As within the leadership of Africa Gospel Church, people must realize that their source of authority is God himself, to whom every spiritual leader owes appropriate respect. This is one of the biblical mandates to be adhered to by every spiritual leader in order to make leadership in any organization effective and fruitful.

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13. John Maxwell, *Everyone Communicates Few Connect: What the most Effective People do Differently* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 3.

14. Acts 20:28



Perhaps the question will rest on whether church leaders are sensitive to the needs of the people they are leading, because those who are regarded with warm affection are those who genuinely exercise proper leadership within a local church congregation. “Sheep multiply when they are pastured.”<sup>15</sup> In the actual sense, a spiritual leader must know how to work with people, work through people, feed people, and lead them. In his book *Planting Fast-Growing Churches*, Stephen Gray notes this description of different kinds of leaders: “There are all kinds of leaders and all kinds of leadership styles. There is the lead-by-example leader, the dictator, the persuader, the gifted orator, and the hands-on leader.”<sup>16</sup> In other words, tasks to be accomplished would depend on the degree of leadership abilities. The leaders of Africa Gospel Church, Kenya have been seriously involved in the planning process as well as the implementation process. They have been good in providing direction, supervision and blessing. With one mindset about the ministry, these leaders believe that with a proper understanding of scriptural principles, it is still possible to be effective in pastoral leadership today, for leadership is just a matter of courage.

A statistical overview of churches in Kenya states that its population is over 36 million people with just under 4 million residing in its capital city, Nairobi. There are 42 ethnic groups who call Kenya home; each group has its own unique language and culture. Although Kikuyu is the largest ethnic group, the Maasai are the most well-known due to both their long and preserved culture and their environment in Kenyan tourism. Kenya is also home to immigrants of other nationalities, including Europeans, Asians, and Somalis. Kenya’s official languages are English and Swahili. More than 45 languages are spoken throughout the country. Kenya is very

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15. Randal Roberts, G. Ed., *Lessons in Leadership: Fifty Respected Evangelical Leaders Share Their Wisdom on Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1999), 37.

16. Stephen Gray and Trent Short, *Planting Fast-Growing Churches* (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2007), 57.

receptive to Christianity. “17 Religious concepts of salvation often imply redemption into or emancipation from culture.” As such, it is about 80% Christian. Religions have this in record: Protestant, 45%; Catholic, 33%; and Islamic, 20%. Some Kenyans also practice Sikhism, Hinduism, and traditional animist religions. Kenya is about the size of the state of Texas and its capital city is Nairobi. There are more than 4,000 registered churches in Kenya, belonging to much variety of denominations. These can range from mainstream churches to lesser known evangelical gospel-oriented churches. “Paul and Philippians’ fellowship in the gospel, their gospel partnership, gives the theological and relational context and texture for his major themes.”<sup>18</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church, Kenya is one of the well-established churches in Kenya. These churches have their roots in early missionary work, when Europeans first came and took interest in the area and they saw an opportunity to preach to a wide new population. The concept of Catholicism first arrived in Kenya in 1498, when a Portuguese trader erected a cross on the coastal shore near Malindi. Many Catholic missionaries began traveling to Kenya in the late 1500s, but the country didn’t start to have an official church presence until the 1900s in place such as; Nairobi, Nyeri, Kisumu and Meru.

Today there are 26 dioceses and more than 7 million baptized Kenyans. The Methodists are about half a million in membership. This church established its presence in Kenya in 1860, with missionaries from the United Methodist Free Church. Today the church has expanded to include the Kenya Methodist University and Mau Methodist Hospital. The Anglican Church missionaries came to Kenya in 1844. They were the ones who translated the Bible into local

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17. Ben Knighton, *Religion and Politics in Kenya: Essays in Honor of a Meddlesome Priest* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 79.

18. R. Kent Hughes, *Philippians: The Fellowship of the Gospel, Preaching the Word*, (Wheaton, Illinois, Crossway Books, 2007), 20

languages in order to preach the gospel to the locals. The Anglican Church has 29 dioceses and over 5 million members. There are six Anglican theological colleges and a publishing house which helps in providing Christian books for Africans.

As with the other churches in Kenya, Pentecostalism came to Africa first through European missionaries in 1912. Pentecostal churches are growing more rapidly due to their charismatic approach to preaching. “The leadership challenge is a profound and inspiring blueprint for building leadership capacity that should be ready by all.”<sup>19</sup> Other significant denominations are the Baptist, Presbyterian, Reformed, Episcopal, Lutheran, and the Gospel Revivalist churches. The Africa Gospel Church is just a network of over 1,500 congregations. The church traces its roots back to the work of missionaries from World Gospel Mission starting in 1932. It has grown to be the sponsor of Tenwek Hospital and Kenya Highlands Evangelical University, Kaboson Pastors’ school, Olderkesi Ministry Training Institute, and many high schools and primary schools among other ministries and community development projects. “The church constantly ministers to the growing and changing needs humanity.”<sup>20</sup> Effective pastoral leadership strategies indicate that the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya has been self-governing since the early 1970s, and has seen remarkable growth and development into urban areas as well as sending its own missionaries to remote areas and unreached tribes in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan. The history of Christianity in Kenya can be easily understood by going down to the roots of some churches and missionary societies.

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19. James M. Kouzes, Barry C. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: The Most Trusted Source on Becoming a Better Leader*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed (San Francisco, CA, John Wiley & Sons, 2007), 4.

20. O. L. Shelton, *The Church Functioning Effectively*, (St. Louis, MO: Christian Board of Publication, 1946), 16.

The first Protestant mission to Kenya was the Missionary Society. Its first pioneer, John Kraft, arrived in 1844. He remained after the death of his wife and child to establish a work that over the years has grown to become the Anglican Church of Kenya, with over 1,000,000 attendants. The British Methodists arrived in 1862 and established a work that also continues today. In 1891, the Scottish Presbyterians began work that established the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. “We stood up in groups and prayed for the people going to all of the different parts of the world-20 going to Africa, 30 going to Europe, 20 going to S. America and so forth.”<sup>21</sup>

Africa Inland Mission also began work in 1895 under the direction of the Mission’s founder, Peter Cameron Scott. The work began at the city of Mombasa with the effort of seven missionaries. They moved inland to a place called Nzawi and the Africa Inland Church was founded in 1943. Today, it has about 1,000,000 members. A keen look at these examples of churches would clearly prove that for an organization to exist and continue to grow there must be an effective pastoral leadership. “Today, thousands of young leaders are equally passionate about their vision for ministry.”<sup>22</sup>

Africa Gospel Church is not an aloof church. Over the years it has been working in mutual collaboration with most of these national churches. The fact that there is freedom of worship of any kind provided by the constitution of Kenya has made much of Kenya to be open and receptive to the Gospel. The church has complete freedom to evangelize and as such every church has experienced tremendous growth over the last 20 years.

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21. Carson Pue, *Mentoring Leaders: Wisdom for Developing Character, Calling, and Competency* (Grand Rapids, BakerBooks, 2005), 15.

22. Christopher, Marco, *Missionary: An Unexpected journey of Following God’s Call to the Other Side of the World*, (Crossway Bibles, 2012), 9.

However, there are many ethnic groups who have not yet responded to God's love and forgiveness. "Mr. Hotchkiss wound up his affairs in Kenya and left for America in late 1899. His aim was to place the burden for souls in Africa on the hearts of the Friends people. His specific concern at that time was for the almost untouched Kavirondo tribe in Western Kenya, and his hope was that the Friends would establish an industrial mission among them."<sup>23</sup> Due to the impact of Christian missionaries during the British colonial period in Kenya, much of its population today is Christian. Africa Gospel Church is one of the many churches that have done a lot in spreading Christianity, a religion which has largely eliminated many of the traditional and tribal beliefs held by the people of Kenya before the coming of the Europeans. "African pastoral care places the greatest value on relationally and participation in ritual, symbol, and ceremony."<sup>24</sup> Not much has been done amongst some tribes such as the Samburu, Turkana, and the Maasai peoples. This means about 10% of the population is still following their African religion in Kenya. The church has strategically penetrated and preached one God, the Almighty creator, and thus it has broken some tribes' traditional beliefs. Suffice it to say that pastoral leadership must be effective in overturning Christians who may have continued to hold beliefs based on their traditional spirituality. Hinduism, Sikhism, Islamism and a few others are some of the exception religions.

### **Statement of Problem and Purpose**

This thesis project intends to examine the factors for healthy church growth strategies with regard to theological reflections, cultural considerations, and individual growth process in

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23. Burnet C. Fish and Gerald W. Fish, *The Place of Songs: A History of the World Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church in Kenya* (Marion, IN: World Gospel Mission, 1990), 22.

24. Lydia F. Johnson, *Drinking from the Same Well: Cross-Cultural Concerns in Pastoral care and Counseling*, (Eugene, Oregon, Pickwick Publications, 2011), 15.

order to establish a healthy church growth. All team members within a pastorate must clearly understand the whole system of leadership as a process as well as a discipline and be able to communicate specific solutions to the main problem. In this sense, too, effective leaders are leaders who are considerably capable of handling the problems at hand or what needs to be done and develop action plans. “These people cannot be expected to serve without training and development.”<sup>25</sup> They are to take responsibility for decisions and communication. Thus effective pastoral leadership involves leaders who focus on opportunities, production, and means to meet needs of churches like in any other organization. “The work of pastors, preachers and teachers is that of edification.”<sup>26</sup>

As stated in the first pages of this introduction this project is an attempt to screen pastoral leadership within Africa Gospel Church, Kenya. It is to find the problem that the current pastoral leadership is trying to bring to the surface and suggest some applicable solutions to the prevailing situation. It is trying to find answers to questions such as, what is the situation of the church in terms of leadership and care today. What are the most pressing needs of the church that leaders are wrestling with? More so, what is the purpose of the church? Most of all, this is a means to highlighting the reality that these problems do exist in churches, as well as in other organizations.

The problem, though, is basically rooted in the need for competent leaders in the pastoral ministry of the church. The church needs leaders who are endowed with a desire to make the ministry as effective and productive as possible. Their need is to succeed by determining their effectiveness by focusing on things they can count. Result is the ultimate measure of their

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25. Dr. Terry W. Dorset, *Developing Leadership Teams in the Bivocational Church*, (Bloomington, Indiana, Cross Books, 2010), 5.

26. G. Campbell Morgan, *The Ministry of the Word*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1970), 134.

success. Those are leaders whose desire is to move the church forward and grow it to a healthy state by applying biblical principles necessary for growth change. Here, the most relevant strategy is the application of heavenly authority to get things done. “Successful leaders must be people who get things done. This demand for measurable results from leaders puts pressure on people to focus on their accomplishments. What better way to appear successful than to set a goal and then meet it.”<sup>27</sup> I Timothy 3:1 states, “Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.”<sup>28</sup> Choosing to be involved with pastoral leadership is a clear proof of shouldering a noble responsibility. This is a personally called leader who is entrusted with the work of God. As such, one must be spiritually gifted in order to perform such a task. Acts 2:42 is a scripture verse which could be considered a problem, or rather the purpose statement, for Africa Gospel Church leadership and other churches and denominations: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”<sup>29</sup> The purposes or activities of the church should be to teach biblically sound doctrine, provide a place of fellowship for members, oversee the Lord’s Supper, and to be committed to prayer.

Pastoral leadership can be categorized as effective when it is providing a place for fellowship where Christians can be devoted to one another, instruct one another and be compassionate to one another. Above all this, the final purpose of church is to promote prayer, according to Philippians 4:6-7: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which

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27. Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2001), 120.

28. 1 Timothy. 3:1

29. Ac. 2:42.

transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your mind in Christ Jesus.”<sup>30</sup> The church was also commissioned to proclaim the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ (Mathew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Without doubt, the church is called into pastoral leadership by spiritual leaders being effective and faithfully sharing the gospel through word and deed. Strategic pastoral leadership also is to elevate the church to be a lighthouse in the community and point people toward Jesus Christ that they may find peace and rest. What the Africa Gospel Church has been doing is recorded in the book of James 1:27, “Religion that God our father accepts as pure and faultless is this; to look after orphans and widows in their distress and keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”<sup>31</sup>

The church is to be about the business of ministering to those in need by sharing the gospel, and providing for physical needs as necessary and appropriate. In addition, the church is also supposed to equip believers in Christ with the tools they need to overcome sin and remain free from the pollution of the world. Strategies for effective pastoral leadership would drive the church forth into healthy growth by engaging in biblical teaching and Christian fellowship. Paul also illustrated the purpose of the church of Christ to the believers in Corinth. I Corinthians 12:12-27 states, “The church is God’s hands, mouth, and feet in this world - the body of Christ.”<sup>32</sup> Africa Gospel Church has existed and lived to be an example in the manner of doing the things that Jesus would do if he were here physically on earth.

Churches all over the world need to re-examine their pastoral leadership strategies in order to improve them in terms of quality and quantity growth. “Strategy is how religious leaders

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30. Philippians. 4:6-7.

31. James 2:7

32. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27



discover, maintain, and enrich the stewardship of their gifts, abilities, and strengths - the edge. Simply put, ministry strategy calls for the expansion of excellence.”<sup>33</sup> If leadership should be effective and prosperous, then leaders ought to focus on certain strategies that will enable them to do so. Shepherds are gentle in nature. Sometimes they act like servant leaders in caring for their flock and mentoring others through the process of discipleship. It is a system whereby the church would re-evaluate its leadership principles as well as the factors for growth. Coupled with this idea of re-examination of leadership principles, the leadership of the church also needs to understand the trend for growth and devise a mechanism for developing other leaders in order to meet the need for strong leaders to champion growth in the church.

It is also to explore some of the necessary biblical and theological foundations of leadership deemed necessary for the building and the extension of the Kingdom of God. Sugden says, “Leadership must never be exploited for personal gain. It is always used for the good of the church and the glory of God. As you gain in leadership abilities, you will also gain in leadership opportunities.”<sup>34</sup> In the same regard, the leadership would need to focus attention on the whole system of its management and administration. The church should propose changes related to its mission, vision, and purpose, and yearn for an effective theological approach to leadership and management of church affairs. “Once we were united around our purpose and mission, the church became more effective, efficient, and excellent in ministry.”<sup>35</sup> Participatory events like election and transition of leadership should be done in obedience to the Word of God. God’s leadership and presence is an assurance of strong and effective pastoral leadership in the church.

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33. Dale, 9.

34. Howard F. Sugden and Warren W. Wiersbe, *Confident Pastoral Leadership: Practical Solutions to Perplexing Problems* (Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute, 1973), 98.

35. Dr. Walther P. Kallestad, Steven L. Schey, *Total Quality Ministry*, (Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1994), 44.

It is never right to assume that pastoral leadership is free of challenges. There are a lot of challenges and barriers facing the church today. These challenges may range from finances, ordinances, availability of capable and theologically trained leaders, and the need to embrace the diversity of spiritual gifts within the same body of believers. This being said, church leadership should seek for an effective model for leadership development. “The lay people must have ownership of the ministry and ownership must come from facing the need and developing the ministry together.”<sup>36</sup> Healthy growth rests upon leadership development. In other words, healthy leaders are capable of building and growing healthy churches. “The pastor is not just a leader. He is a leader of leaders.”<sup>37</sup> In order for good changes to happen so that pastoral leadership is as effective as possible, wise leaders are supposed to know their status in terms of where they are and where they are going. The best way to do this is to create a free environment and a clear system of communication whereby the needs of the congregation are handled in a biblical manner.

### **Statement of Limitations**

As this project will suggest and attempt to outline strategic approaches for healthy church growth, it is a worthy thing to look into its limitations. This paper will only address those unique issues of pastoral leadership within the scope of the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya. It will seek to bring the readers to understand the reasons for growth and sustenance of this church over the past century. Other important churches and missions may be mentioned as models of effective pastoral leadership along the lines as having been working hand in hand with Africa Gospel

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36. Dorsett, 6.

37. Zenas J. Bicket, *The Effective Pastor*, (Springfield, Missouri, Gospel Publishing House, 1973), 36.

Church, Kenya. These churches and missions may include the World Gospel Mission-Kenya, Free Methodist Church, Africa Inland Church, Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, and many more.

This project will also attempt to maintain its purpose of the understanding of the strategies for effective pastoral leadership based on Biblical foundations necessary for leadership and healthy church growth in the Africa Gospel Church-Kenya. It will also be limited by means of research methods, questionnaires, surveys, and interviews thoroughly analyzing and evaluating the status of urban churches, rural churches, mission fields, and institutions of Africa Gospel Church-Kenya. From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for they had now completed.”<sup>38</sup> (Acts 14:26)

In other words, this research paper is limited to exploring some of the significant factors for effective pastoral leadership and healthy church growth in terms of spiritual life, leadership, staff development, services, finances, and ministry potentials. In addition to the said factors, the statement of limitation is meant to cover other aspects such as biblical principles for pastoral leadership, church development, numerical expansion, and methods for church planting.

The project may be limited to the qualities and characteristics of leaders involved in pastoral ministry of this church. How have the leaders been able to run the church since its birth in the early 1900s? “How we communicate the gospel may change, but the gospel itself never changes. The gospel is relevant to all cultures in all time periods.”<sup>39</sup> What makes them different from the pastors and leaders of other denominations? What factors were used in elevating them as competent pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya? This will also look into the role of church membership as well as the impact of church within the entire society. It will

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38. Ac. 14:26

39. Dr. Terry W. Dorsett, *Mission Possible: Reaching the next Generation through the Small Church*, (Bloomington, Indiana, CrossBooks, 2012), 1.

consider relevant leadership styles with regard to culturally acceptable practices among different communities. “All pastors, and especially those new to the ministry, will put forth much effort to improve their leadership skills.”<sup>40</sup> Some of the sources of information are as follows: interviews, internet, books, correspondents, phone calls, research, and personal views regarding effective pastoral leadership. Thereafter, the product of this thorough work will pass through valuable criticism for the sake of making it suitable resource material to be consumed by pastors, teachers, students, churches, theological colleges, and to be kept in Christian as well as public libraries. Hence the material is geared to fulfilling the goal of developing and growing a biblically healthy church without disregarding the cultural aspects of the people within reach.

### **The Biblical and Theological Basis of Healthy Church Growth**

Like any other church, the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya was started by the World Gospel Mission missionaries with a clear mission and vision. This church was started with the purpose of modeling holy living in Christ Jesus. Biblically speaking, this church has existed as a living institution to evangelize the unsaved, edifying believers, establishing local churches and faithfully exercising compassion. “Knowing and fulfilling the expectations of the laity is a great concern for pastors and theological educators.”<sup>41</sup> Owing to this idea as part of its mission, this church has grown healthy in many aspects and extended widely to different parts of the country because of its unique vision. Over forty years, the leadership of this church has seen the vision of raising a church that is ready to meet Jesus Christ come true.

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40. Kurt Brink, *Overcoming Pastoral Pitfalls*, (St. Louis, MO, CPH, 1997), 57.

41. Carnegie Samuel Calian, *Today's Pastors in Tomorrow's World*, (New York, Hawthorn Books, Inc. 1977), 3.

In order to appreciate the Africa Gospel Church and its relationship to the World Gospel Mission, as well as to realize the growth of the work from its seed-stage beginnings, we need to go back to the year 1929 - and even earlier, to 1895 - to get the complete picture. In this historical record, it has been our purpose to compile and put into writing a portion of the events which have brought the World Gospel Church in Kenya to where it is today.<sup>42</sup>

This is a missionary passion of the entire church. It has striven to keep the vision of the founding missionaries who came from other continents of the world to share the gospel of Christ with them. Thus every member, pastor, or leader is following the biblical mandate given by Jesus Christ to go and evangelize those who have not heard the gospel. “Church and missionary organizations today are faced with the same issue; due to the great need of developing the indigenous church in the third world where younger churches are ministering. Much training is required to bring a strong national church into existence and keep it healthy.”<sup>43</sup>

Africa Gospel Church, Kenya has grown strong and healthy because of the leadership that is based on biblical doctrine of church. The understanding of leaders of the church is absolutely fundamental to their Christian life. Church is all about the redemptive purpose of God in Christ and the means of glorifying Himself. This Church has lived over a century through following the marks of the true church as contained in Mathew 16:13-19. From this passage are the marks of the biblical church given as truth, power, and authority. There are so many organizations calling themselves “church,” but a true church is indeed the body of Christ, the

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42. Fish, xii.

43. Ted W. Engstrom. *The Making of a Christian Leader: How to Develop Management and Human Relations Skill* (Grand Rapids, MI: Pyranee Books, 1976), 62.

living son of God. It is an authentic or powerful church as Jesus pointed out, that, “Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overpower it.”<sup>44</sup>

The church of Christ has power over darkness and death. The same church of Christ has power and authority to witness the gospel of salvation in all the darkest parts of humanity. The power stems from the Word of God. Africa Gospel Church is a church that has stood firm in the art of the reclaiming the principles of the kingdom of God and in the advancement of the cause of Christ. So what is church? Some people understand church as a building while others believe it to be a place where believers gather to worship a mighty being. Some believe that a church is group of people who are following Christ. How the pastoral leadership of the Church defined, understood, and perceived church is the most important thing which has determined how they have lived their faith.

The New Testament concept of church gives the real idea of church in the context of the Christian church. This is a point where Jesus first mentioned the term church: (Mathew 16:16-18) “Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar of Jonah, for this not revealed to you by man, but by my father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.’”<sup>45</sup> Some churches and denominations interpret the above verse to mean that Peter is the rock upon which the church was founded. The Africa Gospel Church goes by the ultimate meaning of the verse as Jesus referring to Peter’s declaration “You are the Christ, the son of the living God.” The statement signified a lot of faith upon which the church was built.

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44. Mathew 16:13-19

45. Ephesians 1:22-23.

In summary, the Africa Gospel Church was founded on the biblical principle that the New Testament church is a body of believers who have been called out from the world by God to live as people under the authority of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23). This is when a congregation meets together physically for worship, fellowship, teaching, prayer, and encouragement in the faith. Church is a pure means of building relationship with other believers, praying for each other, making disciples of each other, and sharing of the daily bread. “One of the distinctive callings of the pastor is public proclamation.”<sup>46</sup>This group of believers began in the book of Acts, chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit manifested the power of God in transforming the lives of people at the moment. To date, one becomes a member of a church by simply exercising faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The church, therefore, is a group of God’s people who are in Christ.

Worth mentioning is the specific purpose of Africa Gospel Church. Pastoral leadership of this church has proved to be effective and healthy because it is built around one purpose. The main purpose of this church is to bring together its members and spiritually mature them in the Word of God. It has existed so as to reach out to the unreached people in different communities and localities and spread the love of Christ for the sake of winning them to Him.

God has continued to rise up leaders who have taken the pastoral ministry mandate to heart. They have lived as servant leaders as well as models of the life of Christ. Their main responsibility is the response and the undertaking of the Great Commission - the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ. “The preaching of the word of God is the word of God.”<sup>47</sup> Rick Warren had this to say: “You were made for a mission. God is at work in the world, and he wants

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46. Paul Cedar, Kent Hughes, Ben Patterson, *Mastering the Pastoral Role*, (Thomas Nelson, 1991), 18

47. Billy Graham, *Evangelism in the Twenty-First Century: The Critical Issues*, (Wheaton, Illinois, 1989), 13

you to join him. This assignment is called your mission... your ministry is your service to believers, and your mission is your service to unbelievers.”<sup>48</sup> Over the years, the church has been solely engaged in discipleship, assimilation of new members, and the sending of workers to different harvest fields. To ensure that this purpose of growing a healthy church lives and continues to be enjoyed by other new generations, the church leadership established training institutions like theological colleges, pastors’ schools, Theological Education by Extension, and other related ministries.

### **Statement of Methodology**

This thesis project assumes two most significant approaches in order to assess the strategies for effective pastoral leadership in the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya. One is a case study of one of the Areas (hierarchical status) of the church. The purpose of the assessment is to help the current leadership to re-examine both the previous and the present spiritual factors for healthy church growth. It is a thermometer check on the spiritual life, leadership, staff development, services, finances, and ministry potentials. The second approach is a thorough research into any written literature that pertains to the same church and the communities around it. Once this is done, the project would suggest and outline strategic approaches for healthy church growth and applicable biblical principles for developing, numerical expansion, and methods for planting more than 100 Africa Gospel Church-Kenya churches within the next decade. This material will not only be useful and applicable to this one church, but also other churches and institutions facing the same kind of need.

The thesis project will be covered in 7 chapters as follows: chapter one is the introduction and an overview of the subject matter. Chapter two will give a brief history of Africa Gospel

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48. Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 281.



Church and a summary of growth strengths and economic status of the whole denomination.

“We, as leaders, must work together in obedience to God and those who have charge over us.”<sup>49</sup>

The third chapter will focus more specifically on strategic pastoral leadership. This will explain the meaning of pastoral leadership and how effective leadership is within the Africa Gospel Church.

“Jesus told us to pray the Lord of the harvest that he sends laborers into the harvest.”<sup>50</sup>

The factors for healthy church growth will be covered in the fourth chapter. Basically, a case study on one of the Areas of the church would be done as a way of highlighting some important growth factors that have helped to the entire church to grow in a healthy manner over the past 100 years. Some barriers to effective pastoral leadership and growth, leadership development, and suggested approaches to church growth and church planting are covered in chapter five, six, and seven consecutively.

Some stated interviews and questionnaires may be deemed necessary to be used in order to compare and contrast the leadership styles of the Africa Gospel Church with other denominations in Kenya. It is also important to strike a borderline between church leadership and secular world leadership. Without wasting time, the methodology will provide reasons for teamwork; it will explain how to create teamwork in the church or in any organization. The issues of delegation, multiplication, appreciation, and recognition are so crucial to making pastoral leadership effective as much as it should be. This section also renders an explanation of church discipline and recommendations of applicable strategies as far as pastoral leadership is concerned.

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49. Marshall Donnell Mays. *Decently and in Order: An Administrative Handbook and Guide for Small and Rural Churches*. Dr. Marshall D. Mays, 2001.

50. Graham, 32.

### **Review of Related Literature**

For the sake of producing material that can be used beyond the borders of Africa Gospel Church as a denomination, this project will be prepared and completed through research, interviews, questionnaires, and correspondence. Much research will be done in the written books, articles, magazines, articles, available dissertations, and many other sources. In addition to these resources, some important information from class notes, especially those from various leadership, discipleship, and spiritual factors for church growth courses taken at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary will be included. Online materials and any other related literature resources deemed fit will also be used in this research process.

Some of the reviewed and selected literature is as follows:

Anyabwile, Thabiti M. *What is a Healthy Church Member?* Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 2008. The author of this book attempts to paint a true picture of a healthy church member in the minds of church leaders. His contribution to the understanding of this fact is his definition of a healthy church member as one who is an expositional listener, a biblical theologian, gospel saturated, genuinely converted, and so on.

Adams, Jay E. *Shepherding God's Flock: Pastoral Leadership*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975. In this book, Adams talks about serving God in His church through administration. He emphasized the need for planning, organization, and management as the means to lead and pastor the church effectively. "There is so much to be learned before one launches a church."<sup>51</sup> He understood the term management in three dimensions as skills and gifts necessary for discharging the ministerial duties, part of overseeing work, and the church suffering when the management fails to be productive.

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<sup>51</sup> Douglas Crumbly, *Church Planting Complete: Your "How To" Manual for Planting a Church*, (Nav Press Publishing Group, 2002), 29.

Blackaby, Henry & Richard. *Spiritual Leadership, "Moving People on to God's Agenda."* B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, Tennessee, 2001. This is a resource book that was written specifically on leaders' responsibilities in the church or in any other organization. This book provides a picture of a declining church or organization where everything changes dramatically when a new leader comes in and jump-starts the work. Growth and success depend on effective leadership who are called by God as His servants. Leaders need to apply God's methods of leadership in order to better their success. This is a great help to spiritual leaders who are after finding God's agenda, encouragement, and directions for their lives and their churches. Leadership must be understood in the light of God's calling if they desire to lead effectively. Today people are looking for someone to lead them into God's purposes.

Blackwood, Andrew Watterson. *Pastoral Leadership*, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, 1950. This is very old though still an important resource material written in two parts with great emphasis on the pastor's role as an executive as well as an organizer. With every pastor being an executive, Blackwood gave some insights on a preview of the field, a study of the resources, and a survey of the community as major issues. On the other hand, where a pastor is an organizer, he has to deal with the following responsibilities: "Evangelism and member cultivation, Christian education, missions and community welfare, finances and statistics, and finally, a survey of the whole work of ministry."<sup>52</sup>

Callahan, Kennon L. *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church, "Strong, Healthy Congregation Living in the Grace of God."* Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1990. Callahan reiterated that effective pastoral leadership can be assessed by where your congregation

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52. Blackwood, Andrew Watterson, *Pastoral Leadership*, (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, 1950), 34

is and to where it is heading. Any congregation can be described as strong/healthy, weak/declining, or dying.

Cannon, Tom. *Keys to Effective Leadership*, Preacher's Kid Press, 2011. In his book, Cannon talks about Jesus Christ as the greatest example of servant-leadership in the whole world. If people want to emulate Jesus, then they should first seek his face, study his word, and learn from those who have gone before them. This is all about Jesus' style of leadership with an aim of showing any readers how to follow this perfect ministry in their entire life. "Servant-leaders are world changers," he said.

Carter, Judith Corbett. *Transformational Leadership and Pastoral Leader Effectiveness*, Pastoral Psychology, New York: June 2009. Vol. 58; pg 261. This is a study about many variables related to pastoral leader effectiveness. Several leadership styles, personalities, and spirituality of some leaders were measured through the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), NEO-Five Factor Inventory (FFI), and the Spiritual Transcendence Scale (STS) in order to ascertain which variable would predict pastoral leadership effectiveness. Transformational leadership brought the best results. Personality and spirituality were other contributing factors to pastoral leadership effectiveness.

Cohen, William A. *Heroic Leadership*, "Leading with Integrity & Honor." Wiley, John & Sons, Inc. 2010. In this book, Cohen reveals what leadership is all about: "Leading a group with absolute integrity while raising individual performance to a personal best and building a team spirit of sacrifice for the common good." Every church leader should get a copy of this book. "It is not impossible to achieve certain standards of leadership," he said.

Dale, Robert D. *Pastoral Leadership*, "A Handbook of Resources for Effective Congregational Leadership." Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1996. Dale wrote this book to stress the

need for strong pastoral leadership in churches all over the world. The book entails eighteen chapters discussed and broken into four divisions. Seeing leadership in congregational context, matching leaders and ministry, solving leadership problems, and exploring personal dimensions of leadership are the pillars of this material which render it a good resource to research.

Fish, Burnette C. and Gerald W. Fish. *The Place of Songs, "A History of the World Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church in Kenya"* published by World Gospel Mission, Marion, Indiana, 1989, is the title of a voluminous book written by Fish. "Spiritual Roots" is the key word in this book. It is all about people finding their roots, where they have come from. The interest of the membership of Africa Gospel Church herein is to find where their spiritual roots are. The most informational and inspirational answers about their origin are found in this book.

To realize and get the complete picture about the growth and work of Africa Gospel Church, one must dig into its seed stage beginnings which date back to 1895-1929. That is what this thesis project on "Effective Pastoral Leadership" is attempting to investigate. It is a subject based on the events which have brought the world Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church to where they are today. Their services to the people of Kenya are remarkable since they have opened up the eyes and minds of many of the people to see the works of God in their lives and the preservation of Christ's ministry.

Getz, Gene A & Wall, Joe L. *Effective Church Growth Strategies*, Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000. This is one of the most important resource materials helpful for understanding how effective pastoral leadership can drastically grow churches as it happened in the New Testament times. There are several factors that contribute toward church growth and these can be applied in church health and growth process as stipulated in the Bible.

Harris, Joshua, Mark Dever. *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, Crossway, 2004. Joshua Harris is a senior pastor of Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland. These nine marks are good for distinguishing a healthy, biblical church of Christ. However, they are rarely grown in most of the churches around the world. This book is a must-read book by leaders, members and anyone else associated with churches of all sizes.

Lawrence, Bill, wrote a book entitled *Effective Pastoring: Giving Vision, Direction, and Care to your Church*. Nelson, Thomas Inc., 1999. In this book, Lawrence tries to clear some great confusion that exists today as to what pastors are to be. He quoted Paul and said, “They are to be equippers, disciple-makers.”

MacArthur, John. *Master’s Plan for the Church*, Moody Publishers, 2008. This is written about the local church membership, trying to perceive them as an existing institution for the glory of God. His overall statement is that, “the local church must adhere unfalteringly to Biblical principles.” Church leadership is not something to be earned by seniority, purchased or inherited whatsoever. This leadership of church is likened to humble shepherds who are laboring servants for the kingdom of God.

Malphurs, Aubrey. *Advanced Strategic Planning*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. As the author puts it, the purpose of this book is to provide church leadership with a good strategic planning process. According to him, the typical church does not understand the full implication of mega change for effective ministry. “To be a pastor of a church is to desire an intensive enterprise.”

Sanders J. Oswald. *Spiritual Leadership*. Sanders worked and produced this material with a desire to explain the need for talented, vigorous leaders in the church today. He continues to say that the world situation demands a strong voice from the church. This voice can only come

from leaders who are being guided by God and devoted to Jesus Christ. Further, he encouraged men and women of God to place their talents and powers to the disposal of God so He can create leaders to be used for His glory. “True greatness, true leadership, is achieved not by reducing men to one’s service but in giving oneself in selfish service to them.”<sup>53</sup>

### **The Scriptural Basis**

The office of Pastor is mentioned only once in the New Testament, in Ephesians 4:11. Pastoral position can be equated with the leader’s or an elder’s office. There are several scriptures in the Bible that esteem the elders as shepherds (Acts 20:17, 28; I Peter 5:1-4). The pastor is a spiritual leader as well as the presiding elder in a local church. James was in a leadership position before Paul came over. When Paul came to Jerusalem, he delegated some leadership authority to Timothy and Titus (Ephesians 6:21-22; II Timothy 4:12; Titus 3:12). Jesus called himself the “good shepherd” (John 10:1-18). He is called “shepherd” or “pastor”<sup>54</sup> in Hebrews 13:20 and I Peter 2:25 and 5:4.

