

## ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH AND THEIR CHALLENGES IN EKITILAND

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### **Abstract**

*There are so many writings on the topic Ecumenism, some have written on the activities of ecumenical bodies like Christian Association of Nigeria, The Bible Society of Nigeria and some other inter-denominational fellowships like the Full Gospel Business Men fellowship; what their involvement had been in unifying the other denominations and the Christendom. This research is dwelling on the Ecumenical significance of the Anglican Church within the scope of 1966-2012. The Anglican Church by history happened to be the first church in Ekiti Land by implication, she is expected to be a leader even in all ramifications, may be when there is crisis, she should be in position to foster unity and broker peace among the people of God. The vacuum created in Scholarship is what this research is all about to fill. The methods used include historical, descriptive, analytical and comparative approaches. Educational activities, health activities were considered as tools for ecumenism in the hand of the Anglican Church in Ekiti Land. The research made use of primary sources of information, which involved gathering of information from church pamphlets, magazines, brochures and other historical documents of the church and of Ekiti land. Also, secondary sources of information were sought, which are relevant books and theses. As the ecumenical significance of the Anglican Church in Ekiti land is established, it behooves on the church not to relent on her oars but to continually press further in making herself relevant ecumenically the more within the Christendom. Furthermore, it is recommended that the Anglican Church herself should be united internally before taking up the crusade of unifying others. Also, age and maturity should be considered when choosing leaders in the church for these would prompt largeness of heart that would promote ecumenism. These recommendations given would also assist in furthering the study of ecumenism.*

**Keywords:** Ecumenism, significance, Anglican Church.

**Word count:** 299

### **Introduction**

The word Ecumenism is derived from the Greek words *Oikoumene* which means the inhabited earth and *Oikos* which means house.<sup>1</sup> The aim of Ecumenism is to unite all Christian bodies or the branches of Christian churches. On the basis of history, Ecumenism could be traced back to the early Roman Empire.<sup>2</sup> The word

*Oikoumene* is more attributed to living things<sup>3</sup>, it has to be coined and explained in details so as to express the nature of the modern movement of the church which centers at cooperation and unity.<sup>4</sup> The intention of Christians in coming together was conceived by the Lord Jesus Christ, he wants the church to be one in mind, spirit and witness. Although the church of Christ is by nature a single indivisible church<sup>5</sup> but the diversity in unity is to be seen from an essential unity as it was professed in the New Testament. Ecumenism has to do with the dilemma or contradiction between unity and division. It has its concern on the church and the world.<sup>6</sup> Ecumenism cuts across the four cradle marks of the church, that is, one holy, Catholic and Apostolic.

### **History of Ecumenism in Ekitiland**

Unity in Nigerian churches is desirable as it is equally desirable in the land of Ekiti. In pursuance of unity among Christians in Nigeria, the Anglican Church, Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches came together to form a body called and inaugurated as Church Union Committee with a view to having United Church of Nigeria<sup>7</sup>, so did it happen in Ekiti also. In 1965 the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches came together so as to have a Diocese to be created in the name of Ekiti<sup>8</sup>, but unfortunately the plan did not materialize due to selfishness and greediness on the choice of Ven. M.A. Osanyin as the First Bishop. Some other personnel like Bolaji Idowu deemed it fit to be the bishop and so the other two churches pulled out of the arrangement and left the Anglican all alone to face the music.<sup>9</sup>

The struggle continued with the emergence of the Christian Association of Nigeria in the state due to the creation of Ekiti State from Ondo State in 1996. Rev. J.O. Odu was secretary and Rev. D.S. Jesufemi was the chairman<sup>10</sup> and the treasurer was Sir M.A. Ajayi. These set of Executive led the Association from 1996-2000.<sup>11</sup> Christian Association of Nigeria, the Ekiti Chapter had a temporary secretariat at the St. Patrick Catholic Cathedral Church Ado-Ekiti with Monsignor Ogidan leading the Ado-Ekiti local government CAN activities.<sup>12</sup> The Motto of the Christian Association of Nigeria is "That they may be one".

The Christian Association of Nigeria was going on with her activities and Bible Society of Nigeria equally had a very unique contribution to the issues of Ecumenism in Ekiti land. It was also a baby of the creation of Ekiti State. The body had existed in then Old Ondo State that comprised the Ekiti land. At the creation of state, the society was split into two, with the alms of the group that fell into Ekiti land to be left as a formidable group that should take care of the affairs of the society in the state.

