THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH IN SUPPORTING BEREAVED FAMILIES: THE CASE OF ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA, DIOCESE OF KIRINYAGA, KIRINYAGA COUNTY.

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER, 2013
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late son, Peter Wanjohi, whom I eternally treasure in my heart.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I thank the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in whose jurisdiction I carried out the research and all the respondents for their invaluable help in data collection.

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## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition/Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement</td>
<td>A situation where one has lost someone important to death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Any person under the age of eighteen years. The study excludes children below ten years because according to Kubler Ross children below ten years do not understand death and are therefore not informative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>The administrative and management team of the Diocese of Kirinyaga consisting of the Bishop, the clergy, the lay readers and the local church council members. It also refers to the community of Christian believers. In this study the word “church” has been used for church leadership as well as the Christian community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church council member</td>
<td>A lay person in the Anglican Church elected by church members to represent their interests in church matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
<td>Priest who has been ordained by a Bishop in the Anglican Church after serving as a Deacon successfully and has a right to perform pastoral and sacramental duties if licensed by a Bishop to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>The physical separation of the dead from the living humans although the dead continue to live albeit in a different form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diocesan Missionary Association</td>
<td>A group of Christians from one diocese who go out to preach to people in areas which have not been evangelized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diocesan synod</td>
<td>An assembly of the diocesan bishop, house of clergy and representatives of the laity who make decisions in the diocese.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grief</td>
<td>Deep sorrow, distress or misery a person experiences after losing someone to death.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kubler-Ross stage model of grief</td>
<td>Posits sequential stages of grief namely, denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laity</td>
<td>All persons who are members of the Anglican Church, who are not ordained as Bishop, priest or deacons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay readers</td>
<td>Non-ordained lay persons licensed by the Bishop to read the Bible in the church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry</td>
<td>A service to the bereaved involving giving moral, spiritual, emotional, material and financial support.</td>
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Mourning
The outward expression of grief; the process of dealing with the strong emotions caused by the death of a loved one.

Parish
The geographical area with a congregation or congregations under the pastoral charge of a priest(s).

Pastoral care
A service to the bereaved involving giving moral, spiritual, emotional, material and financial support. “Pastoral care” and “ministry” are used interchangeably in this study.
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACK</td>
<td>Anglican Church of Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>Book of Common Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMA</td>
<td>Diocesan Missionary Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Christian Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAMA</td>
<td>Kenya Anglican Men Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAYO</td>
<td>Kenya Anglican Youth Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU</td>
<td>Mothers’ Union</td>
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The study sought to establish the extent to which the Anglican Church of Kenya, Diocese of Kirinyaga supports bereaved families in grief resolution. This was based on the biblical teaching that obliges the Church to take care of the bereaved and to identify with their sorrows. It was guided by the following objectives: To explore the Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement and their influence on the ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga, determine the support the diocese gives to bereaved families after burial, evaluate the challenges faced by the diocese in supporting bereaved families after burial and develop a strategy for a holistic ministry towards bereaved families. The study was guided by a conceptual framework of ideas borrowed from Kubler-Ross Stage Model, Worden’s “Grief Task” theory of bereavement and biblical concepts on bereavement. Kubler-Ross Stage Model indicates that during the mourning process, mourners need the support of others to enable them to move from one stage to another in order to finally accept the impending death. Worden’s theory postulates that grief is a process and not a state and that grief resolution consists of four overlapping tasks that must be accomplished before mourning is completed. There are biblical concepts that correspond to the two theories. The study also considered the Agikuyu cultural practices and rituals related to bereavement. The locale of the study was the Anglican Church of Kenya, Diocese of Kirinyaga. A Survey Design was employed. The sample comprised clergy, lay readers and local church council members because of the positions they hold in the church. In the sample too were members of bereaved families selected on the basis of gender, age and the length of time of bereavement. A total of 161 informants completed questionnaires. The instruments used to collect data were interview schedules, questionnaires and checklists for Focus Group Discussions. Data collected from primary and secondary sources was integrated. It was coded and arranged in themes and categories following the objectives, which also determined the organization of the chapters. Qualitative methods of data analysis were used where descriptions were used to interpret the trends that emerged from the data and conclusions made. The study found that there were some Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement that seem to have influenced the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in their effort to support bereaved families after burial. It also revealed that the support given to bereaved families was mainly up to the burial and that post-burial bereavement support was lacking. This in essence means that the church leaves the bereaved at a point where they have not fully resolved their grief. It was established that the church faced numerous challenges in supporting bereaved families after burial. The study recommends that the church offers post-burial bereavement support to help the bereaved to resolve their grief. To this end, the church should rewrite its policy on bereavement support clearly and concisely and make it mandatory for all parishes to implement it. It should also empower the church leaders to enable them to support the bereaved.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Bereavement is a universal phenomenon common to all peoples regardless of their cultural background or social status. It is a state of having lost someone; a significant other to death. It brings socio-economic and emotional challenges to families.

Many cultures throughout the world provide support to the bereaved following the death of their loved ones. Mbiti (1971:113) states that among the Africans, the community was duty-bound to support the bereaved. Collins (2009:3) postulates that the support of the extended family and clan system helps the bereaved to resolve their grief.

Leakey (1977:938), however, explains that although the Agikuyu did not fear death and accepted it as predestined, they avoided homes where death had occurred so as not to be caught by the contagion. He adds that among the Agikuyu, a dead body was an unclean thing and was thus a contagion. He further adds that if a person touched a dead body, he or she had to be purified at once as otherwise the contagion of death would be transferred to them.
Many religions throughout the world give help and support to their bereaved members. Moss (1975:111) notes that among the Jews, when a family lost a loved one, other Jews in the neighbourhood would visit and comfort the bereaved. The Bible exhorts the church to support members of bereaved families to enable them to overcome their grief. Paul instructs the Galatians to “carry each other’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2). Ngewa (2006:1424) explains that a burden is any hardship, whether physical, emotional, mental, moral or spiritual. Bereavement causes the bereaved to suffer hence they need support following their loss. Mwololo (2010:6), in a newspaper report on the International Christian Church (ICC) revealed that this church takes care of its bereaved members. Anglican churches in different parts of the world also support the bereaved in their time of loss.

Globally, the Anglican Church is guided by the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) in matters pertaining to bereavement (1962: 326 – 334). This book is the traditional worship resource for all Anglicans. It provides guidelines on conducting the burial for church members. The burial ceremony is conducted as a rite offered by the church for its members to serve three purposes. First, it is a rite to mark the separation of those who have died from the living. The Anglican Church globally holds the view that after death life continues for both the deceased and the bereaved although in a separate and different way for each. This separation results in grief experienced by anticipation before the death and realized most fully at the burial and afterwards. Second, the
burial ceremony provides an occasion for the bereaved to give thanks to God for the life of the deceased. Finally, it is a ceremony meant to comfort the bereaved family.

The BCP is silent on all other forms of support during the post-burial period. Nevertheless, this does not remove the responsibility of the church to offer help to bereaved families in their bid to overcome grief. The church has a mission to support the bereaved as followers of Christ. The Church is founded on Christ who was a model supporter of the bereaved. In Luke’s Gospel, Jesus emotionally identified with the widow of Nain by resurrecting her son (Luke 7:11-17). The woman had previously lost her husband who was the breadwinner and her son was her only means of support and comfort. In resurrecting her son, Jesus intended the widow to have a continued source of livelihood. John records the classic example where Jesus wept as he condoled with Lazarus’ sisters (John 11:35). He let the pain of death overcome him. He allowed himself to be emotionally invested to the point of tears.

Globally, there are Anglican churches which are supporting their bereaved members as a demonstration of their love and in obedience to the “law of Christ”, that of loving one’s neighbour as oneself (Mark 12: 31) and also to fulfill the biblical call to mourn with those who mourn (Romans 12:15). In the USA, for example, the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana has a ministry called “The Office of Disaster Response of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana”
whose main work is to rebuild the lives of bereaved families (Stevenson, 2009:12).

In the African context, the Anglican Church has similar practices. In Nigeria, for example, as soon as the death of a member of the Anglican Church occurs, the church sends a priest to assist the bereaved family during the mourning period (Fapohunda, 2009:4). Doodu (2009:5) records similar practices in Ghana. In Uganda, the Anglican Church has set up a social development arm called “Planning, Development and Rehabilitation Department” which supports orphans and widows.¹

In Kenya, the Anglican Church is one of the oldest institutions having been established first at Mombasa by Johann Ludwig Krapf in 1844 (ACK, 2011). Later on the Diocese of Mombasa established in 1898, was split into four dioceses namely: Diocese of Mombasa itself, Diocese of Nakuru, Diocese of Maseno and Diocese of Fort Hall, later renamed Diocese of Mt. Kenya which later gave rise to the current Diocese of Kirinyaga (Ibid).

The Diocese of Kirinyaga covers the entire Kirinyaga County on the South-East slopes of Mount Kenya. The inhabitants are predominantly Agikuyu community who are agriculturalists. Traditionally, the Agikuyu did not have elaborate death rituals and did not mourn their dead for long. When someone

¹ http://www.coupdr.co.ug accessed on 17-03-2012
died and was thrown away into the bush, his home had to be cleansed of death *(Kurutwo gikuu)*. If for instance a woman’s husband or child died, she had to keep the fire in her house burning because if it went out she would not get fire from anybody in the neighbourhood. People kept off from that home lest they were caught by uncleanness *(Thahu)*. Those who were caught by uncleanness had to undergo a cleansing ritual before being reaccepted into the community *(Waititu, 1980)*. Death rituals played a significant role among the Agikuyu. They helped them to come to terms with death. For instance, they had a ceremony called “*hukura*” which helped them resolve grief and be reintegrated into the society.

The Anglican Church of Kenya is part of the global family of Anglicans and follows the principles set out in the BCP. The Lambeth conference of 1998, however, allowed local Christian communities to revise the book to fit local situations while maintaining the values of the old *(Chatfield, 1998:29)*. Serious liturgical revision does not therefore contemplate the abolition of the use of the BCP. All revisions are alternatives to the BCP. Therefore the ACK uses the alternative book of worship “*Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya*” for all its liturgical matters, including bereavement.

The book outlines the church practice and procedure that includes recommendations on how the bereaved should be supported. It proposes that the burial service for its adherents is best accompanied by pastoral care being
exercised for the bereaved before, during and after burial. It further encourages the church to make follow-up visitations for purposes of pastoral support and fellowship. The book also advises that after burial, the clergy should escort the family back home to enable it to face the environment from which the deceased is missing.

The researcher in her work as a pastor, observed that the practice of the ACK in supporting members of a bereaved family is normally confined to the short period between death and the burial. Immediately a family loses a member, the church responds by making visits and offering support in form of prayers and fellowship. It then conducts an elaborate funeral ceremony which culminates with the burial of the deceased. The ACK seems to end its support to the bereaved at the graveside. It does not to live up to its policy of making follow-up visitations to the bereaved. In addition, the pastoral care the church gives during the short period of mourning is largely spiritual and hardly addresses the post-burial emotional and socio-economic challenges emanating from the loss of a loved one. Collins (2009:3) observes that although the Anglican Church in Kenya has played a great role in comforting the bereaved, their material support, which also includes financial assistance, has been wanting. The focus of the study was to explore the extent to which the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga supports its members to resolve their grief.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Anglican Church perceives one of its missions as to mourn with her bereaved as a demonstration of her love and in obedience to the law of Christ. In its effort to support the bereaved, the ACK is guided by its liturgical book, “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya”. It recommends that the church should support the bereaved not only during the burial but also before and afterwards. It urges the church to make follow-up visitations for pastoral support and fellowships. It further recommends that after burial, a member of the clergy should escort the family back home. From a Christian perspective, escorting the bereaved means “to accompany”, “to walk with” or “to travel” with the bereaved in their new journey of bereavement which normally lasts two years. The policy thus urges the church to give long-term support to the bereaved.

However, during her work as a pastor, the researcher made first hand observations that the practice of the Anglican Church is that when a member of the church dies, the church responds by burying them and seems to end its role there. This indicates there is a disconnect between the stated mission of the church and its practice. This is the gap that the study sought to fill. The researcher sought to establish whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has established structures which help in taking care of the bereaved after burial. She also wished to find out what informed ways are available to the bereaved in Kirinyaga Diocese to enable them to find re-orientation after the burial of a
loved one. These were the pertinent issues that this study sought to address. If the issue of church support to bereaved families is not addressed with the seriousness it deserves, the bereaved may feel disappointed and angry towards their religion and God and a loss of faith may result, hence the need for this study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study focused on the following four objectives:

(i) To explore the Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement and their influence on the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga.

(ii) Determine the support the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga gives to bereaved families after burial.

(iii) Evaluate the challenges faced by the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in supporting the bereaved families after burial.

(iv) Develop a strategy for a holistic ministry towards bereaved families.

1.4 Research Questions

(i) What are the Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement and to what extent do they influence the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga?

(ii) What support does the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga give to bereaved families after burial?

(iii) What challenges does the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga encounter in supporting bereaved families after burial?
(iv) What strategy would provide a holistic ministry towards bereaved families?

1.5 Research Premises

The investigation of the above four objectives was guided by the following premises:

(i) There are Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement that seem to influence those of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga.

(ii) The support the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga gives the bereaved families after burial is short-lived and inadequate.

(iii) The ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga encounters numerous challenges in its efforts to support bereaved families after burial.