There are scriptures in the Old Testament that support pastoral leadership in the church. Many people were recognized as leaders in the nature of counselors, elders, judges, priests, and prophets. The Old Testament pictures God or the coming Messiah as a shepherd (Genesis 49:24; Psalms 80:1, Ecclesiastes 12:11; Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 37:24; Micah 7:14; Zechariah 11:4-14, 13:7). These people were spiritually endowed with the gifts of leadership. They were accounted for leadership duties such as leading (Numbers 27:15-23). Joshua was to be a shepherd leading Israel in and out. David was a leader too (II Samuel 5:2, 7:7; Ezekiel 34:15). Jacob was dedicated as a shepherd (Genesis 31:38-40). As leaders of God’s people, church leaders are supposed to

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53. J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1967), 20.

54. John 10:1-18.

feed the flock (Jeremiah 23:4; John 21:15-17). They are to feed the flock through preaching, teaching, counseling, and healing (Ezekiel 34:4), and prayer (Matthew 10:1; James 5:14-15).

Genesis 14 is a historical manifestation of priesthood. Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine, and being a priest of God the Most High, he blessed Abram (Genesis 14:18). Moses established Levitical priesthood beginning from Abraham. David was a grounded priest, a position he was to hold forever (Psalms 110:4, 15).

In I Samuel 8:4-5, the elders came to Samuel asking him to appoint a king as judge over them. Through the prophet Nathan, God blessed David with extraordinary promises: “Your throne and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever.”<sup>55</sup> “Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’”<sup>56</sup> (II Samuel 7:7).

Numbers 20-24 discloses the origin of wisdom outside Israel’s religious traditions (I Kings 5:9-14; Proverbs 10-31).

Exodus 18:13-27: “Moses followed the advice of his father-in-law and did all that he suggested. He picked out able men and appointed them judges or elders.”<sup>57</sup>

Numbers 11:16-17: “Assemble for me seventy of the elders of Israel, men you know for true elders and authorities among the people, and bring them to the meeting tent. When they are in place beside you, I will come down and speak with you there. I will also take some of the spirit that is on you and will bestow it on them, that they may share the burden of the people with you. You will then not have to bear it by yourself.”

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55. 1 Samuel, 8:4-5

56. 11 Samuel 7:7.

57. Exodus 18:13



Exodus 18:17-19: “You are not acting wisely . . . . You will surely wear yourself out, and not only yourself but also these people with you. The task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. Now listen to me, and I will give you advice that God may be with you.” Jethro continues: “Choose able and God-fearing” women, “trustworthy” women, “who hate dishonest gain.... Let these render decisions” and lead in prayer (an adaptation of Exodus 18:21-22).

Exodus 19:4-6: “Tell the Israelites: ... You shall be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. That is what you must tell the Israelites.”

Amos 4:1; 5:7-15: Amos championed the rights of the poor.

I Samuel 13:14: “But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command.”

Matthew 20:25-28: “But Jesus called them to him and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’”<sup>58</sup>

Acts 20:28: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church which he obtained with his own blood.”

Acts 20:34-35: “You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.” Paul directed all his ambition and ability to the mission of spreading the good news of Jesus Christ and was conversant in every culture. “To evangelize

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58. Mathew 20: 18-25.

is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept him as their Savior and serve him as king.”<sup>59</sup>

I Timothy 2:1-15: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.”

I Timothy 5:16: “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.”

II Timothy 3:16: “All scripture is breathed by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and training in righteousness.”

II Timothy 2:15: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” As a spiritual leader, Paul guided Timothy in a pastoral way. He told him to do his best as a worker approved by God.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of heart.” This helps leaders to live by proven principles and seek guidance from God. Leaders are called to submit to God and letting God to lead them.

### **Summary**

According to the Word of God, the church is the living body of Christ. It means that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, so the church must obey Jesus’ Great Commission, stated

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<sup>59</sup> J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, (Downers Grove, Illinois, Intervarsity Press, 1961), 38.

in Matthew 28:19, to make disciples in the living body of Christ. In other words, the church has to develop and multiply healthy spiritual leaders in Christ-likeness in the cell church. This is the mission of the church and the Lord's will. Today's church must recognize what the church is, and its mission is according to the Word of God.

What can be learned from the introductory part of this thesis project is that pastoral leadership must be effective. Africa Gospel Church, Kenya has proven this statement to be true. The leadership of this church is inspiring, motivating, discerning and more so, envisioning the need to faithfully follow God's will. "They saw themselves as one body; one household; one temple; one building, but they gathered, wherever their secular life brought them together."<sup>60</sup> Like in any other organization, the Africa Gospel Church has lived and grown stronger through so many challenges and setbacks. "They are in communities of occupation, alienation."<sup>61</sup> The number in the congregation, quality of services, age and a wide diversity of ethnic groupings, and staying in the pastoral ministry are the biggest challenges. Changes in all spheres of the church cannot be taken for granted. Faithful men and women called of God can sit and look back into the ages and conclude that God has been faithful to them all along the way. They are the men and women who first saw the ministry of Jesus Christ as a crisis and a great opportunity to minister for him and win lost souls.

The impact that this church has caused across Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania is significantly profound. Quite a good number of people who are diversely talented and spiritually gifted have worked together for the sake of expanding and extending the gospel of salvation across the borders. Fortunately many people from different communities, ethnic groupings, and

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60. Colin W. Williams, *Where in the World: Changing Forms of the Church's witness*, (New York, Printed in U.S.A.), 4.

61. *Ibid*, 4.

social diversities have been reached with the message of the gospel. The church has many programs and ministries essentially directed to exploiting the available resources, doing research and training of quality personnel as the leadership strives to increase the amount and quality of leadership. Thus, anybody is right to say the pastoral leadership within the Africa Gospel Church is effective. Bisagno once said; “How good to be organized and how good to have a plan?”<sup>62</sup> It is effective because of the progress and development it has so far made. You will learn more about the current ministries of this church in the following chapters.

The entire Africa Gospel Church leadership is intentionally focused on Christian ministries. Great advancements have been made in this regard and in making it an accessible church to seekers from all walks of life. Despite the challenges, the church has been well set and organized around its priorities of pastoral leadership. “Establishing relationships with the unchurched is vital to effective church growth.”<sup>63</sup> The culture of the church is built upon the gospel of salvation for all humanity. It is an effective servant leadership that is concerned with shepherding the flock, strategizing the ministries, stewardship of spiritual gifts, self-propagation, and evangelization of the lost.

Both the current and the previous leaders as well as pastors have maintained a perspective that has so far enabled them to understand their ministries as nothing less than participation in the work of God. “People develop ownership for an organization when they participate in ways that help to shape the future of the organization. They develop an even stronger ownership for

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62. John R. Bisagno, *How to Win Them*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadmann Press, 1970), 17.

63. Scott G. Wilkins, *Reach: A Team Approach to Evangelism and Assimilation*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2005), 30.

the mission when the leader evidences tangibly a compassion for the persons in the grouping.’<sup>64</sup>  
They have lived as biblical models of leadership did.

Remember Moses, David, Paul, and Jesus when it comes to the idea of promoting teamwork in church organization. “As Jethro told Moses, leadership consists largely in delegating both opportunity and responsibility.”<sup>65</sup> Moses listened wisely to Jethro’s counsel to delegate powers to his assistants (Exodus 18:24). David courageously faced a monster but he inspired others to rally behind him (I Samuel 17, II Samuel 23). In the New Testament, Paul directed his ambition and ability to mission which penetrated into different cultures (Acts 20:34-35). A perfect example was Jesus the son of God. He carefully set up a team of to-be leaders and trained them as his followers (Matthew 10, Luke 10). Surely, any organization or church that is keen enough to emulate these examples of role models on leadership endeavor should be rated effective and prosperous. Success and healthy growth come as a result of churches gravitating to biblical principles that promote measurable effectiveness.

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64. Kennol L. Callahan, *Effective Church Leadership: Building on the Twelve Keys* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row Publishers, 1990), 88.

65. Andrew W. Blackwood, *Pastoral Leadership* (New York, NY: Abingdon–Cokesbury Press, 1950), 3

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORY, STRATEGIC GROWTH, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA GOSPEL CHURCH, KENYA

#### **Biblical and Cultural Definition of Church**

In the Christian religion, a church is simply a building for public worship. This definition considers all the followers of a Christian region collectively. A church can also be referred to as all the religious services which take place in a church building or in a particular gathering place. Several words are used for church in the New Testament. The term church is translated in the English Bible as “eklesia.” It stems from a Greek word, “kaleo,” which means to call. More emphasis is placed on the phrase, “to call out,” hence the word may mean “the called out ones.” Church is an assembly in reference to a place where the called out people meet. In addition, synagogue carries the same meaning as “church” and “assembly.” “Synagogue” is translated as “coming together” or a “gathering.” The Africa Gospel Church is a Kenyan based network of over 1,500 congregations.

The church traces its roots back to the work of missionaries from World Gospel Mission Call.” “What is we agreed upon the mission, vision, and values that we share, and then we just let people go?”<sup>66</sup> This official publication is produced quarterly to challenge people to read about mission work and to be actively involved in mission fields that God places on the hearts of those who love missions. “The essence of God’s word demands a person-centered witness and requires the church reflects God’s concern for all people”<sup>67</sup> “The Call” has been asking for partnership with many needs over the years. World Gospel Mission uses this resource to report

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66. Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2005), 54.

67. Jack Redford, *Planting New Churches*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman Press, 1978), 11.

progress, development, improvement, and growth in some major areas of its ministries. It is an attempt to keep the progress moving forward with the understanding that there are a lot of people who do not know Jesus Christ. This is why the World Gospel Mission has been pressing on trying to help people find their mission field.

On the other hand, Africa Gospel Church has a publication known as “The Trumpet.” This is a strategic quarterly publication for the church which is useful for gathering and passing information to the local churches. Trumpets were used as signaling instruments whenever there was a calling or warning of an impending danger. In this case, the church used to use the trumpet to call people to gather together in the house of the Lord which is the Church. The then leadership understood the meaning of church as, “the Body of Christ”<sup>68</sup> through baptism. Since believers have been united with Christ through spiritual baptism, they are corporately referred to as the body of Christ. (Romans 12:4-5, I Corinthians 12:11, 18, 27).

The congregations are in interdependent groups of Christians which constitute the physical representation of Christ on earth. That is why its pastoral leadership programs emphasize spiritual growth of every individual member, numerical growth, church planting, and expansion. Programs also move people closer to God in order to see Christ as the cornerstone of their lives and embed the Bible in everything they do. The Bible is the foundation for teaching and life instruction. “If the story is told faithfully and accurately, it will be one of life with God in a church for the world.”<sup>69</sup>The backbone of this church is the Holy Scripture on which everything is based. Leaders have lived a life modeled in the scripture.

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68. Rom.12:4-5

69. Gabriel Fackre, *Do and Tell: Engagement Evangelism in the '70s*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), 28.

In addition to living by the scriptures, the congregations have a sense of belonging to the church and they believe that they are the church. They are all involved in the discipleship process as a strategy for church growth and kingdom expansion. Everyone is accountable for changing their character to become more like Christ in faith and actions. As part of being good shepherds, all the members are serving their communities by being involved in community issues and meeting important pressing concerns. Individual local churches were established with a need to carry on the work of Christ as a local body of believers. “And so were the churches established in their faith and increased in number daily” (Acts 16:5).<sup>70</sup>

A church is an organization that is able to fulfill all the functions that are appropriate for a local church according to the New Testament. In this context, the New Testament church is the Lord’s church of which he is the head. This being the whole truth about church, the real church is the body of Christ on earth. The Africa Gospel Church was founded on what Jesus said about his church: “I will build my church”(Colossians 1:18). Only those who are the called ones are a part of that church - called out of the world, purified, and cleansed by his blood to be his own. It is the Lord that adds people to this church, those who are getting saved. Thus, this church is more than an organization in the sense that it is a living, growing, organism, with the life of Christ within. Many grow the church through exploitation of different spiritual gifts and talents. “The Holy Spirit gives each Christian a spiritual gift or gifts to be used ‘for the common good.’”<sup>71</sup> (I Corinthians 12:27). “God rises up among the Christians in a congregation the gifts needed to carry on ministry in that place.”<sup>72</sup> “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly

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70. Ac. 16:5.

71. 1 Cor. 12:27

72. Joan S. Gray, *Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2009), 1.



prophets, thirdly teachers, of that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues”<sup>73</sup> (I Corinthians 12:28; Eph. 4:11-14).

Africa Gospel Church is a denomination that was initially established by World Gospel Mission Missionaries among the Kipsigis (Kalenjin) peoples of Kenya. This provides a wide understanding of the fact that traditionally the Kalenjin religion is based upon the belief in a supreme god known as “Asis” or “Cheptalel,” who is represented in the form of the sun. “Asis” was believed to be the source of life, fertility, and plenty in the land. The Sun is not God himself but it is a being who is worthy of worship. Another strange being beneath the Asis was called “Elat” who was believed to be the controller of thunder and lightning. The spirits of the dead were known as “Oyik,” and were believed to intervene in the affairs of humans, and could give rains and stop any calamity from happening. The Kalenjin did not have the term “church” in their vocabulary by then, but they used to go to particular places like mountain tops to worship their god. These places were called “Kapkoros.” Their worship would start around 5:00 am and they would continue praying until the sun rose. “The belief in God in Africa originated in ancestor-worship as a reflection of the worship of nature.”<sup>74</sup>

Later on, the Kalenjin became responsive to the Gospel and were changed into a religious people living a monotheistic life. Their relationship with Christ was established when many elders and families received him as Lord and Savior. “But fundamentally, the man of faith does not set out to obey a law but to practice the law as divine command. His obedience and allegiance are to a Transcendent, to God.”<sup>75</sup> This did not happen until some early missionaries

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73. I Corinthians 12:28

74. Geoffrey Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion*, (New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962), 31.

75. E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition*, (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1973), 13

were allowed in to work with the Kalenjin and especially the Kipsigis tribe. It is recorded that no European had lived among them as late as 1933. Missionaries of Africa Gospel Church Mission pioneered the work among the Kipsigis. At the same time, missionaries of the Africa Inland Church Mission began work among the Nandi and the Tugen peoples. This was the moment when missionaries had to define “church” and explain it to the local people as the place where people could gather together and worship a true and a living God.

Theologically speaking, the study of the church is called ecclesiology. As a discipline, church is expressed in two concepts: the universal church and the local church. “The Africa Gospel Church leadership is grounded in the belief that church is an organization as well as an organism which consists of all those people who believe in Jesus for salvation and meeting in one place in one time.”<sup>76</sup> One of the strategic endeavors for effective pastoral leadership is to get people from one community coming together as the body of Christ in order to worship him corporately. The church in Jerusalem had believers meeting daily in their homes, “where they dedicated themselves to the Apostle’s teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).<sup>77</sup> Some believers met daily in the Temple courts. They met in large groups to worship God. The small group in the house is a complete and true church, independent of other churches. This is true of the Africa Gospel Church where small groups meeting in homes are still functioning even today. Apart from strategically strengthening believers and meeting their physical and spiritual needs, small groups are just a network of bodies working together in reaching and evangelizing non-believers in the villages.

Paul wrote letters to seven churches in Asia, each located in its own town or city (Corinth, Thessalonica, Colossae, Antioch, and Laodicea) to encourage them to keep the Word

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76. Fish, xi.

77. Ac. 2:42.

of God burning in their hearts. At the same time, the church was thought of as a building, a place for all believers to meet every so often. People did not meet in buildings or in houses on a daily basis; they had certain times to meet in particular places, either in the buildings, houses, or in the cities. Multitudes of men and women were added to their number. The most important thing was the sharing of the Gospel to the rest of the unreached communities. Most of the local churches of the Africa Gospel Church were also started by strong evangelists who took the message of the Gospel forth and penetrated the neighborhood and cities. There, they took homes as the most natural environment in which the church could develop. This is the basis through which the churches meet in homes of believers so that they can expand the kingdom of Jesus Christ most efficiently.

### **The Birth of Africa Gospel Church: History**

Pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church owes much discussion about the growth of Christianity in Africa which has been very spectacular for decades. Church growth has put Africa on record as the continent with the highest numerical Christian growth rate in the world. “God, the Supreme being, is the greatest power of all who possesses life and strength in Himself, and from whom every creaturely force is derived.”<sup>78</sup> The major contributor to the church growth phenomenon is the Bible (the Word of God). The Bible certainly was very much valued and used by African Christians. The relationship between the Bible and the cultures of African Christians is no longer a strange endeavor. This is the Word of God that missionaries from Western parts of the world carried with them to the continent of Africa. The idea of Christianity and churches, including the Africa Gospel Church, has prompted many leaders as well as their congregations to develop an interest in their roots. “People are looking into their lineages; they want to know from

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78. Parrinder, 15.

where they have come.”<sup>79</sup>

The members of Africa Gospel Church, Kenya have been asking about their spiritual roots. In simple terms, where did this church come from? The search for the answers to this question led some missionaries to come to Kenya in the late 1800s. “The Africa Gospel Church is the product of the combined efforts of the missionaries of the World Gospel Mission plus an even larger number of national workers in Kenya.”<sup>80</sup> History of this relationship dates back to 1929 and as early as 1895. In 1867 at Vineland, New Jersey, a group of young Christians who were interested in the truth of scriptural holiness (by John Wesley) formed an interdenominational effort to spread the gospel to rest of the world. This was an association known as “The National Camp Meeting Association.” The sole aim of this organization was the promotion of Christian holiness and evangelism in America and across the world. The National Holiness Association was concerned about evangelism, a need which made them to seek for help from other societies to be their missionary arms. “The extension of Christian churches over Africa in modern times is a remarkable event, with consequences that affect the whole continent in every aspect of life.”<sup>81</sup>

The Board of the National Holiness Association Missionary Society voted in 1927 to open work in Africa after the request of students from Asbury College. These were Rev. and Mrs. Robert (Bob) Smith and Rev. and Mrs. Virgil Kirkpatrick. In 1929, Clara Ford, daughter of Friends missionaries in Kenya, was appointed as World Gospel Mission’s first missionary in Africa, and asked to explore possibilities for World Gospel Mission ministry. Among her contacts was Dr. Willis R. Hotchkiss, who had worked among the Kipsigis in Kenya since 1905,

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79. Fish, xii.

80. Ibid., xiii.

81. Parrinder, 13.

and had founded the “Lumbwa” Industrial Mission. Due to the failing health of Hotchkiss' wife, he decided to turn over his mission to the World Gospel Mission. In October 1932, the Smiths and Kirkpatrick arrived in Kenya. In 1935, a 10-acre (40,000 m<sup>2</sup>) property was granted to World Gospel Mission at Tenwek, in northeastern Kenya, about 140 miles (230 km) east of Nairobi in the fertile highlands of the Bomet District among the Kipsigis people, through the assistance of Hotchkiss and the Africa Inland Mission. The Church Missionary Society was the first protestant organization to send a missionary to Kenya. “John Ludwig Kraft arrived in 1884. In 1886, he was joined by Johann Rebmann and other missions followed later.”<sup>82</sup>

Starting from nothing, the work of the World Gospel Mission/Africa Gospel Church in Kenya has grown until today (1988) there are 574 organized congregations with a total membership of 40,000 who are served by 18 ordained pastors and 1,148 recognized Christian workers; the 1,530 Sunday Schools have an average attendance of almost 95,000. Add to this the scores of schools (364 primary and 41 secondary) with thousands of students (155,500 in primary and 20,000 in secondary) sponsored by the church, the far-reaching medical ministry extended out from one hospital and five dispensaries, the Bible training programs, the five urban centers, the church’s own missionary programs, and numerous other ministries, and one can readily see how the work has developed and grown under the blessings of God. “Belief is knowledge that God can perform through us his perfect will in reaching people for Christ.”<sup>83</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church has been self-governing since 1970 with the network of churches and has seen remarkable growth and development in urban areas. The mission of Africa Gospel Church is to disciple and train members to be committed, action-oriented Disciples of

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82. Fish, xiv.

83. Mack R. Douglas, *How to Build an Evangelistic Church*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Pub. House, 1963), 18.

Christ and to spread the gospel where Jesus is not known. The church is administered by a moderator (bishop), assistant moderator, and church administrator. It also operates seven different departments: Media, Christian Education, Radio, Publications, Youth, Women, and Evangelism. “Members bring their unsaved friends and expect their response to the invitation.”<sup>84</sup> The church also oversees three pastoral or leadership training programs, medical care through Tenwek Hospital, and urban church ministries in Nairobi and more than ten other major Kenyan cities. The church runs four bookstores and publishes a magazine called *Trumpet*, in addition to producing radio broadcasts that air on national radio stations.

### **The Founding Fathers of Africa Gospel Church**

#### **Willis R Hotchkiss (1895-1948).**

The growth and the expansion of the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya, can be traced back in part for its beginnings to the arrival in Kenya of this one man, Willis R. Hotchkiss (1895-1899), who was regarded by many as a prince among men. “He has rightly been called the founder of Christianity among the Kipsigis people.”<sup>85</sup> He was an 1893 graduate of Cleveland Bible College, the Current Malone College, in Ohio. He was sent to Kenya together with four others as the first missionaries by the Africa Inland Mission. They arrived at Kibwezi on November 29, 1895, where he joined efforts with Peter Scott to make a chain of mission stations from Mombasa to the inland part of East Africa. They opened up the main station at Nzawi and Mr. Hotchkiss was posted to Sakai station in Wakambaland. Though the community did not welcome him, his persistent stay bore vision success. He was joined by other missionaries from Scotland and more

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84. James Fairfield, Ed., *Probe for an Evangelism that Cares*, (SCOTTDALE, Pennsylvania, 1972), 110.

85. *Ibid.*, 13.

stations were opened. The death of several members of the group in 1896, which included Peter Cameron Scott, did not demoralize them.

The work of Africa Inland Mission became firmly established. Willis R. Hotchkiss left for America in 1899 and came back to Kenya after a short while to reach the untouched Kavirondo tribe in the western part of the country to work with the Friends Church. His major aim was to start an industrial mission in East Africa. On February 2, 1901, the Friends Africa Industrial Mission was formed. "About the same time in 1901, Mr. Hotchkiss published his first book, *Sketches from the Dark Continent*. It did a great deal to stimulate concern for the lost condition of the tribes in Africa."<sup>86</sup> These three men, Willis Hotchkiss, Arthur B. Chilson, and Edgar T. Hole, left Cleveland, Ohio for Africa in 1902. They arrived safely in Mombasa and went as far as Kisumu in the western part of Kenya. From here they did not know where else to go or where to start their mission work. Not too long in their scouting of the area, they came across the war-like Nandi people.

Willis took interest in the Nandi people, and later opened work among the Kipsigis, a related tribe. Hotchkiss and Hole died of malaria. Chilson set up a camp site in a place now called Kaimosi station and established the Friends Africa Industrial Mission among the Kavirondo people. Apart from establishing an Industrial Mission, these men also emphasized evangelism. "He knew the importance of evangelism, but he also recognized the need to introduce practical training such as teaching the men to be carpenters, brick-makers and farmers."<sup>87</sup> The strategy of Christian witnessing was in place at this time towards establishing a self-supporting native Christian church.

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86. Ibid., 22.

87. Ibid., 24.

In 1904-1931, Willis was prepared to open up his own mission among the Nandi people in Kenya. He could not penetrate the Nandi country at the time due to their resistance against the British invasion in their land. So the Hotchkiss family moved southward and began work among the Kipsigis. Despite the fights against the European settlement in the land, the Kipsigis people were able to make a peace treaty with the British. He then settled at “Chesinende” which later became the place of the Germans. This was where he started work called the “Lumbwa Industrial Mission.” He succeeded in leasing a huge piece of land for agriculture at a place called Chagaik. It was he who introduced reform in agricultural methods and influenced the community in terms of food production. “It is the duty and responsibility of every Christian or pastor to educate the susceptible Christian.”<sup>88</sup> One young convert known as Petero A. Ngetich was introduced to plowing the land with oxen and planting of food crops.

Hotchkiss is still remembered by the Kipsigis people as a person who brought Christianity and education to the land. He and other missionaries taught the Bible and converted many people to Christianity. He was able to establish sixteen schools and 260 converts under his ministry. Hotchkiss loved the Lord and the Kipsigis people. He worked hard to establish the Lumbwa Industrial Mission and other development projects.

Most importantly, in 1934, Mr. Hotchkiss worked hard in obtaining a site for the World Gospel Mission, a body with which he was in mutual cooperation. He assisted the Mission work to become established in Kenya. Mr. Hotchkiss left Kenya for America in 1939. He left all the responsibility of establishing the Missionary work at the hands of a native by the name of Johana A. Ngetich. “The effort to evangelize tribes in Africa met with tragic results for both

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88. Joseph C. Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism: Crossing Traditional Boundaries to Reach the Unbelieving World*, (Portland, Oregon, Multnomah Press, 1982), 53.



missionaries and their families”<sup>89</sup> With a small gift of money from Mr. Hotchkiss, A. Ngetich bought a Bible in the Nandi language. Mr. Hotchkiss later died in 1948 after laying a foundation for the years of work which were to follow. He also influenced other areas of Kipsigis. He was friend of chiefs and government officials.

### **Rev. Johana A. Ngetich.**

Rev. Johana A. Ngetich was born in Kapsuser, Kericho in Kenya somewhere around 1885. His nickname was Mongesoi and he worked as a gun bearer for W.D.M. “Karamoja” Bell, who was an elephant hunter. He was one of the converts made by Mr. Hotchkiss. He and another convert by the name of Solomon A. Simwolo, became faithful Christians and leaders in the church. “I knew I had been lost and that now I was found by Jesus Christ.”<sup>90</sup>His desire was mainly to tell the gospel of Christ to his own people, the Kipsigis tribe. They moved south of Kericho to the area called “Sot” in 1916. Mongesoi evangelized and won about one hundred souls to the Lord, thus becoming the pioneer Kipsigis missionary to Sot. He and his wife were baptized as Johana and Ester on May 11, 1919.

Johana attended Bible classes under the trees at Tenwek, and a two-year course at the Sotik Bible School. He was ordained on January 20, 1950, when Dr. George R. Warner was present at the dedication of the Hotchkiss Memorial church. Others included Zephaniah A. Maina and Dishon A. Kesembe; they were the first three Kipsigis pastors to be ordained by the World Gospel Mission. Rev. Ngetich served as head evangelist and preacher in 1936, as well as

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89. Frances S. Adeney, *Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Academic, 2010), 9.

90. Bruce Roberts Dreisbach, *The Jesus Plan: Breaking Through Barriers to Introduce the People You Know to the God You Love*, (WaterBrook Press, 1973), 33.

a spokesman for the mission in council meetings. “After the African Gospel Church had been registered with the Government, Rev. Johana served as Moderator from 1964-1968.”<sup>91</sup> He later died on May 15, 1977. Rev. Johana is still remembered as a fatherly man and a faithful steward in ministry. He was also a man of concern and “today the Africa Gospel Church is still reaping blessings and benefits from the life of Rev. Johana A. Ngetich.”

### **The Reverend Clara G. Ford**

Her father, Jefferson Ford, was working in Jamaica as a missionary. He had a huge burden for Africa even before he met Willis Hotchkiss in 1899. Both prayed about starting a Friends church in Kenya. “Mission is the great thing for which the church exists and for which the Christian lives.”<sup>92</sup> The Ford’s family was able to set foot in Kenya in 1914 when Clara was eleven years old. God had placed a call on her heart to serve him in Africa. She got an appointment for mission work with WGM on August 13, 1929. By the grace of God and his providential care, Clara arrived in Kenya on December 3, 1929.

Clara joined her parents in Kisumu located in the western part of Kenya. Her desire and concern to reach the un-evangelized tribes in that region was growing bigger and bigger. Their best strategy was to do scouting trips in order to find a site where they could establish the work of World Gospel Mission. “A missionary is one who goes into the world to give people an opportunity to belong to God’s family.”<sup>93</sup> The trip took them to different places including Nyakach, Litein, Kericho, Kavirondo, and Tenwek. Clara was very instrumental in forming the East Africa Holiness Association and serving as secretary for several years. With the help of this

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91. Adeney, 48.

92. R. Pierce Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel: Selection from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Williams B. Eerdmans Pub. Company, 1967), 17.

93. E. Thomas Brewster, Elizabeth S. Brewster, *Bonding, and The Missionary Task: Establishing a Sense of Belonging*, (Pasadena, CA, Lingua House, 1982), 6.

association, Clara was able to edit a periodical in Swahili called *Matangazo ya Injili (Gospel Herald)*. This magazine was of great help to preachers in terms of sermon outlines. This newspaper contained church news, daily scripture reading calendar, Sunday school lessons, and holiness messages. They had a publishing and printing work done at the Africa Inland Press at Kijabe.

Clara reached many people with the gospel through the *Herald* magazine. Still, by this time, the World Gospel Mission had not secured a location, and Clara was busy serving wherever she was. It was both the Ford's and Anderson's families who worked hard in helping the World Gospel Mission to be established in Kenya. Clara later died in 1946 after suffering from cancer. "Without her help and that of her father in those early years, the development of World Gospel Mission in Kenya might well have taken a different turn."<sup>94</sup>

### **Robert and Catherine (Biesecker) Smith - 1930**

In 1930, the Smith family presented their application to the Board of Directors of the WGM for work in Africa. In the fall of 1932, they were set for work in Africa together with Virgil and Faye Kirkpatrick. These new recruits headed for Kenya and reached Mombasa in November 25, 1932. "The year 1932 became known as the official date for World Gospel Mission entering Kenya."<sup>95</sup> The work began in Kericho and Tenwek in 1935.

The new recruits worked particularly among the Kipsigis people. One of their remarkable developments was the establishment of schools, "mission schools." Great were the opportunities for evangelization in the western part of Kenya. This event resulted in the founding and opening of several mission sites. These missionaries taught the Bible and preached the good news. They

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94. Beaver, 29.

95. Ibid., 65.

also worked in collaboration with the natives and established a mission hospital at Tenwek in 1937.

## **Early National Church Leaders (12 Disciples Model)**

### **The Vision of Africa Gospel Church-Kenya**

Like any other church organization, business enterprise, institution, and many bodies of mutual cooperation, Africa Gospel Church has a vision. It is with intent that this organization is to see a church flourish in all aspects of life and more so ready to meet Jesus Christ. For over fifty years since its establishment, this church has lived to be a mission-founded church with a huge missionary passion. In the late 1800s, God sent missionaries from other continents to share the Gospel with the people of Kenya, Africa and the rest of the world. The passion and mission of reaching the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ is still intact and practiced throughout the denomination. This was due to teamwork and partnership between the missionaries and the local leaders. Larry Kreider knew it when he said, “I know that God is a team builder. He knows how teams work and how they can effectively work together. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit created the universe. Often God uses one person to express his vision and others to turn it into reality. When you encourage and inspire others, you put teamwork into action to accomplish God’s goals.”<sup>96</sup>

Likewise the purpose and vision of World Gospel Mission is to serve God in holiness and righteousness. “An unreached people is a biblical nation among whom our most straightforward

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96. Larry Kreider and Dennis DeGrasse, *21 Tests of Effective Leadership* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2010), 38.

and comprehensive goal in blessing a people has not yet been met.”<sup>97</sup> The mission connects in ministry with churches worldwide to make disciples of Jesus Christ among all nations. “Vision - the place where tomorrow is shaped - motivates ministry and determines achievement. Vision unleashes creativity and helps a body of believers visualize a magnificent future. Vision also serves as a catalyst for innovations and inspires passion for improvements.”<sup>98</sup> For a long period of time, World Gospel Mission has ministered through preaching, teaching, and healing ministries, and assisted in forming culturally relevant congregations comprised of maturing disciples of Jesus Christ who have also been evangelizing and reproducing themselves within their own cultures and across cultural boundaries. “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others”<sup>99</sup> (II Timothy 2:2). It is also to call believers to the deeper work of God in the human heart of being cleansed from all sin and be filled with the Holy Spirit by faith that is in Christ Jesus.

### **The Mission of Africa Gospel Church**

The Missions Department of Africa Gospel Church holds a clear overview of the overall mission and function of the entire church. The Africa Gospel Church leadership has lived through decades because of its effective pastoral leadership. It is a joy to understand the mission of the church as a means of discovering God’s love and sharing it with other people. The mission of the Africa Gospel Church is to model holy living in Christ by evangelizing the unsaved,

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97. George Miley, *Loving the Church... Blessing the Nations: Pursuing the Role of Local Churches in Global Mission*, (Waynesboro, Georgia, Gabriel Publishing, 2003), 41.

98. Dale Galloway, *Leading With Vision*, (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1999), 11.

99. II Tim. 2:2

edifying all believers, establishing churches, and exercising compassion. This mission holds true to effective leadership strategies needed for running today's church.

The mission of Africa Gospel church not been altered in any way. The meaning and all aspects are still applicable. The overall objective of the World Gospel Mission is ministry through preaching, teaching, and healing. It is in this regard that it has moved forward in forming culturally relevant congregations who have always been depicted as maturing disciples of Jesus Christ. The same disciples are the sent-out ones with the purpose of evangelizing and reproducing themselves within their own cultures and environments.

### **The Purpose of Africa Gospel Church**

Practically speaking, the disciples of Jesus Christ are responsible for calling believers to the deeper work of God and to be set apart for the tasks of the father. The reasons why this church exists are quite simple. These are as listed: "It is the church that extends the mission. The church is merely a witnessing instrument that furthers the kingdom of God."<sup>100</sup> The church is to disciple and train members to be active, committed, action-oriented Disciples of Christ, to spread the gospel where Jesus is not known, to encourage sound teachings from the basis of an extremely high view of the Word of God, and especially encourage members to live lives along the pattern of Jesus Christ and to experience by expressing God's holiness in their daily lives. "Two thousand years later this same good news continues to make its impact but calls for a renewed commitment from the church."<sup>101</sup>

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100. A. R. Tippett, *God, Man, and Church Growth*, (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), 59.

101. Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross, Ed., *Mission in the Twenty-first Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission*, (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2008), 3.

The purpose of this church is also to put faith into action in practical ways in society. This is the state of being salt and light of the world. This is a proper way of addressing some of the pressing social, political, spiritual, emotional, psychological, and emotional needs, and other social ills with the positive message of faith in Jesus Christ.