Ven. C.A. Ajepe was the chairman that led the society into Ekiti State, while Ven. B.O. Akosile was the first elected chairman of the State Bible Society. In Ekiti, the tenure of Ven. B.O. Akosile was succeeded by that of Ven. G.O. Owoeye<sup>13</sup> and

Ven. R.V.A. Adepoju succeeded him. The present chairman is Pastor Diya Odejide and the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairman is Ven. Dr. S.I. Falode.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Bible Society of Nigeria (BSN)**

The group began in 1804 as the British and foreign society in England.<sup>15</sup> Some Christians in the city of Abeokuta formed an Auxiliary of the society in 1859.<sup>16</sup> Another group or auxiliary within the society was also formed in Lagos in the year 1864. With these pioneers of the society in the country so many other auxiliaries were springing up within the environs, this gave room for the auxiliary in Lagos to become a Bible Society “Area”. The word “Area” is usually used to represent a headquarters and by the year 1919, the First Bible House was built in Lagos. The primary aim or focus of the society is to make the availability of the Bible easier, the Bible should be very easy and cheap to get for any believer or any reader that could be interested in the Bible because at that time, copies of the Bible were very expensive and equally difficult to get. Some believers of the faith came together to translate the Bible into some many local languages that could be obtained by then and also to contribute to the printing of the Bible so as to subsidize the selling price of a moderate Bible in order to create a suitable atmosphere for a young Christian who is hungry to know what the scripture requires of him or her.

The Bible Society of Nigeria, The Ekiti Area started operation as soon as Ekiti State was created on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, 1996.<sup>1</sup> The Board or the Area came in from Ondo State as a body that had been existing in Ondo State, just a little change in the Managerial personnels, as Ven. C.A. Ajepe was given the charge to lead the Body as a new group trying to find her footing in the state. Shortly after then an election was conducted and Ven. B.O. Akosile was elected the substantial chairman of the Ekiti Area for Bible Society of Nigeria, after his four-year tenure, Ven. G.O. Owoeye stepped into his shoes as another chairman, at the conclusion of the tenure of Ven. G.O. Owoeye, Ven. R.V.A. Adepoju was elected chairman to lead the Area for the B.S.N all these were members and leaders of the Anglican Church in Ekiti.<sup>21</sup>

### **Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)**

The Christian Association of Nigeria was formed in 1976 due to politico-religious tensions and crises in the northern part of Nigeria, for the Islamist extremists were threatening to over-run Christianity in the country<sup>23</sup> in the 1970s. After the civil war which was from 1967-1970, Christians suffered different kinds of persecution, more especially the mainline mission churches experience whereby their schools were taken away from them by the federal and states government, some of the hospitals were also suspected to be harboring missionaries and so were taken over by the Government.<sup>24</sup> Imposition of taxes and heavy import duties were placed on Bible and other church ornaments so as to make them inaccessible to the Christian community. Gifts from the various churches in abroad were discouraged since they were made to pay for taxation and by so doing Christians found it difficult to

receive gifts that would make lives easier for them. In spite of all the persecutions, governments were equally instrumental to the establishment of the Christian Association of Nigeria as they wanted the Christians to speak with one voice so as to enhance dialogue. The Christian leaders were called to a meeting which was presided over by the Chief of Army Staff, Brigadier Shehu Yar'Adua. Representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican, Methodist, African, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches were all present with some other evangelical movements in the North<sup>25</sup> and later in the year the Association was inaugurated at Kaduna in 1976 by Mr. Jolly Yusuf Tanko.<sup>26</sup>

After the inauguration of the body at National level, the states chapter began to emerge and likewise the local government chapter. The Christian Association of Nigeria was well organized at the inception, according to one of the reasons for its creation which was to speak with an accord, this was achieved and things were going on well for the Christians. When the leaders of the church met at Kaduna, Cardinal Dominic Ekandem was elected as the chairman and M.C.O. Williams was elected as the secretary.<sup>27</sup> The Christian Association of Nigeria was organized into five different blocs, so as to give recognition to all churches and also create an avenue for easier communication and administration.