(iv) The ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga requires a holistic ministry towards bereaved families.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

Bereavement affects people from all walks of life and at all times. The study aimed at sensitizing the Anglican Church to support all members of the bereaved family even after the burial of a loved one. Most of the literature on bereavement has mainly focused on widows. This study widened the scope to include widowers and bereaved children. The study has added information and knowledge on bereavement to the already existing literature, especially on post-burial support to the bereaved. This study is significant because the
findings on support to the bereaved are helpful to the Anglican Church in setting up a ministry geared towards supporting bereaved families. It is hoped that the study will enlighten the Christian community on the need to support bereaved families after burial.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted in ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga. The respondents were drawn from twelve parishes selected from the Diocese. The study focused on those who were bereaved between 2005 and 2008 to allow for the elapse of a two-year grief resolution period as per the grief theories. Those who were more recently bereaved at the time of the study, were assumed to be too emotional to participate in the study. It was also assumed that the emotions of those who had been bereaved for a longer period might be remote and they may therefore not provide reliable information needed for this study. Bereavement is an emotive experience and the study had a possibility of evoking memories of loss which some people would rather forget. Consequently, the researcher restricted herself to respondents who were willing to participate in the study. Geographically, the study focused on the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga within Kirinyaga County. The focus of the study was post-burial support to the bereaved.
1.8 Problems Related to the Study

During the study a variety of problems were encountered but the researcher was able to overcome them. The level of literacy of some of the respondents posed a challenge. First, some of the respondents could not read or write hence the researcher and her assistant had to administer the questionnaires. This was time-consuming and rather tedious. In addition, the process entailed the translation of the questionnaire from English into vernacular for some of the respondents and then translating their responses back into English. Some Kikuyu words cannot find literal translations in English. In the process, the researcher opines that some of the originality could have been lost. In such situations, the researcher settled for the closest translation.

The researcher also found it difficult to convene Focus Group Discussions with bereaved male adults because, unlike the females, they were unwilling to discuss the subject in a group. The researcher did not establish the reason for this but it is probably because the Agikuyu male mourns in private as he is socialized to hide his emotions such as sadness to avoid being thought weak. The researcher held 9 Focus Group Discussions of which 6 consisted entirely of females and 3 entirely of males. Thus Focus Group Discussions with bereaved male adults were held in only three parishes. The Focus Group Discussions encouraged the participants to join the discussions and voice their opinions without fear. Elsewhere, the researcher held face-to-face oral interviews with the male respondents individually.
Some of the church council members and lay readers were reluctant to take part in the study citing the fact that they were not authorized to speak on behalf of the church. For the same reason, many of them also did not want to be recorded on tape. However, upon being assured that confidentiality would be maintained, they agreed to participate in the study. The researcher assured them that to maintain the same during the reporting of information, she would only give one of their names in full. The researcher did not attach the list of the respondents in this study so as to maintain confidentiality.

The researcher also met with resistance when attempting to record interviews held with the elderly bereaved people. This was because as they put it, they did not want “their voices on the machine forever”. The researcher therefore had to rely on notes taken by hand.

Another problem that arose during the study was the fact that it was difficult to find respondent bereaved children. Initially, the researcher had hoped to recruit 36 children but during the writing of the proposal, it became clear that the number of children who were ten or older at the time of bereavement and were still below 18 years at the time of data collection were few. As a result of this, the researcher adjusted her expectations and chose to include fewer children, that is, one child per parish. The researcher also sampled children purposively to include those who met the age requirements for the study.
Children above ten years of age understand death and were therefore considered informative to this study. The 12 bereaved children presented an adequate sample size because it met the 10% required in a survey.

1.9 Literature Review
In this study, literature was reviewed under five sections. Section one discusses bereavement in general to give an overview on it. Section two is on Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement in line with the first objective of the study. The third section is on biblical teachings on bereavement support while the fourth is on church policies on the bereaved. Section five is on challenges the church encounters in supporting the bereaved.

1.9.1 Bereavement in General
There are certain words that are related to bereavement such as grief and mourning. Cope (1970:40), Vail (1982:), Taylor (1994:222), Tony (1999:36) and Lemming and Dickinson (2001:156) all define bereavement as the state of having lost someone; a significant other, to death and grief as the emotional reaction to loss. Taylor (1994:222) and Parkes (1975:21) further point out that although many different events such as divorce or loss of a limb produce a sense of loss, the strongest feelings of loss are usually caused by the death of a person. Payne, Horn and Relf (2000:72) note that grief is a long-term process and that it usually takes one to two years for the pangs of grief to become relatively self-contained and for social functioning to be restored, although it
may take much longer. Taylor (1994:222) points out that the word “grief” comes from a Latin word ‘gravare’ meaning ‘weighed down’ or ‘afflicted by heavy wrong’. So, a person who grieves is one who feels deep sorrow, distress or misery.

Lierop (1991:100) and Mwiti (1999:1) reckon that grief is one of the most deeply disturbing emotional states a person may endure. Talitwala (2002:3) adds that the physical and emotional symptoms that characterize normal grief include a feeling of unreality and restlessness, increased emotional distance from other people, intense preoccupation with images of the deceased, strong feelings of guilt, accusing oneself of neglect in regard to the deceased, coldness to others, showing tendencies of hostility, irritability and anger, tightness in the throat and stomach and general exhaustion. Parkes (1975:166), Worden (1982:10) and Talitwala (2002:5) maintain that when a person does not go through the above reactions as expected, the bereaved goes through unhealthy grief.

Cope (1970:40), Taylor (1994:222) and Lemming and Dickinson (2001:156) define mourning as the outward expression of grief; the behavior that social groups expect following bereavement. Tony (1999) and Talitwala (2002: ix) further observe that mourning is the complex process of dealing with and adjusting to the strong emotions that the bereaved display when death occurs. Parkes (1975:21), Moss (1975:109) and Worden (1982:10) observe that grief
is a process and that the “grief-work cycle” is the basic mechanism of bereavement. They maintain that in the “work” of mourning the bereaved persons try to disengage themselves from the demanding relationship and to invest their emotional strength in new and productive directions. They need to gradually renounce their longing for the lost person and to accept the real world without the loved one.

The researcher found the above scholars’ views important in that grief is a process and it is essential for mourners to “work” it out. It is a process which is normally most intense immediately after death and which slowly loses this intensity as time elapses. The above information formed the basis on which the researcher carried out further investigations on how the bereaved cope with grief after the burial of a loved one.

1.9.2 African Cultural Practices on Bereavement

Mbiti (1969:108), Parrinder (1974:192), Mugambi and Kirima (1984:108), Mwiti (1999:12) and Were (2005) share the view that among the African traditional communities, close relatives continued to mourn with the bereaved for many months. The social cohesiveness embodied in the African philosophy as put by Mbiti (1971:113), “I am because we are and since we are therefore I am” made it the bounden duty of one’s kin to help, support and maintain an on-going relationship with the bereaved. The bereaved felt appreciated and supported in their time of grief. Their loneliness was shared
by others and this enabled them to recover from the loss. This study sought to establish whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has similar concerns for its bereaved after the burial of a loved one.

Taylor (1994:224) commenting on bereavement among Africans concurs with the above views in observing that every culture recognizes the role of the community in times of bereavement. Although death chiefly affects the immediate families, many others share in the experience. This is especially so in the extended family or clan systems where the whole family or clan mourns and those most deeply affected receive comfort and help through the community which shares and participates in their grief. These cultural and traditional practices coupled with extended family helped a great deal in enabling the bereaved to cope with grief and loss (Collins, 2009:3) The researcher observes that Collins does not tell us whether that support was sustained after the burial of a loved one, a concern that the present study explored.

Kinoti (1994:182) notes that many African communities supported and cared for their widows and widowers. Widows were valued and respected and their needs were met including their sexual and procreative ones. In the traditional African society, the widower was soon given a wife to take care of him. Some societies ensured that when a wife died, she was soon replaced with a close relative such as a sister (Ibid:183). She observes that the church has more or
less confessed that it has failed to cater for the bereaved. This study sought to find out how the church deals with the bereaved after the burial of a loved one.

The above reviewed literature shows there was great concern and support to the bereaved among Africans in traditional society. This gave an insight to the researcher to explore whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga which is basically within the Agikuyu cultural set up has similar concerns for the bereaved.

Mwiti (1999:12) observes that in Africa, many local communities normally get together once death has occurred to provide emotional and spiritual support to the bereaved members of the family. They bring food to the bereaved family and assist in raising funds to assist the family to meet some financial obligations such as funeral arrangements. He further points out that the support brings peace and healing to the bereaved family in realization that they are not alone in their loss. Mwiti’s observations are in line with the present study in that he points out a support system in the African context was therapeutic to bereaved families. He implies that support was availed to bereaved families immediately death occurred. However, he is silent on whether that support was sustained during the post-burial period, a concern the present study explored.
Cagnolo (1933:140) asserts that among the Agikuyu of Central Province as soon as someone died, all kinship ties were broken and everyone would go his way “the living to their business” suggesting that bereaved families were abandoned to grieve in isolation without the support of their kin. Waititu (1980) concurs with Cagnolo’s view (1933:140) in observing that among the Agikuyu, when someone died and was thrown away, his home had to be cleansed of death, “kurutwo gikuu”. Waititu further adds that if for instance a woman’s husband or child died, she had to keep the fire in her house burning because if it went out, she could not get fire from anybody in the neighbourhood. People kept off from that home lest they were caught by uncleanness “thahu”. Waititu laments that there was no comfort offered to such a family. From the foregoing, one can conclude that a family which lost a loved one among the Agikuyu was shunned. The study wanted to explore whether a parallel could be drawn between the Gikuyu culture and the ACK church concerning whether the church shuns the bereaved after the loss and subsequent burial of a loved one.

Mbiti (1969:153), Shisanya (1993) and Nwoye (2005:236) share the view that in many African communities, children were not mourned and the death of a child was a private family affair. Kenyatta (1938:238) adds that the Agikuyu community did not mourn a child because to do so would be tantamount to questioning God who was expected to always provide another one. The researcher therefore sought to find out how the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga
dealt with a family that had lost a child. She wished to establish whether the
diocese gave importance to such a death and whether it offered continued
support after burial to such a family.

From the above reviewed literature it is implicit that a family losing a member
through death in the Agikuyu society did not enjoy the support of the
community. Kinoti (1994:165) observes that traditionally, events of death and
burial among the Agikuyu were strictly matters for the family. This was
because the community members wished to avoid the contagion of death
"Thahu" which would require them to go through a cleansing ceremony.
Since the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga is basically in an Agikuyu community,
it was interesting to explore whether the church has been influenced by
Agikuyu cultural practices in their support of the bereaved.

1.9.3 Biblical Teaching on Bereavement Support

In both the Old and the New Testament, the Bible demonstrates that God is
concerned with the welfare of the bereaved. The New Testament presents
Jesus mourning with the bereaved. The Gospel of John records the classic
example where Jesus wept as he condoled with Lazarus' sisters (John 11:35).
Mwiti (1999:4) commenting on the above incident reckons that when Jesus
condoled with Martha and Mary, he let the pain of death overcome him. Hale
(2000:261) remarking on this incident, explains that Jesus was troubled by
seeing the sorrow which Mary and Martha had had to endure for four days.
He further avers that Jesus was a man like us and could experience sorrow. The researcher opines that this demonstration of Jesus’ humanity shows that there is need for the church to emulate him in supporting the bereaved and not distance itself from the sorrows experienced by the bereaved in their midst. The Bible presents other people weeping or even wailing aloud as an expression of grief and in support of the bereaved. The gospels record several examples such as the raising of Jairus’ daughter where Jesus found a “commotion with people crying and wailing aloud” (Mark 5:38; Matthew 2:18; John 11:33; Luke 7:11-17). Since the Bible shows people supporting the bereaved, the researcher sought to establish whether the Anglican Church acts similarly.

Paul in Romans 12:15 urged the Romans to “mourn with those who mourn” which Barker et al (2002:1766) interprets to mean that identification with others in their joys and sorrows is a Christian responsibility. In Acts 6:1 poor widows in the apostolic times were cared for. Widows with no family to support them were put on a list for church assistance so that their needs were met adequately and equitably, subject to certain conditions regarding their age and lifestyle (1 Timothy 5:3-14). Keener (1993:618) explains that by giving the exclusive definition of the widows who were to be supported by the church, Paul hoped to stretch the church budget to help those who had no other means of support.
The Bible directs the church to comfort the bereaved in emulation of God, the Father of all comforts. God consoles Christians in all their troubles so that they too can condole with those in grief with the comfort they have received from God (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). Since grief emanating from bereavement is one of the troubles that human beings experience, there is need for the church to comfort the bereaved in emulation of God. The Bible records that Christians can display true religiosity by constant visits to widows and orphans in their times of need (James 1:27).

Douglas and Tenney (1987:1064), Taylor (1994), Mwiti (1999:10) and Ngewa (2006:1424) share the view that the Bible encourages people to offer emotional support to the bereaved. We can highlight that the bereaved feel appreciated when others weep with them. They are comforted that others are willing to see their tears as an expression of grief and not as a sign of weakness or lack of faith. The above views were relevant to the present study in that the researcher investigated whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has similar practices when dealing with the bereaved.

It is recounted in Genesis that the members of Joseph’s household and his relatives offered him long-term moral and material support when his father, Jacob died. They mourned with the family for seventy days before burial (Genesis 50:3) and a further seven days after burial (Genesis 50:10). This reveals that Joseph’s relatives had recognized that there was need to support a
bereaved family not only during the short period before burial but even afterwards. Job’s three friends wept aloud at the death of his children (Job 2:2). The researcher investigated how far the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga fulfills the need to support the bereaved emotionally both before and after burial.

The authors of the Old Testament present God having compassion for widows and orphans and as their defender (Deuteronomy 10:18) who cares for them and protects them (Psalms 68:5; 146:9; Proverbs 15:25). God declares that a widow and her children can depend on Him for sustenance (Jeremiah 49:11). Reggy-Mamo (2006:817) states that the Greek word for ‘widow’ comes from an Indo-European root ‘widhewa’ that means ‘left empty’. A woman who is left without a husband is potentially ‘left empty’. In many parts of the world, widows are likely to suffer loss of status, financial support, property, health and even their own identities after their husband’s death. 2 Kings 4:1-7 records the story of Elisha who bailed a widow out of her financial predicament. This miracle was exemplar of God’s mercy and grace to widows. Chianeque and Ngewa, (2006:242) note that the Hebrews were commanded to treat the weak and defenseless such as orphans and widows with special consideration and in particular to be generous to them. They were specifically instructed to care for the widows and orphans (Deuteronomy 24:17-22). If they did otherwise God would punish them (Exodus 22:22-24; Isaiah 1:17; Jeremiah 7:6).
Andria (2006:231) observes that if the widows and orphans did not receive help, they would be condemned to live in utter poverty. God firmly states that He will be their protector and that He will hear their cry. In Deuteronomy 14: 28-29, God instructed the Hebrews that at the end of every third year the tithe of that year’s produce was to be stored locally in their towns instead of taking it to the central sanctuary so that the widows and fatherless in those towns could eat and be satisfied. Clearly God does not put the needs of the church above those of the bereaved. Offerings to help the widows and the orphans are offerings to Him.