The local churches within the Africa Gospel Church emphasize many areas of ministry without ignoring any single vital area. The church leadership saw it fit to be effective by knowing and doing the purpose that God determined for the Church of Christ. The Bible is very clear about the purpose of the Church. Africa Gospel Church adopted the core purpose of church as a relational phenomenon. This connotes that the church is a living body that relates to people. That is why it has to fulfill the mandate of evangelizing non-believers and edifying believers in the body. The ultimate purpose, though, is to exalt and glorify God Almighty. Thus, a healthy church will always function properly in these three areas.

### **Effective Strategies for Church Growth and Socio-Economic Development of Africa Gospel Church**

The question that can be raised is based on how effective the pastoral ministries of Africa Gospel Church been as far as growth and socio-economic development are concerned. Did the World Gospel Mission personnel come with sound plans or strategies for impacting the lives of people of Kenya? To understand the most important socio-economic contributions made by early missionaries to Kenya, one would critically study the World Gospel Mission's strategic areas of service to the people. "Leaders are able to envision what could be, and this vision drives them."<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>. Susan Hunt and Peggy Hutcheson, *Leadership for Women in the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 39.

Local churches play a large role in Africa Gospel Church's ability to grow and transform. Many Christians work with Africa Gospel Church, lending their skills and support in various ministries. The church people are the base of the work, and ministry teams always strive to show God's love in nearby regions. These people also provide a large amount of financial support for the whole church and wells as individual missionaries. In this sense, the Africa Gospel Church continues to expand in training missionaries for international, cross-cultural missions and partnership locally and overseas. The areas of service may include ministries to children through Sunday schools, Bible Clubs, and Holiday Bible School; to youth through Bible studies, sports ministries, and special youth events and seminars; to women through women's groups, Bible studies and special seminars on marriage and families; to men through Bible studies, men's groups, pastoral training seminars; to university students through Bible studies and discipleship groups; and to congregations through camp meetings and regular church activities as well as special events and crusades. "Missional methods or models used to engage a given culture with the gospel reflect an underlying set of assumptions about what missionaries are commissioned to do."<sup>103</sup>

The organization also partnered with churches, colleges, and individuals to send many personnel volunteers annually on short term mission's experiences."<sup>104</sup> Although both the World Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church mission's focus is on evangelism, other significant roles were to minister to the whole person through church planting, education, medical care, community health, and development. During times of crisis, these bodies have worked hand-in-hand with other organizations in the country to send relief where they are

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103. David J. Hesselgrave, Ed Stetzer, *Missionshift: Global Mission Issues in the Third Millenium*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Group, 2010), 31.

104. Fish, 68.



directly involved. In essence, these organizations have over the years been concentrating on developing a self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating church which is, of course, indigenous to their respective regions in Kenya. The early recruits to mission fields in the western part of Kenya had their dreams fulfilled when they found sites for settlements and establishments. Good examples related to growth and socio-economic developments of the Africa Gospel Church are as discussed below

### **1. Tenwek Hospital**

Tenwek Hospital came into existence as a result of the focus of World Gospel Mission missionaries in meeting medical needs of the people. Tenwek Hospital is a place where many indigenous people have been treated and healed. It is not only an important facility for health care, but it is also a strategic place for helping many souls to find Christ through chaplaincy ministry. “‘We Treat - Jesus Heals;’ this is the sign at the edge of the Tenwek Hospital compound. It is there as a witness to all who come to Tenwek station of the World Gospel Mission. Tenwek Hospital now functions under a Board of Governors with representation from the Africa Gospel Church, the World Gospel Mission, the Ministry of Health, the Kericho County Council, the Protestant Churches Medical Association, and the local community.”<sup>105</sup>

The goal is to help heal the whole man, body and spirit, and lead him to accept Christ as his personal Savior and to deepen the spiritual life of Christians. It is one of the Protestant mission hospitals in Kenya which was began as a clinic in 1936 at Tenwek. Miss Mildred Fermeau and Miss Gertrude Shryock were the first clinic staff members at Tenwek. Dr. Emie Steury, who came in after 22 years, was the also the first doctor to serve the community at Tenwek Hospital. 1956 was a significant year for the World Gospel Mission when it received the

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105. Fish., 139.

first appointment of a medical doctor to Kenya. “One by one miracles occurred, though, and God met every need.”<sup>106</sup>

History tells that the fifty-bed hospital was enlarged with an addition of a new men’s ward in 1967. Again in 1985, there was another addition to the facility which was meant to accommodate 300 patients. This part was renamed the Johana A. Ngetich Memorial Center, basically in honor of the patriarch of the Africa Gospel Church, who died in 1977. Since 1959, the hospital has been under the day-to-day management of a missionary. However, in July 2001, the hospital hit one of its most important milestones as Tenwek’s board appointed Steven Mutai became its first Kenyan executive officer. In addition to being the primary hospital for the area’s one million people, it is also a referral hospital that receives patients from other parts of the country.

Tenwek’s staff, which now totals 500 employees, treats more than 10,000 inpatients and 70,000 outpatients each year. Approximately 3,000 major surgeries and 2,500 deliveries are also performed at Tenwek each year. In addition, several thousand people find Christ as Savior each year, and many more are impacted through Tenwek’s compassionate ministries and training programs. “Work as though it all depends on you and pray as though it all depends on God. Plans and structures are an irreplaceable part of God’s work.”<sup>107</sup>

## **2. Kenya Highlands Evangelical University**

This institution of higher learning is a post-secondary school near Kericho, Kenya. It was started in 1953 by World Gospel Mission missionaries in the fields. These were Gerald Fish

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106. K. P. Yahannan, *One Man’s Journey to Change a Generation: Revolution in World Missions*, (AFA Books, a Division of Gospel for Asia, 2004), 37.

107. Bisagno, 12.

(1927-2008) and Burnett Fish. “We have attempted to present the obligations of the pastor in developing an evangelistic church.”<sup>108</sup> The purpose of starting such a school was to train young people to follow Christ as church leaders by “providing Bible, theology, and Christian education instructions for students from a member of Africa countries and tribes.” Approximately 150 students attend the college each year. In 1972, an extension seminary program, Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was begun.

Now the Kenya Highlands Evangelical University is registered with the Commission for Higher Education as a private college. Though has been a granted candidacy status by the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA), this college has been in the process for accreditation many years. It is also a member of the Nairobi Fellowship of Theological Colleges. According to its website, “the mission of (KHBC) is to advance the Kingdom of God and serve society through promotion of a Christo-centric education within the Wesleyan tradition by integrating faith with scholarship and inspiring servant leaders. Many people have been won to Christ through education ministries of Africa Gospel Church. “Christ is making a church to display his glory, a communion of saints to enjoy him forever.”<sup>109</sup>

In 1993, World Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church joined forces to open Kaboson Pastors’ School in southwest Kenya. The school was opened to meet the vital need of getting national pastors the formal education and theological training they were lacking. Many Africa Gospel Church pastors were untrained and unable to attend Kenya Highlands Bible College (Kericho) because of expense, distance, or family responsibilities or because they did

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108. Lewis A. Drummond, *Leading Your Church in Evangelism*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman Press, 1975), 59.

109. Robert E. Coleman, *The Heart of the Gospel: The Theology Behind the Master Plan of Evangelism*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2011), 211.

not meet admission requirements. The training program at Kaboson was designed to emphasize the practical skills every pastor needs for effective ministry: a good grasp of Bible knowledge and doctrine, the ability to speak and preach well, the capacity to lead people to Christ and disciple them, and the training to lead a church forward. “In a real sense, the church is God’s trophy of grace, displaying to himself the magnificence of his holiness and power.”<sup>110</sup> More than 117 pastors completed Kaboson’s training program between 1993 and 2001 and returned home to serve their local churches. This is one of the most significant strategies for training personnel as pastors, teachers, evangelists, and church leaders. The church has proven the education strategy effective as possible by building schools for both primary and secondary education. Adult literacy classes are provided for the illiterate adults for the purpose of equipping the saints in the ministry of Christ.

### **3. Missions Outreach**

Mission is one of the effective pastoral leadership arms of Africa Gospel Church. On August 29, 1961, the World Gospel Mission churches were registered with the Kenyan government as the Africa Gospel Church. After Kenyan independence from Britain in 1963, many of the responsibilities of the World Gospel Mission were transferred to the Africa Gospel Church. In 1967, ministry was started among the Maasai. “Churches also live in a hostile environment. The world, the flesh, and the devil pound against Christ’s church are seeking to annihilate it. Without fresh leadership and evangelistic outreach, the natural tendency is stagnation, decline and eventual death.”<sup>111</sup> The church was able to send the first Kenyan

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110. Ibid, 211.

111. Joel Comiskey, *Planting Churches the Reproduce*, (Moreno Valley, CA, 2009), 27

missionaries in 1963. Today there are about 49 Kenyan Missionaries serving God with their children in fifteen stations.

These mission fields are categorized into five major fields in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan. Both the World Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church recruit missionaries from people with a special call from God to serve in cross-cultural ministries. “In this view, leadership is a part of the community. One cannot off from the body and still be a leader.”<sup>112</sup> Their financial support comes from all Africa Gospel Church local churches as well as national and international partners. As a responsibility for the church, these missionaries receive some theological training before going to the fields. Kenya Highlands Evangelical University is the main training institutions for pastors and missionaries. Kaboson Pastors’ school and Olderkesi ministry training institute also train indigenous pastors and church leaders. To emphasize the need for missions the college also sends students to the mission fields for holiday ministries. This has been a big boost to missions work, and a great encouragement to missionaries. “God’s heart for and mission to all the peoples of the earth is evident as one notes the number of non-Hebrews touched by God as described in the OT.”<sup>113</sup> They are also supposed to raise their financial support before they are able to be going out to the fields. Some of the local churches send work and ministry teams to different fields for evangelism, teaching seminars, and work projects. They are reaching the communities through evangelism and discipleship. They firmly focus on their purpose of preparing the church to be ready to meet Christ on his return.

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112. Ronald W. Richard, *Creating a Healthier Church: Family Theory and Congregational Life*, (Minneapolis, MO: Fortress Press, 1996), 172.

113. Dave Early & David Wheeler, *Evangelism Is...: How to Share Jesus with Passion and Confidence*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Academic Pub. Group, 2010), 19.

#### 4. Compassionate Ministries

It is the mandate of Africa Gospel Church to help its local churches in building worship sanctuaries both locally and in its station's outposts. However, there are still many people worshipping under trees. The church also reaches out to people by assisting in development projects and by providing food, clothing, and water to the needy. Through the medical outreach program, the church has been able to build dispensaries and provided medical care to many people. A practical example of compassionate ministries is the development of Africa Gospel Church Baby Center which was opened in Nakuru, Kenya to care for orphaned and abandoned infants affected by HIV/AIDS crisis. More than 1 million babies have been orphaned in Kenya alone. This ministry provides food, clothing, shelter, medical attention, and love for the babies with hopes of finding adoptive Christian Kenyan parents. "Like Jonah, we are all called by a compassionate God to a ministry of compassion in our world."<sup>114</sup>

#### The Role of World Gospel Mission, Kenya

The World Gospel Mission is an interdenominational Christian holiness missionary agency. Its headquarters is in Marion, Indiana, United States. It is evangelistic in method, Wesleyan in doctrine, cooperative with other evangelical agencies, and backed by an organized prayer network. It uses the faith mission approach, a mechanism that encourages missionaries and volunteers to be responsible for raising their own financial support with the help of the church's ministries departments. World Gospel Mission works with other organizations such as Churches of Christian Union, the Evangelical Methods Church, the Congregational Methodist Church, and the Methodist Protestant Church as an agent for sending foreign missionaries to the

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<sup>114</sup>. Bryan P. Stone, *Compassionate Ministry: Theological Foundations*, (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1996), xi.

field. It is also affiliated to the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, the Evangelical Fellowship of Missions Agencies, and Standards of Excellence in short term. “The biblical concept of church is grounded in diversity.”<sup>115</sup>

The World Gospel Mission as an organization of believers has an established belief system. First of all, there is a belief in the absolute authority of the Bible and in one God eternally existent in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is the belief in full humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ as the basis of faith in him and as essential for the salvation of all human souls; the presence and personal ministry of the Holy Spirit purifies and enables Christians to live holy lives. “Most Africans believe in a Supreme God who creates the universe though this entity may remain distant from creation.”<sup>116</sup> God created all humanity in his own image and likeness to reflect his glory. The church is the body of Christ made up of all who trust in him and obey him. Hence it is to worship God, reach those without Christ, and nurture them as believers. The belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of believers are promised to hope and eternal life. Eventually, Christ will return in power and glory.

The World Gospel Church has been ministering through preaching, teaching, and healing ministries. World Gospel Mission will assist in forming culturally relevant congregations composed of maturing disciples of Jesus Christ who will evangelize and reproduce themselves within their own cultures and across cultural boundaries. This is recorded in the Bible as, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who

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115. Orlando E. Costas, *The Church and its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World*, (Wheaton, Illinois, 1977), 168.

116. Molefi Kete Asante, Emeka Nwadiora, *Spear Master: An Introduction to African Religion*, (New York, University Press of America, Inc., 2007), 3.

will also be qualified to teach others”<sup>117</sup> (II Timothy 2:2); and “call believers to the deeper work of God in the human heart of being cleansed from all sin and filled with the Holy Spirit by faith (I Thessalonians 4:3). “Many of the older cultural configurations have become irrelevant, as lifestyles have changed and the movements of people have erased the long-established social alliances.”<sup>118</sup> This is exactly what the Africa Gospel Church has been doing and propagating for decades. Though much emphasis is on evangelism, World Gospel Mission does minister to the whole person through church planting, education, medical care, community health, and development. It has developed the Africa Gospel Church as a self-supporting and self-propagating church in own environs. It is mandated to build relationships and create an atmosphere where evangelism can take place. It is also helping in the establishment of local churches by training individuals in leadership and sending them out all over the world. Many people have witnessed the work of the World Gospel Mission in providing relief during times of hardships and meeting human needs while focused on evangelism.

World Gospel Mission offers primary, secondary, post-secondary, and vocational education in a Christian atmosphere to individuals to ensure personal future success by educating tomorrow’s church leaders through Bible schools, seminaries, universities, and extension programs. Missionaries involved in educational ministries know that knowledge is power. “As the church transitioned from the leadership and teaching of the apostles to those who would serve future generations of believers, their educational efforts began to take new form.”<sup>119</sup> The Kenya Field has a couple of established educational facilities like the Kenya Highlands

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117. II Tim. 2:2.

118. Stephen Belcher, *African Myths of Origin*, (Penguin Books, 2005), 179.

119. Michael J. Anthony, *Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the Twenty-first Century*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Publishing Group, 2001), 18.



Evangelical University, Kaboson Pastors Training College, and Tenwek School of Nursing.

“Education is as old as human consciousness.”<sup>120</sup>

WGM has helped Africa Gospel Church in reaching all areas of the world through diverse healthcare and medical training. It has been offering preventative community health programs to develop healthy lifestyles while treating, curing, and responding to the physical needs of a community. That is why they have expressed that "We treat, Jesus heals" is the motto of Tenwek Hospital. It also has been offering all individuals a way to serve in missions by using their God-given talents to support other missionaries. Many missionaries have been working behind the scenes on the field to ensure the success of all ministries.

### **Summary**

Generally speaking, the purpose of the World Gospel Mission and the Africa Gospel Church is to evangelize non-believers. These three areas ought to go hand in hand with each other. The church should not place all of its emphasis on evangelism and disregard the elements of edifying them. If a church focuses all its energy on the worship of God without the edification of believers, then it stagnates along the way as it grows and expands. There is a need to balance these purposes in order for the church and its pastoral leadership to be effective. “Just as every pastor and layperson has a calling, so does every church.”<sup>121</sup>

Acts 2:42 gives a clear statement about a clear purpose of the church. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and

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120. Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing our Story and Vision*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), 5.

121. N. Graham Standish, *Becoming a Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence and Power*, (Herndon, Virginia, The Alban Institute, 2005), 9.

prayer.”<sup>122</sup> Without doubt, the purposes/activities of the church should be teaching biblical doctrines, providing a place for fellowship of believers, observing the Lord’s Supper, and praying. These are the most valued spiritual ingredients that have been adopted by the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership. It has been to encourage and love one another in the body of Christ. Thus the purpose of the local churches may be summed up as follows.

Soul-winning and soul-building (Acts 20:28, 32)

Reaching/teaching the unsaved (Mathew 28:19-20, Acts 2:42)

Preaching (II Timothy 4:3, 3:16)

Evangelism: win and feed the lost (John 21:15-17, Acts 20:28)

Salvation for sinners (be Christ-like)

Ministry (Ephesians 4:12)

Christian service (I Corinthians 6:9-20, 3:22-25)

Another factor that has contributed to Africa Gospel Church having an effective pastoral leadership is the following and doing of the commission given to the whole body of Christ. This is to proclaim the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). This is what the church is all about. The church is called to be faithful in sharing the gospel through word and good deeds. Africa Gospel Church leadership have for years been practical in the sense of being a lighthouse in the community, pointing people toward our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is apparent that this church did engage its members in the business of promoting the gospel and preparing its membership to proclaim the gospel to the unreached people far and within their communities.

Finally, like any other church that is living in any corner of this global earth, Africa Gospel Church has a clear purpose of looking after the orphans and widows. This is the whole

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122. Ac. 2:42

truth as given in the book of James 1:27: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”<sup>123</sup> In other words, pastoral leadership in any church is considered effective if it so values the ministry to the needy. It does not mean only sharing the gospel, but also providing for physical needs as necessary. “Church leaders have a tendency to seize upon programs and organizational variations found in congregations they consider being successful.”<sup>124</sup> In addition, the church is to equip believers in Christ with the tools they need in order to work hard and overcome sin and remain as a blameless flock of God. This is only done by biblical teaching and Christian fellowship.

Regarding the purpose of church, Paul also gave an excellent illustration to believers in Corinth. “The church is God’s hand, mouth, and feet in this world.”<sup>125</sup> This is the body of Christ as recorded in I Corinthians 12:12-27 that, “We are to be the things that Jesus Christ would do if He were physically on earth. The church is to be Christian or rather Christ-like and Christ-following.”<sup>126</sup>

The purpose of the church is to cement the relationship between believers and non-believers. This is possible if the church is to place more emphasis on world evangelism (Matthew 28:19-20). The church should continue building relationships as the place for growth and spiritual edification of every believer. In other words, the church is the realm of spiritual fellowship. Hebrews 10:25 tells us, “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the

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123. Js. 1:27.

124. Joe S. Ellis, *The Church On Purpose: Key to Effective Church Leadership*, (Cincinnati, Ohio, Standard Publishing, 1982), 15.

125. I Corinthians 12:12.

126. I Cor. 12:14.

habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”<sup>127</sup> Not only is the church supposed to proclaim divine truth, but it also protects it as well. In the same regards the church is a place where strong leadership develops and matures. It is a place where true believers gather together for the purpose of worshipping God. Note also that the church is a most precious thing to Jesus Christ because he bought it with his own blood. “Today’s church must move outside the walls of the building and invade the community.”<sup>128</sup>

Therefore, the church is mandated to seek to learn and obey God’s word thus causing cultural, social, education, economic, political, and religious changes to happen. Solely, the church is to guard its proper Biblical teachings. II Timothy 2:1-2 says, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”<sup>129</sup>

The church is to discipline believers. Discipline is a crucial element when it comes to dealing with human sin in the church. The Bible reiterated that discipline of believers should be done in private. The reproof of believers is to make sure that they are growing strong in their spiritual lives and becoming more like Christ as they walk in intimate relationship with him. “And in the sense of leadership being reproductive, there is no person in either the Old or the New Testament who offers us a greater model of building one’s life into others for the cause of Christ than does this complex man - Paul from Tarsus.”<sup>130</sup> The church is subject to pastoral leadership (I Peter 5:1-3) with respect to shepherding the flock and proving to be examples to the

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127. Hebrews 10:25.

128. Ron Sylvia, *Starting New Churches on Purpose: Strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (Lake Forest, CA, Purpose Driven, 2006), 3.

130. Kenneth O. Gangel, *Lessons in the Leadership from the Bible* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 111.

flock of Christ. The saints are to assemble together in order to be equipped for the work of the ministry. The Law here is an unchanging aspect of God's purpose for the church.

Jesus summed up the commandment of the law and the preaching of the prophets in the word "love." "Relax in my presence, knowing that nothing can separate you from my love."<sup>131</sup> People are challenged to love God, love other people, and to serve them both. God bestowed upon Christians a greater motivation, greater power, greater confidence to live a life of love till the end of the ages. "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay our lives for our brothers, (I John 3:16)."<sup>132</sup> By exercising love for God and fellow men, the church of Christ will be a greater model of the life of Christ as well as a world changer. God is revealing a fellowship with man through Jesus Christ our Lord; hence, the church is to make men see that fellowship. "Wherever Jesus calls us to any task, He assumes responsibility to equip and prepare us for the task. If we follow him, yield to him, and cooperate with him, he will make us useful channels for his blessing, useful agents for his eternal plan."<sup>133</sup>

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131. Sarah Young, *Jesus Today: Experiencing Hope Through Presence*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Thomas Nelson, 2012), 4.

132. Ibid.

133. Ray Stedmann, *The Servant who Rules*, ed. James Denney, (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers, 2002), 45.

CHAPTER 3:  
STRATEGIC PASTORAL LEADERSHIP OF THE AFRICA GOSPEL CHURCH, KENYA

**What is Pastoral Leadership?**

Experts have defined the term pastor in so many ways. The most significant meaning is that a pastor is a Christian minister or priest who is endowed with the capability of being spiritually in charge over a congregation. Simply put, he is a shepherd of a certain group of people. This gives the understanding of the pastoral role is to lead people in the congregation into spiritual and emotional habits of growing in faith while going through the challenges of life. He is the one to uphold values, viewpoints, beliefs, communication, and compassion as he grows in experiences through leading a congregation to do the purposes of God promised in scripture. “Effectiveness in relationship and mutual communication goes down, and the need for someone to coach and lead the meetings goes up.”<sup>134</sup> He is playing an important role in the meaning of pastoral leadership by exercising spiritual guidance over his congregation. Here, “Leadership involves the ability to inspire and influence the thinking, attitudes, and behavior of people. Inspiring others to reach goals of common good – a service – is less frequent than influencing others to contribute to the leaders’ good.”<sup>135</sup>

Pastoral leadership is a great subject that has been theologically approached differently by church leadership and ministers the world over. As such, many believers have taken steps and made churches accessible to seekers. The Africa Gospel Church has a leadership style and well defined principles that are in line with such biblical heroes as Moses, David, Paul, and Jesus Christ. Moses, the servant of the Lord, served his father-in-law, Jethro. He took his wise counsel

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<sup>134</sup>. Wolfgang Simson, *Rediscover the Dynamic, Organic, Rational, Viral Community Jesus Started*, (Tyndale Publishing House, 2009), 4.

<sup>135</sup>. Jacobsen, 100.

and delegated tasks to his assistants (Exodus 18:24). Joshua is a perfect model of leadership for church leadership to emulate. David was courageous in the face of big obstacles but he inspired others to follow him. Paul also focused all his attention to mission (Acts 20:34-35). More importantly, Jesus carefully trained a team of twelve followers and used them to attract huge crowds. Africa Gospel Church leadership is based on biblical principles modeled by these biblical leaders. Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is based on Paul's pastoral guide to Timothy. Paul admonished Timothy to do his best in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The most qualifying factor to church leadership is the call to submit to God, to listen to His word, and to follow the leading of his Holy Spirit. "We need eternal reference points, God's word and God's will."<sup>136</sup>

This leadership is also characterized by followership. It is more than wise to follow than to lead. "In the other side of leadership, I identified as leaders those persons who believe they can and must make a difference in the church, their families, and their communities... and ... to do so following biblical principles."<sup>137</sup> Thus, Africa Gospel Church leadership is not separate from spiritual leadership. It is participatory leadership in the work of God of transforming the community of faith together as one body of leaders and followers. Shepherding has been developed as an imitative relationship that creates no barrier between the leaders and followers as a keen approach to doing the ministry. The best thing to do is to follow Christ's principle of casting vision and planning that the leaders may do well to think of the church as taking part in the ongoing story of redemption and Christian communion. The church has a lot of laid down

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136. Brian J. Dodd, *Empowered Church Leadership: Ministry in the Spirit According to Paul*, (Downers Grove, Illinois, Intervarsity Press, 2003), 10.

137. Eugene B. Habecker, *Leading with a Follower's Heart: Practicing Biblical Obedience and Humility in the Workplace* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990), 15.

goals and projects to be completed within the church. These have been deemed necessary for growing the church and its entire membership. Accordingly, one may bear witness of the fact that pastoral leadership is based on the Word of God and grounded in the diligent leadership of many anointed servant leaders.

Leaders do not look to the world for leadership insights. Instead, they look to God for spiritual direction and the Word of God from which they obtain significant Spirit-directed pastoral leadership. “For many Christians, connection to God takes the form of a strong personal relationship with Christ.”<sup>138</sup> The heart of church ministries within the Africa Gospel Church is likened to the way Christ brought back Peter into his service, most likely geared to showing the glad membership that God wants leaders, who know, confess, and sacrificially follow Christ. In this regard, leaders ought to consider their calling, the purpose of church, and the cross as they follow the way of downward mobility. As a strategy, the leadership of Africa Gospel Church has been effective for decades simply because it is built on three simple elements of being Christ-like. Leaders have been keen to lead by prayer, reading scripture, and giving spiritual direction. “As our relationship with God deepens and we learn to integrate our spiritual life and leadership more fully, we will begin to understand spiritual leadership in new ways.”<sup>139</sup>

The founding fathers understood the necessity of leading the church congregation through effective prayers to Almighty God, a strong theological reflection on scripture as well as authentic spiritual direction which involves confession and forgiveness. Leaders have lead many pastors who in turn have been able to help the priesthood of believers engage with the Holy Spirit and grow in Christ together. In addition, the pastors have followed suit in implementing

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138. Timothy C. Geoffrion, *The Spirit-Led Leaders: Nine Leadership Practices and Soul Principles*, (Herndon, VA, 2005), 8.

139. Ibid.



marketing insights, growth strategies, and vision statements, and by increasing corporate effectiveness.

### **Africa Gospel Church Leadership Development Strategy**

After looking at the lives and work of the Africa Gospel Church founding fathers, it is a high time to flash back and see how they designed the church leadership development strategy. The question could be how did they work and pass on their leadership legacy to other leaders and pastors who have risen up along the way and carried the mission and purpose of church to date? One aspect to note about how the former leaders developed the Africa Gospel Church leadership strategy is that they were more of mentors who loved Christ passionately and loved their people passionately. “It is not enough to simply manage the culture we operate within. For, while management acts within culture, leadership creates culture. In fact, our very approach to leadership shapes culture in profound ways.”<sup>140</sup>

With this insight of love and care, these leaders and pastors have been able to think strategically about the life, mission, and purpose of church. Both the former and the later Africa Gospel Church leadership are people who have been thinking strategically about developing other leaders in the church. All along they have been focused on leadership development through training. “We have the opportunity to become communities focused on Jesus and his mission.”<sup>141</sup> A greater emphasis on pastoral leadership is placed on the fact that young people who are called and spiritually endowed with leadership abilities should go to college to be theologically trained as leaders.

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<sup>140.</sup> J R Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture: Equipping the Church for the Sake of the World*, (Downers Grove, Illinois, IVP Books, 2012), 20.

<sup>141.</sup> Tim Chester and Steve Timmis, *Every Day Church: Gospel Communities on Mission*, (Wheaton, Illinois, 2012), 11.

Right now, the church owns two significant training institutions specifically established for training and equipping pastors for the work of ministry. The Kenya Highlands Evangelical University and Kaboson pastors' school stands as the two main centers for serving this purpose. The ideological heritage of educational instruction at the college dates back to 1932 when missionaries of World Gospel Mission saw the need for training their new converts. This instruction not only needed to cover biblical and ministry related subjects, but also teacher training. Teachers were prepared for the existing primary schools and preaching among the local communities. This has been a great ideal of thinking and developing a strategy for effective Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership as a transforming leadership.

Throughout their history, the Africa Gospel Church and World Gospel Mission have been responding to various needs of the church as well as the community by continuing their educational training programs. With much patience, prayer, and effort, Kenya Highlands Evangelical University has been upgraded to university status. This is a product of the educational programs maintained by Africa Gospel Church and World Gospel Mission. The goal is to remain faithful to scriptural truth and relevant to its culture of educational objectives of equipping students for ministry. The college management has always kept the fire of academic excellence and practical experiences burning.

There is enough reason to believe without doubt that Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership has continually been effective over the years because leaders are chosen for their ability to think well. "Strategic thinkers determine the most important long-term goals, and then develop plans to reach the goals."<sup>142</sup> In his outstanding book *Transformational Leadership: A New Model for Total Church Involvement*, Phillip V. Lewis wrote, "Strategic leadership is the

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142. Rawland Forman, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Miller. *The Leadership Baton: An Intentional Strategy for Developing Leaders in Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 61.

formulation, implementation, and evaluation of actions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives. This process is an unbiased, systematic approach to making major decisions under uncertain conditions. Strategic leadership deals with a changing world and evaluates the structure and processes of the church accordingly.”<sup>143</sup>

Africa Gospel Church has the possibility of cultivating a leadership development culture. In fact, within this third chapter, some of the most important factors of a local church will be discussed. In essence, the pastoral leadership of Africa Gospel Church is effective because leaders value the local church as central in developing other leaders. The most driving goal of the entire denomination is to develop and produce more Christ-like servant leaders. These are leaders who are full of wisdom, spirit-led leaders of good character, and skilled leaders who are also willing to function according to their calling. “By God’s grace, we want to produce wise leaders who are sound in their knowledge of God’s word and His world, strong in character and compassion, and skillful in ministry and mission.”<sup>144</sup>

In Titus 1:9, Paul assured Titus that church leaders had to hold firmly to the message so they could encourage others by sound doctrine and refuse those who oppose it. Leadership development must include those leaders who are already in positions and those who are aspiring to grow in their knowledge of God and His word. Leaders also should be developed based on their influence. Influential leaders are those who are in touch with the Holy Spirit of God and have a wide knowledge of the Word of God. Paul also said in I Timothy 4:7-8, “Train you to be

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143. Phillip V. Lewis. *Transformational Leadership: A New Model for Total Church Involvement* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 34.

144. Forman, 62.

godly. For physical training is for some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”<sup>145</sup>

As a strategy may be effective, leadership development should involve servant leaders who are also able to equip others. These are the words of Jesus Christ in Mark 10:42-44, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be the first must be slave of all.”<sup>146</sup> With this thought in mind, the pastoral leadership of Africa Gospel Church is indeed effective because of her Christ-like leaders who are primarily servants.

Africa Gospel Church leadership development strategy has seen leaders equipped in their whole life context. In other words, it is good to understand that it is God who is developing leaders for the church. As Christ promised at his ascension that God’s Holy Spirit was to come upon his disciples, the same Spirit is still acting as a guide to the church. The Africa Gospel Church leadership believes that the Holy Spirit of God is the one helping to train, shape, and mold them and others as spiritual leaders.

One of the vital goals of Africa Gospel Church Leadership development strategy is the training of personnel on biblical wisdom. Its private university offers courses that encourage theological reflection as an essential component in leadership development. Developing leadership is by wisely combining a strategy and character of good leadership. If one must be without wisdom, then he must be without a strategy.

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145. I Timothy 4:7.

146. Mark 10:42-44.

The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is effective when it comes to dealing with the surrounding communities. The church has seen much success in evangelism and church planting by reaching, teaching the Word of God, and providing other social services to different communities. Jesus Christ modeled relational learning by teaching His twelve disciples. “I realized that Christians have more in Jesus than just a great spiritual leader; we have a practical and effective leadership model for all organizations, people and situations.”<sup>147</sup> Africa Gospel Church has for many years strongly upheld the art of teaching and learning among its congregation and communities at its reach. The Theological Education by Extension is one of the best educational programs the church leadership has used for many years to reach and train many pastors and leaders on the Bible.

The Africa Gospel Church leadership development strategy involves strategic people. Most of all, those who are in top leadership position are able to identify key groups of young men and women to be trained as effective servant leaders in different ministries. “Who are the most committed leaders in our church, and how will we develop them? It is strategic because many churches take their leaders for granted and easily adopt a haphazard approach to leadership development.”<sup>148</sup> Consider the Africa Gospel Church leadership hierarchy and you will see a strategized leadership format. The top chair at the Central Office is for the Bishop. The Bishop works with the Assistant Bishop, Administrative Secretary, and heads of Departments. The shape of the leadership pyramid grows downwards from the Central Office to the newly launched Africa Gospel Church Regions, Areas, Districts, and local churches. This is a strategic chain of leadership that has made Africa Gospel Church’s pastoral leadership unique and effective to

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147. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming your Heart, Head, Hands, and Habits*, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2003), 10.

148. Forman, 68.

date. The church leadership dream has been to rise up thousands of wise leaders - men and women who can think about and shoulder the issues facing the church, communities and the government of Kenya. “If the first converts are taught to depend upon the missionary, if all work, evangelistic, educational, social is concentrated in his hands, the infant community learns to rest passively upon the man from whom they received their first insight into the gospel.”<sup>149</sup>

### **Effective Pastoral Leadership Strategies for Church Growth and Socio-Economic Development of Africa Gospel Church**

Perhaps the best question to ask pertains to what the word “strategy” means to church leadership, pastors, and all the set apart members of the body of Christ. The term strategy simply means a plan of action, means, or set up policy for achieving a major aim within an organization. It is actually the direction and the extent to which an organization can stretch in order to meet the needs of its beneficiaries. A strategy is a tool that drives an organization to achieving both its short-term or long-term goals and expectations. In other words, it is answering the question about where the organization is trying to get within a given period of time. It is a summary of activities that the organization should be involved so as to bring sound successes to its own membership. “Strategic Church will help pastors and leaders refocus on visioning and building a faith community that is biblically based and spiritually transformative, helping people become fruitful Disciples of Christ.”<sup>150</sup>

Basically, a strategy is also the means of putting together the necessary resources which may include but are not limited to skills, assets, finances, relationships, facilities, personnel, and

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149. Ronald Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), 81.