The blocs were:

1. Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN)
2. Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN)
3. Organization of African Independent Churches (OAIC)
4. Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)
5. ECWA TEKAN.<sup>28</sup>

The Christian Association of Ekiti State was an offshoot of the Ondo State chapter. At the creation of Ekiti State in 1996, the body became autonomous from that of Ondo State chapter. Since the body had existed in Ondo State, it was not difficult then to re-establish it here in Ekiti State. The functions did not change it remains what it was nation-wide which includes:

- To serve as a basis of response to the unity of the church especially as contained in our Lord's pastoral prayer, that they all may be one.
- To act as a liaison committee, by means of which its member churches can consult together and when necessary, members make common statements and take common action.
- To be watch-dog of the spiritual and moral welfare of the nation.
- To propagate the gospel.
- To promote understanding among the various people and society in Nigeria.<sup>30</sup>

### **Prospects of Anglican Church in Ekiti Land**

The Anglican Church is a church that is well established, it has her root in the Church of England, she is a church that has an accord with the Church of England in doctrine and order, the word Anglican refers to some things pertaining to the Church of England or a Church Communion with it, because she upholds most of the teachings and systems of the Church of England.<sup>31</sup> The Anglican Church is a church that believes in and teaches the approved, sound and correct theological doctrines which are in conformity with the Christian faith as represented in the Apostles' Creed.<sup>32</sup> The fact remains that the establishment of the church was not associated with any great apostle or missionary. It is not possible to shy away from the fact that the church at this early stage was Roman Catholic Church as she was the main church then and the Anglican Church was a break-off of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>33</sup> The Book of Common Prayer in the Anglican Church is another unique prospect of the church, in this book the order of services in the church is listed, name whatever service that could be referred, it has a place in the Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican Communion. The Book actually slows what Anglicanism is all about. Solomon Amusan in his book, Anglican in search of identity stated in the preface that

It had been the wisdom of the Church of England, ever since the first compiling of her public liturgy, to keep the mean between two extremes, of too much stiffness in refusing and of too much easiness in admitting any variation from it.<sup>35</sup>

### **Education**

Education is about giving intellectual or moral instruction to teach. The Anglican Church has a great leading role in education as far as Ekiti land is concerned. The church has a lot of passion for education more especially at the grassroot or the elementary level. The church is held in high esteem in matters of education to the extent that most of her leaders must be educated and they are very committed to the promotion of education in Ekiti land. Most of the early schools that were established in the land were known as Mission Schools, which were Anglican Schools that were under the authority of the church then. Schools like Christ's school, both boys and girls were founded in 1933 by The Anglican Church; they had both foreign and local leaders. Ven. Henry Dallimore was instrumental to the founding of the school, it started as a middle school and Ven. Henry Dallimore that was an Anglican Priest was the first High Master as the head of the school then.<sup>36</sup> The school was the one that was responsible for educating so many great people of Ekiti land, like former governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi who is a Catholic member. Another school within the land that was founded by the Anglican Church was the Ekiti Parapo Secondary School at Usi, it was founded in 1954.<sup>37</sup> It was a communal effort of the people around the place, towns like Ido, Usi, Ayetoro and some other towns within the area but majorly all these people were Anglicans. The first principal of the school was Ch. Ade Akomolafe an Anglican and the Baba Ijo of St. John's Anglican Church Ido-Ekiti.<sup>38</sup> The issue is pathetic now because, most

of the schools established if not all have been taken over by the government and so the church could not lay claim on any of them again, all the moral standard which the church introduced then is now a thing of the past, because the government is secular and not religious. These schools as well as other mission schools do not only teach education but also contribute to moral values within the society.<sup>40</sup>

### **The Contributions of Heroes Past**

The Anglican Church had so many heroes that contributed to the development of Ekiti land. So many of the returnee-slaves of Ekiti land were Anglicans and they were instrumental to the development of the land. We have people like Mr. Payne from Aramoko-Ekiti, Mary Oja of Ode-Ekiti, Mummy Doherty of Ijero-Ekiti, Babamuboni of Iyin-Ekiti, Samuel Omojola of Ikole-Ekiti, Abraham Ogunloju of Ido-Ajuare, Daniel Kolade from Emure-Ekiti, Asefon of Ilawe-Ekiti, David Daramola of Ikere-Ekiti just to mention a few.<sup>41</sup> All these people mentioned had little level of formal education and they tried as much as possible to impact the same into their people. Despite the fact that most of them were illiterate but with the little effort they put up the people began to pick up educationally in the case of Mummy Doherty she even paid somebody from Lagos, St. Peter's Church Faji to come to Ijero and evangelize her people.<sup>42</sup>