From the above Biblical analysis, it emerged that there was care and concern extended to bereaved families. However, while these observations were limited to widows and orphans, the present study widened the scope to include support to widowers.

Moss (1975:111) and Keener (1993: 292) point out that in the Jewish culture, when a family lost a loved one, visiting and consoling the bereaved in the days immediately following the death was an essential duty of Jewish piety. The neighbours would visit and provide the first meal after the funeral. After burial, the first week of deep grief would be spent mourning in one’s house doing no work at all. The mourners would themselves “act dead” without taking baths or anointing themselves. No greetings of wellbeing were said. The only Biblical books read were such as Job and Lamentations. They
further point out that this custom called “Shiv’ah” for “seven days” is still practised in Judaism today and is very helpful in releasing grief. The Talmud attributes the introduction of Shiv’ah to Genesis 50:10 in which Joseph performed mourning ceremonies for seven days. This shows there is a theological backing to support the bereaved in their time of distress. The church therefore cannot claim ignorance concerning such support but has a responsibility to perform this noble task. This study sought to find out whether the ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga gave continued support after burial.

1.9.4 Church Policy on Bereavement

The church in the Apostolic times is known as the early church. Poor widows in these times were cared for by the church (Acts 6:1-3). Seven deacons were chosen to take care of the widows. Widows with no family were put on a list for church assistance (1 Timothy 5: 3-14). Paul encouraged Timothy to ensure that needy widows were paid for their work in the church. Commenting on the above, Douglas and Tenney (1987:1064) observe that in the second and third centuries, there was an order of widows in the church. The church enabled the widows to financially live beyond their husband’s graves by paying them for their work. This is tantamount to economically enhancing the widows to continue living well even after the death of their husbands. This church policy was followed for all those who qualified to be widows. While the above reviewed literature is based on apostolic times, the present study

2 http://www.exploringeastlondon.co.uk/jc/death/death.html accessed on 23-02-2013
deals with a modern church and its practices to the bereaved. The researcher sought to find out whether the church today implements its policy on bereavement.

There is inadequate literature on support to the bereaved in the period between the New Testament times (early church) and the 21st Century church. However, some Anglican churches in various parts of the world have recently developed policies on supporting the bereaved. The Anglican Church of Paphos in Cyprus for example, started its bereavement support programme in 2006.3

There are other Anglican churches which have explicit policies on support for their bereaved. In the USA, the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana has a ministry called “The Office of Disaster Response of the Anglican Diocese of Louisiana” (Stevenson, 2009:12) whose main work is to rebuild the lives of bereaved families. The office is in constant touch with all its members wherever they live to enable it to monitor those who lose members. During the tragedy of the hurricane Katrina which hit New Orleans, USA on 29th August 2005 killing over 1,800 people, the church was in the forefront in helping the bereaved rebuild their lives (Stevenson, 2009:12). This study investigated whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga is as effective as the above mentioned ministry in dealing with the bereaved.

In the African context there are Anglican churches with similar policies. Fapohunda (2009:4) states that in the Northern part of Nigeria, for example, conflicts between Muslims and Christians result in loss of lives and property. As soon as the death of a member of the Anglican Church occurs, the church sends a priest or the assistant who will always be at the family home to pray, counsel and encourage the bereaved. This involves holding home fellowships with the bereaved, praying with them while helping those whose houses and businesses are lost to begin a new life. She gives an example of the Kaduna Diocese of Northern Nigeria which, in 2001, spent £40,000 to assist many bereaved families to recover from the loss of their loved ones. This is explicit financial support long after the burial of the loved ones. Whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has similar concerns is a question this study sought to address.

In Ghana, when a member of the Anglican Church dies, the church mourns with the bereaved. The priest arranges for visits to the family until the funeral ceremony is over. After the funeral, the priest maintains regular pastoral visits to enable the family to deal with the loss (Doodu, 2009:5). What does the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga do to their bereaved? This was a pertinent issue in this study.

In Uganda, the Anglican Church has a programme called “Planning, Development and Rehabilitation Department”, a social arm of the church
whose work is rooted in the Christian principles and core values of love, mercy and responsible stewardship of God’s creation. Under this programme, the orphans, widows and widowers are supported to overcome the emotional and economic challenges arising from the loss of their loved ones. Does ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga have similar practices? This study sought to investigate this issue.

The ACK also has a policy which provides for a burial service for its deceased members. According to its liturgical book, “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya”, which guides church practice on matters such as bereavement, the burial service ought to be accompanied by pastoral care being exercised for the bereaved, before, during and after burial. It further recommends that the priest or any other authorized church member should literally escort the bereaved back to their home after burial. From the Christian perspective, escorting the bereaved means “to accompany”, “to walk with” or “to travel with” the bereaved in their new journey of bereavement.

Moreover, the book urges the clergy to make follow-up visitations for purposes of pastoral support and fellowship. In addition, during the ordination into priesthood the clergy are exhorted to extend the ministry of pastoral care and counseling to those who require it particularly the sick, the poor, the

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4 http://www.coupdr.co.ug accessed on 17-03-2012
helpless and the lonely. They are also to comfort God’s people among other duties (Ibid: 103).

From the above review, it is explicit that the church has a duty to comfort people in trouble. Bereaved families fall into this category. However, the researcher had observed that the church was not putting its stated mission into practice. She therefore sought to investigate to what extent the church implements its policy on support to the bereaved.

1.9.5 Challenges the Church Encounters in Supporting the Bereaved

The early church encountered various challenges in its efforts to support the bereaved. The book of Acts of Apostles records that in the early church, an insufficient budget failed to cater for all the needy widows (Acts 6:1-3). In addition, the disciples did not have enough time to preach and distribute food to widows. This is relevant to the present study which sought to find out the challenges faced by the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in its effort to support the bereaved families.

Debold (1975:102) explains that the clergy encounter a number of challenges as they discharge their duty to console the bereaved in the weeks following the funeral. He lists some of the possible challenges as being clumsy with words, having a very large parish which causes the clergy to be too busy and assuming that the bereaved will receive moral support from the rest of the
church. Debold further observes that some of the clerics hide behind their liturgical roles to hide their inability to relate to the bereaved or because they place too much confidence in ritualistic ministration.

Edwards (1985:143) argues that it is the role of the clergy in the Anglican Church to provide care directed towards the healing, sustaining and guiding of troubled persons who include the bereaved. He argues that at times it is necessary for the clergy to provide pastoral counseling to the bereaved and that many clergy lack the competence to provide this service.

Collins (2009:3) observes that in Kenya, some Anglican churches still depend on voluntary offerings and lack income generating projects to anchor their financial base. He intimates that some churches even find it difficult to pay their priests. He concludes that such churches can hardly afford to meet their own financial obligations let alone offer support to the bereaved families. The present study explored whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga faces challenges that hinder it from supporting the bereaved after burial.

A number of important revelations emerge from the reviewed literature above. Firstly, it is evident that the Bible encourages the church to support the bereaved in grief resolution. Jesus did not shy away from supporting the bereaved in a bid to alleviate their sorrows. Secondly, support systems to bereaved families existed in many African cultures and that they were
therapeutic in grief resolution. In most cases, the community and especially the close relatives would continue to visit the bereaved to offer their support long after burial.

Thirdly, it has emerged that a few churches have recognized the need to support their bereaved members and have put in place mechanisms towards this end. However, little has been done to establish what support systems ACK has put in place to enable its bereaved to overcome grief. The present study makes a useful contribution in this area.

The fourth observation is that there are some churches which find it difficult to support the bereaved after burial as a result of financial constraints. Scholars such as Collins (2009:3) intimate that those Anglican churches which lack income-generating activities are financially constrained to the point of being unable to pay their priests let alone support the bereaved after burial. The present study sought to find out whether the ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga faces similar challenges.
1.10 Conceptual Framework

Various scholars have advanced different theories on bereavement in an attempt to explain how grief is resolved. Some theories on grief have proposed stage models of grief resolution. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, (1969) for example, posited sequential stages of grief including denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance which are commonly referred to as the Kubler-Ross stage model. According to her, for many people, the initial reaction to death is shock and denial. When denial subsides, they confront the loss with anger and bitterness. They then bargain with God to allow the misfortune to pass. When this fails, they sink into depression. As the reality of death begins to actualize, the griever comes to terms with death.

Kubler-Ross implies that mourning is not a one day affair. It is a long process where the mourners would need the support of others to enable them to move from one stage to another in order to finally accept the impending death. While her model is limited in that it focuses on terminally ill people, this study has borrowed her concepts that grieving is a long-term process and that mourners need the support of others to resolve grief.

Worden (1982:10) postulates that as grief is a process and not a state, the bereaved need to “work” through their grief in order to make a complete adjustment. His model “Tasks of mourning” implies that mourning can be influenced by intervention aimed at encouraging people to work through their
grief (Payne, Horn and Relf, 2000:74). For him, “grief work” consists of four overlapping tasks that the mourner must accomplish before mourning can be completed and the mourner makes a complete adjustment to their new status as a bereaved person. These tasks are:

(i) Accept the reality of the loss

(ii) Experience the pain of grief

(iii) Adjust to the environment in which the deceased is missing, and

(iv) Re-invest in new relationships

According to Worden (1982:10), the first task that the bereaved must do is to accept both intellectually and emotionally that death has occurred and that the deceased is gone forever and that there can never be a re-union with the deceased.

In the second task, the bereaved need to allow themselves to experience the pain of grief. Worden (1982:13) maintains that the loss of a loved one causes emotional and physical pain. He points out that some people avoid pain by employing avoidance mechanisms like avoiding places and circumstances that remind them of the deceased.

In Worden’s third task (1982:15), the mourner needs to adjust to the environment in which the deceased is missing. Worden states that this involves the bereaved taking on some of the roles performed by the deceased.
or finding others who will. He further asserts that there is need for the bereaved to develop new skills in order to manage new experiences such as facing an empty house and living alone, raising children alone and managing families or even orphans taking on new roles alien to them before.

According to Worden (1982:16), the fourth task entails the withdrawal of energy from the deceased following the recognition that the deceased cannot reciprocate the emotions and then re-investing these emotions in others. The bereaved store the memories they have of the person who died in their hearts and mind, a process that enables them to comfortably re-invest in others.

There are Biblical concepts that correspond to the two theories that the researcher has chosen as part of her conceptual framework. These concepts encourage Christians to accept the loss of a loved one with courage, faith and a sense of reality. The Bible presents people working through various tasks of mourning. For example, Job is presented as experiencing grief in a manner that corresponds to Worden’s four overlapping tasks. When Job received the news of the death of his children, “he got up and tore his robe and shaved his head”. His reactions indicate that he suffered emotionally and was greatly troubled by his loss. This corresponds to Worden’s second “grief task”, that of experiencing the pain of grief. He is also shown to have accepted the reality of the death of his children, which corresponds to Worden’s first “grief task”. He is resigned to his loss and accepts the finality of death. This is evidenced
by his words in Job 1: 21, “Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away”. Job also adjusted to the environment in which his children were missing when he reprimanded his wife in Job 2: 10, asking her, “Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?” This corresponds to Worden's third “grief task”. Job 42:16 shows that he finally reinvested in new relationships with the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren he was blessed with, which corresponds to Worden's fourth “grief task”. Clearly, the Bible shows that Job's grief progressed through stages similar to Worden’s “grief tasks” before its eventual resolution.

The concepts we have borrowed from the Kubler-Ross theory that mourning is a long process and that the bereaved need the support of others is clearly brought out in Job's story where his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, went to condole with him when they heard how much he had been suffering (Job 2:11). It is also supported by Parkes (1975:21) and Payne, Horn and Relf (2000:72) who observe that grief is a long-term process and that the bereaved need the support of other people in resolving their grief.

Thus, Worden's “Grief Task” theory, Kubler-Ross theory and Biblical concepts that correspond to the two theories were used to create a conceptual framework. The researcher used this conceptual framework to create research instruments which were directed at eliciting specific information on whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga provided long-term post-burial support. The
framework was used to evaluate whether the support as envisaged in the
theories helps the bereaved to overcome grief as presented in chapter three of
this study. The framework was also used in this study to determine the support
offered to the bereaved by the church, evaluate the implementation of the
church policy towards the bereaved and to determine the challenges that the
church encounters in its endeavour to support the bereaved. The conceptual
framework was also used to investigate whether the Agikuyu culture has had
an influence on the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in its dealings with the
bereaved families.

1.11 Research Methodology
This section describes the research design, location of the study, methods of
sampling, the data collection procedure, the research instruments, and data
analysis.

1.11.1 Research Design
The study employed a survey research design in order to gather information on
how the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga supports bereaved families. This
research design is suitable for the purpose of describing a population that is
too large to observe directly (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999:165). Data
collected through surveys is highly representative of a large population
(Stroebe, Stroebe and Schut, 2003:235). Thus it allowed the researcher to draw
conclusions that can be generalized to a much larger population. Data
gathered from the twelve parishes could be generalized to the whole diocese. In addition, using the survey design, many questions can be asked about a given topic giving considerable flexibility to the analysis. Thus it was possible to collect a wide range of information concerning the support offered by the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga, the challenges encountered in providing the support and explore the traditional Agikuyu practices on bereavement.

1.11.2 Study Area

The locale of the study was the Diocese of Kirinyaga. It is administratively located within Kirinyaga County on the South-East slopes of Mount Kenya. The Diocese of Kirinyaga was established in 1990 after it was hived off from the Diocese of Mt. Kenya East which covered Kirinyaga, Embu, and parts of Meru and Marsabit.

The diocese has 104 parishes and 202 congregations with approximate membership of 130,000 parishioners. The administrative diocesan offices and the seat of the Bishop at St. Thomas Cathedral Parish are within Kerugoya – Kutus Municipality (ACK, 2011).

The study area was ideal for this research because; first it is one of the regions where the Anglican Church is dominant. Secondly, it is one the oldest diocese of the Anglican Church in Kenya, seeing that the first church was established within this diocese at Kabare in 1910 and Mutira in 1911 (Gathogo, 2011:3).
As a result, it had well established structures and sufficient respondents. The study locale provided an opportunity to access churches that were both rural and urban. This contributed to the high representativeness of the research findings hence allowing the researcher to draw conclusions that could be generalized to the entire diocese.