150. Frank Damazio, *Strategic Church: A Life Changing Church in an Ever Changing Culture* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2012), 9.

much more. It is counting on the values and expectations of leaders with powers in and around the daily life of an existing organization. The Africa Gospel Church is an organization like any other business entity. The three levels of strategies that exist within any business organization in the world are also potentially application within the church of Christ.

The most suggested levels that any strategy is based upon may include corporate strategy; this is a strategy that is concerned with the overall purpose or the extent to which any organization may reach in order to meet the expectations of the people involved. The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is centered in the same strategy as is summed up in its mission statement. “Readers will uncover principles from the church Jesus built and find out how to apply these strategies to their local context. Strategic Church offers road-tested tools and proven principles for building a life-changing church in a complex culture.”<sup>151</sup> The unit strategy is supposedly concerned with how the Africa Gospel Church has been able to compete with other denominations all over the country. This is how it deals with ministries like evangelism and crusades, education, missions, outreaches, media, and men’s and women’s ministries. The church is currently striving to reach some of the big urban areas in the country with an aim of establishing urban churches. Last but not least, in the business world there is also an operational strategy which gathers for the real organization of business. This focuses on bringing resources, processes, and people into one unit in order to deliver good services to customers.

So to talk about the Africa Gospel Church as an organization endowed with effective pastoral strategies, an observer may need to look into how leaders have been managing these strategies. Are these strategies biblical in the first place? “Purpose driven churches are growing

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151. Damazio, 11.

churches because they have growing leaders.”<sup>152</sup> How has the church leadership been able to effectively carry out its plans for achieving a vision and gain a recognized position of influence? In the past five decades, Africa Gospel Church pastors have been seeking to participate in effective pastoral leadership in both rural and urban churches. They have worked so hard in running the leadership of the church by focusing on nurturing the different roles and responsibilities of members in different functions. They are quite involved with committees and boards which are meant to provide their membership with spiritual leadership necessary for church growth and expansion. “Missions have run farms and agricultural institutions. They have developed industrial schools and taught every kind of handicraft.”<sup>153</sup> Pastors have turned every available resource they might find to enable them to be more effective leaders in developing the entire denominations of Africa Gospel Church. Their hard work does not render it a smooth pastoral leadership trend.

The church has come through a widespread perception of a lack of leadership at a certain point in time since its inception. However, leaders as well as pastors have been patient and faithful enough to keep the rock of leadership rolling. Many of them have taken steps toward a continued learning of leadership skills and strategies in order to become more effective leaders in directing the affairs of the church. Like any other denomination, Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership must be effective. One value of this fact is a thorough understanding of scripture. “The church belongs to Christ, He is the builder of the church; He is the one who must be given credit for all true church growth.”<sup>154</sup> No meeting or event can be done without the reading of

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152. Sylvia, 179.

153. Stephen Neill, *A History of Missions*, (Penguin Books, 1975), 255.

154. Joseph Wall and Gene Getz, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000), 5.



scripture. The application and proper implementation of scriptural principles is one of the spiritual leadership elements that have formed the basis of the general pastoral leadership effectiveness. Subjects on leadership, administration, management, and stewardship have been taught at all leadership levels from the local church setting to the central office. These subjects are not just functional ideas, but they are also the most significant ingredients for foundational support of effective pastoral leadership of Africa Gospel Church.

One can automatically lend support to effective leadership of Africa Gospel Church by agreeing with the fact that it is authoritative. Leadership is the core of pastoral ministry in every denomination worldwide. As such, it should not be dictatorial. The central mission of Africa Gospel Church is to preach Christ and win more lost souls to him from any corner of the world. Right now its pastoral leadership and management are expanding its scope by opening up churches in Kenya's neighboring countries like Uganda, Burundi, Sudan, and Tanzania. The leadership of Africa Gospel Church is actually using the authority of scripture and following the command of the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by taking the message of the cross to the ends of the earth. This is a clear indication that leaders and pastors know what they are doing, where they are going, and why. "Christianity has made more converts in Black Africa than in all the rest of the world combined."<sup>155</sup> Christ is the church's chief shepherd and the authority over it. Here is what Paul said about authoritative leadership in Romans 12:8: "If it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."<sup>156</sup>

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155. J. Herbert Kane, *A Concise History of the Christian World Missions: A Panoramic View of Missions from Pentecost to the Present*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1978), 139.

156. Rom. 12:8.

The work of leading the flock of the Lord requires a serious purpose. Secondly, the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is effective because it is spiritual. Some pastors have skills and a lot of experience in ministry. Both of these elements are important in addition to the essential qualities of being spirit-filled and spirit-led. The spiritual life of the entire Africa Gospel Church depends upon the spiritual life of its leaders and pastors. Note that these leaders are ministers of Christ whose ministry ought to be centered in his person and his work. They are keen shepherds of local churches, and they rely on God as the ultimate source of power they need for doing the ministry. Pastors and leaders have led the congregation with love as the spiritual driving power in the church. In Acts 20:28 is found a tremendous biblical exhortation to church leaders: “Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”<sup>157</sup> In other words, pastors and leaders need to take heed to themselves before they take heed of their fellow men. This is indeed a high standard of serving other people.

The third element that characterizes the pastoral leadership of Africa Gospel Church as effective is sacrificial leadership. This began with the first missionaries who came to Kenya and helped in the establishment of churches countrywide. “The African personnel made a significant contribution to the work of gospel proclamation and church planting.”<sup>158</sup> They sacrificed a lot of what they had, including their lives. Since the birth of Africa Gospel Church, leaders have come to take over positions and led sacrificially. Local missionaries can attest to this true fact, that mission work is not easy. The stories they have related are all about dangers, hunger, diseases, and many hardships in the mission fields.

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157. Ac. 20:28.

158. Martin I. Klauber & Scott M. Manetsch, *The Great Commission: Evangelicals and the World Missions*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 167.

However, despite any kind of hardship they face, pastors and people have recognized that they are serving among different ethnic communities in God-given positions. Mission work and evangelism go hand-in-hand with poured sacrifices. Pastoral leadership within the Africa Gospel Church is not without accountability. The whole hierarchy of leadership in this church is accountable to God and to other believers. Accountability is the permanent mark in the life of every Christian leader. When the first missionaries left the work of leading the church in the hands of indigenous leaders, they too have remained justified, sanctified, and faithful to the call to minister to the needy. Most of them have remained effective in ministry and have stood in many corners of the country and tell of the good news of Jesus Christ to the lost. “Everything the church does is a vision-driven, values-endowed endeavor, whether or not its leaders know it.”<sup>159</sup> From the time of the founding fathers, the work of ministry has been passed on to the ever growing generations who have carried it up to today. The gospel has been presented with simplicity and clarity; hence, the general pastoral leadership has been rendered as effective. Good leaders have delegated the work to the hands of young leaders; they have equipped others for ministry through training in biblical principles.

Effective pastoral leadership is evident by the leaders’ hearts of warmth and encouragement. Africa Gospel Church leaders see the best in other growing leaders, pastors and congregation. Encouragement is an element of leadership that builds confidence in others who are aspiring to be leaders. Coupled with encouragement is the idea that leadership involves and revolves around a team of keen facilitators. Most of the good pastors of this church are gifted workers serving together for the sake of doing a blessed ministry.

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159. Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson, *Building a Life-Changing Small Group Ministry: A Strategic Guide for Leading Group Life in Your Church (Groups that Grow)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 24.

As a result, people have been coming to faith in Christ and growing in their Christian maturity and being incorporated into the church. For any organization to flourish with effective leadership there must be well-defined goals. Goal-setting is very crucial when it comes to dealing with effective pastoral leadership. Goals should always be specific, attainable, measurable, and numerically few. Properly set-up goals are essential for good leadership, health, and growth of any church.

Coupled with the above factors is the element of innovation. Some of the effective pastors within the Africa Gospel Church are naturally creative innovators. Many have dreamed and put their dreams in actions. Churches have grown in terms of congregation, numbers of local churches, and structured buildings. A recent survey may show that a few local church congregations are worshipping under trees or in schools. These pastors believe that there is a better way of running the church in order to achieve growth. Some of them have stayed on long pastorates and have grown their churches to greater levels. “A second motive prominent in the history of missions is the desire for the salvation of man.”<sup>160</sup> Africa Gospel Church pastors hold yearly leadership conferences. The purpose of these annual meetings is to refresh and refuel them on ways to make their pastoral leadership as effective as possible. They understand the truth about leadership that it is a way of getting things done with and through others of the same mind and interest. The pastors embrace the fact that they are leaders of other leaders.

Leadership is a gift from God, but it can be expressed in many ways. These leaders understand themselves, their co-leaders, their groups, and the general congregation. Today if you go on Facebook, you can see pictures of both top leaders and pastors teaming up together and working together and uplifting each other. “A theology of hard work is founded on Jesus’

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160. Alfred DeWitt Mason D. D., *Outline of Missionary History*, (Hodder & Stoughton, New York, George H. Doran Company, 1916), 10.

acknowledgement of the role of hard work in preparing for a harvest.”<sup>161</sup> They always come together in order to assess the climate of the whole church and readiness for growth. What matters most is the fact that the top leadership knows the gifts, limitations, and responsibilities of the fellow servant pastors. Freedom to do what is right is what they mostly cherish, and that is why they are always available as motivators.

Effective pastoral leadership strategies must be mission-oriented. There is nothing so significant in leadership than to understand the needs of the people you are leading. These clarify the goodness of having dependence or independence, love or belongingness, self-esteem and self-actualization. It is making sure that every participant in leadership is enjoying the benefits of being part and parcel of each other. The overall mission of the church is to win souls for Christ through evangelism strategies. “To participate in the mission of God is to announce the good news of the kingdom.”<sup>162</sup> This is the mission of being compassionate as well as doing the work of justice. The most important role of leaders and pastors on the same mission is to be role models in nurturing others. In his 121 page book, Ken Blanchard had this in mind, “All great leaders have a specific leadership point of view that defines how they see their role and their relationships to those they seek to influence.”<sup>163</sup> Their primary task is to grow the people by means of example and exhortation. This may be seen by viewing I Peter 5:3, I Timothy 4:11-12, and Titus 2:7 consecutively.

Pastoral leadership strategies also involve and revolve around good organization. Africa Gospel Church is not the only organization having been frustrated with the problem of

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161. Beth Snodderly and A. Scott Moreau, *Evangelical and Frontier Mission: Perspective on the Global Progress of the Gospel*, (Eugene, Oregon, WIPF & STOCK, 2011), 114.

162. James A. Scherer, Stephen B. Bevans, *New Directions in Missions and Evangelism 2: Theological Foundations*, (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1994), 8.

163. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming Your Heart, Head, Hands, and Habits* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 43.

organization. Leaders as well as pastors have been looking for administrators to man the existing offices and run the affairs of church. Prayer, preaching, and planning are key ingredients of good governorship in this church. The founding fathers worked administratively with most of the foreign missionaries in ensuring that the local congregation is taught the Lord's statutes, intercession, and some are appointed co-judges. Administration is learning and doing the art of delegating ministry to those who are endowed with different capabilities. Jesus delegated some of his ministry responsibilities to his disciples. The apostles appointed helpers so they could remain and be devoted to prayer and the ministry of the word.

Good leaders are good planners who ought to know their goals and ways and means of getting them accomplished. Pastors ought to be well qualified for their calling. Academic qualifications are important; Moses and Paul were educated people. However, spiritual and moral qualities of pastors are important as well. All should be striving for righteousness, goodness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness as they run the race of faith. First Timothy 6:11-12 says this: "But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."<sup>164</sup>

Effective pastoral leadership strategy of the Africa Gospel Church is also based on a sound theology. This is clear ordination for ministry. Note that the whole church is pastoral, priestly, and prophetic. This kind of leadership is a special gift from God to the church. Theologies and ordination for ministry may vary but the core life of the church is the ministry of the word. "Christian faith can never be satisfied with a theology of hope that is purely

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164. I Tim. 6:11-12.

attitudinal, abstract, or doctrinal.”<sup>165</sup> To better implement a good theology of church, Africa Gospel Church has since established a theological university, Kenya Highlands Evangelical University, formerly Kenya Highlands Bible College. The main purpose of this institution is to train and produce young men and women who are able to lead the church in to the future by teaching the correct doctrines. Great men and women with vision have gone through this school and have been able to give themselves to the big idea about the shape of Africa Gospel Church. It therefore suffices to say that the individuals and their communities serving God in rural or urban local churches understand the essence of all they do. “Christian stewardship is not something we do, but something we become.”<sup>166</sup> The writer of this thesis project is himself proud to be a product of this wonderful Christian institution.

The effective pastoral leadership of Africa Gospel Church has so far made a lot of recognizable differences among different individual communities. Effective pastors and leaders are focused on developing, coaching and mentoring each other and have enabled lay leadership to improve their performances. These are the pastors who have kept on propelling the local churches to set up and achieve important goals and inspired the congregation through preaching and teaching of the Word of God. They developed a group of lay leaders who are increasingly effective at helping the congregation stay focused on doing the will of God and fulfilling the mission of Christ. “God has placed in us a calling to ministry. It is the calling that gives focus, direction, and purpose.”<sup>167</sup> This is the art of empowering the laity as partners in leadership through coaching and mentoring for the sake of having a strong base of leaders in a

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165. Walter Brueggeman, *Hope for the World: Mission in a Global Context*, (Louisville, London, Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 8.

166. Jonathan J. Bonk, *Missions and Money: Affluence as a Western Missionary Problem*, (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2005), 131.

167. David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship: Biblical Principles for Worship-Based Evangelism*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Group, 2011), 45.

congregation. Again AGC leaders and pastors have severally used their relationships and pulpits to encourage people toward changes that have resulted in mission effectiveness.

### **Effective Pastoral Leadership Factors of the Africa Gospel Church**

The question to ponder here is; what does the effective leadership of the Africa Gospel Church look like? This question could be addressed from the light of how this leadership works and on whether people really know that they are being effectively led. Generally speaking, Africa Gospel Church leadership focuses on the relationship between the congregation being led and the leaders who are leading them. “The Local church has a similar role as the home team in the game of missions. It is where enthusiasm and loyalty to world evangelization is generated.”<sup>168</sup> This leadership is a process of helping the congregation to fit into corporate Christian life practices that shape them to live a Christ-like life. Emphasis to this fact is affirmed in the New Testament that the task of ministry is the duty of all believers in Christ. In other words, the ministry of the church is the ministry of Christ. The Africa Gospel Church leadership is essentially the same in all places at all times. The main purpose of leaders in this church is to help people live the Christian life and do the will of God effectively. The core of this church’s leadership is the role of ministry context based on history, setting, relationship, culture, and community values in which it is being exercised.

The most common ideas, feelings, and values are the elements that guide personal behavior of the communities reached by the church. God is presented to them with respect to their cultural aspects. Christianity is not there to destroy the culture of a people receiving the message of the Gospel of Christ, but it is to strengthen itself and have an influence in the culture

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<sup>168</sup>. Tom Telford with Lois Shaw, *Missions in the 21ST Century: Getting Your Church into the Game*, (Wheaton, Illinois, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1998), 26.



of the people. Thus effective leaders do understand that culture functions in powerful ways in any group and its aspects must be respected without compromising the gospel.

The pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church has been effective in the sense that leaders understand that the whole ministry of Jesus Christ is cross-cultural. “It believes in Discipleship”<sup>169</sup> With this truth in mind, this church has ventured into different locations and reached people of different cultural beliefs and dialects. It has gone as far as reaching the unreached in Kenya’s neighboring countries like Uganda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Burundi. Its pastoral leadership is culturally sensitive and responsive to meeting the needs of different communities, races, ethnic groups, nations, regions, and socio-economic classes within and outside Kenya. Effective leadership is mostly taking place in situations where leaders portray trusted characteristics. “We are to love the church and we are to be faithful to the head of the church”<sup>170</sup>

Both the former and the current leaders of Church developed a significant element of trust before their congregations. They have led the church throughout decades with the conviction that the purpose and the vision of the church is the heart of the gospel of Christ. They have also led the congregation with clear competencies. Competencies in the current pastors and leaders have helped the congregation to function in a healthy system and productive ways. They have also worked joyfully with all the young and the old, poor and rich, tribes and races in respect to the purpose of God. This sums up the character of leaders as emulating the character of Christ and able to produce good morals that are crucial to the leaders’ effectiveness. This should check leaders’ effectiveness in terms of honesty, integrity, fairness, compassion, prayer life, and total dependence on God for strength and guidance.

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169. Donahue, 2.

170. Jerry Vines, *Wanted Church Growers*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman Press, 1990), 69.

The idea of leadership competencies draws attention of many observers as an essential transition from a faithful rule to an effective rule. The early established rule rewarded competence and passed the baton of faithful pastoral leadership to today's effective leaders. The young and energetic leaders in church leadership positions are as effective as they ought to be as far as getting things done at the right time and in the right way. Competence is but a leader's track record and ability to get things done. Here skills and experiences come into play when it comes to leaders at the top position humbling themselves down to the level at which they can work with other leaders.

### **Africa Gospel Church Leaders are Good Shepherds**

The term "shepherd" is found John 10:1-21, in which passage Jesus is depicted as the Good Shepherd who lies down his life for the sheep. The same imagery is recorded in Psalms 23. A picture of a good shepherd taking care of the sheep and not letting any of them get lost is painted here in the scriptures. The context of this term is that Jesus was a divine being and was God watching over his people. Images of a good shepherd often include a sheep on his shoulders, and thus John 10:11-21 says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who doesn't own the sheep, sees the wolf coming, leaves the sheep, and flees. The wolf snatches the sheep, and scatters them. The hired hand flees because he is a hired hand, and doesn't care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and I'm known by my own; even as the Father knows me, and I know the Father."<sup>171</sup>

The good shepherds of the church's pastoral leadership are effective and progressive evangelicals who are shouldering the role of stewardship throughout the entire church. "Of

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<sup>171</sup> Jn. 10:11-12.

course the church exists for worship and education and fellowship among members”<sup>172</sup> They have followed a sound Christian tradition about the stewardship of time, talents, and material in utilizing and managing all resources God provides for the glory and the betterment of all the believers in Jesus Christ. They deserve credit for managing everything that God has blessed them with into the believers’ lives in a manner that honors and brings glory to God. The rule of thumb is to understand that God is the owner of everything that man may own and for which he cares. Stewardship can also be understood as God’s holiness as found in Genesis 1:2, Psalms 104 and 113, I Chronicles 29:10-20, Colossians 1:16, and Revelation 1:8. Hence they are following the principles of servant leadership. These are as summarized below.

There are numerous principles of servant leadership. The art of listening is one aspect for which the church leaders have been valued, for communication and decision making skills. Empathy comes second as a principle for servant leadership. “Visions have their own authority. True visions from God don’t need to be pushed into reality. They have their own power. They just need to be shared.”<sup>173</sup> The Africa Gospel Church as servant leaders has had the opportunity to understand and empathize with others. Simply put, people need to be accepted and recognized for their special spirit of contribution into the body of Christ.

Servant leaders of the Africa Gospel Church have learned a great deal of the healing power of oneself and others. These are men and women who are driven by passion to do immeasurable things in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Their foresight is a characteristic which has enabled them to understand lessons from the past, the present, and those relating to their future.

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172. John R. Wilkins, *The Christian Mission Today*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1960), 42.

173. David Hansen, *The Heart of Pastoring: Ministry Without all the Answer*, (Downers Grove, Illinois, Intervarsity Press, 1994), 150.

Great servant leaders have always been great stewards of the flock and the things of God. They are also committed to the growth of the people of God regardless of their tribe or location. This is to produce yet more spiritual persons and continue to build reachable communities.

The Africa Gospel Church leaders have applied the term in several instances as a Christian responsibility which Christians have used in maintaining the gifts that God has bestowed them. Men and women of God are the ones to continue the work of creation, redemption, and satisfaction of all the sheep under their care. The Lord said to Moses on Mount Sinai in Leviticus 1:1-5, “Speak to the Israelites and say to them, “When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath to the Lord. For six years you sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. But in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to the LORD.”<sup>174</sup>

Stewardship has done many important things for the church. There is much in the Gospels that helps us understand the concept of Christian stewardship. Stewardship offers a way to invite all people to become more aware of Jesus Christ, his example, and how through stewardship all can become authentic Disciples of Christ. Through commitments of talent, treasure, and time, people will discover that they grow spiritually and that their faith is deepened. As this conversion begins, the church becomes an active center of ministry supported with resources of people educated in the faith and giving, not out of obligation, but out of appreciation for God’s grace in their lives. A church is the place where people experience their faith. The local church is more than just a building. It is a community of faith and action where you can see the face of Jesus in the face of a neighbor. “Unless Christians make a conscious effort to create

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174. Leviticus 1:1-5

programs that will appeal to unbelievers, they naturally default to designing events that reflect their own taste.”<sup>175</sup>

Conversion takes time and constant opportunities to grow in faith. Stewardship is a ministry of hope and of faith that requires work, prayer, and understanding to make it succeed. Through it, all can become even better stewards of the church and help lead and prepare all people to accept and embrace a greater role in their church, country, and world. Together, the church will endeavor to continue the mission of Jesus Christ and grow closer to the example he provides. Together, through stewardship, all must be challenged to embark on an intense but rewarding initiative to bring a renewed vitality to the church and its ministries. The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership takes stewardship of all things as one of the elements that contribute to church growth. “The gospel starts by teaching us that we, as creatures, are absolutely dependent on God, and the He, as creator, has the ultimate claim of us...”<sup>176</sup> As such, environmental stewardship is very crucial. It teaches leaders, pastors, and the general congregation to be responsible in protecting and using the most available natural resources with regards to man dealing with land, animals, and plants.

Coupled with environmental protection, the leadership also cares about lives of other people. Owing to the fact that many people in Africa and the rest of the world have been either infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, Africa Gospel Church in collaboration with World Gospel Mission has made progress in preserving lives of young children and infants without parents. In most cases, families in Kenya have either lost a husband or wife through HIV/AIDS. Poverty and disease are epidemic in Kenya and leave in their wake poverty-stricken and dying children.

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175. Lee Strobel, *Inside the Mind of Unchurched: How to Reach Friends and Family Who Avoid God and the Church*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 1993), 161.

176. R. Alan Street, *The Effective Invitation*, (Old Tappan, New Jersey, 1979), 27.

“Everything has been corrupted by the fall and God cares about all of it. Redemption on this scale is going to involve more than preachers and pastors.”<sup>177</sup> That is the reason the church has taken the initiative of caring for orphaned children by establishing the Africa Gospel Church Baby Center for such destitute, innocent, and helpless children. This is a God-given stewardship system of caring for the need, thus rendering the church pastoral leadership as effective relative to stewardship.

The Baby Center is indeed a ministry intended to change the future of Kenyan children, families, churches, and the society for a better life. This center is located outside Nakuru and is being run by these two organizations. With this valuable idea in mind, the church now is seeking to mature and grow in the work of the kingdom as it reaches out to help deal with one of the national problems. It also would lead to opening up greater opportunities for growth and long-term investment in the future of the church and the people of Kenya. It will also increase community and national awareness of the work of stewardship by the church serving as a commissioned body of believers to reach the lost for Christ. “Of course it knows you. Like Jesus said He knew His sheep, and they know Him.”<sup>178</sup>

In fact, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General highlighted health stewardship as a new concept geared to setting and enforcing rules and providing strategic direction for anybody who is involved. Like the Africa Gospel Church and the World Gospel Mission, W.H.O has defined one of its functions as the management and responsibility of taking care of other people’s well-being. It means that healthy people would contribute to the society in

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177. Bob Roberts, Jr. *Real-Time-Connections: Linking Your Job to God’s Global Work*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, 2010), 124.

178. Mrs. Hermann Bosch, *The Good Shepherd and His Little Lamb Study Edition: A First Communion Story-Primer* (Bessemer, MI: Biblio Resource Publications, 2010), 17

a positive way. Hence, the government, ministry of health, and the church ought to be able to take a large part of the stewardship of health systems within and without various communities.

In collaboration with the World Gospel Mission, the Africa Gospel Church leaders have shown the heart of a shepherd in the manner in which it has been taking care of its personnel laboring together in ministry. All understand that the work is the Lord's. Many pastors and leaders in various positions have been theologically trained at the church's private university, its pastors' school, or any other institution meeting the necessary qualifications as required by the church jobs. Personnel training and development is a crucial field which is concerned with organization of activities aimed at bettering the performance of leaders in pastoral settings. This is a system of providing training, education, and development of all the servants of the Lord down the line from the top. Those who are currently serving from the top seat of the Bishop to the local church pastor have received some kind of biblical training. In other words, the church has adopted this strategy of training and equipping of personnel in order to develop them to be capable of doing ministry as evangelists, pastors, teachers, administrators, educators, preachers, and many more. What this does when it comes to shepherding personnel, is that the idea of feeding the flock as was introduced by Jesus Christ might be applicable in the church. This is feeding leaders and pastors with knowledge of the Word of God so that they are deemed qualified to carry on the ministry of the church.

### **The Importance of the Local Church**

According to Mark Driscoll's definition of a local church, Bryan Barley wrote it down as, "The local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. In obedience to Scripture they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe the biblical sacraments of baptism and communion, are unified by the

Spirit, are disciplined for holiness, and scatter to fulfill the great commandment and the great commission as missionaries to the world for God's glory and their joy."<sup>179</sup>

One of the most effective Africa Gospel Church strategies of Pastoral Leadership is the way the local church was defined and designed. During the initial stages of the church, the founding fathers, together with the pioneering missionaries, had to meet people where they were located. They went to each location administered by a local chief or headman and requested permission to be allowed to have a place where they could come and meet with the indigenous people. They called these meeting places "outstations," each some kilometer away from the others. First they chose twelve elders as the earliest national church leaders. "This pattern of having a group of elders was followed by other missions in Kenya also. It was a sound, workable way to conduct the affairs relative to the church."<sup>180</sup>

The twelve elders of Africa Gospel Church were in operation before the missionaries entered Sot. They were under Johana A. Ngetich and were standing behind him in the work of the outstations. One elder by the name of Elijah A. Busien became very burdened for a location in 1940. This location had long remained closed to the gospel, for approximately five thousand people. "God radically transformed Dan's life, and he soon was involved in the life of our church. His zeal and enthusiasm for Christ were infectious; he just could not get enough."<sup>181</sup> Elijah dared go there to preach the gospel. While they were in a meeting with the other elders, a missionary by the name of Bob Smith asked Elijah A. Busien to take off his shirt. He did not

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179. Bryan Barley, "Mark Driscoll's Definition of a Local Church," aGCb // Gospel, Biblical Theology & SEC football, entry posted January 26, 2009, <http://bryanbarley.wordpress.com/2009/01/26/mark-driscolls-definition-of-a-local-church/> (accessed November 27, 2012).

180. Fish. 162.

181. Terry Wardle, *One to One: A Practical Guide to Friendship Evangelism*, (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, Christian Publications, 1984), 25.



want to take it off, but when he agreed to do it, there were several cuts across his back. Bob Smith asked him what had happened and he explained that a tribal retainer had beaten him across his back after he finished speaking. “The chief does not want you to come here. You have no right to come here without permission. If you come back next Sunday, I will beat you again.”<sup>182</sup> Before he left he told the people to come back again the following Sunday. Elijah A. Busien went back to preach four more times, and he was beaten each time. Elijah did not tell the missionary, Bob Smith, about what was going on because “We suffer for Christ.”<sup>183</sup> Bob Smith later told his congregation that there was a chief who did not want the gospel to get to his location. They prayed right at that minute and within a few days, the chief, Arap Katam, was moved to another location. That was when the location was opened to the gospel. Thereafter, many other geographical locations were opened up to the gospel. Nobody can quickly tell how many local churches have been established since the birth of the Africa Gospel Church. This brings home the point that every human event has a starting point, setbacks, and steps to move forward. The purpose of a local church is to serve as a public place for worshipping God, edification of the saints, and spreading the gospel to the lost.

The local churches have retained the purpose of having a local church as a meeting place, a place for corporate discipline of believers, as well as a place where pastors, elders, and leaders render their services to one living God. “The world, as we see it, is a battlefield at every level-political, moral, mental, and spiritual-with many strongholds to be stormed.”<sup>184</sup> Many ordinances are practiced at the local church also. The leadership does understand the importance

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182. Ibid., 165.

183. Ibid.

184. Edward Rommen, Ed., *Spiritual Power and Missions: Raising the Issues*, (Pasadena, CA, William Carey Library, 1995), 137.

of its local churches to all of its believers. The strategy of taking the message of the gospel to a local church has been a workable one. It has been very effective to the extent that many local churches have been planted close to each other, meaning that many congregations have been formed within smaller circles. The most significant belief is that it is Christ who establishes the local church and he has said to the members and those of other denominations that the scriptures are given by God to instruct them: “They teach us doctrine, reproof, correction and righteousness that we might be fully equipped to do the works of God” (II Timothy 3:16).<sup>185</sup>

Christ established the local church for his Disciples or those who trust in him as Lord and Savior for such reasons as follow.

a. To edify believers (build up) in the faith by effective leaders and teachers (Ephesians 4:11-13).

b. God also uses the local church as a training ground to teach new both new and old believers the Word of God.

c. A local church is a meeting place where all the children of God gather together for worship and giving tithes and offerings to the Lord toward the support of the local church ministries and missions (Acts 4:32-37, I Corinthians 8:1-6, 9:6-15; Philippians 4:15-19).

“Mission is: loving God and loving neighbor or glorifying God and enjoying him forever”<sup>186</sup>

d. The local church is a place where all believers come together to pray and work for the Lord. The local church sends missionaries (Acts 11:19-30, 13:1-3).

e. People will belong to the family of God where they carry the purposes of God.

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185. II Tim. 3:16

186. Kevin Deyoung & Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church: Making Sense of the Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission*, (Wheaton, Illinois, Crossway, 2011), 16.

f. The local church is a vital and necessary part of a disciple's life. Acts 2:47 says that God added to or increased the local church each time a person received Christ as Lord and Savior. Those who were saved became believers through baptism and were added to the local church as members. Biblical examples were the churches at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1), Antioch (Acts 13:1), Cenchreae (Romans 16:1) and the home of Aquila and Priscilla (I Corinthians 16:19 and Colossians 4:15). Here, then, the meaning of a local church always refers to a local assembly of believers. This is an aspect of church growth that has unified the local churches of the Africa Gospel Church and has boosted the effectiveness of the pastoral leadership of the entire church.

g. Believers are to learn the doctrine of the church in the local church. The Bible doctrine is to be taught in the local church. Paul says in Ephesians 4:11-13, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."<sup>187</sup> The goal is to bring all members into unity of faith, the knowledge of the son of God being made perfect in the fullness of Christ.

The pastoral leadership strategy of the Africa Gospel Church has been effective so long as the leadership has been helping to stir up love and good works and leading the assemblies of believers thus exhorting them in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. All members are supporters of worship and the work of ministry. Pastors are leaders of every local assembly of believers as indicated in Acts 20:28. They have been acting in obedience and submission to the commands of the Lord.

The pastors also have been given authority as contained in the New Testament (I Peter 5:2-3) to feed the flock by providing spiritual and administrative leadership. They are the Lord's servants doing the Lord's work of preaching the word (II Timothy 4:2), teaching, and ministry of

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187. Eph. 4:11-13.

the word. By carrying all these responsibilities, the pastors are fulfilling their call to the services of God regardless of where they may be. “Our knowledge of the Bible, our new educational methods, even our sincerity of character will be handicapped if we cannot work with people.”<sup>188</sup>

The responsibility of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment is clearly given through the ministry of the local congregation as they collectively carry it out. Accordingly, the pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church takes the church as the very center of Christ’s plan for all believers whether they are worshipping under trees, in schools, or in semi-permanent or permanent buildings. Christ is the absolute first place in their lives and in the lives of other believers as is recorded in Colossians 1:18 that Christ, through the Holy Spirit, administers to his sheep through the local church. It is where believers gather, fellowship, worship, serve, and grow in the Lord.

### **The Biblical Traits of Effective Pastoral Leaders**

There is no doubt that the Church pastors as well as leaders believe that they are in positions of service because God chose them as his instruments of spreading his kingdom on earth. This is probably why its pastoral leadership is quite effective and their work is not of the faint of heart. Their areas of influence include but are not limited to preaching, teaching, church ordinances, counseling, worship, spiritual formation, and community service. What makes them effective is the fact that they are ordained by God to carry on the ministry of his son, Jesus Christ. God chooses and qualifies people for service. These are those who know him as God, and they are men and women filled with the Holy Spirit of God. In order to serve God and share the good news of salvation, God’s chosen servants must be saved. The message of these servants of God which they are supposed to carry to a lost world is the message of reconciliation to God

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188. Roy W. Hinchey, *Plain Talk About Pastorate*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman Press, 1975), 43.

through Jesus Christ. Prayer has developed intimacy with God. “While such direct contact with the Father must always be tested against the written Word of God and confirmed by other members of the Body of Christ, it helps us enormously in being the kind of servants God wishes us to be.”<sup>189</sup>

Like in other churches, institutions of leadership and management, organizations, and government and private sectors, men and women are put in certain positions of leadership depending on their qualifications and capabilities. Ron Sylvia writes, “The more you know about leadership, the faster you grow as a leader, and the farther you are able to go as a leader.”<sup>190</sup> Men of God who are serving God within the Africa Gospel Church are endowed with different spiritual gifts, natural talents, and skills necessary for pastoral leadership.

Some of the effective pastors and lay leaders are perceived to be real church leaders who are called of God and confirmed by men to serve God among them. They are men and women of great integrity who can be trusted. In fact, those who have led Church for decades have been men who instinctively know they can be trusted by others. The pastoral leadership of this church has so far been effective because of some men who have remained faithful to the gospel and to the teachings of the church. “Christian missions were primarily concerned with the spiritual well-being of the people.”<sup>191</sup> They have faced pastoral situations with intelligence and wisdom from the Lord.

Identity is one of the most important qualifications of men and women who are aspiring to serve God in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Hence, effective pastoral leaders and lay leaders

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189. C. Peter Wagner, *Strategies for Church Growth: Tools for Effective Mission and Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1989), 22

190. Ron Sylvia, *Starting New Churches on Purpose* (Lake Forest, CA: Purpose Driven Publishing, 2006), 179.

191. Wilber C. Harry, *Frontiers of the Christians World Mission Since 1938*, (New York, Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1962), 24.

know and understand that they are disciples of Jesus Christ. They went through baptism of the Holy Spirit and water in order to befit the circle of the faithful spiritual leaders of the church.