Almost all the villages and towns could boast of one of their returnee children that had embraced Christianity and this enhanced the development of the areas. Between 1893 and 1910, nearly all the villages and towns had heard of the Gospel.<sup>43</sup> All the returnee-slaves labored so much as to improve the standard of their people through the religion and education in all these there were still some lapses because these returnees were not fully educated and it could be dangerous if one is passing half knowledge to the people. It may become a situation of the blind leading the blind. The half education some of the returnee slaves had also become a hindrance for them also in furthering the Gospel to some other towns and villages also.

### **Ordination Validity**

The Anglican Church is toying the part of the Apostles, what makes the ordained ministry of the Anglican authentic is the fact that the Anglicans believe and accept the Apostolic succession that the ministry is truly of the word and sacrament.<sup>44</sup> The Anglican Church was led by the Holy Spirit as she got to the understanding of the Ordained Ministry to be in three orders, which are: (1) Deacon (2) Priest (3) Bishop. Each of the orders have specific roles to play in the church.<sup>45</sup>

In the early days of the church, it was the bishop all through the administration and running of the church, but in recent times there have been some other created offices for administrative efficiencies such as Canon, Chairman, Archdeacon, Provost, Dean and Vicar-General in what the case may demand.<sup>46</sup> The three orders of the Anglican Church is unique and makes administration smooth to run in the

church. The Deacon is made in the Anglican language, the priest is ordained and the bishop is consecrated. In view of some other administrative offices, there are equally technicalities and languages also like a canon is installed, an Archdeacon is collated and inducted, Dean or Provost is included.<sup>47</sup> So this rich heritage of Anglican Church in ordination makes them stand out high shoulders higher above others.

### **The Liturgy**

Liturgy is considered to be an expression of faith and that the church's faith is made visible and audible by the liturgy. This could be seen as the faith becoming empty without the liturgy and the liturgy becomes obsolete without having faith to express.<sup>50</sup> Therefore liturgy is the way at which faith could be expressed. Amusan stated in his book, *Anglican in search of identity; A response to celebrating the Anglican way*, that

Liturgical spirituality means more than just sharing liturgical rites. It involves all liturgical activities of the church or individual Christians.<sup>51</sup>

The Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican is a document that speaks volume concerning liturgical activities of the Anglican Church. The liturgy is so regarded as the public form of worship used in churches and true to this, is that the Anglican Communion liturgy is dynamic from time to time. It is always a distinctive factor in all Christian assembly. the Eucharistic activity was instituted by Christ and the early apostles adopted fish as their symbol then and later added the cross.<sup>52</sup> This is explained that Christ promised to make his disciples fishers of men and it is always to remind them of the original mission which they had. The liturgy of the baptism is another controversial one, while some believe in Emersion as the only form of baptism, the Anglican Church equally believes in sprinkling of water on the head or forehead of the candidate to be baptized. Infant and adult baptism is equally another issue as far as liturgy is concerned, while the Anglican Church believes that the rite was to initiate the child into Christ from a tender-age and also that the promise of the Holy Spirit is not for the Adults alone but children inclusive and some other denominations come against this that Christ instructed that those to be baptized must be taught before you talk of baptism and since a child could not take a decision on his own, his baptism is not valid and such a person would be asked to re-baptized if he finds himself in this fold of Christian worshippers as adult.

The liturgical colors of the Anglican Church are another liturgical significance in the Christendom there are four colors recently used. They have different meaning and they are for different occasions and seasons. The reasons for the colors are psychological and historical. The four majorly used are Red, White, Green, and Purple. Some of the time colors like white could be paired with Gold and Purple with violet or blue in the early church. The Red is likened to blood or fire, which

connotes the blood of Christ or the fire of the Holy Spirit, White is taken for purity, Gold is paired with white, green is taken for growth and purple is considered for royalty or dignity.<sup>53</sup> The Anglican Church is truly unique in the case of liturgy but they would have done better if they educate the Christendom better and refuse to be conservative in liturgical issues. The Bible and Bible alone should be the yardstick and not allow any kind of sentiment.