1.11.3 Target Population

The target population in the study was the members of ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga. Kombo and Tromp (2006:76) define a population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement.

The study area consisted of 104 parishes and 202 congregations in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga which has 130,000 parishioners (ACK, 2011). There were 2006 bereaved families, bereaved between 2005 and 2008 and 130 clergy, 400 lay readers and 2,424 church council members (ACK 2005-2008).

1.11.4 Sampling Technique

The researcher used stratified sampling to select 12 parishes out of the total 104 so as to achieve a desired representation from both a rural and an urban set up. Six parishes were from a rural set up and the other six from an urban set up. The members of these parishes were chosen as the accessible
population in this study who were considered representative of the target population in the diocese.

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999:42), a sample taken from the accessible population may be used for a descriptive study. They further observe that survey research could be descriptive (Ibid:165) as in this case. 17 clergy from the chosen 12 parishes were included in the study. This is because in the twelve selected parishes some had more than one clergy. The total number of the clergy in the 12 parishes was 21. In the parishes with one or two clergy, these were purposively selected. Where there more than two clergy, only two were selected through simple random sampling. The category of the clergy, the lay readers and the church council members were not bereaved but were included in this study because of the position they hold in the church.

In the parishes where there were only two lay readers, both were included in the sample. Where there were more than two of this cadre of church leaders, simple random sampling was used to select the two to participate in the study. The names of all the lay readers were written on pieces of paper and put in a box. One of the lay readers was then requested to pick two names from the box. Those picked participated in the study. Out of the total 43 lay readers in the 12 selected parishes, 24 were chosen to fill out questionnaires, thus
representing 56%. This met the required minimum of the accessible population of lay readers.

The three church council members were selected through simple random sampling in a similar manner as the lay readers. Out of the total 144 church council members in the 12 parishes, 36 respondents were chosen to fill out the questionnaires. This met the required minimum of 10% of the accessible population of church council members.

The bereaved families were identified from the burial registers between the years 2005 and 2008 in the selected parishes. Random sampling was used to select one respondent representing one bereaved family. The names of the deceased in each parish were printed out and the list cut into slips of paper. They were put into a box. Six names of the deceased were picked from the box randomly. The researcher went to the families of the deceased and requested one person from each family to fill out a questionnaire such that six respondents were chosen. The researcher enlisted the help of the parish priest who assigned an evangelist to locate the bereaved families and introduced them to her. To ensure equal gender representation, the researcher randomly chose either a male or female respondent from the families such that there were 3 male and 3 female bereaved adults in each parish. There were an equal number of respondents per gender so as to get a representative sample of the population in the diocese. Anybody above 18 years at the time of data
collection was considered an adult and was eligible to fill the questionnaire for bereaved adult respondents. 72 bereaved adult respondents, that is 36 male and 36 female respondents, completed the questionnaires for bereaved adults in the diocese. There were 324 bereaved adults in the 12 selected parishes.

According to Kubler-Ross (1981), children of ten years understand the meaning of death and so are informative. In this study, anybody who had been a child aged ten years or above at the time of bereavement, that is, within the study period of 2005 and 2008 and who was still below 18 years old at the time of the data collection in 2011 could complete a questionnaire for bereaved children. Due to the fact that they were few, they were purposively sampled for the study. 12 bereaved children were selected. The study adapted the definition of a child given by the Children Act 2001. The study excludes children below ten years because children below ten years do not understand death and are therefore not informative (Kubler-Ross, 1981).

The 12 bereaved children and 72 bereaved adults came to a total of 84 bereaved respondents. There were 77 church leaders bringing the total of questionnaires filled to 161.
Below is a table showing the 12 selected parishes and the number of respondents who completed questionnaires in each of the parishes.

**TABLE 1: Table of the Respondents who Completed Questionnaires**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARISH</th>
<th>CLERGY</th>
<th>LAY-READERS</th>
<th>CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS</th>
<th>TOTAL NO. OF RESPONDENTS FROM THE BEREAVED FAMILIES</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cathedral</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gakoigo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamuiru</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutira</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabonge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiangai</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiburu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kagio</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kutus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiaritha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabare</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MALE 3  FEMALE 3  CHILDREN 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>MALE 36  FEMALE 36  CHILDREN 12</strong></td>
<td><strong>161</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Group Discussions were held with bereaved adult respondents to supplement the questionnaires. The researcher considered that all adults were eligible to take part in the Focus Group Discussions regardless of their age. These discussion groups were gender based to allow the respondents to open up. The researcher had intended to hold 12 Focus Group Discussions; six with male respondents and six with female respondents. Random sampling was used to determine in which parishes the male and the female Focus Group Discussions would be held. Three of the Focus Group Discussions intended for bereaved males failed entirely. Thus, the researcher held 9 Focus Group Discussions of which 6 consisted entirely of females and 3 entirely of males. The female Focus Group Discussions were larger with an average of 12 people, while the male Focus Group Discussions had an average of 7 people.

Those respondents who had already completed a questionnaire were excluded from the Focus Group Discussions. In addition, only one member per family was allowed to join the Focus Group Discussions. This was to avoid the opinion of one family being given more importance than the others and thus having undue influence on the group. This also worked in the researcher's favour because it enabled her to achieve the largest possible number of total respondents for the study. This ensured that a wide range of respondents' unbiased perceptions was captured.
Oral interviews were held with key informants in the church leadership. These interviewees included the former Archbishop of the ACK, David Mukuba Gitari, some clergy, lay readers and church council members from the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga. Bereaved male adult respondents from three of the parishes under study, several bereaved female adult respondents and a few bereaved children were interviewed. The interviews were used to probe for in-depth information on the study topic. The bereaved male adult respondents were those who had been earlier targeted for Focus Group Discussions but preferred face to face interviews.

1.11.5 Research Instruments

Questionnaires, checklists for Focus Group Discussions and interview schedules were the main research instruments.

1.11.5.1 Questionnaires

The researcher developed self-administered questionnaires consisting of both structured and open-ended questions reflecting the objectives of the study. Prior to data collection, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaire on two church leaders and two bereaved adults from the ACK, Diocese of Mount Kenya West. These represented 2% of the expected sample respondents. Questions which were reported as being ambiguous were corrected to remove the ambiguity and ensure that they were easily understandable.
During data collection in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga, the questionnaires were administered to adult bereaved respondents and church leaders. All the respondent church leaders and most of the bereaved adults completed the self-administered questionnaires but it was necessary for the researcher to administer 23 questionnaires to the bereaved respondents whose low literacy level hindered them from either reading or understanding the questionnaire.

Most of the respondents chose to complete and return the questionnaires immediately. In the few instances where the questionnaires were not returned, the researcher attended the church services and was able to follow up and collect the questionnaires. Four questionnaires were returned largely incomplete, all of them from bereaved male respondents. The researcher did not seek to replace these respondents because she considered that this small number would not adversely impact the study.

The researcher administered 12 questionnaires to children, six to female children and the other six to male children. These questionnaires were constructed using language appropriate to their age and level of education. Since the questionnaires were researcher-administered, all of them were returned.
1.11.5.2 Checklists for Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussions were held in the church compound on Sunday afternoon after the church services. The researcher used a checklist to ensure that all the key thematic concerns of the study were brought out in the Focus Group Discussions.

In the female Focus Group Discussions, the researcher was able to gather a lot of information since the participants were eager to join the discussions, voice their opinions and even out-do one another. Male Focus Group Discussions were also fruitful but smaller. Observations on the participants' reactions to the questions were made and recorded during the discussions.

1.11.5.3 Interview schedules

Interview schedules were used in face to face interviews with some of the clergy, lay readers and church council members to probe them on their opinion on church support to the bereaved and to acquire more detailed information on the subject of this study. In addition, in those parishes where the male Focus Group Discussions failed to materialize, the researcher conducted face to face interviews with a few bereaved male respondents. The respondents were few and therefore it was easy to administer interviews. In three parishes male bereaved adults preferred face to face interviews to Focus Group Discussions probably because Agikuyu men are cultured not to discuss their problems publicly.
1.11.6 Data Collection

The researcher got a letter from Kenyatta University permitting her to conduct the research. A visit was then made to the diocesan headquarters followed by the various parishes in the study area with an introductory letter from the University. Data was collected from primary and secondary sources.

1.11.6.1 Primary Sources

The study used self-administered questionnaires which enabled the researcher to save on time, uphold confidentiality, collect data from a large sample and avoid interviewer-researcher bias (Kombo and Tromp, 2006:89). Focus Group Discussions were used in the study to supplement the questionnaires. The discussions enabled the researcher to gather information quickly and were ideal in identifying beliefs, ideas or opinions in the community (Ibid:95). Interviews helped to probe for more specific information on the subject of study and clarify any information given in the questionnaires by the church leader respondents.

1.11.6.2 Secondary Sources

This involved the use of published and unpublished materials. The researcher visited the headquarters of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga at Kutus and the country headquarters of the ACK in Nairobi to access archival materials concerning the programmes that the Anglican Church has to support the
bereaved. She also visited Kenyatta University library, St. Paul's University library, University of Nairobi library, Hekima College library, Kabare Theological College library and Kenya National Library Services; Nyeri branch. Relevant information was sourced in books, journals, newsletters, internet and newspapers.

1.11.7 Data Processing and Analysis

The study employed a qualitative method of data analysis. Data analysis critically looked at the information gathered. The cumulative data from secondary and primary sources was synthesized and the resultant data categorized in accordance to the objectives of the study. The categorization formed the chapters of the study. The recorded data was transcribed before compilation.

Analysis and examination of data in comparison with the objectives of the study was carried out after the analysis of the data. Data was discussed thematically and coded. The highlights formed chapters according to themes and codes. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations for the study were made.

1.11.8 Ethical Considerations

There were several ethical issues that the researcher took into consideration during the study. First, due to the intensely emotive nature of bereavement, the
researcher used her counseling skills to counsel any respondents whose emotions were awakened. The researcher avoided asking questions which would make them recall unpleasant occurrences that would cause them psychological harm. She also ensured that she used a skillful manner of asking questions to avoid evoking painful memories. She was sensitive to the feelings of the respondents.

Secondly, the researcher ensured confidentiality of the study participants by making sure that the names of the respondents were not written on any questionnaires. The researcher explained to those who took part in oral interviews that, for purposes of reporting, only one name would be used. This ensured that their identities were not revealed. For this reason, the researcher did not attach the list of respondents in the appendices.

Thirdly, those who were not comfortable to participate were not forced to. Participation was limited only to those who voluntarily consented to take part.

Fourth, the researcher sought the informed consent of the children’s guardians before administering the questionnaire since, as minors, they were not of age to give their consent. Assent from the children was also sought and those children who were not willing to participate were left out.
1.12 Summary

This chapter set the background to the study and revealed that bereavement is a universal phenomenon. The chapter further outlined the statement of problem that the study set out to investigate. This chapter stated that there is a disconnect between the stated mission of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga and its practice on support to the bereaved. The chapter also revealed that the general consensus is that grief is a long-term process and that the bereaved need support to resolve it. It presented a conceptual framework based on Kubler-Ross' concept that the bereaved need support to resolve their grief, Worden's "grief task" theory which states that to resolve their grief the bereaved must accomplish four tasks of mourning and biblical concepts that correspond to the two theories.

The chapter indicated that the bereaved in many traditional African societies were supported by the community and that this support helped the bereaved to resolve their grief. The chapter further concluded that the Bible urges Christians to support the bereaved. There are some Anglican churches in various parts of the world that have policies on supporting the bereaved.

This leads to the next chapter in which the Agikuyu culture on bereavement and its influence on the ACK support to the bereaved is discussed.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 THE AGIKUYU CULTURE ON BEREAVEMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ACK, DIOCESE OF KIRINYAGA

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one provided the background to the study, stated the problem and presented a conceptual framework on which further discussion is based.

The task of this chapter was to discuss the Agikuyu culture on bereavement and its influence on church support to the bereaved by the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga after burial. It situated the A.C.K, Diocese of Kirinyaga in the Agikuyu cultural context since the community in the diocese is predominantly Agikuyu. Its importance was to establish to what extent the Agikuyu culture could have influenced the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in handling the bereaved after burial.

It discussed the Agikuyu perspective of death by considering the causes of death, death rituals among the Agikuyu, their importance and symbolism. It looked at the “hukura” ceremony, meaning “to unbury”, a ceremony which was the last ritual that marked the end of the mourning period.

2.2 The Agikuyu Perspective of Death

The Agikuyu categorized death as either normal or abnormal. Leakey (1977:938) observes that a “normal death” applied to deaths due to sickness or
diseases other than smallpox or deaths they attributed merely to old age. Deaths due to violence, suicide, or accidents, or death that took place away from home did not rank as normal. The Agikuyu did not bury people who had committed suicide. This is relevant to this study which sought to find out how the church handled families of those who had committed suicide. It was notable that Focus Group Discussion with bereaved female respondents revealed that the church was not very supportive of the families of those who committed suicide. They reported that it had been noted that the clergy would not wear full vestments when burying a person who committed suicide.

Death arouses many emotions, the common one being sorrow. The way in which this sorrow is conceived is different and depends almost entirely on the community’s cultural orientation. Among the Agikuyu, men are cultured not to express their emotions openly as this would be construed to mean weakness. In an oral interview, Kabecha (OJ 10-11-2011) reported that after his father’s death he went and concealed himself in the coffee bushes, away from the sight of his family, to cry and mourn his father.

However, Leakey (1977:937) observes that the Agikuyu did not fear death and they faced the fact calmly and with equanimity because of the belief that all departed spirits were reunited in a single spirit world. Death took place because “ikundo ria mundu ucio niriathenga” meaning the knot of that person has been removed. This can be attributed to the method the Agikuyu used to
make appointments by tying a series of knots in a piece of string to represent
the number of days that would elapse before the appointment. The knots were
untied one after the other with each successive day that passed, until the last
knot was reached which indicated the day of appointment had arrived. Leakey
concludes that according to the Agikuyu, the appointed days of any individual
were numbered by some unseen supernatural power, meaning the day of death
was fixed at birth. This concept of accepting death as predetermined agrees
with Worden’s first “grief task” which states that for proper grief resolution
there is need to accept death as a reality when it occurs.