Thirdly, these pastoral leaders of the same church have shown that the best life to be lived here on earth is the kind of life that models honesty, maturity of friendship, and intimacy with God. If they had diminished their ability to serve God, then the church would not have grown and expanded to its current status.

Truly this is a church that has been growing numerically and expanding regionally. It has survived the odds since its inception and it has been effective in the manner of handling its purposes and its mission endeavors. They have the hospitality that is demanded by the gospel in their hearts and mind through a commitment to prayer and trust in God. Of course the grace of God is his affection for these leaders. This effective pastoral leadership has been operating out of the leaders' concern and care for the well-being of the members, and the different communities around them. Regular prayer for the people they serve has been the foundation of the Church's pastoral leaders' concern at all times. "Where the church has been planted, it is growing like wildfire. And as it grows, it is reaching across language, racial and cultural barriers to unreached people groups."<sup>192</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church pastors and leaders, in spite of the demands placed on them, have been taking their intellectual lives seriously. Some of them have personal libraries where they can go and read to enrich their minds on the current issues pertaining to their church, communities, country, and the world at large. Annual leaders' conferences are their blessing points where they can converge and be refueled by reports from various localities, by listening to inspiring messages from different speakers, and by attending lessons through which God speaks

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192. Bill & Amy Stearns, *Catch the Vision 2000*, (Minneapolis, Minnesota, Bethany House Publishers, 1991), 18.

to their hearts. Leadership is the art of knowing where you have come from, where you are and to where you are taking people - destination. Jesus Christ grew up in knowledge and stature, and so are the church leaders; they need to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord.

Many of the Africa Gospel Church pastors and leaders do ministry willingly. They do it because it is a call. Most of them have gone through theological training, leadership and administration training, leadership and management training, and biblical and counseling training, yet they humble themselves and serve regardless of their low salaries. Several years ago, a pastor with a bachelor of theology degree was earning a salary of \$66.7 per month. They would respond to the pastoral needs of their congregations without complaining about too much work. Mission accomplishment was and is still their goal of bringing the light of God's word to a world thirsting for peace and fulfillment. "To put God first does not exclude family and other relationships. They are very much a part of his plan for us."<sup>193</sup> That desire is what drove Jesus Christ throughout his suffering and death on the cross for the sake of shining his light to the whole world.

Second to none is the fact that the pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church has followed the best scriptural ways of employing people whose spiritual lives are vitally sound. They do not hire anybody because they know them or are familiar with them, but hire people who exemplify unique spiritual life. In other words, "Spiritual maturity is one of the qualifications for leadership"<sup>194</sup>. Just by way of mentioning, here are some of the skills of the highly effective leaders and pastors of the Africa Gospel Church. People working in every

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193. Charles Troutman, *Everything You want to know about the Mission Field, but are Afraid you won't Learn until you get there: Letters to a Prospective Missionary*, (Downers Grove, Illinois, Intervarsity Press, 1977), 78

194. Fish, 102

vocation must possess certain skills and develop and sharpen these skills as part of their training and formation. Hence, the Africa Gospel Church has a continuing-education program for pastors who so desire to further their knowledge in areas of their interest. Kenya Highlands Evangelical University is a suitable place where most of the leaders have been receiving some refresher courses. By learning and training further, leaders and pastors are able to connect with everybody else. “In order to shine and light up the lives of others in positive, productive interpersonal relationships we need to be connected at the source. There is power in productive relationships. We are made to communicate positively and rationally.”<sup>195</sup>

The effective leaders and pastors of Africa Gospel Church are also faithful to regular times of prayer. They have learned to live prayerful lives. As a result, they have been able to move the church forward by winning souls to Christ for decades. In spite of the demands placed on their lives by the nature of the church ministries, the effective pastors and leaders have seriously kept their time for quiet listening to the voice of God. There is one pastor who had been a missionary for many years in one of the remote, drier parts of the country. He went to Kenya Highlands Evangelical University to further his studies. His testimony was that God is there and always ready to bless those whose ways are straight. His prayer was that God may take him through college and send him back to the bush - somewhere worse than where he had been staying before.

These leaders and pastors understand their role as both pastoral caregivers and as members of a particular faith community. They have teamed up together and work for the growth and expansion of the church and in maturing other believers just like the disciples of Jesus Christ. They know who they are and understand their own human needs for friendship, intimacy, and

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195. O. S. Hawkins. *The Art of Connecting: Advice from Philemon on the Power of Productive Relationships* (Nashville, TN: GuideStone Financial Resources, 2004), 18.



community. Leadership potential is a critical factor in their choice of leaders. Today leadership is at the heart of church ministries. “Compassion performance can involve acts of mercy, verbal outreach to people suffering from hopelessness, financial response to crises or diligent, concerted prayer.”<sup>196</sup> As such, every leader has been given an opportunity and a position to exercise their gifts and to provide the training and appropriate support for each other as well as their members.

Coupled with the leadership potential, the leaders are blessed with art and an ability to collaborate. They work closely with leaders, pastoral associates, directors of religious education, evangelism, male and female leaders, missionaries, youth, members, and communities. Together they form a pastoral team that has been supportive and strength focused. These leaders have been healthy and humble enough to recognize and celebrate the ministerial gifts of each other.

One other thing to note about the pastoral leaders of Africa Gospel Church is that they are ministers of the Word of God who know and understand the art of listening. This is quite relevant when it comes to a healing presence in the ministry. “Our perspective on missions must be geared to the times and anchored to the word of God. The missionary challenge can rest neither on past momentum nor on an annual missionary convention.”<sup>197</sup> They are people who are always available and ready to serve the communities around them. That is why the ministries of the church have been expanding and growing. They are participants in prayer in and out of season. Good preaching flows out of their mature spiritual lives and is passed down the leadership ladder as a strategy for good governance. The pastoral leadership qualities possessed

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196. Paul Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Mission: What's the Role of the North American Church?* (Downers Grove, Illinois, IVP Books, Intersity Press, 2012), 146.

197. Samuel J. Stoesz, *Church and Missions A text on the Biblical and practical elements of missions in the Local Church*, (25 alive: S. Tenth St., Harrisburg, PA, Christian Publications, Inc., 1975), 13.

by the leaders are quite remarkable. If their leadership qualities are measured, the following ideas may be ascertained.

First of all, the idea of attendance is very crucial. An effective pastoral leadership should embrace the idea of attendance. Every year, the church holds a yearly pastors' and leaders' conference. They also have been holding annual women and youth leaders' conferences, because these leaders want to keep the fire of meeting together burning. A conference is an important time for spiritually refueling the servants and the sheep of the flock of the Lord. "Unity is the one thing that can't be left to chance."<sup>198</sup>

The effective strategic pastoral leadership involves mission participation. Drawn from the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, the pastoral leadership is mission oriented. The missions department is always interested in engaging volunteers in the work of missions. The element of giving to missions is a phenomenon throughout the church and as such, the church leadership has been investing time, energy and resources into doing the work of missions. Another very important strategy that has been applicable as far as the pastoral leadership is concerned, is the idea of assimilation. Assimilation is a means to incorporate new members into the system of the church. Church growth happens when the process of assimilation is strong and valued. The Church pastoral leadership is effective because leaders are chosen and given positions to exercise their leadership skills based on the qualities of pastoral leadership. In other words, these leaders are leading because they are qualified and capable to lead. They possess good qualities of pastoral leadership.

This pastoral leadership is a kind of leadership that investigates leadership traits such as vision, strategy, development, and shepherding strategy. These are pastoral gifts and part of the

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198. Larry Osborne, *Sticky Teams: Keeping Your Leadership and staff on the Same Page* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 23.

divine calling to ministry, leadership styles, and leadership evaluation by the top leadership of the entire denomination. The Central Office requires leaders and pastors to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses as far as leadership capabilities are concerned. Leadership is never effective without the participants doing evaluation of their progress and the growth of the different ministries of the church. “God’s people have always been sustained by a vision of the incomparable love of God.”<sup>199</sup> The congregation also evaluates their pastors in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. It does not mean that pastors and leaders always gain 100% approval by their peers or congregation.

Surveys that have been carried out on the strengths and weaknesses of pastoral leadership show that their greatest weakness revolves around management and entrepreneurial skills. Pastors lack management in time, process, managing people, and in leading others. Most of them lack creative systems and processes, creating a strategy, and the implementing of a strategy. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the highest qualities of pastoral leadership are centered on the heart of pastoral ministry, which is shepherding. This deals with people’s skills, spirituality, and their basic leadership abilities. “We are not to serve fellow church members just because they are loveable. We are to love the unlovable as well.”<sup>200</sup> It is the intent of the church to use strong, spiritually healthy leaders. Coupled with spirituality is the need for communication from the top leadership seat to the bottom of the leadership hierarchy. This involves dealing with issues in a more reasonable manner.

The church leadership qualities Paul speaks about in the pastoral leaders can be examined in the biblical text. The books of I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus are known as the

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199. John E. Bietsdorf, *Creating an Intentional Ministry*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Parthenon Press, 1976), 123.

200. Thomas S. Rainer, *I am a Church Member: Discovering the Attitude that makes a difference*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Group, 2013), 76.

“pastoral letters” simply because they are designated to pastoral teachings and instructions for bishops. At the time, bishops were beginning to rise up to the positions of overseers of the flock of the Lord. They were required to be citizens with good reputations from outsiders and obeying the law. The same requirements for deacons apply to today’s church.

Just as there were requirements for deacons, leadership is defined for both husbands and wives. Husbands are leaders for their wives, who were commanded to obey their husbands. In return, husbands and masters were to treat their wives, children and slaves kindly. In this sense, therefore, the pastors as well as leaders are people who desire to be a part of their congregation and one with them. They have always been meeting their members where they are, meeting their varied needs and moving forward with them. “We meet together to start a fresh journey into the heart of the gospel, prepared to be newly amazed by it, resolved to let its principles begin shaping how our churches worship, serve and operate.”<sup>201</sup> The responsibility of the pastors and leaders is to give spiritual and inspirational servant leadership to the church through challenging preaching, sound teaching, and meaningful worship of one true God. This is one of the most crucial ways of moving people forward and strengthening them as they also work hard in applying their faith into their everyday lives. This is a church life phenomenon that leadership is shared throughout the church by nurturing, visitation, and even conflict resolution. Leaders are just like playing coaches in the fields of athletics as facilitators, trainers, and encouragers of the gifts of the congregations with which God endowed them. This is the heart for leading people to a Christian commitment.

Leaders also help to stand as network representatives of the church both within its environs (denominational) as well as among other outside churches (interdenominational). They

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201. Matt Chandler. Josh Patterson. Eric Geiger, *Creature of the Word: The Jesus-Centered Church*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Group, 2012), 5

are supposed to help in developing and supporting the vision, mission, and values of the church. Considering the qualities of leadership that are common, it is appropriate to mention the personal qualities of the pastoral leaders. These pastors are persons of prayer, servant leaders, visionary leaders, mature in faith, team players, and committed to biblical values. They are also leaders with strong rational skills, good communication, and have the ability to work with different kinds of people regardless of their sex or cultural background. Certainly they are also able to think strategically about the future developments of church facilities. “Instead, churches formed around their common need for Jesus. The gospel of Jesus became the unifying center of the church. As a result, the communities that formed preached Jesus, not only to those outside the church but also to one another within the church.”<sup>202</sup> All that the pastoral care involves within the church is the caring for all through partnering with local communities. This has been possible by leaders adopting an organized care approach with community leaders and small groups, thus equipping them for the work of ministry.

### **Summary**

The goal of Africa Gospel Church is to meet the need of providing church-based training and developing all believers to maturity and many to leadership positions in the local church. “The local church leadership has the authority of presenting Christ and establishing other local churches through outreach and evangelism.”<sup>203</sup> Most of the leaders are convinced about the relative value and importance of leadership development. This is the root of leading other people among their diversified congregations to focus on leadership development. The top church leadership has designed a development plan for bringing many young generations into

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<sup>202</sup>. Jonathan K. Dodson, *Gospel-centered Discipleship*, (Wheaton Illinois, CrossWay, 2012), 13

<sup>203</sup> Ibid

leadership. Recently, the entire top pastoral leadership proved its effectiveness by licensing, ordaining, and commissioning more faithful servants of Christ into the harvest field. It was a remarkable event as well as a great move towards developing more leaders to undertake different ministries within the church.

The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is indeed effective because it is open to change. The ideal change has occurred due to the fact that pastors and leaders are very efficient in communicating any new vision, values, or strategic plan. Not long ago, the church elected a new Bishop. He is one of the best visionary leaders the entire denomination has ever had. He is quick in getting and passing on any crucial information pertaining to church affairs and events. His confidence has grown and his impact and effectiveness as a church leader has also grown. Under his new leadership, every ministry in the local churches is flourishing, with quality leaders bearing fruit for Christ.

#### CHAPTER 4:

#### FACTORS FOR HEALTHY CHURCH GROWTH

##### **What is Church Growth?**

Generally, church growth as a movement began within evangelical Christianity, greatly emphasizing missionary work and sociological awareness of a particularly targeted population in any corner of the world. This movement began with the publication of a book *The Bridges of God*, which was written by Donald McGavran. McGavran was a missionary to India, where he saw how churches grow. His desire to know more about how a church can grow made him underline certain sociological factors that spread the Christian gospel among the unconverted peoples. In 1965, his contributions to mission work of the church were realized in the founding of a school of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, USA. This

institution became the home base for church growth studies for many years before his death. Fuller Seminary has been the training ground for many thousands of pastors and missionaries of many evangelical denominations. In his book entitled, *Understanding Church Growth*, here is what McGavran said: “Tremendous church growth is going on in the world today. “Our members over the past five years weren’t just good, they were great. Twenty-six percent increase in church attendance, I know bigger- doesn’t always mean better, but our people were not just showing up on weekends.”<sup>204</sup> “We live in the age of the most rapid forward advance of Christianity that history has ever known. The church is expanding in many towns and cities in North America and overseas in numerous cultures and subcultures, languages and dialects, tribes, classes, kindred and people groups.”<sup>205</sup> McGavran explained that the church grows when it splits into two sections.

The idea of church growth taking place when it splits into sections is true with the Africa Gospel Church. No local church was established by itself. Every local church was born by splitting members from one or two local churches which were coexisting some distances apart. This has happened for many years in the rural and in the urban centers, thus strengthening and expanding growth network. People do not want to be moved from their comfort zones but when they realize numerical growth in the newly set up local church, they would like to partner with and support each other. “As we gather together in our local church and give ourselves to hearing the voice of God through his preached word, we are shaped into one body. We are united in

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204. Greg L. Hawkins & Cally Parkinson, *Move: What 1,000 churches Reveal about Spiritual Growth*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 2011), 14.

205. Donald McGavran and C. Peter Wagner. *Understanding Church Growth*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 3.

understanding and purpose”<sup>206</sup> The numbers mostly grow up from without the church - from non-believers being converted to Christianity and assimilated into the church body. No doubt they would praise God for the vitality and growth of the other section. “Anyone who would comprehend the church growth of Christian churches must see it primarily as faithfulness to God. Christians, like their Master, are sent to seek and save the lost - to become your servants for Christ’s sake.”<sup>207</sup> In other words, church growth is a humane action of bearing the burdens of the lost and the weak souls and bringing them into the saving knowledge of Christ.

That being said, what is church growth? Greg Des Voignes defined church growth as, “Striving to combine the eternal principles of God’s word with the best insights of contemporary social and behavior sciences.”<sup>208</sup> Church growth is an effort to increase membership in the church. Africa Gospel Church pastoral leaders have been effectively involved in using techniques and strategies in their effort to maximize the term “church growth.”<sup>209</sup> These include the theories of sociology, anthropology, psychology, statistics, marketing, cultural relevance, and the ideal within each one. The AGC pastors and leaders used the Word of God and other related biblical teachings and has seen tremendous growth through the power of the Holy Spirit. “With families and pastors using the internet more frequently, there is one final ingredient that can bring about effective use of new technological tools in ministry. That ingredient is having a leadership in the local church that is committed to helping the church integrate ministry and

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206. Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *What is a healthy church member?* (Wheaton, Illinois, Crossway, 2008), 19.

207. *Ibid.*, 6.

208. Greg DesVoignes. “The Church Growth Movement. Part 1: Sciences, Marketing, Surveys, and Demographics: Following God?” [http://www.inplainsite.org/html/church\\_growth\\_new\\_age.html](http://www.inplainsite.org/html/church_growth_new_age.html) (accessed November 27, 2012).

209. *Ibid.*



technology.”<sup>210</sup> The office of the administrative secretary plays the role of church consultant with church advertising and marketing strategies. The church has adopted a transformation process that is sold through council meeting, conferences, and camps. Any crucial information about church growth from the Central Office is swiftly channeled to the local church through staff and lay leadership training, newspapers, and correspondence.

The effectiveness of Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is owed to the founding fathers of the church as a denomination. Current leaders work hand in hand to grow and prosper the church in remembrance of those who started the church. Jesus Christ is the rock who the builders rejected, and yet the same one is the head of the church. He gave the church believers many commands to love one another. “And he said unto them, Go ye into the entire world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall not be damned” (Mark 16: 15-16).<sup>211</sup>

Today’s church must follow this command: to be responsible for reaching the world. Paul preached about gathering together as one body of believers in Christ. That oneness gives strength to the church to reach the world. Reaching the world has been the most powerful driving force behind the effectiveness and success of the Africa Gospel Church as far as church growth is concerned. In the mid-1960s, the church turned attention to the unending work of missions. Since 1896, foreign missionaries had been working among the indigenous people teaching them the Word of God and the importance of missions. The World Gospel Mission partnered with the young Africa Gospel Church pastorate and opened up local mission stations. The first Africa Gospel Church missionary couple was sent to minister among the Maasai community of Kenya.

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210. John P. Jewell, *New Tools for a New Century: First Steps in Equipping Your Church for the Digital Revolution*, (Abingdon Press, 1989), 91.

211. Mar. 16:15-16

The first and the second Bishop of the entire denomination were able to carry the baton of missions work in their hearts. During their time in office, many Areas, Districts, local churches, urban churches, and mission fields were opened up.

Church growth and expansion of the whole church was not without difficulties and setbacks. But the called men and women of God were able to endure until some work was established. The church grew strong and healthy because of the sacrifices made by these called and anointed servants of Christ. That is why one aspect of church growth is to add numbers to the existing one and reaching out to the unreached. Jesus Christ said; after these things the LORD appointed other servants also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. God has used the Africa Gospel Church personnel to bring a light into the world. The church has been light, salt, a city on a hill, and a messenger of the cross. Hence, its pastoral leadership strategies are effective in service to those to whom pastors and leaders are sent. It should be remembered that they are sent to the entire world. That is how healthy church growth has come about.

### **Reasons for the Africa Gospel Church Healthy Church Growth**

If any AGC members were interviewed, it would not be surprising to hear some related reasons as to why the church is growing and healthy. Most of its members are quite aware of the common elements in their growing local churches, districts, areas, and even up to the central office. All growth within this church is attributed to people's obedience to the Great Commission, and the Great Commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ to the whole world. Jesus said, "Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to

go....Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”<sup>212</sup> (Matthew 28:16-20). “The Great Commission, the task of communicating the Gospel that was given to the disciples, was not intended for them alone. It was a missionary command to the Church and its individual members.”<sup>213</sup> And he gave them the command: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus replied: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments’”<sup>214</sup> (Matthew 22:36-40). With these two passages containing the words of Jesus, the founding fathers and the following leaders understood that there are reasons to grow the church of Christ today. “Leaders give what they have to their followers. Jesus, of course, gave the most. He gave his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). We too become stewards in order to serve as well.”<sup>215</sup>

The first and foremost reason as to why Africa Gospel Church has undergone tremendously healthy growth over the years is because of the need for evangelism and discipleship. This is a strategy of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to the lost. The “lost” are those people who do not believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They are like lost sheep, which a good shepherd seeks and brings them home to safety (Matthew 18:12). Africa Gospel Church has kept the goal of evangelizing the lost and winning converts since the time of

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212. Mt. 28:16-20

213. Viggo B. Sogaard, *Everything you need to Cassette Ministry: Cassettes in the Context of a Total Christian Communication Program*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Bethany Fellowship, Inc. 1975.

214. Mt. 22:36-40.

215. Dale, 58.

the early missionaries. The need for oriented evangelism has been a driving inner force in the life of this church. It has proven that the key to church growth is for the local church congregation to focus its evangelistic efforts on the question and needs of non-Christians. Pastoral leadership ought to be effective in building bridges that meet the needs of the non-Christian population.

The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is also effective because of the need for discipleship. A disciple is a convert who adheres to the basics of the Christian faith. In Christian theology, discipleship is the process of training individuals to become mature disciples. Discipleship is more than just sharing information. It involves developing individuals to love and obey God. “Nowhere in scripture do we see a greater expression of the Lord’s shepherding love for his flock than we see in the church’s patient practice of redemptive, corrective church discipline.”<sup>216</sup>

In most cases evangelism by the members has resulted in converts, and converts are trained to become disciples. Disciples evangelize to reach more converts, who are trained to become disciples. So evangelism leads to disciples and disciples evangelize until the Gospel is spread throughout the world.

The second reason as to why the pastoral leadership has experienced a healthy church growth is because of its discipleship process. The entire Africa Gospel Church is a disciple making church. Making disciples has remained the most affordable and simple available resource which the church has used over the past decades in developing transformational discipleship ministries. It is a practical step-by-step process which has helped to give leaders total freedom to do ministry in their best cultural context. Many church leaders have learned a lot about the importance of making disciples in their local churches and communities. Helping

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216. Tara Klena Barthel and David V. Edling, *Redeeming Church Conflicts: Turning Crisis into Compassion and Care*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2012), 198.

people grow more spiritually mature is not a new concern for the Africa Gospel Church top leadership and in its local churches. “Church leadership involves being examples to the flock in evident devotion to God the father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This requires spiritual maturity, emotional stability, personal discipline, practical benevolence and generosity, coupled with social ease.”<sup>217</sup>

It has been the goal all along the church growth system since the establishment of the church as one of the nationally recognized denominations in Kenya. The well-developed process of discipleship within the Africa Gospel Church local church structure, however, is a strategic plan that has been greatly effective in the growth and expansion process of the whole church. This is a process of communicating high leadership expectations and biblical depth so as to guide and direct believers towards the local church, district, area, or central church goals. The pastoral leadership has maintained a clear discipleship process by developing a clear and memorable vision, mission, and a purpose statement. The meaning of the term discipleship has become practical in the context of the transfer of life and breaking into multiple small groups. Since the initial stages of growing healthy, most of the leaders have maintained their purpose statement which has helped to flow the entire process of discipleship through multiplication of small groups to date. All programs and ministries of the entire church fit under the practical umbrella of the church’s purpose statement.

The other important reason for healthy church growth throughout the Church is that leaders have been empowering other leaders. As the saying goes in Proverbs 27:17, “As iron sharpens an iron, so one man sharpens another man”<sup>218</sup> This idea of leaders empowering other

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217. Gareth Crossley, *Growing Leaders in the Church: The Essential Leadership Development Resource* (Carlisle, PA: Evangelical Press, 2008), 98.

218. Proverbs 27:17.

leaders begins at the grass roots, or the local church level. The local church is the most important birthing, feeding, and growing ground. Effective evangelism helps bring new members to the local church. When new souls of young men and women are won to Christ, they come with their talents, spiritual gifts, and unique capabilities.

After assimilation into the church system through the discipleship process, they are fed with the Word of God; hence, they grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Once they are spiritually matured they are incorporated into the local church system and they are given different responsibilities within the local church. Some would portray their giftedness as evangelists, pastors, leaders, teachers, worship leaders, counselors, and so on. Wise pastoral leadership would guide the young generation to go to college and pursue courses of their divine calling. Though there are those who never went far in school, they are lay leaders who have been given opportunities to participate in the service and ministry of Jesus Christ. Many pastors and leaders of Africa Gospel Church have been using the same lay leaders to help in their way to attain their own goals and fulfill their own visions. Some of the lay leaders have helped a lot of Christians to attain the spiritual potential God has for them. This is one of the most significant ways the pastoral leadership has been effective as far as healthy church growth process is concerned. “We can’t all be articulate, middle-class, college educated, Gap-wearing, small-group leaders. And if we were, who would be in a relationship with world citizens who will never attend a small group or shop at Gap?”<sup>219</sup>

Leaders become empowered through mentoring, training, licensing, and ordination. Right from the time when foreign missionaries came to Kenya in the late 1800s, the church has had the strategy of leaders empowering other leaders as an effective means to grow the church into a

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219. Sarah Cunningham, *Dear Church: Letters from a Disillusioned Generation*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 2006), 96.

healthy organization. The work of propagating missions among the Kipsigis people of Kenya began with twelve elders. They were considered the first National Leaders of the Africa Gospel Church. “In fact, the practice was already in operation when WGM entered ‘Sot,’ for Johana A. Ngetich had a group of elders whom he met with and who were standing behind him in the work of the outstation churches.”<sup>220</sup> When the church was registered as a separate organization with its own constitution, each outstation became an organized local church with its own Local Church Council. An overview of strong top leaders (Moderators) of the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya who have led the church to prosperity is as follows.

List of Moderators/Bishops since 1961

1. 1961-1964. Bishop: A
2. 1964-1968 Bishop: B
3. 1969 Bishop: C
4. 1995-2011 Bishop: D
5. 2011- Bishop: E

Each of the leaders was appointed to lead the church due to his faithfulness and commitment to his calling. The status of Africa Gospel Church is where it is today because there have been humble servants with the purpose and mission of the church at heart. They have the aim of the WGM fulfilled to date. “The aim of the World Gospel Mission on all of its fields has been to establish national churches which would be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating or self-extending.” This was stated in the mission handbook, *Laborers Together*.<sup>221</sup>

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220. Fish, 162.

221. Ibid., 179.

“Any worthwhile endeavor justifies the spending of money.”<sup>222</sup> In order to establish a truly indigenous work, the whole body of Church or the Christian was encouraged to share responsibility for the establishment, maintenance, management, and growth of the work. The entire Africa Gospel Church has mentored and produced young men and women leaders who are typically passionate spiritually. This is the most emphasized element of healthy church growth. It is a means through which every individual leader, pastor, evangelist, teacher, or office worker, and members at large, examine their prayer lives. Prayers are a greater tool useful for changing and transforming lives. The entire Africa Gospel Church also has special times in its calendar year in which every congregation participates. Area prayer days are quite emphasized and attended.

Department heads also play one of the most significant roles in the health growth of the entire denomination. Based on their talents, giftedness, and large amount of skills, they are all in their positions of service as heads of departments which include education, publication, women, men, youth, urban outreach, evangelism, and many more. One common objective of these department heads is to be in place and functioning in the ministry. They are not simply there to lead, but they are also working hard to win and develop other leaders. “The Baptist Church shows that the ministry begun by a great pastor can be furthered by another great pastor.”<sup>223</sup>

Reliance on the Holy Spirit of God to inspire worship services throughout the church has caused much success in healthy growth of Africa Gospel Church. The Holy Spirit is not a new phenomenon in scripture. The Africa Gospel Church pastors, leaders, and the general congregation believe that the Holy Spirit has a vital role in God’s plan of redemption, from the

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222. Alvin D. Johnson, *Celebrating Your Church Anniversary*, (The Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1968), 31.

223. Elmer Towns, *Great Soul-Winning Churches*, (Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1973), 105.



moment of creation to everlasting. He was involved in creation (Genesis 1:2) and he continues to invite humanity to come to redemption through the saving power and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. So it is the desire of the Church pastoral leadership to grow the church into a healthy status based on their dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Africa Gospel Church leadership believes in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and teaches his activities as creation (Genesis 1:2) where God modeled humanity after himself (Genesis 9:6); the Holy Spirit is doing the work of revealing the Father, love, and God's will to humanity. Man should realize his condition, the need for redemption, and the provision of salvation and seek it through the touch and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Concerning redemption, the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, leads to repentance of sin, and indwells for the good of mankind. A great deal of the Holy Spirit is the fact that he transforms lives into reflecting the image of Christ. That is the message being proclaimed by the Church as a Christian entity. No matter what comes along the way of seeking healthy church growth, the leaders have stood up for the gospel like the apostle Paul who was beaten and put in prison in Acts 16:23-25. "And when they had laid many stripes on the, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at night Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them."<sup>224</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church also believes that the Holy Spirit gives every member/believer the ability to conquer the giants of sin in our lives. Through prayer and spiritual weapons, all those who believe in the role of the Holy Spirit are being made into the image of Christ. They are also endowed with the power to overcome those areas in their lives which may prevent them

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224. Ac. 16:23.

from enjoying the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also equips the believers and gives them gifts so that they can accomplish the work of ministry. Some are empowered to be leaders, pastors, evangelists, teachers, counselors, and so on. “The church of Jesus Christ is that church of which every true Christian is a member”<sup>225</sup> “Therefore I make known to you the no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord” (1 Corinthians 12:3-5).<sup>226</sup>

The Holy Spirit also allows the church leadership the opportunity and power to do the work of ministry to the lost. This is the power to witness about Jesus who is the focus of both the Old and the New Testaments. Acts 1:8 says, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit come up on you and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”<sup>227</sup> Africa Gospel Church is commissioned to deliver the Good News to the lost the world over. In conjunction with the power to carry the Good News yonder, the Holy Spirit helps the church body to glorify God. The gradual healthy church growth has been happening because pastors and leaders have learned the importance of relying on the power of the Holy Spirit of God in doing ministry. For decades, pastoral leadership has been effective, enjoying the presence and the blessings of God. “One of the most important principles of effective church management must be the successful supervision of the change process”<sup>228</sup> Today, the church stands as if on top of a hill as a shadow of what it will be when Jesus Christ shall come. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the entire church has chosen to

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225. Waldo J. Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1978), 18

226. I Cor. 12:3-5.

227. Ac. 1:8.

228. Bob Whitesel, *Staying Power: Why People Leave the Church over Change (and what you can do about it!)*, (Abingdon Press, 2003), 77

have a victorious Christian life, looking forward to the day of restored fellowship, and the day of the Lord.

Lastly, loving relationship is one of the reasons for Africa Gospel Church healthy church growth. People do not want to hear leaders or pastors talk about love; rather they want to experience how Christian love relationship really works. For decades leaders have been effective and keen in keeping the importance of visiting local churches, districts, areas, and mission fields as well as urban centers as a church tradition. These are opportunities for the top leadership to get acquainted with members of the church, listening to their needs and feelings, problems, and ways to move forward. Loving relationship within the hierarchical levels of church structure is one of the best ways to grow a healthy church and boost pastoral leadership strategies to remarkable effectiveness.

### **What it means to be a Healthy Church**

What it really means to be a healthy church is a great conceptual challenge to many churches today. Many leaders and pastors are trying to figure out whether healthy churches must have healthy leaders. However, it should be noted that it is vitally important for church leaders to develop sound leadership models that are rooted in the biblical understanding of the church as a community of faithful believers. Church planting, as such, centers on the role of the pastor in congregational leadership. The role of pastors is not only to preach the word but also to care for the flock, thus providing sound leadership and setting the congregation's course. "He worried constantly about his traveling companions and the many people he had convinced to do the crazy, risky thing of believing in Christ."<sup>229</sup>

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229. Thomas G. Bandy, *Mission Mover: Beyond Education for Church Leadership*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2004), 125.

If there is a means to discover what it really means to be healthy, it is by looking at the function of leadership. The church, regardless of denomination or religious background, needs strong leadership. The focus is not on the leader as a person but on the word “leadership.” The church needs leadership. “The need for better clerical and lay leaders is second to none in the church today.”<sup>230</sup>It has happened to the Africa Gospel Church at some point that it was in dire need for leadership that was theologically grounded and culturally responsive to the Gospel. And the missionaries were wise enough to lead the national leaders to lead their own people. The missionaries contributed much towards the development of indigenous leaders who would function well in leading the church to achieve a healthy growth. Both the foreign missionaries and the national leaders came up with the goal of developing churches which were self-governing, self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-reliant.

Pastors understood their roles of preaching, teaching, sacraments, visitation, evangelizing, and counseling. Their functions were possible as long as they were collaborating with other members of the body to stimulate the discovery and the use of different spiritual gifts of all members and involving the body in ministry. Such a need was developed by leaders who had envisioned it. “What we may not realize is that God sovereignly calls us not only to salvation, but to vocation.”<sup>231</sup> The pastors were supposed to give shape to the church’s ministry through their spiritual giftedness and in helping the congregation to understand their calling and mission.

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230. Donald S. Aultman, *Learning Christian Leadership*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1961), 19.

231. Hudson T. Armerding, *Leadership*, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1978), 30.

What it really means to have a healthy church is that the church requires leaders who have character, conviction, and competence. These are leaders who would serve selflessly and creatively in the full expectation of the abundance of God's blessing over the whole church.

The first Moderators had focused upon the mission of the church in casting the vision and directing the congregations. The success of the church was too closely tied to these pioneering leaders. By focusing on the mission of the church, these leaders were able to maintain their effectiveness which was later passed on to the new generation of leaders. "Scripture teaches that every Christian has a God-given ministry to perform in the place of the Lord's choosing."<sup>232</sup> They had understood that leadership is not first about the leader, but it is about the mission to which the whole body is called. Moreover, the application of leadership principles to actual church situations has not been easy for pastoral leadership. It does not mean that Church is without challenges today. There are still common leadership challenges today. Most of the pastors generally want to work hard to please those they serve; hence, they have become vulnerable to the temptation to take too much responsibility for church problems. By doing so, they have harmed the church more than help it grow healthy. Some leaders, though, deserve credit for what they have done in order to make the church as a functional, growing, and healthy organization. They must have kept some secrets of maintaining the health and growth of the whole Africa Gospel Church in decades.

In order to maintain a healthy growth in the church and provide answers as to what it means to have a healthy church, the leaders and pastors have committed themselves to following certain significant principles of growing healthy churches. These principles were not created by this church alone but they are almost universal aspects applicable in other denominations as well.

The principles of growing healthy churches are as follows.

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232. Ibid, 30.

