



ACK DIOCESE of GARISSA

CALL FOR SYNOD PAPERS

For the Diocesan Synod of 2025, 23rd to 25th November.

The bishop of Garissa is inviting synodal papers to help discern the voice of God on presenting challenges inhibiting Christian Witness in the diocese.

Garissa Diocese's primary ministry is providing chaplaincy to Christian's resident within the see. Our presence and active congregational worship are an intentional witness to Christ's Gospel to the local communities. The contextual challenge of ministry in a majority Muslim region places makes us accommodate, in worship, all Christian denominations. Christians, though residents, are not natives of the region. These would congregate in our ACK churches irrespective of denominations.

A visit around the diocese exposed me to the challenge of a morphed understanding of the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, which has accentuated conflicting orders of practice within the diocese.

When visiting Wajir Parish, I met a woman who was the head of the Sunday School, tasked with preparing children for confirmation. Despite her successful delivery of catechumens who were welcomed unto the Lord's table, she was barred from receiving the Eucharist. She is a single mother. And had been a communicant until she had a child out of wedlock.

In Garissa, Madogo, and Wajir, some women were excluded from the communion altar or take part in church leadership, despite being married, because they had not been wed in church. They had contracted civil, or customary, marriages. Another group had found themselves in a polygamous marriage, despite being communicants, and are not welcome to the Lord's table, although active in the life of the church. Yet, a few had failed marriages, through official divorce, or their spouses' walkout. Such have since remarried and are now faithful church members.

When visiting Modogashe, I found out that a church official (treasurer) would not participate in the Eucharist. Reason? was not a confirmed Anglican—a communicant at home church—and a faithful church member. I also encountered adult converts, baptised and graduates of catechism, but not yet confirmed, and so, could not share in the Lord's table.

In Benane parish, some congregants refrained from baptism in the ACK, thinking that this would imply a denunciation of their faith and allegiance to their home church.

These issues are pertinent and may inhibit our Christian witness in the Garissa Diocese. I invite you to join me in discerning the mind of the Holy Spirit, as I address these pastoral challenges that are not clearly articulated in the text of our church canons. And in cases where the canons implicitly conflict with our liturgical or scriptural injunctions.

I raise the following questions:

- Should the church use deprivation of Eucharist as a form of punishment for violations of church canons or human moral lapse...?
- Is confirmation a requirement for communion? Should a non-sacramental practice be a requirement for an individual to participate in a sacrament?
- Should these sacraments be the point of ecumenical unity for the followers of Christ?

I chose this synodal process in discerning, to:

First, by calling for papers to analyse the situation and provide a theological and liturgical underpinning for the sacraments. The written papers will be reviewed and synthesised to draw learning for us.

Second, a listening process begins with synod seminars and plenary sessions to discuss the findings and build consensus.

Third, we will draft motions emerging from the discussion for voting at the synod. These should be weighed against the Canons of the ACK and recommendations made accordingly.

Fourth, the resolutions that gain the majority in both houses will be presented to the bishop for veto or approval.

The findings will reflect in our diocesan pastoral intervention to the challenges and be adopted as guidelines for the Garissa Diocese.

Such findings and pastoral interventions shall be forwarded to the Archbishop, Episcopal Synod and the Provincial for consideration for the ACK.

SYNODAL PAPERS

I call for papers to discuss:

*** Theology and practice of Baptism.**

Papers should examine the concept of the unity of baptism and its implications for ecumenical dialogue and cooperation.

***The understanding of Hospitality at the Lord's Table*:**

Papers should explore the concept of hospitality at the Lord's Table and its implications on ecumenicalism and Christian witness.

Ecumenical Challenges in shared Sacraments

Papers should explore the Anglican theology and liturgical practice of Sacraments and its implications for the Christian witness.

Contextual Challenges facing women in church

Papers should discuss the inhibition women encounter in the church and its implications for the church's mission.

Submission Guidelines

Deadline for abstract submission, full paper submission, and notification of acceptance.

Paper Length:

An abstract of **200 words** highlighting key content.

We will accept papers of **1500 to 3000 words** and format specifications (font, spacing, referencing style, such as APA or Chicago).

Eligibility:

Academics, clergy, students, and Anglican Christians can put in papers

All submissions will undergo a structured review, a peer review and an editorial review

Important Dates:

Abstracts should be submitted by **15 September 2025**.

Notification of acceptance will be communicated by **17th September 2025**.

The full paper submission deadline will be **5th October 2025**.

Registration for Participation by 3rd **November 2025**.

The Synod will be held from **23rd to 25th November 2025**.

Venue:

St Peter's ACK Pro-Cathedral, Garissa.

For inquiries,

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bishop@ackgarissadiocese.org.

Blessings'

+Francis