Kinoti (1994:173) like Leakey, points out that the Agikuyu believed that
nothing, including death happened without God’s knowledge and permission.
To this effect they had a proverb saying “Giathi kiega no kia Ngai”- the only
ture appointment is that determined by God. The Agikuyu gladly embraced all
things that happened, including death and attributed them to God.

Kenyatta (1938) states that the Agikuyu community did not mourn a child
because to do so would be tantamount to questioning God who was expected
to provide another one. In an oral interview with one Gikuyu elder Kangangi
(O.I 03-12-2011) he said that infants were not mourned and were disposed as
soon as they died. Consequently, Agikuyu families that lost infants to death
were not given post-burial bereavement support. Interviews with clergy
revealed that the ACK does not give a lot of support to members who lose
their children to death. It emerged that in most cases the clergy did not follow up families who had lost their children to offer post-burial support. This seems to be an influence from the Agikuyu culture where post-burial support was lacking.

Cagnolo (1933:139) posits that the Agikuyu display a stoicism regarding death that borders on indifference. They believed all die and it is useless fearing what cannot be avoided. Death was viewed as not inspiring fear or horror among the Agikuyu because they believed that even after death, the individual would continue to live as a spirit (Ndung’u,1977). The fact that the Agikuyu community accepted death when it occurred enabled them to accomplish Worden’s first “grief task”.

The Agikuyu readily accepted death and associated it to a fixed time set by “Ngai” - God - which was a path that all would take. This belief of accepting death is in line with Worden’s first “grief task” which states that when death occurs one needs to accept both intellectually and emotionally that death has occurred and that the deceased is gone forever and there can never be a reunion with the deceased.

Ndung’u (1977) opines that the Agikuyu did not have specific days for mourning and that they did not mourn for long, perhaps because of their belief that the spirit of the dead is in union with the living. Death is not merely the
end of earthly life but also a transition to a life that is otherworldly (Ong’ong’a
1978:3). According to Karanja (2003:3) the Agikuyu did not believe that death
was the final end of a person. They believed that when a person died they
joined the spirit world and continued to live as the living dead, that although a
person was physically dead, they were still living in the spirit world. The
world of the living dead was closed to the physical world.

Cagnolo (1933: 140) posits that as soon as one died or it was assumed that one
was to die, all bonds of relationship and fellowship were broken. He further
observes that, “the dead man’s memory must not survive, and every effort was
made to leave it in oblivion”. This was done by ensuring that the dead person
was no longer spoken of. It was an evil thing to even mention the name of the
deceased even though it was one’s father or mother or a beloved child.
Cagnolo contends that every bond of attachment was sundered between the
dead and those who remained behind because the dead were not loved but
were feared by the Agikuyu. He depicts the Agikuyu as merciless people who
quickly forgot their loved ones when they died and even avoided mentioning
their names despite their attachment when they were alive.

Cagnolo’s view is disputable because Kinoti (1994:177) states that
traditionally, African peoples have held the departed in fond memory.
Cagnolo’s view is erroneous because Karanja (2003), in the preface to his
book, affirms that the Agikuyu respected their dead, especially before they
were buried. He points out that the dead were remembered through dreams, visions and possessions (Ibid, 2003:2). He further points out that at times, the Agikuyu kept the names of their dead alive by giving their new-born babies names that represented the dead relatives as a means of remembering them. This naming system was outside the ordinary naming of new born babies after their grandparents, uncles and aunts. This indicates that though the Agikuyu did not have long mourning periods, they retained the memory of their dead.

Karanja (2003:8) observes that the name of the dead was kept alive when his or her name was given to a new-born child but in form of a nickname to avoid the death of the child named after the dead. If for example the deceased was a male child called Njoroge, the child who was born after this was given such names as Kariuki or Muriuki. For a female child, if she was called Njoki the replacement was named Gachoki, Nyagichuhi, Wamuhu among others.

The researcher’s view is that this naming practice is important because choosing a new name in memory of someone who died helps the bereaved to accomplish two tasks; those of accepting the death of their loved one and reinvesting in a new relationship with the new child, which are Worden’s first and fourth “grief tasks”.

2.3 Death Rituals among the Agikuyu

Writing generally about death, Das (1986:179) states that there is no society, historical or contemporary, that has not ritualised death. There are funeral rites in all cultures (Onuh 1992:158). Among the Agikuyu the name for ritual is "mambura". Life among them was governed by a system of rituals. For every little or big thing there was a ritual that went with it. Rituals were mainly connected with such things as taboos (migiro) or uncleanness (thahu) (Waititu 1980).

Leakey (1977:938) explains that among the Agikuyu death was not feared but a dead body on the other hand was an unclean thing, and thus was a contagion. He adds that if any person touched a dead body, he or she had at once to be purified, as otherwise the contagion of death would be transferred to them. These two facts especially the contagion by the dead body made the Agikuyu avoid the corpse and where they came into contact with it, elaborate purification rituals were practised. Leakey further observes that there were a considerable number of differences in the details of death ceremonies according to social status and the age of the deceased.

Cagnolo (1933:141) and Ndung’u (1977) concur on one point that on the rare occasions when an individual died in the house, the individual members of the family or close relations took up the duty to dispose of the body in a bush to be eaten by the hyenas. Ndung’u (1977) points out that the body was wrapped
in dry banana leaves for disposal and that where the body was not disposed of in the bushes, it was disposed of under a native Agikuyu tree called "Muu". Leakey (1977:941) and Kinoti (1994:165) explain that the deceased was wrapped up in his skin cloak and bound up with bark and dry roots called "muoha-akuu" meaning 'ties of the dead' and then carried to the place of burial called "kibirira". Middleton and Kershaw (1972:60) observe that the bodies were placed in the bushes or a hole was made in the wall of the hut for the hyenas to enter. This burial or disposal helped them to perform the first grief task by Worden which is a necessary step in the mourning process and in grief resolution. However, it was notable that the Agikuyu did not make follow-up visits until the "hukura" ceremony which took place five weeks after burial.

When someone died his home had to be cleansed of death, "kurutwo gikuu". (Waititu, 1980) and (Ndung'u, 1977). Waititu further adds that if for instance a woman's husband or child died, she had to keep fire in her house burning because if it went out, she could not get fire from anybody in the neighbourhood. People kept off from that home lest they were caught by uncleanness "thahu". Gatuto (O.I 23-11-2011), an elderly respondent, reported that when he lost his grandmother his family was shunned by their neighbours and were left to mourn on their own. This was relevant to the present study which sought to find out whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga shunned the bereaved at any time during the mourning process.
Where people touched a dead body they were not given any food at home so they would eat sugarcane and bananas. A goat was slaughtered and the stomach contents "tatha" were smeared on their heads. They then went to wash their heads in the river. The symbolism of the washing was that by doing so they washed death off and so were now clean. When they came back home, they shaved one another. After that, they were now clean and could resume normal life otherwise they could not even touch their wives (Waititu, 1980) and (Ndung’u, 1977).

Ndung’u further observes that where a person who had handled a dead body went home first, he was not supposed to enter his house. He was supposed to stay outside. Entering the house would be to bring uncleanness there; he therefore used to stay outside in a temporary shelter specifically made for that purpose until seven days were over. Mbiti (O.I 23-11-2011) expounded that during the seven days, the person had his own utensils to use. Food and water were brought to him and poured in his own utensils. Mbiti further explained that the number ‘seven’ in Agikuyu culture was considered to signify evil and was referred to as ‘Mugwanja Muru’, meaning evil seven. Once those seven days had elapsed, the ‘evil’ was considered to have passed. It is evident that during those seven days there was no post-burial support offered.

Ndung’u further states that no one went in the direction of the person who had touched the body for this was a serious thing that would call for a sacrifice.
Apart from the person giving him food, no one else was supposed to go near him; anyone coming into this homestead saw the individual and knew what was wrong with him, hence greeted him from afar. There was no post-bereavement support offered.

Ndung’u adds that after seven days, the person who had touched the body was supposed to bathe and was shaved by an old woman with an axe-like instrument called “rwenji” and then he was told to go out visiting. He sought out a medicine man who was supposed to make him vomit out the death which was called “gutahika thahu”. He was also supposed to get for himself a woman to sleep with and after that, he was welcomed back as a clean person.

Shaving of hair was a very common feature among the Agikuyu during the mourning period. Gatuto (O.I 15-10-2011) pointed out the shaving of hair was a symbol of cutting off death and the growth of new hair a symbol of springing of new life. Gennep (1972) further observes that this “sacrifice of the hair” includes two distinct operations: cutting of the hair which is to separate oneself from the previous world and dedicating, consecrating or sacrificing it which is to bind oneself to the sacred world and more particularly to a deity or a spirit with whom kinship is in this way established.

Cagnolo (1933:143), Leakey (1977:939), Middleton and Kershaw (1972:60) and Karanja (2003:91) concur that only the wealthy men and elders were
buried. Leakey describes the elders as not any married man, but a married man who was of the standing of elder, and who had sons of his own who were old enough to take part in burying him. Ngigi (O.I 20.09.2011) agreed with the view that burial ceremonies were rarely carried out. The researcher is of the view that burial ceremonies served a useful purpose in grief resolution because they helped the mourners to come to terms with the reality of death which is Worden’s first “grief task”. This was important to this study because it sought to establish whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga conducted burial ceremonies for its bereaved.

Karanja (2003:92) further observes that one month after the funeral, the bereaved family would slaughter “mburi ya kunungura mucii” a home-cleansing ram. All the deceased’s family members would come to eat the meat. Pieces of sugarcane were dipped into the “taatha”, intestinal and stomach contents of the ram, and a piece of this sugarcane was taken to each family member who had not attended the burial ceremony, to eat as a show of togetherness in cleansing.

Onuh (1992:161) points out that the age of the deceased has an influence on the burial rites. Dead children are normally given a hushed burial as distinct from the elaborate burial of a titled adult, which can stretch into days, weeks, and even months in some cultures. Leakey (1977:964) points out that among the Agikuyu a child who was not initiated was regarded as part of the mother
and when such a child died, he or she was not an individual in the community who had died but a human infant that had no separate identity. Therefore, the death of children was not regarded as important. Consequently, a family losing a child did not enjoy communal support. The researcher sought to establish whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga supported a family that had lost a child after its burial.

In the Agikuyu culture, the day after the funeral was known as “mutiiro”, meaning shunning work. It was a very sad day. The bereaved family did not go to work on that day (Karanja 2003:92). Mbuko (O.I 09-12-2011) confirmed the same. The fact that they remained at home, enabled them to come to terms with the reality that death had occurred. The researcher is of the view that traditionally, “mutiiro” would have helped the bereaved to meet Worden’s first “grief task”, that of accepting the reality of death.

One month after the burial a ceremony called “hukura” was conducted to mark the end of the mourning period. “Kuhukura” was a celebration that lasted eight days and nights to free the home from the contagion of death and so enable family members resume normal life (Leakey, 1977:943).

The “hukura” ceremony involved the following: getting an old woman accustomed to performing the ceremony of “shaving” the heads of the bereaved at “hukura” ceremony, finding men called “endia-ruhiu” which
literally means ‘men who sell their sword for a fee’, who were men willing to perform the service of ceremonial sexual intercourse for a fee with the widows during the ceremony. It also involved getting a given number of old men with no special social status and a few elderly widows of long standing. These were to be present to act as observers in the “hukura” ceremony. Another requirement was a fat ram of a single colour which had to be sought and slaughtered during the ceremony. Finally, all the children of the deceased were to attend the ceremony to ensure that the whole family was cleansed of the uncleanness of death.

On the first day, the first ram “ndurume ya gikuu” (ram of death) was slaughtered and eaten by those present. They also invoked the names of the deceased relatives and the spirit of the forgotten dead to join in the ceremony. Next the widows performed the ceremonial sex act with the “endia - ruhiu”. The next day was a “mutiiro” a day for suspending normal activities.

On the morning of the third day, the woman whose work was to shave the participants of the ceremony did so (Leakey, 1977:948). Gennep (1972:167) points out that the shaving of the hair by the widows symbolised the breaking of the bond created by marriage. The fourth day was a day of “mutiiro”.
On the fifth day, a he-goat was slaughtered and the meat was eaten by the participants and then on the sixth day all participants washed in running water to symbolize the washing away of the contagion of death.

On the seventh day, a ram was eaten by the family and sugarcane beer was taken. This feast was called “kurianira ngoima” (to eat the stall-fed ram together). The significance of this feast was to reunite the family as a whole with the immediate family of the deceased, who for five weeks had been isolated owing to their contamination (Leakey, 1977: 951). This sharing of a meal together is similar to Onuh’s view of reintegration (1992:159). Gennep (1972:165) further points out that the purpose of sharing meals is to reunite all the surviving members of the family with each other, and sometimes also with the deceased.

On the eighth day, a ram was slaughtered and the medicine-man was called to carry out the ceremony of “gutahikia” to purify the widows and their partners. Finally, life returned to normal and that marked the end of the “hukura” ceremony which served the purpose of lifting the mourning period.

Leakey points out that the first four days were “bad days” during which emphasis was on putting away the contagion of death, while the other four days from the fifth day were “good days”, and the object of the ceremonies
connected with them was to return the bereaved gradually to normal conditions.

It can be concluded that burial among the Agikuyu was a family affair due to the contagion of death and the bereaved were shunned by the community until the ceremony of “kuhukura” was performed. Kinoti (1994:165) reaffirms this by pointing out that traditionally among the Agikuyu, death and burial were strictly matters for the immediate family and none of the neighbours were present.

Secondly, the Agikuyu undertook the five weeks of mourning between death to the end of the “hukura” ceremony that marked the end of the mourning period and reintegrated the bereaved back to society. It was the researcher’s view that the “hukura” ceremony served a useful purpose of lifting the mourning and emphasizing the need for people to continue living normal life although not forgetting their dead. Oral interviews with the clergy revealed that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga does not have a Christian ceremony to mark the end of mourning. The church has thus not been influenced by the Agikuyu cultural practice of having a ceremony to mark the end of mourning after the burial of its deceased members.
2.4 Summary

From this chapter several conclusions can be made. First, the Agikuyu cultural practices on support to the bereaved have to a large extent influenced the way the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga supports its bereaved. Second, the death of children was not given emphasis and their funerals were often hushed up. Third, the Agikuyu accepted death of children and adults when it occurred as predestined and were resigned to it. Fourth, the Agikuyu avoided homes where death had occurred so as not to be caught by the contagion of death. Fifth, it was also observed that generally, the Agikuyu did not bury their dead but had a different way of interring them. Sixth, the Agikuyu had a ritual called “hukura” that marked the end of the mourning period. Finally, the Agikuyu did not seem to offer post-burial bereavement to support to its bereaved.