Leaders, pastors, and the congregation hold scripture as authoritative. Second Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”<sup>233</sup> The Word of God is the ultimate truth and the source of life to the church. “Blessed leaders have created a vision, aligned people behind it, and develop a plan for executing it.”<sup>234</sup> Africa Gospel Church leadership holds a higher view of scripture and the congregations are always being fed with the word and being trained in it for the sake of growing healthy and mature.

Since its birth in 1932, the church has been carrying a positive perspective and philosophy of ministry. It is been strong in terms of its biblical fidelity and the art of reaching the unreached communities in Kenya and beyond the borders as far as Uganda, Burundi, Sudan, and Tanzania with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The first converts became leaders who were not more concerned about their own comforts than making the necessary sacrifices to be relevant and reach out to those who were not yet followers of Christ. They were able to penetrate different cultures with the Gospel without compromising the scripture. The Gospel has ever been presented in a more contextualized manner without offending the recipients.

There is power in preaching the Word of God. Not only does the church hold the scripture as the only authoritative tool for growing healthy local churches and keeping them relevant, but also leaders and pastors emphasize preaching of the Word of God. “It is about trusting God so much that all we want in this life is to abandon ourselves to the goodness of

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233. II Tim. 3:16-17.

234. Nancy Beach, *Gifted to Lead: The Art of Leading as a Woman in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan, Pub., 2008), 145.

God's will.”<sup>235</sup> “Church growth theology accepts the authority of the scriptures in all matters pertaining to faith and order for the individual Christian and for the church. It is also based on the fundamental principle that Scripture alone is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.”<sup>236</sup> Preaching all over the church is the central part of worship services. Pastors or preachers understand the ideal of sermon preparation and delivery of sermons with an anointed power. Powerful preaching has led to healthy conversion, growth, and meaningful discipleship ministries throughout the Africa Gospel Church. Pastors are expected to attend meetings, meet pastoral needs, do visitation, and counseling. The congregations are to provide them with ample time for sermon preparation and prayer.

The Africa Gospel Church is structured into small groups. It is composed of Sunday school, small groups (meeting on Tuesday nights for prayer and Thursday evenings for prayer and Bible study). Almost all of the healthy growing local churches have emphasized moving as many converts as possible into small groups and assimilating them into membership. “People bring many different gifts and talents to the work of church leadership.”<sup>237</sup> Leadership and pastors are also involved in the formation and growth and extension of small groups. Small groups are where new members or guests connect with membership.

Africa Gospel Church leadership emphasizes prayer and prayer ministries. This is another essential element that its leadership has used over the years to grow strong and healthy local churches. One of the special times in the church are days when the whole congregation is set to pray for leadership and special needs affecting the church. There are also specific prayer days

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235. Ruth Haley Barton, *Pursuing God's Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups*, (Downers Grove, Illinois, IVP Books, 2012), 71.

236. Tetsunao Yamamori and E. LeRoy Lawson, *Introducing Church Growth: A Textbook in Missions* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1975), 39.

237. Christopher A. Beeley, *Leading God's People: Wisdom from the Early Church for Today*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Erdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 28.

dedicated to praying for Kenya Highlands Evangelical University and Tenwek Hospital. These may be evangelistic days whereby evangelism and crusades are conducted prior to prayer day. Film showing and praying for salvation through Christ by the church media has been very effective in reaching the lost within a given community and many people have been getting saved thus increasing the numbers of members in the church.

The Africa Gospel Church leadership also has a love for its members regardless of their tribe, culture, and race, economic or academic status. Leaders are accountable for members. Mentioned earlier in chapter three, this principle of loving church members is a boost to the desired level of growth and expansion process. They love, feed, train/equip, and protect them from being attacked and swayed away by other churches who may be selling different or false doctrines.

This kind of leadership is highly intentional about evangelism. The church has ministries, programs, and places a lot of emphasis on members reaching their unreached friends, relatives, co-workers, and acquaintances. The leaders and pastors in this church believe in Hell and so their evangelism is motivated by spreading the Gospel of salvation by Christ to the lost. Meeting this need for evangelizing the lost has provided the church with all it needs to be effective and growing healthy for God's glory.

### **Factors for Healthy Church Growth within the Africa Gospel Church**

“Church planting is an exhausting but exciting venture of faith, the planned process of starting and growing local churches based on Jesus’ promise to build his church and in obedience to his Great Commission.”<sup>238</sup> It makes sense to say that the goal of starting and growing churches

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238. Aubrey Malphus, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting: A Guide for Starting Any Kind of Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 17.



is not only to start a church but to see them grow. Churches grow biologically, by transfer, through evangelism, and through spiritual growth. A local church can be defined as “an indispensable gathering of professing believers in Christ, who, under leadership, are organized to obey Jesus’ Great Commission by accomplishing certain functions to the glory of God.”<sup>239</sup>

Here biblical church growth is made clear through the New Testament. The local church is God’s instrument through which he is working. The growth of a local church is the natural byproduct of its spiritual health which may be translated to mean the relationship between God and man. The church is the body of Christ; it belongs to him. He started it and he has a plan and purpose for each local church that make his body. On the other hand, Christ is interested in Kingdom growth, which is the right motive for growth. There ought to be growth in corporate prayer and patience, worship, numbers, discipleship and empowerment, and ministry partnership with other Christian organizations outside the local church.

Africa Gospel Church has experienced growth over the years due to being marked with solid Bible teaching and treating each other and outsiders with good hospitality, and special times in the church calendar.

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239. Ibid., 22.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO CHURCH GROWTH AND CHURCH PLANTING

#### **The Simple Approach to Growing Healthy Churches**

The goal of the Africa Gospel Church is to produce churches which are self-governing, propagating, self-supporting, healthy, and reproducing other churches. The church has been self-governing since 1970s and has seen remarkable growth and development into urban areas and sending its own missionaries to remote areas within Kenya and outside Kenya. The purposes of carrying out this endeavor are simply to disciple and train its members as active, committed, and action-oriented followers of Christ. “Paul, convinced of God’s design for his life, worked tirelessly to do God’s calling.”<sup>240</sup> In addition, the leadership is concerned about encouraging sound teachings from the Word of God and encourages members to live along the pattern of Jesus Christ and to express God’s holiness in their lives. The purpose of the church is also to put faith into action in society, by being salt and light. It should also address the most pressing social ills and needs with the positive message of faith in Jesus Christ.

For the church to succeed in all it is trying to accomplish as far as church planting is concerned, then it must have a viable, biblical, long-term church planting and multiplication strategy. Note that with or without a planning or strategy for planting churches, God would ultimately do so. He acts as he chooses. The church ought to be ready to move forward and plant another church despite obstacles, with limited resources along the way. “Along the way, the local church will encounter certain numerical barriers to growth.”<sup>241</sup> Africa Gospel Church has been effective in church planting because of its leadership clear call, teamwork, and the possibilities of

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240. George Barna, *The Power of Vision: How You Can Capture and Apply God’s Vision for Your Ministry*, (Ventura, CA, Regal Books, A Division of Gospel Light, 1992), 19.

241. Michael Fletcher, *Overcoming Barriers to Growth* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2006), 19.

having an adequate strategy for church planting. Many obstacles have been facing the church since its inception in 1932, but in contrast many church plants have been established within the target. The aim has always been to reach non-believers by believers.

This does not necessarily mean that the church has been planting other churches gradually. Some churches either in the city or rural part of the country, Kenya, have come to a plateau level at some point in time. Most of the church have succeeded and grown and multiplied to a greater extent. Proverbs 24:3-4 states, “Through wisdom is a house built; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”<sup>242</sup> This means that if it takes wisdom to build a house here on earth, how much more it would take the house of God.

The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership has a clear church planting strategy. This is a strategy that God has used to bless the church for decades. The church growth theory that has benefited the growth of the church is in line with the belief in the sovereignty of God. The entire denomination has adhered to church growth principles which basically mean total dependency upon the work of the Holy Spirit. “To lead, the pastor must create vision for the local church. Someone with vision lives in the future”<sup>243</sup> As C. Peter Wagner puts it, “If strategy planning quenches the Holy Spirit, I too want nothing. Nor would I recommend it all, if I had any reservations about whether strategy planning can be pleasing to God. God’s work, I believe, must be done in God’s way.”<sup>244</sup> The whole church is built on God’s word, the Great Commission, the Great Commandment, and the biblical principles that appertain. Nothing much

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242. Pro. 24:3-4

243. Leith Anderson, Jack Hayford, Ben Patterson, *Who’s In Charge? Standing Up to Leadership Pressures*, (Multnomah Books, 1993), 20.

244. Wagner, 18.

has been crucial for health and growth of this church than its leadership commitment to prayer based on what God is doing and revealing to the entire body Christ.

It is clear from the historical background of the Africa Gospel Church that the founding fathers, as illiterate as they were, sought God's counsel and the counsel of wise foreign missionaries who introduced them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They understood the demographic make-up of the Kalenjin people of Kenya, their worldview, and their cultural and religious traditions prevailing at the time. They were wise not to condemn religious cultural practices of their people, but instead they let the Gospel penetrate into the people's culture and transformed it into the likeness of Christ. No plan of planting a church has been made in haste, but all in prayer and the Word of God. God has been at work of helping the pastoral leadership to plant churches in different localities. He is the one who has been preparing every target group in terms of demographics, people groups, and their worldview. He brings people together to be part of the church. John Tanki has partnered with the church leadership team in the new faith of venturing into new areas and planted numerous churches. The church planting strategy is focused on a particular group of people. When the missionaries came to Kenya, they first found settlements around Tenwek area, Cheptenye, Maasai and Kipkelion. Another living strategy based on the effective pastoral leadership of AGC is the work of missions. Every mission station was started with a focus on reaching one particular group of people in mind. Currently these are the fields.

#### **Current AGC Local Missionaries and their Locations**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Date</b>
Naikara (Narok District)	Maasai People of Kenya	1951- Missionary A 1963- Missionary B 1966- Missionary C
Chepnyal (West Pokot), Turkana, Kapenguria	Pokot and Turkana	1972- Missionary A 1986- Missionary B

		1988- Missionary C
Ngoron	Pokot	1990-1992
Turkwel, Kangolitiang	Turkana	1991-
Baringo	Iljamos peoples	2006-
Tanzania -montorosi	Swahili people	2005
Sudan	No station	
Samburu	Samburu	
Sitoka		
Garisa	Somali	

The main goal of church planting by the Africa Gospel Church is the multiplication and reproduction of disciples and spiritual communities. Different churches have been planted among different cultures with a hope of producing seeds that will insure reproduction within the same culture. The church fulfills the Great Commission as leaders and pastors strive to produce seeds that are capable of reproducing local and urban churches. That being said, it is therefore necessary to empower local churches to practice and design their own strategies. “Hence leadership is influence, so to say”<sup>245</sup>

The church has had local indigenous church planters with special insights into the people to be reached, needs to be met, and ways to shape the church and its ministry for greater impact. The church planting leaders, who happened to be district leaders, have contributed much in coordinating the research and strategic planning and establishing new localities. These are leaders who have observed the biblical mandate, biblical principles, and biblical rules for church planting and church growth. They are also the ones to work on church planting terrain, target population, and the planting team. Once a site has been located, some effective members are sent to start a new church.

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245. Mike Bomen and Roger Patterson, *Leading From the Second Chair: Serving Your Church, Fulfilling Your Role, and Realizing Your Dream*, (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 2005), 83.

An effective Africa Gospel Church planting strategy answers the question of purpose. Purpose covers a clear regional and local vision that God gave to church planting individuals or groups to fulfill the dream of reaching the lost with the gospel. First, they need to find and locate a place where God is calling them to begin the work of planting a church in terms of geographic and ethnographic factor, and then find suitable personnel whom God is setting apart to lead this effort of planting a church. Personnel are considered to be the players with the burden of planting churches at heart. Now, as if that is not enough, the players are given a plan of what the churches would look like and how they will be planted. After designing the nature of the church, then a lot of provision is made in terms of resources (human and financial) needed to facilitate the work. “It simply means working with and through other people to accomplish organizational goals and purposes.”<sup>246</sup>

### **Effective Church Planting Strategies of the Africa Gospel Church**

As simple as it may sound, a strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a specific goal. It is all about being prepared to gain or get a position of advantage over the failure to achieve the other possibilities. It is more about a set of options or rather some choices to make as opposed to taking a fixed plan. One should be aware that if one has designed a plan of action, then one is likely to achieve one’s goal of planting and growing a church. “All members have a gifted responsibility. The distributions of the responsibilities make a complete, functioning body.”<sup>247</sup> Ultimately, a strategy is the direction and the extent to which an organization can reach over a period of time. It involves an organization putting resources together in order to meet the needs of the surrounding communities.

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<sup>246</sup>. Marlene Wilson, *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers*, (Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1983), 47.

<sup>247</sup>. Welch, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., 67.

In order to have a working strategy, the process of establishing a strategy begins with prayer, faithfulness to biblical foundations, and non-complicated principles. The pastoral leadership of the church took steps and formulated strategies for healthy church growth and church planting. In fact, the leadership of that time knew the right moment to develop strategy. With a target population on the table, they would outline some appropriate steps on how to reach them. Now they would sit down and draw a workable plan. “Is your leadership style effective and appropriate for your congregation? To be an effective planner, you need to be an effective leader.”<sup>248</sup> Most probably, the plan would have to embrace a vision, ministry focus group, core values, and church planting approaches. Under the same plan, the responsible pastors or leaders would consider putting evangelistic, disciple-making, and leadership training options. This is the plan that should be reviewed over and over and it should involve planning with the local community members and government officials as well as other churches if there is any within the locality. “Congregationalism locates the authority of the church in each local body of believers. No person or organization is above it except the Lord Jesus Christ alone as its head.”<sup>249</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church planting strategies are generally focused on starting new churches with the goal of helping the existing churches to fulfill the Great Commission and reach the world for Jesus Christ. Initially, the first leaders of this church had taken keen interest in reaching their own neighborhoods before they could reach beyond their borders. Right now, the church leadership is trying to reach different communities and tribes, and urban centers. At first Africa Gospel Church activities had impacted one province with the gospel and a few major cities, only to realize that there were greener pastures among other tribes, cities, and neighboring

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248. Douglas Alan Walrath, *Planning for Your Church*, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1984), 18.

249. Daniel Akin, James Leo Garrett, Jr., *Perspectives on Church Government: Five views of Church Polity*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadmans & Holman Publishers, 2004), 27.

countries. They came to learn the secrets of church growth both spiritually and physically, and they made it possible by involving volunteers and staff.

Now the current leaders have continued to keep one thing about going into the field. They understood that not everyone is a fisherman. Not every person responds to the same methods. Jesus always knew who he spoke to. When he was around fishermen, he talked about fish. When he was around farmers, he spoke to them about farming. The hope was to reach their communities which they had known likely in terms of cultural differences. They also needed to support the new churches so as to make a great impact on any target community. Their most driving idea was the fact that they wanted to apply a biblical foundation of church growth which states that God wants all churches to grow. “The key to successful spiritual leadership has much more to do with the leader’s internal life than his expertise, gifts, or experience.”<sup>250</sup> God places people in the body as he will. The basic principle here is that the church ministry and mission must be located where they would succeed, where people would respond, and believe it to be God’s will.

The pastoral leadership of this Church has had aggressive church planting strategies. These strategies are categorized as; intentional (reaching village families), Missions (missions to the lost through the spirit of compassion), and Migration (same members moving to new localities). Over the last two decades, the entire church has planned about 1720 local churches. The overall figures show that there are 450 Districts, 37 Areas, 30 Town or Urban Churches and 9 newly for Regions. The question has been, why new churches? Church statistics prove that new churches reach the lost more effectively than older ones. The prayer has been to ask God for quality church planters who are capable of advancing the gospel strategically.

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250. Peter L. Scazzero, with Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives*, (Grand Rapid, Michigan, Zondervan Publishers, 2010), 35.



Church planting by the Africa Gospel Church involved diversity. The target people groups included those people of different tribes and language groups. The strength of this church is that not all of the local and urban churches are the same. Each church, regardless of the people group, shares the same doctrine, but there is a little diversity in how each proclaims the gospel. Take, for example, an urban church which conducts worship differently from the typical rural church in the semi-arid region of Kenya. Pastors in the aforesaid locations do not preach the same, and not all worship leaders use the same style of music. There are differences in styles of worship, preaching, and teaching for each different people group. “A small congregation that is open to receiving new members and wants to grow encourages and supports the pastor in his evangelistic efforts.”<sup>251</sup>

The pastoral leadership of the church strategies has been effective in the sense that leaders and pastors have been focusing on reaching smaller communities. This is true when it comes to reaching mission ministries. “The concept of new churches to reach new people was increasingly being implemented outside the mainline denomination and that has been a powerful factor in the lack of numerical growth.”<sup>252</sup> Most of the target populations are small pastoralists groups living in the drier parts of Kenya-Turkana, Baringo, Pokot, Maasai, and so many others. These are people groups in hardship areas. The church has intervened and reached their lives with the gospel, and met physical needs like food, clothing, medication, and education. The church has brought them into light through church, school, and hospital systems. The church has also reached some other lowly populated areas in towns and started planting churches among smaller communities. Understanding the rural and urban culture is the key to success in this

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251. Carolyn Weese, *Eagles in Tall Steeples: Insights into Pastors and the People they Pastor*, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), 24.

252. Liyle E. Schaller, *It's A Different World! The Challenge for Today's Pastor*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1989), 81.

church endeavor. The whole denomination of the Africa Gospel Church has many churches planters in the big cities as well. In these cities, pastors in large churches like the Good Shepherd Africa Gospel Church in Nairobi can mentor the men and women on their staff to become church planters.

### *Church Growth Models*

Many answers are provided to the question of whether the Africa Gospel Church has been involved with church growth activities by emulating certain Biblical models of church growth. Church growth is not a new term or phenomenon, or something to be taken for granted. Church growth began with the Lord Jesus Christ. “Delegation is not simply a means of increasing productivity, but a means of actually multiplying it by one third or more.”<sup>253</sup> Today, a history of Christianity tells us that God desires that churches should grow and mature. The Bible contains many stories and narratives concerning the birth of the church. In so many occasions and situations Jesus Christ drew crowds but not necessarily making a local church. Jesus surrounded himself with a smaller group of the first disciples whom he had called, and spent most of his time teaching them and performing miracles before their eyes. The disciple saw Jesus do miraculous signs while he moved from one place to the other. He continually reached out to a new group of people, speaking and ministering to their needs. “They must encompass the members, their relationship to the cooperate body, their purpose for joining in the corporate body, and the purpose of the corporate body itself. The viable local church is a body of believers, necessity for the believer, and benefits the believer, and functions as an organism.”<sup>254</sup>

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253. Mark Short, *Time Management for Ministers*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman Press, 1987), 62.

254. Donald J. MacNair, *The Growing Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1975), 21.

The church in Jerusalem grew in terms of numbers and size from 120 to 3,120 believers. However, Jesus did not stay in one locality or in one small group setting. Instead, he continually reached out to other green pastures and communities where he spoke to and ministered to many people he could meet in Judea-Palestine. Meanwhile, after his ascension, his disciples gathered themselves in an “Upper Room”<sup>255</sup> to pray (Acts 1:12-13). Unlike the present day church growth methods and models, God’s method and model that is found in Scripture, especially in Acts 5:12-42, is so radically different. Paul’s church planting strategies are quite radical model to follow. Paul was focused on making Disciples as a strategy. Paul understood the church as a natural outflow of what our call is; making Disciples. Their work was taking place among very similar cultures and times to the Africa Gospel Church. The Church leaders and pastors have been looking to their methods to re-examine and revise the church planting models they use today. “Pastoral calling can be defined as that form of ministry which is taken by the pastor to the people where they are.”<sup>256</sup> They want to increase their expectations of what God can accomplish through His people as He builds His Church. The book of Acts lays out the rapid spread of Christianity from Jerusalem through Judea and Samaria and into the Graeco-Roman world. The spread of the church was powered by the disciples who were Peter, John, and James who became the leaders of the Jerusalem church.

Jesus did not seek out the crowds, the crowds sought him. Jesus spent most of his time with the few devoted disciples. People were attracted to him by the things they saw and heard him do, and so when he did stop to speak, the crowds followed. The models of the early church all point to smaller gatherings, not regular gatherings of thousands. The most effective model is a

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255. Ac. 1:12-13.

256. Richard S. Taylor, *Principles of Pastoral Success*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Francis Ausbury Press, 1989), 123.

smaller church that is growing and therefore constantly planting other churches. This is the model that the church emulated from the time when the first missionaries introduced the gospel of Christ to the indigenous peoples of Kenya. “As the church continued to experiment with the call of mission, more people in church became committed to living missionally.”<sup>257</sup> It has not changed from following the formula of Christ and Paul, who later came in as the most committed missionary in the history of Christianity.

The parable of talents illustrates to the church leaders as well as pastors what they can learn about giving towards church multiplication. This parable is one parable told by Jesus in the book of Matthew 25:14-25. In the parable of the talents a very wealthy man is going on a trip and before he leaves he decides to divide his talents among his servants. It should be noted that talents in this sense are not the type of talents the AGC leaders and pastors are familiar with. A talent at that time was a form of money. A talent actually equaled 6,000 denary and one denary was worth a day’s work. That comes out to about 16 and half years of wages. Even today the church is still dealing with a lot of money. The three servants were each given a different amount of talents. Eventually the wealthy man returns and asks the three servants what they did with the money. The first servant, the one with the most talents, said he had doubled his money. The second servant, the one with the second most about of talents also doubled his money. The third servant, with the least talents, said that he buried his talents so he did not gain any, but he did not lose any. The man then scorns the third servant for not using his talents to gain more talents.

One can vividly attest to the reality that the clear lesson from the life of Christ and the book of Acts is that the church is supposed to be expanding to reaching individuals, families, and communities. The local church exists to do the will of God by standing for truth and practicing

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<sup>257</sup>. Allan J. Roxburgh and M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the Missional Church: What it is, Why it Matters, How to Become One* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 191.

sound doctrine, which of course are part of God's mandate for the church. From this fact it is clear that the biblical model for a church is a church that actively and passionately ministers to both physical and spiritual needs of those around it. The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership has been part of following God's mandate for the church of Christ. The desire has been to grow because of the love for God and the people within reach. Pastors and leaders have done their best in growing the church regardless of whether they are worshipping God under trees, in schools, in semi-permanent buildings, or in permanent buildings. "People came, buildings were built, international mission was launched, and then the kingdom of God came."<sup>258</sup> Most of the local churches, though, are conducted under trees. The smaller churches have been multiplying in numbers and by planting other churches. Church growth is a result of good and inspired leadership who are effectively and continually propagating the gospel of Christ. These are leaders who understand that the church should live and exist despite challenges, persecutions, and perseverance. "We need the order and organization local churches give in order to get the gospel out and support those who go into the entire world."<sup>259</sup>

Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership has come a long way through problems in its part to grow the church. Every year, new leaders who have the courage needed to lead well are elected and installed into positions as they are deemed qualified. The most driving idea is the principle of delegation. Leaders lead by assigning some responsibilities to their juniors as a means of preparing them to lead when the time is ripe for them to take over leadership. Effective leaders of AGC also are those who are chosen based on their spirit of sacrificial nature. They must be willing to adhere to the biblical model of sacrificing one's time, money, and other

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258. William H. Willimon, *The Gifts of the Small Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 13

259. C. Sumner Wemp, *The Guide to Practical Pastoring*, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), 51.

resources for the sake of growing a healthy and strong church. They are men and women of prayer. These are the people who protect the God-given vision in the midst of hard times. They have made the Africa Gospel Church to grow up to a competent level as well as a strong organization.

### *Steps Necessary for Church Planting*

Church planting is not an overnight event that may occur and have a new church coming into existence. Simply put, there are steps that the Africa Gospel Church pastors and leaders have been following in ensuring that a church is planted in a manner. The most important element in church planting strategies is building relationships and assimilation as a process for venturing into new areas and doing ministry. Church planting strategies are applicable in very diverse contexts or locations as far as urban, rural, and tribal lines are concerned. The Africa Gospel Church does not have a specific team designated for the responsibility of church planting. Rather, it is the work of the nearest local church. Most of the time the local church pastor, council, and members are the ones to initial the planting of a new locality. Once they see a need for reaching a certain group of people, then they will take a step of reaching them first with the gospel. They will work with those who have received the gospel in finding a suitable site. Not surprisingly, there has been a need to enthuse about church planting, to promote this strategy, and to draw attention to successful examples.”<sup>260</sup>

The first step or strategy toward church planting is research and understanding of the local group of people. A wise pastor, leader, or member of a local church can look around and may see a need for reaching and evangelizing a particular group of people within a given population. Identification and understanding is very crucial for the process of church planting

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<sup>260</sup> Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying the Foundations*, North American ed. P. cm, (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 14.

before approaching it with the gospel. There must be sound evangelistic programs inside the nearby local church which is capable of propagating the gospel of Christ concentrating on his purity and truth. Research should be done because it is an attempt to reach people who may resist the gospel or may become open to it. Research would lead to understanding the society to be reached in terms of numbers, locality, their means of subsistence, how they are organized, which religion predominates, as well as family groups. “Some Christians have decided to leave the institutional church and meet with family and friends in their own homes to worship.”<sup>261</sup> A demographic survey is fundamental for the process of planting churches according to how any population is distributed. Also one should observe and register which are the cultural, social and economic sectors in one area or target location and with the greatest potential to influence others for the sake of church planting.

The nature of population matters most when considering steps necessary for planting a church. The population should be checked to assess whether it is urban, suburban, rural, or tribal. It should be noted that urban populations are normally more cautious toward strangers who are coming in their midst. Instead, they would like to stay in their comfort zones in full privacy, work, and selective events. “House-church advocates believe the house church is simply a return to first-century Christianity.”<sup>262</sup> They form their own groups in order to serve their common interests. The only means to penetrate into their way of living is through relationship with some members. The pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church has been effectively doing the capturing of certain preaching points by making friendship with some key member of the target group. Any church that seems to be capable of making this happen must be presenting the gospel

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261. Denise George, *What Pastors Wish Church Members Knew: Understanding the Needs, Fears, and Challenges of Church Leaders Today*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 2009), 124.

262. Ibid.

in an atmosphere of great trust and acceptance and is trying to meet some social needs. The rural population is much friendlier to the outsiders and they can easily show hospitality and acceptance. If they are tribal, then language or culture may pose restrictions to a remarkable extent. “The same is true for our work and our ministry- without resistance, no full acceptance.”<sup>263</sup>

Evangelism is the second most important strategy necessary for church planting. Churches can be planted anywhere in the streets, urban, rural, down and up the hills. Church planting is a fundamental action in every church that seeks to grow, edify believers and glorify God. Africa Gospel Church has extended its evangelistic arm to reach far and near areas with the purpose of establishing mission fields and local churches. “We must find a renewed passion for our Lord. Our task as followers of Jesus Christ is to be living witnesses to take the timeless message to a particular time and place in a timely manner.”<sup>264</sup> Through evangelistic initiatives, the church has made multiple attempts of communicating the gospel to different communities through established missionary posts. Pastoral leadership here believes and recognizes that evangelism leads people to Christ and one way of planting a church. As a guide, an incoming church personnel member ought to be able to speak the local dialect, understand the culture of the people, and be personally involved with the tribal society. Church growth and church planting are the result of a constant evangelism. Any church that desires to grow should give priority to much evangelism.

The church must communicate Christ as the center of the gospel. Evangelism should be nothing else other than the Word of God. The message being taken abroad is the message of the

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263. Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2010), 71.

264. Alvin Reid, *Evangelism Handbook: Biblical, Spiritual, Intentional, Missional* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2009), 4.



cross, which is Jesus Christ himself. Any evangelistic actions must promote the church, environment, morality, and fellowship, and service to other people who are in need of Christ. The central element in the New Testament is the work of missions. Evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel, the content of which is that Christ died for the sin of mankind, was buried, and rose again. True biblical evangelism is just a total presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In addition to evangelism and the art of communicating Christ, is prayer. This is the most required tool that church planters should have in their endeavors of establishing and growing more churches. One of the greatest musicologists of our day, Patrick Johnstone, states that “When man works, man works. When man prays, God works.” He and other missiologists such as David Garrison and David Barrett have mentioned the clear link between prayer and church planting. The Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that prayer united with faith brings answers from the father. “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”<sup>265</sup> (Matthew 21:22). After the death of Christ, his disciples united in prayer (Acts 1:14). Peter and John went out to pray (Acts 3:1) and the apostles gave themselves to teaching the word and prayer (Acts 6:4) and the building of the church. Paul tells us that he prayed for the planted church (Ephesians 6:18). “Love for the flock produces a concern for the long-term health and strength of the flock.”<sup>266</sup> Peter exhorts us to watch and pray (I Peter 4:7). Prayer is a powerful weapon for believers to use in order to have a breakthrough in life.

Another strategy for church planting is the nature and organization of local churches. Believers come together for fellowship, study of the word, prayer, and constant encouragements.

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265. Mt. 21:22

266. James D. Berkley, General Editor, *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2005), 16.

This was Paul's strategy. He had organized the first church and put elders and deacons in positions of leadership. The delegation of responsibilities prepared the apostles for planting other churches and work in the maturing of the local communities (Acts 14:21-23). Paul's idea about building churches rested on developing his disciples, joining together of the saints, teaching the Word of God, and leading them to the knowledge of the Christ. In this case, evangelism and discipleship are two important elements that must work together. Both deal with conversion of non-believers and the maturing of believers in Christ. It is through discipleship that leaders are produced and grown. Worship and fellowship bring believers together as one body in Christ. Therefore, making an investment in local people and passing to them the vision, passion, and strategy will automatically result in a good process of church planting.

Another strategy that Africa Gospel Church has implemented for years is the act of discipleship and training of local leaders. Well-trained leaders contribute much to incorporating believers into the church. Leaders are trained on methods and principles of multiplication that may cause a church to multiply itself. A church in a sense must have quality trained leaders and not necessarily the quantity of members. The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is strong in teaching the word, visitation, developing friendship, and fellowship of believers. "Ministry, the activity of the servant church, necessarily involves office and function."<sup>267</sup>

Last but not least is the strategy of following true Christianity. "While the environment for ministry has changed, God hasn't. The Lord of the church is still beside us, offering us assurance the He will be with us, even unto the end of the age."<sup>268</sup> The story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) relates to how a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan came across a man who

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267. Urban T. Holmes III, *The Future Shape of Ministry: A Theological Projection*, (New York, The Seabury Press, 1971), 3.

268. H. B. London, Jr., Neil B. Wiseman, *Pastors at Greater Risk*, (Ventura, CA, Regal Books, 2003), 56

had been beaten by robbers and laying on the wayside. The priest and the Levite were reluctant to stop and help the fallen man. Their actions showed that it is possible to be a church, be knowledgeable of the Bible, and be involved with worship of God and at the same time not help the needy. The Africa Gospel Church pastors and leaders have been passionate about rendering services to the needy by following the example of the Good Samaritan. “The aspect of religious life and church administration dealing with the individual’s responsibility for sharing responsibly his time, talent, and material possessions in the service of God and for the benefit of all mankind.”<sup>269</sup> They have planted churches that speak of Christ, and love the Word of God and have planted churches through the years which have produced human and social transformation and spiritual transformation. Both Africa Gospel Church leadership and membership believe that the Word of God is a central element in the birth and growth of the church as it is in Acts 6:7, 12-24, and 19:20. The Word of God is a conducting agent of the growth of the church. Effective strategy is the use of the Word of God in producing fruit of any kind in the church. “Such advocacy of church planting has been effective. Church planting policies, strategies and targets have been adopted by many denominations and networks.”<sup>270</sup>

### ***Key points on How and Where to Plant a Church***

1. Development of relationships with non-believers in the community
2. Large evangelistic gatherings
3. Encouragement of the participation of the congregation to join small groups
4. Helping membership to discover their spiritual gifts and talents
5. Use of any talents whenever there is need.

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<sup>269</sup> John Reumann, *Stewardship and the Economy of God*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 4.

<sup>270</sup> Murray, 14.

Note from David Garrison's *Church Planting Movements*, where he discusses ten universal elements of planting a church;

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| -Prayer                             | -Abundant gospel sowing           |
| -Intentional church planting        | -Building on Scriptural authority |
| -Reliance on local leadership       | -Strong lay leadership            |
| -Use of cell or house churches      | -Churches planting churches       |
| -Expectations of rapid reproduction | -Making church health a priority  |

God's empowering presence (God-exalting worship, spiritual disciplines, learning and growing in community, a commitment to loving and caring relationship, servant-leadership development, an outward focus, networking with the body of Christ, wise administration and accountability, stewardship and generosity, etc. "Churches cost money to operate and, in most cases, they must depend on the contributions of their members to meet these expenses."<sup>271</sup>

### **Principles of Church Growth**

These are what the Africa Gospel Church believes are the foundational church growth principles that may be applicable in any church setting. They are a means to helping growing church leaders, pastors, staff, and the congregations to use their God-given talents in growing the church and giving glory to God. Here the church needs to grow in four dimensions: internal growth, which means an increase of competent Christians, men and women who know the Bible and practice the Christian faith. As a matter of principle, the church can experience expansion growth when new people enter the church's body and become members. "The extension growth occurs when a church plants a new church to reach people that the mother church would like to

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<sup>271</sup>. Mark Allan Powell, *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 130.

reach but cannot reach, in substantial numbers at least, because they are too far away.”<sup>272</sup>

Another dimension of church growth is bridging growth. Usually this element of growth occurs when a local church sends cross-cultural missionaries across great languages and cultural barriers to start a Christian movement among a different population. It is making significant investments in church ministries regardless of the person or situation as described in Mathew 25:14-30.

### *Disciple-making*

As mentioned earlier, one of the principles of church growth is disciple-making. The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership set this principle as the first priority in doing ministry. Making disciples is a command from our Lord Jesus Christ. This is what the church is all about; it exists to fulfill the Great Commission. The church leadership strives to be self-propagating and self-preserving church. “Christian communities, throughout their history, have commonly sought to enable their members to make connections between the teachings of their faith and their experiences in the world.”<sup>273</sup> Ministry has been and it will continue to be an on-going business. The church focuses, too, on its original purpose, time, money, staff, and prayers. However, it is not as much as focusing on making disciples. The pastoral leadership has been strategically effective in making disciples through programming, prayers, budgets, staffing, and evaluating the church’s ministries. The church is following the overall mandate of going out to seek and train everyone in the way of the command of the Lord.