### **Doctrinal Standard**

Doctrine is the belief and teaching of the church; the doctrines could be formulated by the authorities of the church and they are to be accepted by the adherent or the followers in the church. So, the Anglicans maintain the doctrines of the ancient and undivided church and rejects medieval developments, which are un-Catholic.<sup>62</sup> The main document of the Anglican Communion that expresses the doctrine is the thirty-nine articles of fourth as continued in the Book of Common Prayer. The articles embrace the basis of the Anglican Church doctrine. The claim stands to be that in 1571 parliament approved the thirty-nine articles, the only official confessional statement of Anglicanism.<sup>63</sup> When the doctrines of the Anglican Church is looked into it, is not limited to the thirty-nine articles alone, it equally includes the following official formularies which provide the fundamental foundational dogmas or ideological texts on which Anglican teaching is based, like the Book of Common Prayer and ordinal, the Canons Ecclesiastical and the Catechism.<sup>64</sup> The thirty-nine articles of faith is an important document to the Anglican faithful for it teaches most of the beliefs and teachings the members should accept and uphold. Some of the teachings in the thirty-nine articles include of the Holy Trinity, of the word or son of God made man, of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and of the authenticity of Holy Scripture just to mention a few.

The Book of Common Prayer contains the orders of services, how services could be conducted, it contains the Psalms, some of the Epistles and the Gospel according to the setting of the Anglican Church, the Canons Ecclesiastical is focused on the laws that govern the church, not all the laws rather but few of them. So is also the catechism which equally is talking much about some basic tenets that should be accepted and practiced as either a young believer in the church or an elder or adult within the church. More especially this formulary is being used for candidates that want to obtain confirmation in the Anglican Church.<sup>65</sup>

Doctrines on baptism both infant and adult, immersion and sprinkling, the baptism of the dead, burial of the dead may be at home or cemetery all these are part of the controversial issues on doctrines within the Anglican Church.<sup>66</sup> With issues like these, the church may not come in agreement with some other denominations and it would stand against the Ecumenical relevance that she could put up among the council of churches.



### **Health Organizational Influence**

As the missionaries were beginning to have impact in the establishment and spread of Christianity in Ekiti land, the consideration of provision of good health facilities to the followers came up. The idea was that one of the three folds of Jesus' ministry was healing and so the missionaries were interested in this. It led to establishment of Maternity Homes and Hospitals for the interest of their followers. Our Savior's Hospital Ado-Ekiti was a baby of this struggle and it was established in 1953.<sup>67</sup> The Hospital was involved in the training of mission-spiritual mid-wives. The hospital was also majoring in healing Gynecological and pediatric cases in true Christ spirit. The name was later changed to "Ile Abiye" Hospital.<sup>68</sup>

There were so many notable indigenes of Ekiti land that were given birth to in this hospital also many other denominations members have had their babies there. Also in the hospital we have a mortuary service that welcome all citizens of the country that would be interested in their services by this also the Anglican Church is making herself relevant within the community.<sup>69</sup> The wind of change, development and civilization have affected the hospital a great deal, situation whereby sons and daughters of the state have studied and became medical practitioners and have established so many private hospitals, the government also have their own hospitals almost in every local government area or towns have taken away popularity from the Abiye Hospital but Otenaike was of the view that if the authorities of the Anglican Church could be magnanimous in promoting free health care for his priests and family members, this could bring back the glory of the hospitals because the priests and his family members could travel from Ikole, Ayede, Ilasa and some other places to Ado-Ekiti to obtain free medical care from the hospital by this, promotion would be given more to the hospital.<sup>70</sup>

### **Ecumenical Problems**

A.O. Otenaike declared in his PhD Thesis that

"The coming together of Christians as one body in Christ is beclouded with failure to know who is who in matters of salvation, redemption and spirituality."<sup>71</sup> For the differences in doctrine and church programs the hindrance in making the church and all the denominations one had been so difficult. On most occasions we promote the church more than the activities of Christianity. So many differences are waging war against the unity of the body Christ in the church. Leadership tussle is also another, when Christians congregate to give the leadership position to any is always a problem. The mode of worship, songs and style of prayer all these stands against the unity of the church at this point, the research would look a little to some of the issues that are problematic in making Ecumenism possible in the Christendom.