Having looked at the way the Agikuyu handled their bereaved members, the next chapter aims at establishing the support the ACK gives to its bereaved.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 BEREAVEMENT IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the support the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga gives to bereaved families after burial. It did this by looking at the historical background of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga to identify its formation which is important when it comes to support of bereaved because the older the diocese the more time it has had to interact with the bereaved families and come up with structures to support them.

The chapter also discussed the Anglican Church’s global perspective on support to the bereaved since the ACK is part of the global Anglican communion which bases all its matters including bereavement on a common book of prayer, the BCP. It outlined the policy of the ACK on bereavement since the policy is the one that guides the support the church gives to its bereaved.

It further outlined the role of the various offices of leadership in the diocese in supporting the bereaved because church leaders have a pastoral duty to the bereaved. The chapter also presented the support programmes to the bereaved within the diocese as implemented by the church departments in their endeavor to fulfill the biblical call to mourn with those who mourn. Finally, it
presented the complementary assistance that the church gets from other social
groups in its support to the bereaved since the bereaved are not only church
members but also part of the community.

3.2 Historical Background of ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga.

The history of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga can be traced back to the
establishment of the Diocese of Eastern Equatorial Africa by Dr. Ludwig
Krapf who arrived in Mombasa in 1844 and Johann Rebmann who joined him
in 1846. Both were representatives of the Church Missionary Society from
England.

The first Anglican Diocese called the Diocese of Eastern Equatorial Africa
was started at Rabai and included Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika (currently
Tanzania) with Rt. Rev. James Hannington as the first Bishop. The Diocese
saw tremendous growth and a need arose to divide it for easy administration.
Thus in 1898, it was divided into two Dioceses, namely the Diocese of
Mombasa covering all Kenya and Northern Tanganyika and the Diocese of
Uganda. In 1927, Northern Tanganyika was removed from the Diocese of
Mombasa which now covered Kenya only (ACK, 2011).

In 1961, the Diocese of Mombasa was split into four Dioceses. These were:
Diocese of Mombasa itself, Diocese of Nakuru, Diocese of Maseno and
Diocese of Fort Hall which was later renamed Diocese of Mt. Kenya. In 1975
the Diocese of Mt. Kenya was divided into Diocese of Mt. Kenya East and Mt. Kenya South (ACK, 2011).

In April 1975 at the age of thirty seven, David Mukuba Gitari was elected as the Bishop of the newly created Diocese of Mt. Kenya East. At the time of the division of the Diocese of Mt. Kenya, the new Diocese of Mt. Kenya East had 19 parishes. Eight of these parishes were in the former Kirinyaga District currently Kirinyaga County while nine were in Embu, and two were in the Diocesan Missionary Association (DMA) areas of Meru and Marsabit (CPK Diocese of Kirinyaga, 1995:29).

On 29th June, 1990, the Diocese of Mt. Kenya East was sub-divided into the Diocese of Embu and Diocese of Kirinyaga. The newly-born Diocese of Kirinyaga grew rapidly under the guidance of the then Bishop Gitari and a need was expressed to divide it into two. In 1997, this need was met. The Diocese of Meru was created after the subdivision of the Diocese of Kirinyaga. At the time of the study, the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in Kirinyaga County had the Rt. Rev. Daniel Ngoru as its Bishop. The Diocese has 104 parishes, 202 congregations and 130,000 parishioners.

The ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga is one of the 30 Dioceses which make up the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK, 2011) which itself is a member of the Anglican Communion and accepts the Bishop of Canterbury as its head (ACK,
2002:4). As a member of the Anglican communion worldwide, it is guided by the Book of Common Prayer in all its matters including support to the bereaved. It was therefore important to look at the way the Anglican church globally supports its bereaved before evaluating the way the Anglican Church in Kenya supports its bereaved.

3.3 The Anglican Church Global Perspective on Support to the Bereaved

Globally, the Anglican Church is guided by the BCP first published in 1662 in all of its matters including support to the bereaved. What is most distinctive about the Anglican pastoral tradition globally is that its ministry is given its form by the BCP. He adds that the BCP is the manual of the art of ministering as Anglicans have understood it down the ages and practice it today. It makes provision for the total life of the church and therefore furnishes the shape of the ministry in all of its aspects (Edwards, 1998:338).

He further observes that after presenting the basic Regular Liturgy of Morning and Evening Prayer, the BCP for instance moves into the cradle-to-grave care of Christians to all the moments of life such as baptism, catechism, confirmation, and visitation for those who are ill and more relevant for this study, burial for the dead. Thus for the Anglican Communion, the BCP incorporates much more than the rites of corporate worship.
The BCP provides the guidelines to be used during the burial of a deceased Anglican. It states how the burial ceremony for church members should be conducted (1962:326-334). It dictates that the presiding priest and clerks are to meet the corpse at the entrance of the church yard and go before it either into the church or towards the grave where the burial ceremony will take place. Globally the burial ceremony for the Anglicans serves a fourfold purpose:

First, the committal of the deceased through burial marks the separation of those who have died from the living. The Anglican Church globally asserts that although the body ceases to function at death, life does not end there but continues beyond the grave. As a result, the Anglican Church and its members live expecting life eternal for themselves and for others. For the church, the deceased continues to live in another form while the bereaved continue to live physically (Edwards, 1985:133).

Due to this separation, the living experience grief which is intense and realized most fully at the burial and afterwards. Ongwae (2011:37) observes that the bereaved are often out of balance for long periods and they would need support to help keep life in perspective during that moment of crisis.

Secondly, the burial affords the bereaved the opportunity to pay tribute to the deceased. Thirdly, the burial ceremony gives the bereaved an occasion to give
thanks to God for the life shared with the deceased. Finally, it is also a
ceremony to comfort the bereaved (Ibid:37).

Coombs (1999:101) states that Christians view the burial service and
ceremony as an integral part of the healing process in grief. The researcher
opines that the burial ceremony helps the bereaved families go through
Worden’s first “grief task” that of accepting the reality of the death. Coombs
expresses a similar opinion when he states that one of the elements of a helpful
funeral service is to make the bereaved recognize that their loved one has died
(Ibid:101). The researcher was of the opinion that it is at the burial ceremony
that the church emphasizes on the finality of death through biblical scriptures
such as John 14:2-4. In this scripture Jesus told the believers that he was
going to prepare a room for each one of them and that once the rooms were
ready he would come back for them, confirming that death is a reality. The
church also insists that the bereaved witness the lowering of the casket and be
the first to cast in the earth upon the coffin thereby helping the bereaved
accept that truly death has occurred.

The BCP (1962: 326-334) forbids the church to bury three categories of
Christians: those who die unbaptized, the excommunicated and those who
have committed suicide. The unbaptized are considered not to be full
members of the church because they have not undergone the sacrament of
baptism while the excommunicated are regarded not to be church members
because they are under church discipline and therefore cannot partake of the sacrament of the Holy Communion. Those who have committed suicide are regarded as sinners for taking their own lives.

The researcher observed that the families of those who die unbaptized, those who die excommunicated and those who commit suicide experience the pain of loss just like every other family which loses its members under normal circumstances. It is the researcher’s interpretation that as a result of the practice of not conducting burial ceremonies for these three categories of people, the church fails to enable them to meet Worden’s first “grief task”, that of accepting the reality of death. The BCP is therefore punitive to the bereaved family which, regardless of how death occurs, grieves the loss of their loved one and without adequate support may find it difficult to resolve their grief.

The BCP is silent on what the Anglican Church needs to do in the post-burial period to support the bereaved; a period when the reality of death finally sinks in and the bereaved experience a sense of emptiness and the void left by the deceased. This is consistent with the research premise that the Anglican Church support to the bereaved is short-lived and confined to the period between death and burial. The fact that the BCP is silent on post-burial support could be the reason why the Anglican Church offers short-lived support to the bereaved.
When one loses someone they love often the hardest time is after the funeral. Up until then family and friends rally around but in the months that follow, a bereaved person can often feel very alone as they grieve for their loved one and seek to carry on. A listening ear and some love and concern in these times can make all the difference.

Aware of this, the Kirkby Anglican Churches in the United Kingdom have set up a Bereavement Support Team. This is a team of people who have undergone a training course in bereavement and are available to visit and listen to the bereaved in their homes in the months following a bereavement. They just provide a listening ear as people share their memories, feelings and experiences. The team also organises regular services offering the chance for prayer for healing and wholeness.

A Reader in St. Peter and St. Paul’s Chaplaincy of Tanatoios/ Cremantorios Spain notes how the church’s bereavement support group has grown since its inception with each year having new faces and has now expanded to work hand in hand with church departments such as the Mothers Union to run these groups. These support groups help the members to realise that they are not alone in their loneliness, grief and sometimes their guilt as they interact with people in similar situations. Brown adds that it is also part of their duty to make home visits and offer counseling services to those who have been

5http://www.cofekirkby.co.uk/welcome/bereavement-support/ accessed on 09-03-2012
bereaved and have no one to share their lives with. He adds that this support has enabled majority of the bereaved to continue attending the church after losing their loved one (Brown, 2009:8).

Despite the BCP forbidding the burying of people who have committed suicide, the South Australia Anglican Church has a project called “Living Beyond Suicide Project” implemented through its agency, Anglicare-South Australia where it has partnered with the local police to provide support and information for families at the acute stages of their loss. This is done through connecting newly bereaved and a group of trained family-support volunteers, many of whom have also been bereaved by suicide. This team of volunteers is a ray of hope to those families they visit at their homes and provides a unique type of service to those who are suffering while showing the bereaved that despite being affected by suicide they have not been defeated by the pain (Hawke, 2009:9).

It is illustrated that in the Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion, the Kaduna Diocese in Northern Nigeria is often seen assisting to rehabilitate those who are affected by the Christian-Muslim conflict by sending priests to offer spiritual and counseling support to those who are bereaved. The church also assists financially those who lose their homes and businesses so that they can begin anew. For example, in 2001, it spent over 40,000 pounds to rehabilitate its members (Fapohunda, 2009:4).
Gamba (2008:17) points out that in Zimbabwe, the Mothers’ Union of the Diocese of Manicaland makes a great effort to relieve hardships and make orphans’ lives a bit more bearable by providing them with basic needs as well as access to medical and health resources. They also give financial assistance so the children can attend school. Housing and accommodation assistance are provided. Psychological support is given especially to HIV and AIDS orphaned children to help them cope with saddening losses of their families and loved ones by providing counseling services, helping them create happy memory family books, and providing relaxation and therapy centres for them to adjust to their circumstances.

Gamba further observes that the Mothers’ Union also tries to identify parents who wish to foster, adopt, or provide holidays, overnight or long weekend breaks for the children. Mothers’ Union members also visit the orphans to befriend them and promote life skills. They may assist the youth with training for such projects as forming and running savings and lending groups, and farming activities such as chicken-rearing and crop-growing to sustain themselves in the future. This enables the orphans to meet Worden’s third “grief task”, that of adjusting to the environment in which the deceased is missing.

Gamba further adds that the provision of support to vulnerable, disadvantaged and HIV and AIDS orphans is an on-going exercise for the Mothers’ Union in
Manicaland. The Mothers’ Union meets regularly with leaders of the church, village elders and members of the community to discuss how everyone can best contribute towards the successful building of a better society.

In the Church of the Province of Uganda- Anglican Communion, the church has a department called ‘Planning, Development and Rehabilitation Department’, a social arm whose core values are love, mercy and responsible stewardship of God’s creation. The department has initiated programmes through which orphans, widows and widowers are supported to overcome the emotional and economic challenges arising from the loss of a loved one. This study sought to establish whether the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has similar concerns for its bereaved.

In the Kenyan context, the researcher found two Anglican churches, namely All Saints Cathedral Parish, Nairobi and St. Peter’s Cathedral Parish, Nyeri, which have comprehensive post-burial support programmes for the bereaved. In an interview with Wanyoike (O.I 10-03-2011) the Provost at the ACK, All Saints Cathedral, Nairobi, it was noted that the church has a widows’ programme where the widows meet once a month to share experiences and encourage one another. The church also organises follow-up visitations at the homes of the bereaved especially after burial to enable the bereaved to move on with life.

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6 http://www.coupdr.co.ug accessed on 17-03-2012
From archival materials at the All Saints’ Cathedral, Nairobi, the church has a comprehensive pastoral ministry to the bereaved encompassing the widows, widowers and orphaned children. For the church to offer post-burial support, it has three forums, that is, the widows’ forum, the widowers’ forum and orphaned children’s forum under its pastoral programme.

The minutes of the “Widows’ Fellowship Annual Report” for the year 2011 listed the key activities of the fellowship as reaching out to other widows to join the ministry; and having annual retreats. They also organise seminars, monthly meetings and visits to children’s homes. The Church has a number of homes for children like St Nicholas Childrens’ Home at Karen in Nairobi and St Nicholas Childrens’ Home in Nakuru (ACK, 2011).

From the “Minutes of the Widows’ Fellowship”, it also emerged that during the widows’ monthly meetings, they invite specialists to speak on topics related to bereavement. These topics include succession and inheritance; parenting now that they are alone and need to take on new roles of raising children on their own; financial management where they are taught how to run businesses, manage finances and are encouraged to join savings and cooperative societies to be self-reliant and find personal fulfillment in life. This in essence helps them to accomplish Worden’s third “grief task”. Other topics include remarriage, where the church encourages the young widows to remarry, bring up a family and lead a full life basing it on 1 Timothy 5. By
encouraging young widows to remarry the Church enables them to re-invest in new relationships thereby accomplishing Worden’s fourth “grief task”, that of reinvesting in new relationships.