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272. George G. Hunter III, *The Apostolic Congregation: Church Growth Reconceived for a New Generation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 10.

273. Charles J. Scalise, *Bridging the Gap: Connecting What You Learned with What You Find in the Congregation*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2003), 20.

### *Relationships*

Having good relationships with non-Christians is one of the best ways the Africa Gospel Church pastors and leaders have emphasized for years. They believe that establishing relationships is one of the best ways of reaching non-Christians and winning them to Christ. People reaching their relations, families, and friends will create growth at the church. “Many ministers and priests are extremely concerned to be in with the competent people and to have a clear-cut identity.”<sup>274</sup> These are the ones who are potential in bringing new believers into the kingdom of God. It is easy to reach the people known to one, than to reach people who are typically strangers in one’s life. This would be possible if members would invite their loved ones to the church. “Paul found that the Christian faith expanded best when it grew along natural family ties from one community to another.”<sup>275</sup>

### *Meeting the Needs*

The unreached people in communities have various needs ranging from physical, emotional, social, academic, and much more. These people are always thinking about something of immediate interest in terms of jobs, friends, health, kids, finances, hobbies, and so on. The AGC has effectively made the gospel relevant to some of the people’s needs. Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman about water that will quench thirst forever if she had desired to drink it. The need here was for water. People need a place to belong to and to be connected to other people they may call family. People also are under pressure from different things and so they need a

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274. Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, (New York, Doubleday Image Books, 1971), 49.

275. S.Robert Skivington, *Mission to Mindanao: A Study in the Principles of Church Planting Strategy for the Philippines*, (Quezon City, Philippines, Conservative Baptist Publications, 1977), 29.

sense of balance in a situation where they can manage their priorities and daily activities. Most of all they are looking for spiritual answers to their hunger for the things of God.

### ***Retention***

The term retention may sound hard to explain. However, it is a word that comes after relationship. Getting people into the church may be one simple thing to do. The main task that the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership has been concerned with is how to keep them from disappearing out. The church has developed some ingredients necessary to keep new converts as active in the church as possible. One of the ways the AGC uses to retain new members in the church is friendship. Friendship is the most likely tool of winning and bringing new people to church as well as being a tool useful for retaining or helping them stay in the church a little longer. “Once believers have been part of a growing church, they never are the same. They may not know why their church is growing, but they know they experience excitement and joy in being a part of it. For them, their church is the place to be.”<sup>276</sup>

### ***Planting the Right Seed***

Jesus Christ told a story about the harvest fields. The non-Christian people in our communities are not easily receptive to the message of the gospel and becoming Christians or members of a particular church. Jesus spoke of the “White fields”<sup>277</sup> (John 4:35) in respect to planting a seed (word) of the gospel in good soil (receptive hearts). The most important thing to do is to identify receptive people in the surrounding communities and try to reach them and meet their most felt needs. Church leadership should develop ministries which will focus mainly on sharing the unconditional love of God.

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276. Gene Mims, *Kingdom Principles for Church Growth*, (Nashville, Tennessee, Convention Press, 1994), 33.

277. Jn. 4:35

*The Lord's Desire for Church to Grow*

This idea may sound so strange, but it is the whole truth contained in the message of Jesus Christ and it is relevant to the church today. Church growth is the desire and business of the Lord. Jesus Christ called the first twelve disciples and sent them to go and take the gospel to the ends of the earth. “The work of the ministry is too demanding and difficult for a man to enter it without a sense of divine calling.”<sup>278</sup> The Africa Gospel Church was founded on this same commission: to go and tell about Christ in far and near places. The church has been effective in carrying out this mandate by relying on Jesus Christ to provide gifts to ensure spiritual growth and the development of the church. Christ is the head of the church; thus, connecting to him means getting connected to a source of life. It does not mean that church growth is automatic. In a sense, some local churches with this church become stagnant. So to ensure growth, church leadership has assumed the act of delegating responsibilities to capable members in the body of Christ.

The members are directly involved with church ministries. “Evangelistic witness demands a deep involvement in the lives of those to whom we are bringing the message.”<sup>279</sup> It is quite remarkable for leaders and pastors to let each member to do his or her part so as to function as one and meet the need for growing the church as a whole. This is not saying that Africa Gospel Church has performed to its full potential, but it is making efforts to use every available tool and as well as members to enhance growth. The church evangelizes among non-believers and strengthens the weak in faith in order to mature them and grow as the Lord so desires. The

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<sup>278</sup>. Howard F. Sugden & Warren W. Wiersbe, *Confident Pastoral Leadership*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1973), 9.

<sup>279</sup>. Arthur Leonard Tuggy, *The Philippine Church: Growth in a Changing Society*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 14.



strong members ought to be careful not to grow weak by staying connected to the source of their strength. God's strength to them is unlimited (Ephesians 3:20).

### **Africa Gospel Church Organization and Administration**

From the Biblical point of view, it is understood that church administration is a very important ingredient of the Africa Gospel Church organization and administration. The Church's hierarchical pastoral leadership portrays the elements of organization and administration as it entails a form of training geared to equipping saints, and that God is the only one who can call and empower his servants for effective roles within the church community. Specifically, it is one of the spiritual gifts from God spelled out in I Corinthians 12:28: "And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues."<sup>280</sup> It is also a matter of getting people to work together. The Africa Gospel Church organization and administration is basically the manner of leaders getting others to work together. Church organization and administration is a ministry that is entirely centered on people as an art of management. It is an art that requires faith in God, integrity, timing, and proper management of the available resources. "Organization does not make a difference. The reason some small churches fail is that they do not utilize their own potentials."<sup>281</sup>

The key to the successful and healthy growth of the Church is basically its personnel management. In its entirety the church is an organization with one or more people who are responsible for managing the welfare and performance of every organization. The task of

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<sup>280</sup>.I Cor. 12:28

<sup>281</sup>. Robert E. Maner, *Making the Small Church Grow*, (Kansas City, Missouri, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1982), 78.

overseeing programs and setting policies that affect everyone is referred to as personnel management or human resource management. The functions of this office usually begin with the staffing process, though most of the church workers are holding elective positions. “God appoints leaders and God expects those leaders to function effectively.”<sup>282</sup> It is also supposed to oversee training programs and continuing education for people who are already working for the church. The church usually holds personnel management meetings, conferences, and leaders’ training workshops for the purpose of training, equipping and refueling its personnel.

In addition to personnel management is the idea of how the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership has been strategically effective in managing its financial resources. Everyone understands that money is a substance that is hard to come by. In I Corinthians 14:40, Paul wrote, “Let all things be done decently and in order.”<sup>283</sup> The Africa Gospel Church leaders sometimes feel inadequate to fulfill Paul’s admonition, especially in the area of managing church finances. Management of finances goes hand in hand with property management. This involves the aspect of making sure that the church buildings, lands and land title deeds, vehicles, and any other physical material useful for the work of the church is well kept in good condition.

The whole work of ministry begins at the top leadership level whereby the Bishop and his assistants have the ability to influence the congregation and other people in their surrounding communities. That is why Africa Gospel Church has a strong office of the administrative secretary. Duties are in the hands of several naturally talented men, talents which have been sharpened by experience, training, and empowerment from God.

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282. Robert H. Welch, *Church Administration: Creating Efficiency for Effective Ministry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2011), 3.

283. II Cor. 14:40.

The pastoral leadership strategies of the Africa Gospel Church have been effective because the founding fathers and the subsequent leaders have been faithfully driving the people to see the original vision. Quite honestly, most of the pastoral leaders have understood the significance of communicating the vision and imparting it on the members of their congregations. The board of directors and trustees are people who are highly esteemed because of their integrity and their pursuit of a healthy church growth. These leaders are organized, decisive, creative, problem-solvers, resourceful, peace-makers, and are good administrators. The secret of a strong leadership is the fact that most of the leaders were placed where their strengths and calling are. “Churches are not exactly tribes, but they still need leaders. Congregation size and governance style profoundly shape the roles of leaders.”<sup>284</sup> In other words, they are playing the game of moving the church forward at their real positions of influence. They are well informed about church affairs, qualified, and are responsible leaders who take their ministry of organization and administration to heart.

History indicates that the aim of the World Gospel Mission has been to establish national churches which would be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. The nationals were encouraged to share responsibilities for the establishment, maintenance, management and the general growth of the church. “The retention and training of new members is essential to the future life of the church.”<sup>285</sup> When nationals possess sufficient spiritual, intellectual, and experiential depth and maturity, responsibility shall be shared with them on the basis of equality, with the purpose in mind of their ultimately assuming full responsibility.”<sup>286</sup>

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284. Brad Miller, *Church Health and Growth Primer*, (ChurchTech Press, 2010), 13.

285. John Killinger, *The Tender Shepherd*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1987), 48

286. Fish, 179.

Missionaries wanted to plant and mature institutions to reach a position of strength and stability in native communities. The Africa Gospel Church is indeed a Kenyan-based network of over 1,500 congregations. The church was started way back in 1932 through the work of missionaries from the World Gospel Mission. It has realized tremendous growth to a position of sponsoring Tenwek Hospital, Kenya Highlands Evangelical University, Kaboson Pastors' College, Olderkesi Ministry Training Institute, and many high schools and primary schools among other ministries and community development projects. The church has been self-governing since the early 1970s, and has seen remarkable growth and development into urban areas as well as sending its own missionaries to remote areas and unreached tribes in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan.

The government of Africa Gospel Church is hierarchical and democratic in rule and organization. The highest point of its pastoral leadership is at the central level. This is the Central Church Council portfolio with the bishop as the leader of the whole denomination and chairman of the central church council. "The quality of leadership necessarily demands that servants be administrators who direct its life and action."<sup>287</sup> The Bishop is also the vice chancellor of the Kenya Highlands Evangelical University. Under him are the assistant bishop and other heads of departments. This pyramidal kind of pastoral leadership broadens more widely as it drops down and extends to the local churches. Regions which are being headed by regional chairmen are a system of leadership that was created less than a year ago. One region is composed of one to five Areas.

All the Area directors together with the Regional chairmen make up the Regional church Council. The Central Church Council is made up of the Central Office personnel; Bishop,

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287. Kent and Barbara Hughes, *Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome*, (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1984), 50.

Assistant Bishop, Administrative Secretary, chairman of the Board of Directors, University Chancellor, and World Gospel Mission representative, heads of departments, Regional chairmen, Tenwek Hospital CEO, Missions Director, Kaboson Pastors' College Principal, and other co-opted members. The Area church council, District church Council, Local church Council as well the Urban church Council are other governing bodies which contribute much to the organization and the administration of the entire Africa Gospel Church.

All the church's administrative and pastoral leadership and management are driven by one common purpose. The most important goal is to disciple and trains its membership to be actively involved and committed to the ministry of Jesus Christ. This happens by spreading the Gospel to the unreached peoples of Kenya, and to encourage members to cherish and live a Christ-like life. They are all supposed to put their faith into action especially in their societies where they are called to be salt and light. Every member is encouraged to be salt and light and to be pro-active in addressing some of the pressing social ills in their localities and diligently spread the message of faith in Christ. "The church is a stewardship community that is central in the purposes of God for human history. Many references of specific stewardship words in the New Testament are to various aspects of the church's life and ministry."<sup>288</sup>.

### ***Africa Gospel Church Constitution***

The hand of the World Gospel Mission has been involved with the establishment of national churches which would be independent in many ways. The missionaries started with the need to train Christian leaders to share responsibility for the establishment, maintenance, management, and growth of the work of missions. This was the mission that Jesus was determined to do right about. "He understood what the Father had wanted him to do. He lived

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<sup>288</sup>. Richard B. Cunningham, *Creative Stewardship*, (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1979), 111.

his life with a clear sense of mission: he was about his Father's business"<sup>289</sup> (Luke 2:49).

Likewise the missionaries understood their calling to establish the mission of Christ wherever God had sent them. "When nationals possess sufficient spiritual, intellectual, and experiential depth and maturity, responsibility shall be shared with them on a basis of equality, with the purpose in mind of their ultimately assuming responsibility."<sup>290</sup>

The drafting of the AGC constitution was done by missionaries who were appointed into a committee: Mr Smith, Mr Adkins, Miss Shryock, and Dr. Warner. The committee had much of what they proposed on the constitution as contained on the constitution of the Methodist Church as it was here in the United States. The final draft was considered as the constitution of the Africa Gospel Church in 1952. A new constitution was later formed in 1958 as a workable guide to an indigenous church. The writing of this constitution was completed in 1960 and translated into Kipsigis and it was accepted by the local people because it was understood. On August 29, 1961, the AGC was registered as a Society by the Assistant Registrar of Societies as a capable institution caring for itself.

### ***Church and Politics***

Perhaps one can ask a question of whether Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is involved with politics. By the way, should there politics be in the church? How has Africa Gospel Church been effective as a church in playing the role of being salt and light in the world? Certainly, politics are faced in the church, but the Church has some principles to help the congregations to deal with church and societal politics in Kenya. Politics: "Using, exhibiting, or

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289. Jim Herrington, R. Robert Creech, and Trisha Taylor, *The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation* (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 18.

290. Fish, 179.

proceeding study, structure, or affairs of government, politics, or the state. Having a definite or organized policy or structure of government. Typical of politics or resembling politics, political parties, or politicians.”<sup>291</sup>

Politics is the process of balancing competing interests in a social system including any religious organization. The effort to continue the ethnic make-up of a church is what the composition of leadership reflects about politics. “Most churches are declining because they have forgotten what business they are in. Healthy churches focus on transforming people and society.”<sup>292</sup> Church politics can outflow from competing biblical doctrines. The United Methodist church believes that the church has the moral imperative to act for the common good of all citizens. People of faith ought to have no political or spiritual zones where their participation can be denied. The founding leaders clearly understood their attempt to influence the formation and execution of public policy within the government of Kenya. This is often the most effective means available to other churches to keep before humanity in their society in order to serve the ends of justice and freedom for all people.

Through social action, the Africa Gospel Church has kept certain goals and methods and emphasized values in ways that foster the implementation of specific policies that promote goals that are in line with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The task of this church has been in no way in contradiction with the members’ commitment to a vital separation of Church and State. The integrity of both institutions is best served when both institutions do not try to control the other. With Kenya being a pluralistic society, the Church has not sought to use the authority of government to make the whole community conform to their particular moral codes. Rather, it has been seeking to enlarge and clarify the ethical grounds of public discourse and to identify and

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291. New Riverside University Dictionary, s.v. “Politics.”

292. Bill Easum, Bill Tenny-Brittian, *Ministry in Hard Times*, (Nashville, Abingdon, Press, 2010), 25.

define the foreseeable consequences of available choices of public policy. The Africa Gospel Church believes in social justice, mission, and outreach ministries. Taking an active stance in society is nothing new for the congregations.

The Africa Gospel Church and other religious groups in Kenya have the right to speak out on political and social issues. All the members are believed to be the rightful citizens and can intervene in matters concerning elections by choosing their leaders in a democratic manner. The leaders are perfect when it comes to abiding by the law and refrain from turning their congregations into a political machine. As far as faith and politics are concerned, the Africa Gospel Church also has been able to manage politics in a way that have not undermined the gospel. This has been possible due to the leaders' way of practice of humility and self-distrust. "When God's reign was not recognized, things began having dominion over man. If man is ever to live life as God meant it to be lived, God's place of authority must be reestablished within the life of the individual."<sup>293</sup>

Paul had to say this in II Timothy 2:24-26: "The servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome, but rather gentle toward everyone; teachable, bearing slander without resentment, in humility instructing those who 'oppose themselves,' in the hope that God might give them repentance leading to knowledge of truth, and that they might escape the trap of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will."<sup>294</sup> Leaders always call upon the national or public leaders to have a passion for fairness and justice in their ways of treating the common man.

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293. A. R. Fagon, *What the Bible Says About Stewardship*, (Convention Press, 1976), 15.

294. II Tim. 2:24-26



### **Barriers to Healthy Church Growth**

There are practical reasons why every church should do church planting in their part for good health and growth. The need for church planting is obvious in regions and communities where churches did not exist before. When the first leaders (elders) got the message of the Gospel of Christ, they immediately went forth and established a lot of sub-stations among the “Kipsigis” people of Kenya. The team of elders worked together and through their evangelistic efforts, they planted many churches. There are no statistical records showing how the church has been growing, but the reality behind it is that the church has processed well enough to set up many local churches. Churches were able to reach people groups which had not been reached with the gospel. The pastoral leadership strategies of the Africa Gospel Church has been remarkably effective in reaching and saturating villages, communities, mission fields, and several urban quarters. The new churches have proven to be necessary for long-term growth of the Church and discipleship of new believers. “The church, with all departments, has an overall potential for bringing out the best qualities in its congregation.”<sup>295</sup>

The most important strategy for reaching the community is the church planter’s goal. This owes to the big idea of discipleship. The whole body system of church has prospered much and became effective after applying a clear, simple, and memorable pathway of making disciples. “Pastors and lay leaders must see with eyes of faith to catch a glimpse of a bigger view of their church’s ministry.”<sup>296</sup> What the first leaders learned from the first missionaries is the fact that God does not ask people to seek converts, but he simply asks them to do discipleship.

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<sup>295.</sup> George E. Brazell, *Dynamic Stewardship Strategies: Harnessing Time, Talent, and Treasury for Church*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books House, 1989.

<sup>296.</sup> Carl F. George and Warren Bird, *How to Break Growth Barriers: Capturing Overlooked Opportunities for Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993), 16.

They understood discipleship as modeling and teaching Christians the precepts of the Bible. These include the Bible (word), prayer, doctrine, Christian living, and worship. Today, they are still to evangelize, though that is not their main goal and mission. They have been evangelizing and they have realized that it is the role of the Holy Spirit to bring people into an intimate relationship with God. This is definitely an act of divine intervention and grace.

Ever since the birth of the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya, the leaders, pastors, staff and the general congregations have been effectively working together in accomplishing three main areas or principles of discipleship. The first principle is about relationship or mentoring as a process of making disciples. This was initially understood and undertaken as a means to build a network of people who are capable of building each other up in the faith through friendship and mentoring. A biblically practical example of relationship is the connection between Paul and Barabbas, later Paul and Timothy. The more experienced Christians took care of those who were young in faith and helped them to become better and more effective Christians for God's glory. In this case Paul was highly educated and an experienced leader and Barnabas were not. Paul mentored him in love, friendship, knowledge, and experience. Their qualities of relationship were the keys for their spiritual growth. "There are so many needy people out there who want to be with you. They need a friend; they need counsel; they need someone to just give them a little attention; the need to participate vicariously in someone else's success."<sup>297</sup>

Another important area of making disciples which was adopted by the Africa Gospel Church strategic pastoral leadership was teaching. This was a belief that the Church was called, as a church, to teach all Christians of all ages how to live a Christian life. They first taught the first converts on how to study the Bible, how to pray, and how to worship, and even on how to

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297. Jay Kesler, *Being Holy Being Human: dealing with the Incredible Expectations and Pressures of Ministry*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Bethany House Publishers, 1988.

teach others. “Church growth is like planted grass. If you stand on the seeded bed, the new green shoots do not have a chance.”<sup>298</sup>

Lastly, the most important area as far as making disciples was concerned is service. All believers were called to put their faith into practice in their daily lives. The act of service was expressed in terms of projects and missions. Service was how they lived their new lives as the first converts and the kind of character they modeled. This is not the idea of those days, but it is what the Africa Gospel Church has lived on to the present time. Through these three principles of making disciples, the Africa Gospel Church has realized tremendous healthy growth and expansion.

Surely, coupled with discipleship making, the first missionaries to come to Kenya had a God-sized vision to do the work of mission and impact the lives within communities by evangelizing the indigenous people and planting churches. Their main agenda was mainly centered on establishing their mission of education, medication, and preaching the gospel of salvation. They had to position their stations and substations and set up programs which helped their ministry with plans to break through growth church planting and growth barriers. The young men and women who came as missionaries burning with the desire to initiate the work of mission attracted individuals, families and communities and hence sustained a vibrant and healthy church.

When the Africa Gospel Church was founded by the missionaries from the World Gospel Mission, the first twelve elders helped the church to grow and become healthier in attendance, finances, and infrastructure. This was one of the best attitudes they had in achieving their goal for church growth and church planting. In no way has the church grown and expanded without remarkable obstacles. There have been a lot of discouragements along the way of growth in

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<sup>298</sup>. Ibid, 16.

terms of church splits, leadership failure, and financial, social, and economic setbacks. Most of the time this church has found large numbers of growing local and urban churches lacking the necessary infrastructure to sustain continued growth. Dr. Elmer Towns has a wider understanding about healthy church growth: “Whatever is alive will grow. And anytime growth takes place, barriers to growth will be present. Just as weeds will stop growth in a garden and germs or disease will hinder growth in the human body, so barriers go together like a sock on a foot; they must be studied together for understanding the growing church.”<sup>299</sup>

Numerous leaders endowed with great potential had the appearance of being good leaders but they lacked one thing or two as far as effective pastoral leadership was concerned. It was not because they could not lead their congregations but to continue to grow as leaders and be successful in ministry. Success came about due to their partnership with Jesus Christ in the mission of growing the church. “When Jesus Christ set about growing his church, he started with a small core of people whom he nurtured as leaders. This nucleus of 12 was later expanded to 72 and, at Pentecost, grew to a group of 120. He adopts the same approach today, nurturing people for leadership who then continue this work of growing his church in active partnership with him.”<sup>300</sup>

First of all, with a look at the quality of pastoral leadership, one would be likely to see some of the detriments or certain barriers that might have led the growth progress of the church to decline. Culture and cultural aspects or beliefs has been the most important barrier to the growth and expansion of the Africa Gospel Church. Kenya is made up 42 tribes each leading a different cultural way of living. It has not been easy for pastors and leaders to penetrate into

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299. Elmer Towns, C. Peter Wagner and Thom S. Rainer, *The Everychurch Guide to Growth: How any Planted Church can Grow* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 1.

300. Brad Long, Paul Stokes, and Cindy Strickler, *Growing the Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit: Seven Principles of Dynamic Cooperation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 37.

communities in which a different language is spoken and people are leading a unique way of living. So many large churches have not really had apparent influence in their communities simply because some tribes in Kenya do not get along with each other. Seriously speaking, lack of vision in the church is due to the lack of spiritual leadership. The church is not an exceptional church when it comes to dealing with the subject of having a vision for the church. There are many other churches which are filled with people who are trying to live lives and remain available for whatever God calls them to do, yet still they are not fruitful. “A call of God to the ministry does not mean that success is possible everywhere. Some churches and men are plain mismatches, not made in heaven”<sup>301</sup> They do not understand that bearing spiritual food is by taking spiritual vision into the whole process of growing healthy churches. The subject of vision was practical in the life of Jesus Christ. He had the ability to do anything. He could recognize where faith was present and where it was not. He knew when it was time to proceed publicly or retreat privately. True spiritual leadership is needed. The energies of the church must be harnessed to a clear vision of what the father has already set for it as the body of Christ. Identifying and implementing the strategy for accomplishing the vision, of course, assumes a clear vision for the church has previously been established. The senior leadership team, though, is ultimately responsible for identifying the strategies that will be used to accomplish that vision. They fill the gap between vision and execution.

Keeping everyone aligned and focused on the vision, strategy, and execution priorities was much easier in the early days of a church plant. Because there are fewer people initially, church plants stay much focused out of necessity. As churches grow, though, the senior leadership team will have to work hard to keep everyone focused on the church’s overall vision

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301. Richard S. Taylor, *Principles of Pastoral Success*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Francis Asbury Press, 1989), 40.

and ministry strategy. As a side note, that means God may call someone in one's church to launch a great ministry that is not a part of the church's vision and strategy. It just means that may be their personal mission and not the church's mission. When that happens, the individual should be encouraged, but the church's mission should also be protected. More of this is needed.

Looking at the growth and expansion of the Africa Gospel Church, one may deem to conclude that it has been facing the problem of proselytization. This was the effort of the early missionaries to proselytize the indigenous and traditional peoples of Kenya. The idea of proselytization may bring either positive or negative impact to the church. Imagine a senior pastor in one of the fastest growing local churches. All of a sudden, the sheep begin disappearing one by one; someone else has induced them to convert to his or her own religious faith without the pastor's knowledge. This breaks the heart of a shepherd who is after God's own heart.

Just because someone has an office, role, title, or responsibility doesn't mean that he or she is a leader. Leadership is an art, a skill, a craft, a gift; it must be developed. A leader must have the ability to inspire people to do more, be more, and go farther. If a leader lacks genuine followers or lacks what it takes to be a leader, they aren't leading; they are simply going on a walk. "Creative leadership is an adventure."<sup>302</sup>

Leadership is the most commonly used word when it comes down to the success of an organization, product, group, or team. No matter how it is viewed, success all boils down to leadership. There are countless books about how to be a successful leader: *21 Laws of Leadership*, *How to Go from Good to Great*, and the list go on and on. People thrive on learning about leadership; the fact that John Maxwell has sold over 19 million books is a clear indication of such. There are many reasons that contribute to the success of a leader and just as many

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<sup>302</sup>. Michael S. Kroppel, *Open-Hearted Ministry: Play as a Key to Pastoral Leadership*, (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2008), 72.

reasons for why they fail. As much may be learned from failures and working around poor leadership as can be learned from successful leadership.

Space is the most fundamental barrier the church faces. Africa Gospel church leaders in urban churches or local churches which have permanent buildings love full rooms. The truth is that when a room reaches 70 percent of its seating capacity, it's full. Some of these churches could hold a capacity of 120 people and they are full. It is therefore hard to create more space in the room or build a new sanctuary. People may stop inviting their friends because they perceived there is not enough more room. Some regular attendees may also stop coming because it was hard to find a seat.

Anyway, some have moved to bigger spaces and have realized growth again while others have started second services. Self-development is a critical issue among pastors and church leaders. Growing churches within the Africa Gospel Church are led by growing leaders. "The church is a living organism, the body of Christ; and it should grow in size, in effectiveness, in faithfulness, and in outreach."<sup>303</sup> However, a lot of them face the problem of lack of self-development. "Once the pastors select these people, the people will need to be equipped."<sup>304</sup> Others, though, have set up personal growth plan for themselves, focusing on leadership ability and spiritual maturity. Sure enough, when they started growing as individuals, their churches started growing again. Their sermons stopped staling; the congregation's passion for ministry did not wane anymore. The staff started growing, the churches realized continuous growth. Personal development is essential not only for the pastors' own health and balance, but also for the growth of their churches. Sharing is not the only problem that has faced the church for years. A lot of

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303. Waldo J. Werning, *Vision and Strategy for Church Growth*, 1977.

304. Terry W. Dorsett, *Developing Leadership Teams in the Bivocational Church* (Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2010), 4.

families, communities, institutions, and organizations or churches can stop growing when they become inwardly focused. Some have maintained regular number of personnel or congregation due to lack of sharing. Some do not invite strangers into their circles or zones of influence.

The most important of these barriers is the manner in which the worship service is being conducted. Notice that the weekly worship service is the front door through which people are introduced to church. If not done correctly, it can become a big barrier. In other words, the worship service needs to be energized at all times for the sake of growth and maturity of church members.

### **Strategies for Minimizing Church Growth Barriers**

The Africa Gospel Church leaders and pastors must realize that their existing local churches cannot grow from within. They have to create smaller units, new classes, new services, and many other things in order to invite new people to join and be part of the congregation. The church must decide if it really wants to grow. For a real growth to take place in the church, then the leadership team must seek for personal change. The church must decide if it really wants to grow. “Jealousy, threat, and competition with other churches will not be possible as the congregation understands the larger ministry that all of them are all about.”<sup>305</sup>

Secondly, the role of the leaders and pastors must change. Change only occurs when leaders and pastors are willing to pay the price in order to realize that significant change.

Thirdly, the church leaders and all those who are involved with pastoral leadership in the Africa Gospel Church must learn new additional skills.

The fourth thing that Africa Gospel Church churches need to do in order to break through the growth barriers is that members must be mobilized for ministry. Just as the leadership must

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<sup>305</sup>. Ezra Earl Jones, *Strategies for New Churches*, (New York, Harper & Row Publishers, 1978), 17.



be entrusted to pastors and staff, the ministry must be entrusted to the people in the church. That often requires a change in government surrounding the structure of the whole church.

### **Summary**

The matter about church planting must begin with the definition of who the church planter is. There are a dozen instances of church planting and church planters recorded in the New Testament. Church planting was a day-to-day activity in the first-century Judea, Samaria, Asia Minor, or Europe. Paul is depicted as the church planter who did a lot of church planting in accordance with his role. During those days of Paul, church planting was part and parcel of the ministry of evangelism and pastoral care. Many of the apostles named in the New Testament were involved with church planting. “Several dimensions of apostolic ministry fit well with the tasks involved with church planting: pioneering, envisioning, and breaking new ground, team leadership, and cross-cultural missionary activity.”<sup>306</sup> Hence a clear explanation about who the church planter is as illustrated below.

Church planters need to know their strengths and weaknesses. This awareness of self is what the Africa Gospel Church leaders realized as a necessity and worthy for the sake of being sustained in the ministry. Some of them are still remembered today because of their creativity and flexibility in the ministry. A good number of them are blessed with the gift of perseverance as well as the spirit of team building. Ultimately, God is calling his servants to be church planters. “Does church planting positively affect the growth of the church? New churches have both a higher growth rate and a higher conversion growth rate.”<sup>307</sup>

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306. Stuart Murray, *Planting Churches in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century : A Guide for Those who want Fresh Perspectives and New Ideas for Creating Congregations* (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2010), 165.

307. Rainer, 206.

Church planting is a Biblical mandate which has simply been adopted by the Africa Gospel Church. It is significantly practiced and understood as essential to God's purpose of salvation and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. "If the church is at the heart of God's work, we need not be embarrassed about making it the heart of mission."<sup>308</sup> This is to say that the Great Commission entails church planting. The Africa Gospel Church is a church that was founded of the essentials of the Great Commission. It has really adhered to the command to baptize and the command to teach obedience to all that Christ commanded. Christ calls his followers to and sends them out to go and make disciples who will in turn obey him and all that he has said. Matthew 16:18 states the will of Christ regarding the church: "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."<sup>309</sup>

### **Church Planting Strategies**

Now here are some of the effective pastoral leadership strategies useful for empowering church leaders in order to be able to leverage their gifts and indeed maximize the potential of the Africa Gospel Church. Leaders would have to agree on the vision and values. There are times when leaders are supposed to be set aside so that they can spend reasonable time in making decisions on how to run the church. "The motivation for planting a new church should be considered with extreme carefulness. A number of factors must be pondered, not the least of which is whether a call to church planting is evident."<sup>310</sup> The Bishop and other top leaders may

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308. Ibid.

309. Ibid., 21.

310. Hozell C. Francis, *Church Planting in the African-American Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 25.

need to clarify vision and values and steps to implement systems that would advance the church through the next steps toward a healthy church growth.

Seeking for unity in the church is quite as important as other factor for church planting and growth. The church leadership and management should try to avoid conflicts as much as possible. In a sense every leader must be held responsible for their ministry roles. Delegation of duties is recommendable. This is a situation as well as a tradition that the Africa Gospel Church leaders have maintained since the birth of the church whereby leaders are given ownership, and responsibilities. In addition every leader has been responsible and accountable for team building, setting up goals and direction, and in making sure that all church affairs are drained down to members for the sake of awareness.

The pastoral leadership is given a challenge to invest their time in the future rather than urgent needs, to catch the vision and hold onto it. It is also a matter of exploring open opportunities. Culture is changing, people, families, communities are changing, and so do the church. In the application of biblical role models as adaptable strategies one ought to rediscover Paul's church planting strategies. "Whatever is effective is whatever works in a given situation. Effective leaders find and use the style that is best for considerable importance and will become more significant in the future."<sup>311</sup> Making disciples was one of Paul's strategic focuses. Paul was called to be a missionary but he did a lot of church planting in often location-based institutions to a greater extent than he did in making disciples. Planting churches was a natural outflow of what the call of Paul was - making disciples. The art of making disciples would bring a gathering in one place where of course churches were formed.

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311. Lewis, 35.

The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership as well as other churches understands and needs to focus their attention on making disciples who will be used to build a local church for discipleship is the heart of mission. “We teach, or mentor, with Jesus’ authority, not our own.”<sup>312</sup> Where disciples are being made, there must be a transformation of community people and their environment. “Identify emerging leaders, invest in them, give them kingdom responsibilities, and coach them into effectiveness.”<sup>313</sup> In Acts 13-21 one reads that Paul and his co-workers established the first church planting movement and surely they demonstrated a church planting method that was cheap and flexible.

Paul put a lot of workers as church elders from among the local elders he had encountered (Ephesians 4:11-16). Paul was personally driven by the goal as he told the Galatians church that he was in the pains of childbirth until Christ in formed in the lives of people (Galatians 4:19). According to Paul, the spiritual gifts that God had given to individuals were for the purpose of perfecting other saints, the work of ministry, and edifying the body of Christ. He intended that all men should come in the unity of the faith, knowledge of the son of God, perfect man, and to the fullness Christ.

Paul had a message in all of his letters referring to the centrality of Christ, the cross, and the pure gospel which was the foundation on which the ministry was built. He challenged the church at the time and the church of today to keep the same message of the cross burning as indicated in I Corinthians 3:11: “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in

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312. George Patterson and Richard Scoggins, *Church Multiplication Guide (Revised): The Miracle of Church Reproduction*, (Pasadena, California, William Carey Library, 2002), 46.

313. Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 138.

all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.”<sup>314</sup>

While he was in the business of witnessing, making disciples, and planting churches, Paul also had set up a personal pattern of doing ministry. This was a good example for other fellow believers in Christ to follow in their endeavors of carrying the message of the cross beyond their physical boundaries. “Disciplers love new people into the fellowship.”<sup>315</sup> Paul was charged with the awareness that every action he took was going to constitute a clear example to the new converts and was willing to make sacrifices in order to accomplish it. In today’s church, the pastor is expected to invest significant time preparing for a major message to the congregation and non-believers as well. He spent time teaching people in the homes, and in small groups. The secret of his success in ministry was that he believed God was alive and active in the affairs of his people. “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed” (Acts 14:23). “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).<sup>316</sup>

In many organizations, there are one or more people who are responsible for managing the welfare and performance of everyone within the organization. This is the work of overseeing programs and setting up policies would affect everyone associated with the organization and it can be referred to as personnel management or human resources management. The function of personnel manager begins with staffing process focused on placing individuals with the right skills in the right position within the organization. Financial management is a big issue to Africa

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314. I Cor. 3:13.