### **LEADERSHIP**

This had been a very disturbing issue in the Christendom, more especially when there is an ecumenical activity that has to bring so many denominational bodies

together. The leadership is always in line with the title that would go with the position of the leader. In the instance of the Anglican Church, there are positions and the title commiserates with the positions. The leadership titles in the Anglican Church are as follows: Lay readers, Evangelists –, Agent, Catechist, Ordinand, Deacon, Priest/Reverend, Canon, Archdeacon/Venerable, Dean/Provost, Bishop, Archbishop, Primate/Metropolitan.<sup>72</sup>

Going through the ladder of these hierarchies in the church is bound to take years and so many challenges and experiences. On most occasions at ecumenical meetings or services you would find some self-made title holders of some churches or denominations equating themselves with some of mainline church leaders, some would even claim superiority in laying claim of the time of his calling or consecration to be earlier than some of these mainline churches' leaders. Otenaike further stated that there are three-month Bible schools that are now taken to be of the same production with a three-year seminarian training, there had been a time when a Pentecostal body organized a three-month program and awarded a degree of Doctor of Divinity to the participant at the program. Unfortunately, most of the awardees were primary school leavers, some were secondary schools drop-outs and some were half-educated some could not even express themselves in clear English language, by so doing making ridicule of the educational and theological acquired degrees and qualifications. This situation had discouraged some mainline churches' leaders from attending the ecumenical meetings of the Christendom.<sup>72</sup> The tussle for leadership of position is even more than what could be explained. In view of this, if the Anglican Church must make herself relevant even in the circle, she must learn to live with these self-claimed leaders and accommodate them more than they could ever imagined and later choose to educate them so as to know the importance of education.

### **Materialistic Tendency**

The church seems to be going materialistic, the clergy or pastors rate their well-being and successes on how many houses and plots of land they have, number of cars and the model which they now use. How fat are his bank accounts, the influence which he has among the brethren monetarily. They have no other message than that of prosperity, that even when you are thief you must be blessed by your God. Regardless of your dubious character, God will surely bless you even when your ways are crooked and full of deceit, no one should be discouraged about the blessings of God and they boast and brag about the ill-gotten wealth of theirs, at the detriment of the members of the church, situations whereby the church members are getting poorer and the pastor is getting richer calls for a big consideration within the Christendom<sup>75</sup>. The doctrine and message become different and it would not be in line with the teachings of the Bible and that of Jesus Christ, any follower of Jesus Christ would not see suffering or lack as a taboo to what these people see it to be.

**Cultural Influences in Ekiti land****Traditional Practices:**

The way that various groups and denominations integrate traditional Yoruba traditions with the Christian faith might differ greatly from one another. Traditional Yoruba rituals and customs, including as ancestor veneration, traditional music, and dancing, are adhered to strictly in certain churches. Many people consider these customs to be fundamental to cultural identity and legacy. Other denominations, on the other hand, especially the more conservative or evangelical ones, can see these customs as in odds with what Christianity teaches. When people and families are split between their religious convictions and cultural heritage, it can cause difficulties and disputes within the community. It is crucial to promote honest communication and a sense of respect for one another in order to negotiate these difficulties. Leaders in the community and churches may be extremely helpful in fostering conversations that enable both points of view to be understood and appreciated. Educational initiatives that emphasize the shared history and ideals of traditional Yoruba culture and Christianity can also aid in bridging the divide. Communities can establish a peaceful equilibrium that respects their religious beliefs and cultural history by encouraging diversity and tolerance.

**Ethnic Divisions:**

Church involvement and affiliation can be strongly impacted by ethnic affiliations within Ekiti land. Numerous ethnic groups, each with unique customs, dialects, and social structures, call the region home. These racial differences can occasionally result in a feeling of exclusion from churches, as people may feel more at ease and connected in groups that reflect their own ethnic heritage. This particular dynamic may present obstacles for more extensive ecumenical endeavors and initiatives aimed at fostering unity among diverse denominations and ethnic communities. It may put up obstacles in the way of church cooperation and support for one another, reducing the opportunity for group action on social and community issues. Finding an ethnically inclusive common ground is essential to addressing these issues. This can be accomplished by concentrating on the overarching purpose of the Christian faith, as well as shared values and objectives. A sense of oneness can be fostered and obstacles broken down through interethnic discourse, cooperative community projects, and inclusive worship services. Additionally, church leaders may be extremely helpful in spreading an inclusive message and highlighting the value of Christian unity. Churches may establish a welcoming and valued environment where people from different ethnic backgrounds feel appreciated by celebrating diversity within the community and promoting an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding. These initiatives would help Ekiti land become a more harmonious and united Christian community that is not limited by ethnic boundaries.