From the Church’s financial budget for the year 2012, it was clear that these activities are financially supported by the Church which had allocated Ksh. 210,000 to the widows’ and widowers’ programmes. In their five-year Strategic Plan for 2011 to 2016 the Church has identified one of its targets as strengthening the counseling ministry in the Cathedral. Counseling sessions are available for those who request for it. Thirty teams have been created to be used to visit, share with and pray for the bereaved. The researcher observes that the comprehensive post-burial support programme offered at All Saints Cathedral enables the widows, widowers and orphaned children to go through Worden’s four “grief tasks”.

The second case was St. Peter’s Cathedral ACK, Diocese of Mount Kenya West which has a church-based ministry called ‘Widows of Faith’. Minutes of the Widows of Faith meeting held on 15th July 2012 revealed that the ministry assists its members with post-burial services such as forums where they share experiences and encourage one another. It further emerged that the widows invite specialists to talk to them about coping with bereavement. They also help one another financially in needy cases such as paying school fees for their children. They have established a special fund to which each member
contributes Ksh. 200 per month to meet their needs. They also assist each other during times of crisis such as funerals and joyous occasions such as weddings. Currently their membership stands at twelve widows. The ministry has been in existence for two years and members continue to meet every month to offer each other support.

From the above discussion it is clear that the Anglican Church globally is guided by the BCP, the church has a biblical and theological responsibility not only to support the bereaved until burial but also after burial to help them in the process of adaptation to the new status which may be prolonged and painful. These churches have therefore put in place mechanisms to enable the bereaved members of a family to cope with the financial, emotional and spiritual challenges stemming from the death of a loved one. This leads the researcher to discuss the subsection on the ACK policy on support to bereaved families.

3.4 Anglican Church of Kenya’s Policy on Support to the Bereaved

The discussion of the ACK policy on bereavement support cannot be done without a mention of the review of the Book of Common Prayer. This review has been largely influenced by the spread of the Anglican Church. As the Anglican Church spread from England to the rest of the world, it became necessary for the BCP to be adapted to fit the local situations.
Chatfield (1998:28) points out that as the Anglican Church spread throughout the world, several problems arose such as the fact that the mother tongue of many Anglicans was no longer English. This can be attributed to the fact that the spread of the Anglican Church worldwide was pegged on the expansion of the British Empire that had colonised many territories where the locals did not use English as a first language. The spread of the Anglican Church from England led to potent forces pulling Anglican forms of worship away from uniformity due to cultural differences because none of these places in the world were the same as it was in England in 1662 when the BCP was written.

Chatfield further points out that as a result of this, during the 1988 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops, the need for all Christians to encounter and express their faith in their own language and cultural ideas was expressed, leaving the BCP as a benchmark and a reference point for any liturgical revision. The Conference also resolved that each province should be free, subject to essential universal norms of worship and to a valuing of traditional liturgical materials, to seek the expression of worship which is appropriate to its Christian people in their cultural context. This was aimed at encouraging local congregations to adapt their culture into Christian worship as long as it did not contravene the Christian principles and values as set out in the BCP. Thus they were allowed, for example, to use local musical instruments in worship or incorporate customary burial rites as long as they are not repugnant to the Christian faith.
The ACK Constitution, states that the church accepts the Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888 which outlined the Anglican essentials for a united Christian church and that

this church may make and authorize such deviations from and additions or alternatives to the forms of service provided in the said BCP and such new forms of Liturgy may, in its judgment, be required to meet the needs of this church and shall be consistent with the spirit and teaching of the said BCP (ACK, 2002:4).

The resolutions of the Lambeth Conference of 1988 allowed local churches to revise the BCP to fit local situations while maintaining the old values. The revisions were to be used in the place of the BCP. The ACK, under the direction of the then Archbishop David Mukuba Gitari, therefore drew up a new prayer book titled, “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya”, which provides liturgical guidelines for the Anglican Church in Kenya on all issues.

Gitari (0.1 03-01-2012) observed that the publication of “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya,” (OMS) was the culmination of a long process of inculturation of Kenyan culture into the liturgy by a committee he appointed in his capacity as the then Archbishop of Kenya. He elaborated that the guidelines laid out in the OMS concerning burial and post-burial support were written specifically because the church realized that it had no guidelines directing its dealings with bereaved Christians. Prior to the release of the OMS, the committee had published a series of abridged prayer books, containing the incultated liturgy of several services such as morning and
evening prayers, baptism, admission to holy communion, confirmation and commissioning.

These prayer books did not contain the liturgy for the burial of the dead or give guidance to the church on how to handle the bereaved. Njogu (O.I 20-09-2011) observed that the clergy in the Diocese of Kirinyaga mainly used these abridged versions to conduct services.

Procter (1978:841) defines a policy as “a plan, a course of action for directing affairs as chosen by an organization”. This is the definition that the researcher has adopted in this study. “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya” (2003:164) which gives the policy of the ACK states, among other things, the following with regard to support and handling of the bereaved: First, that “the burial service is best accompanied by pastoral care being exercised for the bereaved before, during and afterwards”. Second, a simple and inexpensive burial is advised and that the burial ceremony should not overtake the resources of the bereaved. Third, “any traditional custom or way of placing the body, which is not repugnant to Christian faith, can be incorporated in the service”.

Further, this policy recommends that “after the burial, the minister or any other authorized church member should escort the bereaved back to their
home if possible” and that “follow up visitations are encouraged for purposes of pastoral support and fellowship”.

From the foregone, it is evident that the ACK policy advocates for pastoral care to follow all church activities targeted by the church for the bereaved and further encourages the church leadership to offer continued support after burial though it uses conditional clauses leaving it open to different interpretations. It further advises for simple and inexpensive burials which are within the financial limits of the bereaved to save on their resources.

During the study it was observed that most bereaved adults were not familiar with the ACK policy but gave diverging answers as to what the policy states. Focus Group Discussions held with few bereaved male adults pointed out these as fellowship, financial contributions and visiting the bereaved immediately after a death occurred. Those responses partially related to what the OMS gives as the policy of the ACK in dealing with the bereaved. However, none of the respondents knew the complete policy. Bereaved female adults in Focus Group Discussions said they were familiar with the policy because the church makes them aware of it by announcing it in church and requesting the church members and public to assist the bereaved in their time of need.
While majority of the church leaders indicated that the ACK does not have a policy, Karia (O.I 21-12-2011), Munene (O.I 10-09-2011) and Gichangi (O.I 20-11-2011) concurred that the church has a policy on dealing with the bereaved families. Similar to the bereaved, these church leaders also gave divergent answers with regard to what the policy is. They included financial contributions being made to the bereaved, prayers and “maombolezi”, the visits during the period between death and burial for purposes of mourning. Gatuto (O.I 25-11-2011) said that the policy is in the use of the liturgical book “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya”. Most of these responses represent small parts of the policy but do not give the whole picture of the ACK policy in dealing with the bereaved. It is therefore evident that the ACK policy on bereavement is not clear-cut and is not understood by most of the clergy.

The reason why both the bereaved and the church leaders are not conversant with the policy can be attributed to the following:

There is lack of training about the policy on bereavement. Nguyo (O.I 01-10-2011) said that the policy on bereavement is not part of the syllabus in the theological training college that he attended. As a result, he did not know what the policy entailed and how to implement it. Chege (O.I 13-12-2011) added that in the theological college he trained in, bereavement as a topic was taught but what the policy says and how to implement it was not taught.
Majority of the adult bereaved respondents said that the church does not make the congregation aware of its policy on issues of bereavement. During the study it also emerged that both the BCP (1662) and its Kikuyu translation, known as "Ibuku Ría Thara" give guidelines on who may be buried and elaborate on how to conduct a burial service but do not contain the policy on post-burial support.

During the time of this study, Thendi (O.I 12-10-2011) pointed out the existence of a Kikuyu translation of “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya” (OMS), known as “Ibuku Ría Mahoya na Magongona Ma Kanitha Wa Ki-Anglikana wa Kenya” which was published and released in 2010 and incorporates the policy on how the bereaved should be supported even in the post-burial period. However, while the OMS was first published in 2002, the Kikuyu translation was published eight years later. This meant that for a period of eight years the Kikuyu service congregants had no guidelines on post-burial support. Murage (O.I 01-11-2011) made the same observation that in the intervening eight years between the publication of the OMS and its Kikuyu version, clergy ministering in Kikuyu would use “Ibuku Ría Thara” (1935) which does not contain the policy on support to the bereaved after burial. Thus the Kikuyu service congregants had had few opportunities to familiarise themselves with the ACK policy as contained in the OMS and its Kikuyu translation “Ibuku Ría Mahoya na Magongona Ma Kanitha Wa Ki-Anglikana wa Kenya".
In an interview with the clergy, Njogu (O.I 31-08-2011) pointed out that the policy as contained in the OMS is not fully put into practice and few clergy had seen or heard of it. He attributed this to the fact that there has been some resistance to the OMS in some circles of the clergy who claim that they were not consulted in its preparation; that it was forced on them and was hurriedly prepared. He added that it is dilute in language meaning that the guidelines therein are not assertive since they use “if” clauses, for example “After the burial, the minister or any other authorized church member should escort the bereaved back to their home if possible”. Njogu further explained that this makes the policy open to different interpretations. In addition, some areas deviate from the BCP.

The Kikuyu translation of the OMS, “Ibuku Ria Mahoya na Magongona Ma Kanitha Wa Ki-Anglikana wa Kenya” (2010:311) states “Igongona riri niwega ritarane na iihoro wa giicerera na kuiriria aria makuirimwo hindi iyo mari na kieha, ona thutha wa mathiko”. This literally translated means that the burial service is best accompanied by visits and comforting the bereaved during their time of sorrow and even after burial. The wording of the Kikuyu version emphasizes the need for visitations and encouragement for the bereaved and is more emphatic on the support of the bereaved not only during the “maombolesi” but even after burial than the English version which makes it optional. At the time of the study the book had only been in existence for one year and it is hoped that its emphatic language will prevail
upon the church leaders to implement the policy and thus give post-burial support.

It is evident that most of the bereaved and many church leaders do not understand the guidelines on the support to bereaved families after burial. This is because the ACK policy is not clear and the language is equivocal. Therefore, it has not been fully embraced. The researcher is of the view that this partial implementation of the policy means that the bereaved in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga have not been helped to accomplish Worden’s four “grief tasks”. However, the researcher also noted that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has enabled all its bereaved to accomplish Worden’s first “grief task” by conducting burial ceremonies for them which is the first step in grief resolution. This is a positive step towards the healing process and it is hoped that the church could improve its support to enable them to complete the grieving process like the two aforementioned cases of All Saints Cathedral Parish, Nairobi and St. Peter’s Cathedral Parish, Nyeri.

Having discussed the policy on post-burial support and establishing that it is not fully implemented, the next subsection discussed open expression of grief to determine whether the church supported the bereaved in expressing their emotions during the grieving process.
3.5 Open Expression of Grief

The central role of the Christian church is to provide integrated leadership that serves the spiritual, social, and emotional interests of its members. Gikunju (O.I 10-12-2011) observed that the bereaved felt encouraged when their church leaders especially the clergy visited them and empathised with them. This made them feel the presence of Jesus the exemplar comforter among them. Below is a discussion on how the church leaders supported the bereaved through open expression of grief.

Ongwae (2011:37) points out that it is normally observed that even the toughest of human beings will acknowledge that probably no period is as difficult as when people have lost a loved one. It is a time to grieve and no man or woman can claim to be strong enough to cope with such an emotional moment alone. It takes the support of others for one to go through the trying period of transition of a beloved member of the family. Kiura (O.I 10-10-2011) said that the clergy visited him immediately after the loss of his wife and prayed with him. He added that because of their participation he felt that he was not alone in the journey of bereavement. He was consoled and counseled and was reassured that life must continue. This enabled him to accept the reality of death and thus accomplish Worden’s first “grief task”.

Payne, Horn and Relf (2000:21-24) observe that open expressions of grief and emotions, including crying and sobbing aloud are necessary for the bereaved
to come to terms with their grief. They further state that the initial numbness following death is replaced by ‘pangs of grief - episodes of intense pining interspersed with periods of anxiety, tension, anger and self-reproach’. Crying aloud and sobbing is common. Wakini (O.I 02-09-2011) lamented that during the burial of her child she wept uncontrollably as the casket was lowered. The clergy discouraged her from weeping telling her that God knew what was good for her and that she should try to be strong. By suppressing her emotions, the clergy denied her the opportunity to experience the pain of grief which is Worden’s second “grief task” for healthy grief resolution. For the bereaved to successfully work out their grief, it is necessary for the bereaved person to endure this buffeting of emotion. Only if the pining can be tolerated, the more or less conscious searching, the seemingly endless examination of how and why the loss occurred, can he come to recognize and accept that the loss is in truth permanent and that his life must be shaped anew (Bowlby, 1980:93).

Nute (1975:84) asserts that grief is work that the bereaved have to face and that expression of grief has to be permitted. He maintains that just as one has to face the pain, one must face the tears, look at oneself and say, ‘I weep, I am someone who must weep and does’. He adds that failure to do this is a denial of one’s humanity, a rejection of one’s self, a self-mutilation, a semi-suicide.

In oral interviews with bereaved female respondents, Wakagio (O.I 12-01-12) recalled a time when church leaders who visited her during “maombolezi” after losing her sister were surprised to see her weeping because she was a lay reader and she was the one the church had always sent out to comfort others in
times of bereavement. When they tried to discourage her she recalled telling them that she was human and she had to weep for her sister. Although she appreciated their support, she added that she felt upset by the church leaders who did not seem to understand her pain. As such, when comforting the bereaved, the members of the clergy should refrain from curtailing the open expressions of grief that may occur.

Mararo (O.I 31-10-2011), a member of the clergy, pointed out that the church leaders shared in the bereaved’s grief and allowed them to openly express their emotions. However, in Focus Group Discussions, the bereaved respondents reported that some church leaders did not allow them to express their emotions or cry openly. Instead, they said that the church leaders often told them that they ‘were strong in faith’, ‘God would take care of them’, ‘that God knows what is best for them’, ‘that God has a good plan for them’ ‘that God is in control’, ‘that crying was a sign of lack of faith in God’ and that they should therefore not cry. By discouraging the bereaved from crying, the clergy are denying the bereaved the opportunity to work through Worden’s second “grief task”, that of experiencing the pain of grief. Although the church leaders discouraged them, it was probable that they cried in private.