315. Charles Mylander, *Secrets for Growing Churches*, (New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979), 70.

316. Ac. 20:32.

Gospel Church pastoral leadership endeavors. The church should be strong enough in financial management in order to keep its ministries alive and growing. The pastoral leadership strategies ought to be effective in the creation of wealth for the church. The main purpose of the missionaries of the World Gospel Mission had the brightest idea of establishing indigenous churches which are self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-reliant. Financial management would involve financial planning. “If there is an activity that provides us with a glimpse of the heart of God, it is sending.”<sup>317</sup> The management needs to ensure that enough funding is available at the right time to meet the needs of the congregation. The leadership lays more emphasis on the use of finances through its financial control system. However, many a church leader can find it difficult to talk about money. Pastors list many reasons why: they don’t want to offend people by talking about it too much; they are reluctant or uncomfortable because giving pays their salary; they know that people are struggling in bad financial times.

However, leadership is essential to fund the ministry of the church, not simply salaries. There is a pastoral responsibility to address an issue which touches people’s lives every single day; helping people grow in generosity is critical to their spiritual development. To live out God’s purpose as a church requires resources. “The church is eternally relevant; it is essential in God’s purpose. The church is a vital part of his creation.”<sup>318</sup> To become reality, a vision needs not only energy and creativity, but also money. It should be kept in mind why people are being challenged to grow in financial stewardship. In thinking and speaking about giving, the vision should be kept in the forefront. People need a spiritual context for their financial lives. If money is spoken of more often, they can be helped to develop a way to think about their resources, apart

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317. John M. Bailey, *Pursuing the Mission of God in Church Planting: The Missional Church in North America*, (Alpharetta, GA, Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), 69

318. Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting: A Practical Journey*, Neosho, Missouri, Church Growth International, 1994.

from funding the church budget. In today's money-minded world, this is an essential part of pastoral ministry.

### **The Price of Leadership**

Though the pastoral leadership strategies of the Africa Gospel Church have been exclusively effective, leadership, growth, and expansion has not been without cost. Leaders have paid tremendous costs in their effort to spread the message of salvation both within and without their communities. Citing the scripture in Luke 14:28-30, one can learn about some incredible advice that Jesus Christ gave concerning paying the cost to accomplish a goal. He said, "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"<sup>319</sup> No one wants to lay a foundation of his house and leaves it unfinished. Obviously neighbors and passersby will ridicule him. This illustration does not only apply to buildings and structures, but it also applies to the AGC evangelism strategy. "God calls and sends missionary-evangelists in and through the churches."<sup>320</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church has always been on the mission of winning souls for Christ. When one soul is won to Christ, pastors and leaders would embark on discipleship, assimilation, and membership processes when the individual is grounded in faith and matured in spirit. To accomplish this goal the founding fathers and leaders did suffer a lot of pain and costs. Most of them put themselves in positions to be stretched with the work of ministry without counting the cost in monetary form. They were personally willing to pay the cost of taking the gospel to wherever God had called them regardless of the cost. Ministry has grown stronger and wider despite financial and human costs. "Leadership is worth the risk because the goals extend beyond

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319. Luke, 14:30.

320. David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-culturally: North America and Beyond*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2005), 98.

material gain or personal advancement. By making the lives of people around you better, leadership provides meaning in life. It creates purpose.”<sup>321</sup> The founding fathers of Africa Gospel Church were driven by a larger sense of purpose while using their gifts to help the church, families and communities thrive. The pastoral leadership of the church has remained as effective as possible due to the personal sacrifices made with a purpose. Christians are more likely to witness and invite if they have a vision of what people can become that goes deeper than accepting our beliefs, obeying our rules, or conforming to our styles.

Secondly, the Africa Gospel Church is where it is today because leaders and pastors persisted in spreading the gospel through emotional costs. Leading in the church was one of the most emotionally draining things they had to go through. Their hearts and motives were challenged by resistance from the native people. There were some places where evangelists were not welcomed. Instead, they were attacked and some were subjected to pain and suffering.

On most days, they felt overwhelmed and unworthy of their calling, but they were willing to pay the price of witnessing emotionally. The other cost that the Africa Gospel Church leaders had to pay was the physical cost. They were not lazy leaders and pastors. The idea is that those who had worked with missionaries knew that it was going to take them blood, sweat, and tears in order to be developed to their fullest leadership potential. Leaders like Bosuben were beaten by an area chief who never welcomed him to preach at a substation in his location. Mr. Bosuben insisted on going to the station regardless of threats and whippings he had received. The church could not be where it is today if it were not for other people to suffer and endure pain for its course. “Our commitment to God never assures us encouragement from any human source. The greater our vision, the more we may have to stand utterly without human support. Others have

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321. Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 3.



done it before us. Men and women have dreamed great dreams and seen them come true despite obstacles and opposition.”<sup>322</sup>

Most of the leaders were spiritually attacked in their lives. They experienced spiritual warfare due to cultural beliefs and African traditional regions. Some of them encountered a lot of temptations but they were willing to fight and pay the price as godly leaders. Let alone the above mentioned costs, these leaders also suffered personal cost. There is a personal cost when it comes to leadership. Personal cost will never cease to affect anybody even today’s church. When Jesus was in the garden undergoing much sufferings and pain he still fully surrendered to the Father and endured the pain unto the cross. The same leaders have really set a good example of caring for the church of Christ with costs. “Leadership arouses passion. The exercise and even the study of leadership stir feeling because leadership engages our values. Indeed, the term itself is value-laden. When we call for leadership in our organizations and politics, we call for something we prize.”<sup>323</sup> Galatians 6:9 is a promise which any church leaders should take to heart as leaders. They should not give up or throw away their witnessing tools. At times, the price is incredibly high but pastors and church leaders have been asked to pay the price that Christ himself had paid. His mission and assignment was much higher, and it brought him joy to fulfill it.

Healthy church growth and church planting come about as a result of all believers understanding the costs associated with the message of the cross. Most of the factors that have made the Africa Gospel Church to grow and extend beyond physical boundaries are not because leaders understood the joy that comes through paying the cost. Churches in the rural and urban

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322. Michael Youssef, *The Leadership Styles of Jesus: How to Develop the Leadership Qualities of The Good Shepherd* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1982), 125.

323. Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 13.

areas have experienced growth over the years because pastors and leaders have preached and lived a clear vision. “Church Growth may therefore be seen as a facilitator of the communication of the Spirit with a view to a more rapid and consistent increase in the numbers of new believers organized into churches or brought into existing churches by the application of systematic research, planning, and execution.”<sup>324</sup> As such, the Africa Gospel Church leadership understood church growth as part and parcel of the ongoing effort to establish the indigenous churches with strong Christian faith where churches have not been planted.

Leaders and people knew where the church was supposed to be going. These leaders and those who have led the church in the last ten decades have been leaders with passion. Some have worked hard for years without any established salary. Not all pastors today are receiving any standardized monthly salary. Some are blessed of God by surrendering unreserved services day and night. They are mostly dependent on God to bless and grow the church. By prayer and willingness to take risks they have accomplished a lot for the church. “While the Savior wants us to trust him to provide for our basic needs, he wants us also to plan our finances (Luke 14:28-30). He uses a combination of both our faith and planning in providing abundantly for us. In planning for their finances, churches should be aware of the various financial sources available to them.”<sup>325</sup> Obedience to the Word of God and following the Great Commandment and the Great Commission is the key to leading, planting, and growing the church to a healthy status. Every believer and participant is called to fulfill the mission of reaching people for God with the message of the cross. “For Jesus, the church would be the nerve ends through which he could

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324. Wilbert R. Shenk, *Exploring Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 255.

325. Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 50.

touch all generations. It would be the continuing expression of his humanity, of his concern for all human beings, of his relationship to them.”<sup>326</sup> They should be like Jesus in serving others rather than expecting the church to be their servant all the time for service means taking up our cross and following Him.

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326. C.B. Hugue, *I Want to Grow my Church* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1977), 24.

## CONCLUSION

This Thesis Project concludes with a flash-back into the roots of the Africa Gospel Churches which competently live today as an independent denomination. Its pastoral leadership owes a lot of gratitude to the World Gospel Mission (WGM), an interdenominational Christian holiness missionary agency sitting in Marion, Indiana, United States. This is an organization which has been aligned with the Wesleyan Holiness tradition of Protestantism for decades. The heart of this organization was the promotion of holiness and the proclamation of scriptural here and beyond. Several smaller denominations have decided to designate the WGM as their official agent for sending foreign missionaries to the fields. And this is how and why the effort of that sending agent gave birth to the Africa Gospel Church in 1932.

Africa Gospel Church has grown healthy and strong through her endeavors to being a self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating church. It has remarkably grown and developed since the early 1970s. No doubt the pastoral leadership of this church has been blessed with wise, visionary and foresight men and women who have stood the odds and led the church by strengthening various arms of ministries and departments. Every one of them has been indebted with some key strategies for effective pastoral leadership of the entire denomination. A run-down of these strategies for effective pastoral leadership is as discussed below;

**Mission** is the backbone of the entire denomination. Hence the purposes of this church are simply to disciple and train its members to be active, committed, action oriented disciples of Christ as well as to spread the Gospel where Jesus is not well known. Most of all it is to encourage its members to live lives along the pattern of Jesus and to experience and express God's holiness in their daily lives. This is a church which believes that both Old and New

Testaments constitute the divinely inspired Word of God, inerrant in the originals, and the final authority for life and faith.

Jesus Christ did mission work. He is the sole model of faith and practice of missions that the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership if to effectively follow. Its strategic leadership goes by the words of Andy Stanley who in his book, “In The Next Generation, said; “The more you know about leadership, the faster you grow as a leader, and the farther you are able to go as a leader.”<sup>327</sup> Jesus Christ understood what it means to be a human or to serve out in the field. Our Lord served and taught, just as He calls them to go to serve and teach. In this instance the Africa Gospel Church is commendable for carrying on the mission of Christ. The members, pastors and leaders have been proclaiming the Gospel message outside of their culture and physical boundaries. This is a common understanding of what fulfillment of the Great Commission would mean to them.

However, the church should not triumph in the sense that it is mission-oriented and has succeeded in sending out many local missionaries to the fields. This Thesis offers some suggestions on how to do mission effectively. It is missions to learn a foreign language and witness Jesus Christ to a people. The local churches should continue promoting the primary purpose of mission of reaching the world for Christ by increasing resources and personnel. There is need to develop a career path to missionary calling which may entail training and experience. Church leaders should invest more to reach the world based on the size of the mission budget. Fear of the imminent dangers in mission fields should not hold back the pastoral leadership from support and promoting missions.

**Evangelism and Outreaches** is also an effective pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church. This is the ultimate call of every Christian to be an evangelist. “To not witness is to sin

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327. Sylvia, 179.

because we know we ought to be doing it”<sup>328</sup> (James 4:17). The local church members can’t rely upon their pastor or church to do it because they are the church. It is their call and their responsibility. They are ministers of reconciliation, and they will be judged for their faithfulness in that ministry. The ministry starts with a burden for seeing the lost come to Christ. If that doesn’t exist, they must pray for it to become a reality in their hearts.

The evangelist must have a testimony that gives him credibility before the unsaved. If he does not live as one revived, no one will care to listen, and the listeners will be kept from some of the light that could have come their way. The evangelist must be a person of prayer. He must be pleading with God for opportunities to share the gospel, and he must be interceding on behalf of particular souls. He knows that salvation cannot be manipulated, and he must put trust in God to release some of the captives of the devil and hence rendering this strategy as effective as possible. Above all, evangelists must know the message of the gospel. He knows that God is holy, that man is a sinner, and that Christ is the sacrifice for sin.

**Educational systems** have been most effective tool used by the Africa Gospel Church in assisting the learners to develop a personal relationship with God. “Christian education is a reverent attempt to discover the divinely ordained process by which individuals grow in Christ-likeness and to work with that process.”<sup>329</sup> It is the manner of equipping the learners with knowledge, skills and attitudes on various ways of worshipping God. Through education systems the leadership has contributed a lot to the spiritual development of the members and individuals. In this regard the mission and the purpose which called the church to teach should continue in order to produce more servant leaders who may be effective in shaping and transforming people

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328. James 4:17.

329. William Yount, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church, 2nd Ed.*, (Nashville, Tennessee, B & H Publishing Groups, 2008), 6

and communities in life-giving ways of faith. “The mission set itself to combat ignorance, illiteracy, and superstition through Christ-centered schools.”<sup>330</sup> And so the mission of the Kenya Highlands Evangelical University, Kaboson Bible College, Theological Education by Extension, Department of Christian Religious Education should be improved and continued as; to advance the Kingdom of God and serve society through promotion of a Christo-centric education within the Wesleyan tradition by integrating faith with scholarship and inspiring servant leaders.

**Leadership structure** of the Africa Gospel Church as a denomination is pyramidal in nature and shape. “Everything rises and falls on leadership.”<sup>331</sup> 4- Sylvia, 97. Pastoral leaders are always democratically chosen every year within the structure to take positions of leadership. These are leaders who are indeed godly servants who own and understand the vision of the church. From the high office of Bishop and his assistant, departmental, regional, area, district, and local church pastors are men and women who are heavenly called to stand in the gap.

For the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership to be more sound and effective, the entire leadership structure should be directly geared to arousing, more engaging and satisfying the needs and accomplishing the motives of its followers. All should be able to manage an environment of conflict, competition, and any intruding elements as they forge forward to mutually sharing a common vision. This includes but not limited to preparation, envisioning, initiating, assessing, and responding where duty calls. Prayer is the key to start the power engine of God that enables them to do his work. The entire pastoral leadership should re-emphasize the

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330. Fish, 234.

331. Sylvia, 97.

aspect and the role of servant leadership for a real successful leadership is rooted in the life of Jesus Christ, as; “He took a towel.”<sup>332</sup> (John 13:2-5).

**Church planting** is another effective strategy for pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church. The current leaders need to look for more tremendous opportunity for growth bot in the urban and rural communities. They should spend time analyzing the size and shape of such communities. “Most denominations had endorsed church planting as a legitimate component of their mission strategies.”<sup>333</sup> Stuart Murray, *Planting Churches in the 21st Century; A Guide for those who Want Fresh Perspectives and New Ideas for Creating Congregations: A Framework for Practitioners*, (Scottsdale, PA, 2010), 13. There are some realities that can block the development of strategies for the planting and growth of local churches. Such realities must be evaluated in each context and I suggest here a ministerial self-examination if they may be involved in a vision of Church Planting or growth of a local church.

Health is crucial to the life of the church, leaders, members, and communities. Tenwek Hospital, located in Bomet, Kenya, is a ministry of World Gospel Mission and Africa Gospel Church. The hospital, which started as a single-nurse dispensary in 1937, is now a 260-bed hospital and training center. In addition to being the area’s primary hospital, Tenwek serves as a referral hospital that receives patients from throughout the country. Every participant in the mission of Jesus Christ ought to be; physically, spiritually, emotionally, socially, relationally, mentally and academically so as to be able to grow a healthy church. Nobody can respond to locally felt needs of other people unless they are living healthy lives. With health and wellness idea in minds of pastoral leaders, everybody should seek to meet spiritual and physical needs through compassionate healthcare, spiritual ministry, and training for service. These needs are

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332. Jn. 13:2-5

333. Murray,13.



met through the skills of medical workers and the service of hospital chaplains, each of whom are available to visit and pray with patients and their families. They are also accomplished through these programs.

**Compassion and Stewardship.** Last but not least is the effective strategy of compassion and stewardship. The church should be able to provide answers to challenges faced by the country and the church. Today's challenges are deeply rooted in poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS which require the effort of the entire church. Note that the growth of a local church is the natural byproduct of its spiritual health which is an intimate relationship to God.

Since the Africa Gospel Church belongs to Christ, He has a unique growth plan and purpose for each local church that makes up His body. Christ, not man, makes the local church grow. Man has a responsibility of caring for the church of Christ and keeps it healthy. Christ is still calling his children to labor in a number of overlooked fertile harvest fields: growth in corporate prayer and patience; growth in heartfelt, genuine worship, numbers, congregational diversity, discipleship, and empowerment and ministry partnerships.

Perhaps a clear conclusion of this material can be drawn by looking at what leadership really entails. In essence, leadership begins by examining the person individually as a leader. A person may seek to identify certain characteristics of personality or style that other leaders possess. One may call somebody in a certain position or status a leader. However, the most common assumption should be disregarded, that influencing others and acquiring followers depend primarily on leaders' personalities, gifts, or abilities. It may sound appropriate to say leaders make decisions and get things done. The best way to explain it may be, "Leadership involves a person, group, or organization who shows the way in an area of life - whether in the

short or in the long-term - and in doing so, both influences and empowers enough people to bring about change in that area.”<sup>334</sup>

Pastoral leadership is a central concern in any local church, community or organization. “As already noted, the issue of leadership influences attempt to understand the chains of command and lines of authority.”<sup>335</sup> Paul’s concerns about the manner in which the church was conducting itself in an orderly way and the members were being cared for and guided. Jesus came that the church might adopt his way of leadership. The Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership was developed in a way as to be Christ-centered leadership. Jesus is but a role model for every church leadership. He is a perfect example of serving, following, facilitating, teaching, modeling, and envisioning. If the church of today wants to be strategically effective, then it should emulate the leadership of Jesus. “In evangelism today it is the general rule, not the exception, that workers consider the job done when the person says he trusts Christ for salvation.”<sup>336</sup>

As a strategist, Jesus had a sense of destiny, promises and hope, as well as a global goal. He promoted kingdom values and taught about the kingdom yet to come. His vision for the church was real. He showed his strength of character through external power and inner authority. He had the power to fulfill the assignment from the Father.

Biblical Basis for developing Pastoral Leadership is directly linked to seven steps for Effective Leadership Development. Usually, quite a number of local churches are not well prepared to fill vacancies in their leadership roles. In fact, only a few of them or rather some of

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334. Robert Banks and Bernice M. Ledbetter, *Reviewing Leadership: A Christian Evaluation of Current Approaches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 16.

335. *Ibid.*, 36

336. Rogers S. Greenway, Ed., *The Pastor-Evangelist: Preacher, Model, and Mobilizer for Church Growth*, (Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1987), 119.

the urban churches have programs in place to immediately fill leadership positions. Developing effective leadership using a consistent talent management program at all levels across the Africa Gospel Church can return significant growth values. To identify, attract, fill, and retain corporate leadership talent, this church needs to focus on hiring strategies, employee development, and career and succession planning. Leadership development programs begin with alignment of leadership development to pastoral leadership strategy and follow any steps necessary to bring success in healthy growth and church planting. Such steps towards church growth should be focused on fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. “We believe the next few decades could see an explosion of holistic ministry that will draw millions to personal faith in Jesus Christ, restore broken people to wholeness, and renew entire neighborhoods and societies.”<sup>337</sup>

II Timothy 2:2 is about team work. Teamwork is important because it organizes ideas and skills from several sources and the general leadership into one. Leaders as well as pastors have achieved greater things faster and more efficiently through the process of teamwork. Delegation of duties is another characteristic of church’s pastoral leadership strategy. This refers to a contract by which the leadership of the church agrees to pass on some of their duties to their juniors. “God calls us to generous giving, cheerful giving, giving that flows abundantly and richly out of one’s heart and soul. It is to help you and other people grow forward the spirit of generosity.”<sup>338</sup>

As this piece of material winds down to its finish line, it is not regrettable to mention the need to re-examine the vision, core values, planning, and purpose of the Africa Gospel Church. The pioneering missionaries left the whole denomination in the strong hands of the indigenous

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337. Ronald J. Sider, Philip N. Plson, and Heidi Bolland Unruh, *Churches That Make a Difference: Reaching your Community with Good News and Good Work*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), 14.

338. Kennon L. Callahan, *Giving and Stewardship in an Effective Church: A Guide for Every Member*, (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992), 49.

leadership. These leaders have been able to let the candle burn for decades. A flashback into their times of need in the past are long gone. Each of them has taken individual, family, community or corporate responsibility in making sure that the church prospers and grows healthy for the sake of the Gospel of Christ.

The strategic pastoral leadership of Africa Gospel Church has been effective so far in regard to good leadership. It looks like most of them who are steering the church forward right now and their predecessors possess good leadership qualities. For decades, the whole congregation has enjoyed the leadership of men and women with a vision. These are leaders who knew where they were supposed to go and how they could motivate others to believe in the same vision. They were and are still men of great wisdom. They are the servants of the Lord who can be strategic, wise and perceptive.

Among the leaders are those who are more passionate people than others who may be serving in another location or denomination. Keenly they are intensely obsessed with what they are focused on. Good leaders also have compassion for their supporters who are mainly pastors and staff in their local church. While these leaders have great goals to accomplish, they have been effective in offering consistent care for individual and families.

Last but not least, the Africa Gospel Church pastoral leadership is effective because of the good leaders who have always been very captivating. They are great communicators - people who are very comfortable with public speaking and in inspiring others who are in the ministry and service of Jesus Christ. They have learned to be persistent and determined in attaining their goals. They also have integrity and people have found them reliable, and as such are dedicated to them. More so, they are disciplined servants of the Lord. "The development of members as

informed and effective workers and leaders may be a determining motivation for a participative approach to particular situations, since people learn and grow through involvement.”<sup>339</sup>

The Africa Gospel Church has existed for over seven decades because of Christ who has done so much to preserve it for his glory and the production of his work. He was, he is and will always be the force or power behind the healthy growth and prosperity of the Africa Gospel Church. The church exists for today’s generation in order for new believers to be in Christ, to be his people, his hands, and feet. The church of today started with the story of Abraham and continues to the unknown future. The covenant of Abraham represents one of the main themes of the Bible. That God has filled and blessed the entire Africa Gospel Church with believers who are called to share the message of the cross as a primary purpose for its existence. Leaders as well as pastors believe that they have been blessed so as to be a blessing to others. This church was born and has continued to live by the people God chose and the response they have learned to give. Jeremiah 31:31-34 states, “I will be your God and you will be my people.”<sup>340</sup> This is the relationship to which God calls his people - first to himself and then to others. God is our God and all are called to be his people. That is the backbone of the Africa Gospel Church effective pastoral leadership strategies.

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339. Arthur Merrihew Adams, *Effective Leadership for Today’s Church* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1978), 54.

340. Jeremiah 31:31-34.

## APPENDIX A

List of Moderators/Bishops since 1961

List of Moderators/Bishops since 1961

1.1961-1964. Bishop: A

2.1964-1968 Bishop: B

3. 1969 Bishop: C

4. 1995-2011 Bishop: D

5. 2011- Bishop: E

## APPENDIX B

### **Current AGC Local Missionaries and their Locations**

The role of the World Gospel Mission was three-in-one. Their over urging needs was the spread of the gospel following the Great Commission of Jesus Christ of taking the gospel the ends of the earth. So they came to Africa with the purpose of establishing churches. First they found settlements, loved the indigenous people and gave them the message of the gospel. From there they went ahead and started establishing churches in several substations. Churches, schools and hospitals were three major landmarks initiated by the early missionaries. The local missionaries were trained and sent to different parts of the country with one mission's goal of serving the Lord within a monoculture and cross cultural missions. Today, there are quite a number of the local missionaries of the Africa Gospel Church who are serving in different localities both across the country and outside Kenya. They are doing an incredible ministry.

## APPENDIX C

### **LOCAL CHURCH IS A BODY OF BELIEVERS**

The book of Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18 simply describe the church as one body of believers in Jesus Christ. It is both an organization as well as an organism (Ephesians 4:16, Colossians 2:20). The local church is the focal point of God's plan for displaying his glory to the nations, reflecting the character of God. These are some of the special marks of a healthy church which may include prayer and fellowship. Relationship is the most unifying factor in the local churches of the Africa Gospel Church. This renders believers as indispensable and indestructible. When it comes to the standards of a local church, members are categorized as council of elders performing church ordinances. Within the body of believers are pastors and leaders who perform other functions as; preaching which expounds what Scripture says in a particular passage, carefully explaining its meaning and applying it to the congregation. Africa Gospel Church is commitment to hearing God's Word and to recovering the centrality of it in our worship.

One other standard of a local church is the system of government and doctrine. This involves the manner in which resources are utilized to benefit the body of Christ as head of the church. The Holy Spirit guides the church through the elders and aides them in fulfilling the following responsibilities;

Teaching-Paul charges Titus to teach what is in accord with sound doctrine (Titus 2:1). The entire pastoral leadership is effective in emulation Paul by being concerned about teaching and commitment to Biblical theology-knowledge of a Biblical God. The gospel is the heart of the Africa Gospel Church which has painted an image of a healthy church. It is the good news that has converted many people to Christ through evangelism. The body of believers of Africa Gospel Church presents the gospel openly and leaves the converting to God.



The membership of Africa Gospel Church should reflect a living commitment to a local church in attendance, giving, prayer and service; otherwise it is meaningless, worthless to exist as a church without performing such services. Church discipline gives parameters to church membership. Each local church actually has a biblical responsibility to judge the life and teaching of its leaders and even of its members. Every member is up to promoting Christian Discipleship and Growth- not simply with growing numbers, but with growing members under a strong pastoral leadership.

## APPENDIX D

## SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE

Philip Barar Ngasura

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Even though each leader or pastor has a different way of running the church, my study and research indicates that they're following the same process of growth that is relevant in their own local communities and culture. The strategic pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church has been effective for decades. The church has grown since its establishment to date in terms of numbers, size and spirituality. These random survey questions sum up the reasons for effective pastoral leadership and spiritual FACTORS for healthy church growth and church planting processes within the AGC.

In the process of building the church of Christ, the survey questions cover areas such as; leadership and Administration, Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship, Education, Spirituality, and membership. The survey consists of 35 questions to be answered by 10 or more church leaders, pastors, and members who are active in ministry. One is supposed to take a careful look at the various ministries and departments, growth and the entire pastoral leadership strategies of the AGC and focus on what is distinctive and unique about the future church planting strategies of the church.

The questions are structured to involve; True or, False, Yes or No, and explain.

The following questions are true or false.

1. Leadership is a challenge to the current leaders and pastors of the Africa Gospel Church, Kenya.



a) True

b) False

10. World Gospel Mission has ministered with the Africa Gospel Church for decades through preaching, teaching, and healing ministries.

a) True

b) False

11. The AGC pastoral leadership is not restricted to within the church walls only, but it is equally effective in the communities.

a) True

b) False

12. Some of the AGC members are called to experience and express God's holiness in their daily lives and not to put their faith into action in practical ways in their society, being salt and light.

a) True

b) False

13. God does not want the local churches of the Africa Gospel Church to grow in numbers.

a) True

b) False

14. Leaders and pastors throughout the AGC as a denomination are not supposed to address pressing social ills with the positive message of faith in Christ.

a) True

b) False

15. Kenya Highlands Evangelical University was established with a purpose of advancing the kingdom of God. Which one of the following is not the purpose of this University?

a) To offer holistic education

b) To train men and women who are called to be leaders and pastors

c) Not to inspire servant leaders

d) To serve the society through promotion of a Christo-centric education

16. How is the pastoral leadership of the AGC intentionally planting churches? Select all that apply.;

- a) Sending out church planters      b) Training planters      c) Funding planters

17. Which one of the following four items is not the mission of the Africa Gospel Church?

- a) Education      b) Excommunication      c) Evangelism      d) Edification

18. Church growth and expansion has been possible due to financial support from the following sources. Which one is not a valid source of financial support to the church?

- a) All the AGC local churches  
b) National and International Partners  
c) The Government of Kenya  
d) Income generating projects

19. The Africa Gospel Church has sustained a healthy church growth and expansion for decades because of its strong ministries. Which one is not one of the ministries of the church?

- a) Education      b) Evangelism      c) Building churches      d) Proselytization

20. Which of the following leadership styles is not practiced by the AGC leaders and pastors?

- a) Engaging      b) Autocratic/ authoritarian  
c) Participative or democratic      d) Task-oriented and relationship-oriented

21. Which one of the statements listed below is not one of what the Africa Gospel Church believes in?

- a) That man did not fall into sin through his acts of disobedience

b) Both the Old and the New Testaments constitute the divinely inspired word of God

b) That there is only one God who eternally exists.

c) That the church is the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22. The World Gospel Mission sent missionaries to Kenya in the late 1800s to;

a) Establish Churches

b) Exploit its natural resources

c) Educate the locals

d) Provide medical services.

23. The local churches play a large role in AGC's ability to continually grow and transform in three of the following ways. Which one is not part of their role?

a) Many local Christians work with AGC

b) Sending other members to other denominations

c) Lending their skills and support in various ministries

d) Provide a large amount of financial support for AGC and mission work.

24. Which one of the following is not the reason why the AGC should have a strategic leadership? A strategic leadership involves;

a) The task of planning strategies, wisely choosing the right path, and making valuable changes

b) Establishing the relationships, training, trusting and empowering others for ministry.

c) Encouraging and guiding followers in the accomplishment of the team goals.

d) Strategic leadership does not deal with vision.

25. Some of the reasons for church planting by the Africa Gospel Church are listed below. Which one is not?

- a) There are many unreached people within the local communities.
- b) New churches reach lost people better than any other form of evangelism.
- c) Old churches do not need new members.
- d) The older the churches grow, the lesser evangelistic they become.

26. List at least four characteristics of the Africa Gospel Church's top leadership?

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27. Provide some of the reasons why the pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church should continue to plant 100 more churches within the next ten years.

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28. In your own opinion do you think the leadership team of the AGC is making the right decisions towards achieving a healthy growth of the church?

If so, briefly explain in your own terms.

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29. An effective strategy is necessary to see your ministry direction (mission and vision) become a reality. If you believe this to be true, provide supportive facts.

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30. If the AGC is a mission-oriented organization by teaching and practice, is it also reaching other communities across the tribal and cultural boundaries? If yes, give examples.

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31. The Africa Gospel Church is one of the fastest growing denominations in Kenya.

Rate this statement as;

a) Strongly disagree   b) Disagree   c) Agree   d) Strongly agree

32. The congregations of the Africa Gospel Church believe that the new leadership is stronger than the old one because most of the leaders are young and highly educated.

a) Strongly disagree   b) Disagree   c) Agree   d) Strongly agree

33. The pastoral leadership of the Africa Gospel Church is effective because of the strong heads of departments such as; education, evangelism, missions, medical, compassion, men and women, youth, etc.

a) Strongly disagree   b) Disagree   c) Agree   d) Strongly agree

34. The missionaries came to establish a church organization in Africa as a self-evangelizing and, self-evangelizing, self-supporting entity.

a) Strongly disagree   b) Disagree   c) Agree   d) Strong agree

35. The AGC leaders are really focusing their time, money, leadership, prayer, and knowledge behind the things that will produce life change and community impact.

a) Strongly disagree   b) Disagree   c) Agree   d) Strongly agree

Thank you so much for your participation in answering these questions. Your answers shall be kept as confidential as possible and will be used only for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of this research. If you have any comments about this questionnaire, you are free to write them down on the space provided below:

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My purpose:

*" To be taught and theologically learn as a person, developed in knowledge and values, gain skills and be transformed into the image of Christ through education process by Christ-centered instructors so that I may professionally and personally grow and to mature spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially, and to be able to impact my family, community and the whole world through the message of Christ. I am pursuing Doctor of Ministry Degree as a calling to glorify God by fulfilling the Great Commission through the ministry of evangelism in order to lead people to receive Christ as their Lord and personal Savior and grow the church of Christ. I am also seeking for more training in Clinical Pastoral Education (Residency) at the University of Virginia Health System. My purpose is to be approved as a man who is capable of providing excellent Pastoral Care Services to patients, families and staff in any hospital setting."*

**PERSONAL**

Date of Birth: April 12, 1969  
Parents: Peter Ngasura Marindany and Chepngetich Marindany  
Country of Origin: Kenya  
Married: Baciliza Barar, August 30, 1996  
Children: Ebenezer Barar-09/19/1997, Hep-siba Barar-01/27/1999, Eliezer Barar  
11/29/2005, Joanna Barar-01/18/2007

**EDUCATIONAL**

-I attended a Public Primary School in Narok, Kenya in 1976-1983 (Certificate of Primary Education)  
-Secondary/High School, Kaboson and Narok in 1984-1989 (Kenya Secondary Certificate of Education, and Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education).  
-B.Th., Kenya Highlands Evangelical University, 1996  
-M.Div., (Church Ministries), Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008  
-CPE, Unit 1, (Chaplaincy), University of Virginia, 2012  
-D.Min., (Leadership and Management), Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, \_\_\_\_\_

**MINISTRY AND EMPLOYMENT**

- i. Year: 1996-1999  
Ilmotiok Africa Gospel Church, Kenya.

- Areas Office Secretary/Accountant/logistics and statistics/Church development
- Area Youth Director
- ii. Year: 1999-2003
  - Melelo High School, Narok District-Kenya
  - Deputy Head teacher in charge of Discipline
  - Chaplain and Christian Union Patron

### **PROFESSIONAL**

Ilmotiok Africa Gospel Church as Pastor/Secretary/Accountant, 1996-1999  
 Melelo High School as Deputy Head Teacher, Chaplain, 1999-2003  
 Ministry of Education Science and Technology as a teacher and administrator, guidance and counseling.

### **EXPERIENCE/VOCATION**

- I. Lynchburg First Church of the Nazarene-2003-2012
  - Pastor, (Church Board)
  - Small Groups Board Member
  - Worship –Usher/Greeter Department
- II. University of Virginia/Centra- Chaplain Intern. 2012.

### **REFERENCES**

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## IRB APPROVAL



The Graduate School at Liberty University

February 11, 2013

Philip K. Barar Ngasura  
IRB Approval 1479.021113: Effective Pastoral Leadership Strategies: Biblical  
Foundations for Leadership and Health Church Growth in the Africa Gospel Church,  
Kenya

Dear Philip,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

**Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.**  
*Professor, IRB Chair*  
**Counseling**

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