## CONCLUSION

The Anglican Church has the potential to be a significant force for Christian unity in Ekiti land. Its rich history, educational background, and contributions to healthcare position it well for ecumenical endeavors. However, challenges such as doctrinal differences, leadership struggles, and materialistic tendencies within the church hinder ecumenical progress. Overcoming these challenges is crucial for achieving greater Christian unity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

As the ecumenical significance of the Anglican Church in Ekiti land is established, it behooves on the church not to relent on her oars but to continually press further in making herself relevant ecumenically the more within the Christendom. Furthermore, it is recommended that the Anglican Church herself should be united internally before taking up the crusade of unifying others. Also, age and maturity should be considered when choosing leaders in the church for these would prompt largeness of heart that would promote ecumenism. These recommendations given would also assist in furthering the study of ecumenism.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and Church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 11.

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<sup>3</sup> A.S. Oyalana, 2000. *Oneness in the Spirit: The goal of Ecumenism in Nigeria*. Eds. Ademola Ishola and Deji Ayegboyin, Rediscovery and Fostering Unity in the body of Christ. Fellowship, Nigeria in association with Wellspring Publication and African Theological Fellowship. Sceptre Prints Limited Ibadan. p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> A.S. Oyalana, 2000. *Oneness in the Spirit: The goal of Ecumenism in Nigeria*. Eds. Ademola Ishola and Deji Ayegboyin, Rediscovery and Fostering Unity in the body of Christ. Fellowship, Nigeria in association with Wellspring Publication and African Theological Fellowship. Sceptre Prints Limited Ibadan. p. 83.

<sup>5</sup> A.S. Oyalana, 2000. *Oneness in the Spirit: The goal of Ecumenism in Nigeria*. Eds. Ademola Ishola and Deji Ayegboyin, Rediscovery and Fostering Unity in the body of Christ. Fellowship, Nigeria in association with Wellspring Publication and African Theological Fellowship. Sceptre Prints Limited Ibadan. p. 84.

<sup>6</sup> National Teacher's Institute 2000. *N.C.E./DLS Course Book on Christian Religious Studies Cycle 4, Module 7: Ecumenism and Religious Dialogue* NTI Computer center Okoro Kevin, Oduah 1, Isaac Road Kaduna. p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Solomon Amusan, 2000. *The perspective of the Anglican Communion*, Eds Ademola Ishola and Deji Ayegboyin, *Rediscovering and Fostering Unity in the body of Christ*. The Nigerian Experience, African Theological Fellowship, Nigeria in association with Wellspring Publication and African. Theological Fellowship Sceptre Prints Limited Ibadan. p. 107.

<sup>8</sup> Diocese of Ekiti 2006. *Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion, 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1966-2006, Commemorative Brochure, The Birth and development of Ekiti Diocese* by F.A. Daramola p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Ven. Dr. A.O. Otenaike, 27/10, 2014. St. Paul's Odo Ado Vicarage at 7:15pm.

<sup>10</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 126.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Pastor Olorunsegun C.A.C. Oke-Alafia, Interview on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014. 5pm.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Pastor Olorunsegun C.A.C. Oke-Alafia, Interview on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014. 5pm.

<sup>13</sup> Ven. Dr. A.O. Otenaike, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014. Interview at St. Paul's Vicarage Ado- Ekiti.

<sup>14</sup> Ven. Dr. A.O. Otenaike, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014. Interview at St. Paul's Vicarage Ado-Ekiti.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Falk, 1997. *The Growth of Christianity in Africa* (ACTS, Bukuru Plateau State, Nigeria) p. 123

<sup>16</sup> Peter Falk, 1997. *The Growth of Christianity in Africa* (ACTS, Bukuru Plateau State, Nigeria) p. 124

<sup>17</sup> Evang. Taiwo Ajeigbe, Secretary Ekiti Area Bible Society of Nigeria, Interview on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, 2014, at B.S.N. House Ado.

<sup>21</sup> Ven. R.V.A. Adepoju, Former Chairman of Ekiti Area Bible Society of Nigeria, Interview on 4<sup>th</sup> of November, 2014 at Bible Guest House Abuja.

<sup>23</sup> Rev. J.A. Odu, former state CAN Secretary. Interview on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 at Ado-Ekiti.

<sup>24</sup> Rev. J.A. Odu, former state CAN Secretary. Interview on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 at Ado-Ekiti.

<sup>25</sup> Rev. J.A. Odu, former state CAN Secretary. Interview on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 at Ado-Ekiti.

<sup>26</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 108

<sup>27</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 109

<sup>28</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 111

<sup>30</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. pp. 14 & 15.

<sup>31</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 16

<sup>32</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 16

<sup>33</sup> A.A. Akinade, 2003. *Anglicanism and its parish administration*. Babron and Associates, P.O. Box 2921 Festac Town, Lagos. p. 43

<sup>35</sup> Olusola Bayode, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 Interview at his home in Ado-Ekiti.

- <sup>36</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014, Interview at his residence, St. Paul's Odo-Ado Vicarage, Ado-Ekiti.
- <sup>37</sup> S.O. Osho, 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2014, Interview at his residence in Ado-Ekiti.
- <sup>38</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014, Interview at his residence, St. Paul's Odo-Ado Vicarage, Ado-Ekiti.
- <sup>40</sup> Peter, A. Adebisi. 2003. *History of Christianity in Ekiti Ibadan*, CSS Limited Lagos p. 31
- <sup>41</sup> S.M. Solomon Mepaiyeda. 2002. *The Anglican Common Prayer Nigeria*. Evangelism and church growth, Gospel Printing Press, Ekiti Anglican Diocesan Headquarters, P.O. Box 12, Ado-Ekiti p. 42
- <sup>42</sup> S.M. Solomon Mepaiyeda. 2002. *The Anglican Common Prayer Nigeria*. Evangelism and church growth, Gospel Printing Press, Ekiti Anglican Diocesan Headquarters, P.O. Box 12, Ado-Ekiti p. 42.
- <sup>43</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 26
- <sup>44</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 27
- <sup>45</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 27.
- <sup>46</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 27
- <sup>47</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 39
- <sup>50</sup> Solomon Amusan, 1998. *Anglican in search of identity*, A response to celebrating the Anglican way concept publications Limited, P.O. Box 2516, Mushin Lagos. p. 84
- <sup>51</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. pp. 23 & 24.
- <sup>52</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 25
- <sup>53</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 25
- <sup>62</sup> Solomon Amusan, 1998. *Anglican in search of identity*, A response to celebrating the Anglican way concept publications Limited, P.O. Box 2516, Mushin Lagos. p. 36
- <sup>63</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 21
- <sup>64</sup> Olusola Igbari, 2007. *Essential issues in Anglican Polity*. Kraft Books Limited, 6<sup>A</sup> Polytechnic Road, Sango, Ibadan Oyo State. p. 22
- <sup>65</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 181.
- <sup>66</sup> S.M. Solomon Mepaiyeda. 2002. *The Anglican Common Prayer Nigeria*. Evangelism and church growth, Gospel Printing Press, Ekiti Anglican Diocesan Headquarters, P.O. Box 12, Ado-Ekiti. p. 22.
- <sup>67</sup> S.M. Solomon Mepaiyeda. 2002. *The Anglican Common Prayer Nigeria*. Evangelism and church growth, Gospel Printing Press, Ekiti Anglican Diocesan Headquarters, P.O. Box 12, Ado-Ekiti. p. 22

<sup>68</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014, Interview at his residence, St. Paul's Odo-Ado Vicarage, Ado-Ekiti.

<sup>69</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014, Interview at his residence, St. Paul's Odo-Ado Vicarage, Ado-Ekiti.

<sup>70</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 172

<sup>71</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 172.

<sup>74</sup> E.T. Babalola, Rev. Canon/ Interview Respondent, Cathedral Church of Emmanuel, Ado-Ekiti, 43 years old, interviewed on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014 at 2:00pm

<sup>72</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and Church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 184.

<sup>73</sup> A.O. Otenaike, 2012. *Ecumenism and Church unity in Ekiti State 1996-2011*. A thesis in the department of religious studies, submitted to Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. p. 180.

<sup>75</sup> E.T. Babalola, Rev. Canon/ Interview Respondent, Cathedral Church of Emmanuel, Ado-Ekiti, 43 years old, interviewed on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014 at 2:00pm