The researcher observed that the visits by the church leaders mainly focused on the bereaved adults and ignored children. The children were ‘protected’ from even discussing the loss. This indicates that the church did not
adequately help the children to accomplish either of Worden’s first two “grief tasks” those of accepting the reality of the loss and experiencing the pain of loss.

It was also clear that where a couple had lost a child, the visits were mainly focused on the female adult leaving out the bereaved male adult. The bereaved male adult would feel ignored during such visits. Thiga (O.I 10-11-2011), speaking about the fact that there are no programmes for widowers in the church, said that due to the differences in socialization of genders, it is assumed that men are strong and they are expected to keep their feelings to themselves. The researcher’s view is that perhaps because of the expectation that they are strong, they are left out even when they lose children.

Interviews revealed that widowers tended to leave the church because of feeling neglected by the church leaders who did not identify with their grief and this was compounded by social gossip from the church. One widower, Thiga (O.I 10-11-2011) said that he could not go to church because the congregation was saying he wanted to marry the “mama mboga”, meaning “female vegetable vendor” from whom he bought his green groceries after the death of his wife.

The study identified that the responsibility of the lay readers in ministering to such individuals was critical in support of the bereaved after burial. This was
supported by Kinyua (O.I 05-12-2011) a member of the clergy who pointed out that it was easier and important for the Anglican Church to empower the lay readers in following up the bereaved after burial.

Focus Group Discussions with bereaved male respondents established that the bereaved were bitter with the church. Miano (O.I 31-09-2011) stated the bereaved felt empty because they had no one to turn to and the church leaders did not come back to help them through the process of grief after burial.

Simfukwe (2006:1462) states that at times, misinformed Christians prevent other bereaved Christians from crying, overlooking the fact that the Bible does not negate or forbid expressions of the emotions of grief. People are often seen weeping in the Bible; for example Joseph wept over his father’s body (Genesis 50: 1), Job shaved his head and tore his robe (Job 1: 20) and Jesus himself wept over Lazarus’ death (John 11: 35).

Moreover, the Bible records that following the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, devout men buried him and made great lamentations over him (Acts 8:12) and after the death of Tabitha all widows wept over her (Acts 9:39). It is imperative to note that even Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 4: 13 does not, in actual fact tell the Thessalonians not to mourn but only, rather to avoid excesses of grief and not mourn like those who have no hope.
Morgan (2009:1), Lierop (1991:100) and Taylor (1994:222) agree that bereavement is one of the most severe crises of human existence. Morgan (2009:1) adds that although Christians believe that 'death is not the end, for we go out not into the nothingness but into the arms of a God of love' and that faith gives Christians hope, the pain of grief and separation can nevertheless be acute since the bereaved will not see their loved ones again in this life.

Barnes (1999) concurs that the bereaved Christian will feel, indeed, as keenly as the non-Christian the loss of their loved ones; the absence of their well-known faces; the want of the sweet voice of friendship and love; for religion does not blunt the sensibility of the soul, or make the heart unfeeling. Lierop (1991:101) says that it is then, the role of the clergy to help the bereaved person to yield to the grief process and to assist the bereaved in verbalizing and exteriorizing their feelings, including those of anger.

The bereaved should therefore be allowed and in fact encouraged by the church leaders to express their emotions. This will help them accomplish Worden’s second “grief task”, that of experiencing the pain of loss, both before and after burial. The next sub section discusses the support that the church leaders give to the bereaved.
3.6 Church Leaders' Support to the Bereaved in ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga

The ACK Constitution (2002:7) states that the Church as the body of Christ upon the earth has been committed to the task of continuing and completing all that Jesus began both to do and to teach (Acts 1:1), therefore it has been found convenient to have various people to carry out its three ministries namely: pastoral, prophetic and priestly. The role of supporting the bereaved falls within the pastoral ministry. The constitution further points out that since the apostolic times there have been the three orders of bishops, priests and deacons in the church. There are also the lay people who include lay readers and local church council members who assist in performing these ministries.

3.6.1 The Bishop's Support to the Bereaved

The ACK Constitution (2002:7) states that the bishop is the chief pastor or shepherd, the overseer of a Diocese or an area which in most cases is large enough to include people from all sectors of life. It further states that in these people the full variety and riches of the church of Christ may be set forth in the life of the Church. He is not the pastor of one congregation but is set free from the detailed work of a pastor in order that he may be free to exercise his special duty of overseer.

Data collected through Focus Group Discussions revealed that the bishop visited some bereaved families and the support he provided was mainly
spiritual where he offered sermons to encourage the bereaved and the
mourners with the word of God and prayers.

It was observed that the bishop’s support was limited. Njoka (2010:15) points
out that the pastoral role is supplementary to the bishop’s ministry. He
illuminates that in the Anglican Church, it is hoped that the bishop as the chief
shepherd of the diocese visits every parish at least once a year as a way of
sharing and meeting with at least all the Christians, among other duties. He
works in collaboration with priests, the deacons and the laity who are in
individual parishes.

Mithamo (O.I 03-09-2011) said that he had not seen the bishop attend many
burials. Njoroge (O.I 05-09-2011) observed that the bishop visited very few
bereaved families. They further elaborated that these visits were based on
their social status, their support to church programmes, their payment of tithe
and offertory and their personal relationship with the bishop. Many bereaved
adults in Focus Group Discussions held similar views. However, Gitari (O.I
03-01-2012) said that even the bereaved, who are perceived by others as being
influential in the church, felt that the bishop was not concerned about their
plight. The researcher’s view on this is that because the bishop has a large
area of jurisdiction, he cannot visit many people but the parish priests are
expected to make the visits on his behalf because they are the representatives
of the bishop at the parish level.
The researcher holds the same view as Njoka (2010:15) who avers that the bishop’s visits were also limited because of his office which covers a big geographical area with a big congregation and the role it plays. His support was limited to the period between death and burial due to the heavy responsibility laid upon his office. In the Anglican Church, the bishop takes oversight authority and administrative responsibility therefore the failure to support the bereaved does not fall on him.

3.6.2 The Clergy’s Support to the Bereaved.

The ACK Constitution, (2002:8-9) states that the clergy or the priests are usually appointed by the bishop to a local ministry as shepherds for the people of Christ in one particular locality. This locality in most cases, is a parish or local community. The parishes sampled had a parish priest in charge, though the parishes had many churches within them, some headed by their own priest. Njoka (2010:15) noted that at the local congregation, priests are the bishop’s representative. They are closer to the people and are expected to be diligent in visiting Christians in their homes, to know their situations and to teach them to become faithful members of the kingdom of God and offer pastoral care and counseling.

Ndegwa (O.I 13-09-2011) observed that the clergy visited the bereaved immediately they were informed about the occurrence of death, preferably by the bereaved or a member of the deceased’s family, to offer pastoral care.
Field data showed that majority of the sampled bereaved adults individually informed the clergy when they lost a significant other and were subsequently visited by the clergy. However, these visits were confined to the period between the death and burial of the deceased. The clergy conducted the burials thus enabling the bereaved to meet Worden’s first “grief task”, that of accepting the reality of the loss.

Muchiri (O.I 07-09-2011), a church leader, said the clergy preferred to commence prayers and fellowship with the bereaved family after the latter had organised themselves. During the “maombolezi”, the mourning period between death and burial, Mbiti (O.I 17-11-2011) a bereaved adult, said that the clergy availed themselves as much as possible and where they were unavailable they organised the deacons, lay readers and/or the church council members to visit the bereaved and offer pastoral care.

Macharia (O.I 07-10-2011), a bereaved adult, said that visits to the bereaved normally occurred between the day the clergy received the information and two days later. Sharing his experience, he narrated how after the death of his wife, the clergy in the parish attended the “maombolezi”, preached and encouraged the mourners to show their continued support by attending the “maombolezi” daily. In the subsequent days, the clergy could not attend the prayer meeting but he ensured that a church representative was available to conduct the prayers. On the eve of the burial, the clergy attended the prayer
meeting to make final arrangements for the burial. Macharia further said that although the clergy conducted the burial ceremony the following day, it was the last time that the church leaders visited him. The researcher notes that Macharia’s observation agrees with the research premise that the church support to the bereaved is mostly limited to the period between death and burial.

From the Focus Group Discussion with the bereaved female respondents, it was observed that the clergy readily organised for the burial service and conducted the burial ceremony for the deceased and that their services ended at the grave side with the planting of the cross on the grave. Both groups of respondents, the bereaved adults and the clergy, concurred that there were no follow up visitations after burial and where they occurred they only lasted for a month. Given that Kubler-Ross states that grief is not a one-day affair through which the bereaved need to be supported, the researcher’s view is that the one-month period of visitations means that the bereaved were not adequately supported in resolving their grief.

Talitwala (2002:5) and Payne, Horn and Relf (2000:72) observe that the overall consensus is that grief is a long-term process and that it usually takes one or two years for the pangs of grief to be relatively contained. The bereaved would thus need support for a longer duration than one month for them to be able to recover.
During an interview with the clergy, Njogu (O.I 20-09-2011) one of them said “honestly the church has relaxed in its support of the bereaved after burial.” He further went on to say that they normally had one week to visit needy families which included the bereaved families especially those having issues coping with the death and in particular those who had lost the significant other tragically.

Njogu (O.I 20-09-2011) added that even in those situations where the bereaved families were visited after burial by the church leaders, these visits were not specifically made in the light of the families’ bereavement. Instead, they were part of the clergy’s routine pastoral home visits aimed at acquainting the clergy with their parishioners living in a particular area at a specified time regardless of whether the parishioners had any special needs or not. In these routine visits, the clergy is able to meet different families in their home set-up where prayers are conducted. Their visits served a useful purpose.

“Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya” directs that during their ordination into priesthood, the priests are to be exhorted to “minister to the sick and prepare the dying for their death and to extend the ministry of pastoral care and counseling to those who require it”. The bereaved are in this category and pastoral care and counseling services would be meaningful interventions to enable them to resolve their grief faster. Kamau, (2005)
observes that bereaved adults seek counseling services offered as intervention for grief and that those who do not seek professional counseling support seek social and religious support.

3.6.3 The Deacon’s Support to the Bereaved.

The study regarded the deacons as part of the clergy because they aspire to be ordained to clergy. Their role in the church is also similar to that of the clergy but they cannot perform some priestly functions. Their actual role is to assist the priest in Divine Service, especially during the Holy Communion, to read the Holy Scriptures, to instruct the youth in the catechism and in the absence of the priest to baptize infants. It is also their duty to search for the sick, the needy and the poor people in the parish, to find out where they live and to pray with them and to report their needs to the clergy in charge so that where possible the congregation may be called upon to help the very needy. The bereaved fall within the category of the needy.

The ACK Constitution (2002:2) states that in the modern Anglican Church, deaconate is a grade through which a candidate passes for a brief period before being ordained to priesthood if found suitable. The ministry of a deacon entails pastoral service and concern for all people, but particularly the sick, poor, helpless and the lonely among other duties. Wall (1985:61) adds that the first deacons were ordained to help bishops with service to the poor and the distribution of alms. As a result, the deaconate’s special emphasis is on
serving especially the weak, the poor, the sick and the lonely and in interpreting to the church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world. The bereaved are in this category of the helpless and lonely.

“Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya” (2003:90) further points out that the deacon is supposed to exercise this ministry with gladness and with zeal. The ACK Constitution (2002:10) emphasizes that he or she is expected to seek out the sick and other needy persons in the parish and to ensure that they receive the care and help they need. A deacon serves under a bishop or a priest who allocates him or her duties to perform from time to time.

The researcher established that the deacons were sent by the clergy under whom they worked to minister to the bereaved mainly during the week following the death. They were able to pray and comfort the bereaved during the period between death and burial. Kamau (O.I 10-12-2011) reported that the deacons also bury the deceased thereby enabling the bereaved to accomplish Worden’s first “grief task”, that of accepting the reality of death. In a Focus Group Discussion with bereaved male adults, it emerged that the deacons did not visit them after burial.
3.6.4 The Support of the Laity to the Bereaved

The ACK Constitution (2002:2) defines the laity as all persons who are members of the Anglican Church and who are not members of the orders of bishop, priests or deacons.

The constitution outlines the roles of the office of the lay persons, some of which include: taking his or her full support of the parish ministers responsible for the administrative and financial affairs of the parish, to take notice of those who are in danger of straying from the right way, to seek them out and advise them, and if need be, to report on their case to the parish priest.

Njoka (2010:115) points out that the laity’s participation in pastoral visits of the sick, bereaved families and destitute in homes, hospitals and burial ceremonies is usually mobilised by the clergy. This study chose to use lay readers and the church council members as laity respondents because they hold responsibilities in the church and assist the clergy in their work.

Lay readers are a special group of the laity, in that they are commissioned into church leadership by the bishop. They are also licensed to perform special roles in the church and are robed during the church services. “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya” (2003:194) points out that the role of the lay readers is to assist the priest in pastoral duties such as visiting the parishioners, the sick, the lost, and praying with them and encouraging them,
burying the dead, among other services. To qualify for licensing as a lay reader, candidates must have undergone theological or other resourceful training.

The researcher observed from field data that the bereaved adults were visited by the lay readers. It was also established that when the clergy needed to send someone to support the bereaved, they preferred to send the lay readers rather than the other groups of the laity. This is because, according to Njoka (2010:14), lay readers are licensed by the Diocesan Bishop which authenticates their ministries. Their pastoral support to the bereaved was limited to the period before, and during burial. The study established that they offered their services on voluntary basis.

Wachira (OJ 20-12-2011) said that the lay readers were sent in cases where the clergy wanted to follow up a bereaved congregation member and the clergy was unavailable. Though the lay readers are authenticated by the bishop to carry out their ministries, the researcher observed that their support to the bereaved was hampered by the fact that they could not freely visit the bereaved without the explicit authority of the clergy. This is because the Anglican Church has a bureaucracy that does not allow the lay readers to take on duties that have not been specifically assigned to them by the clergy. Moreover, the lay readers offer their services on a voluntary basis and are not employees of the church and so they may not be able to go back and visit the
bereaved after burial. This means that the bereaved are not assisted by the church to meet Worden’s third and fourth “grief tasks”, those of adjusting to an environment in which the deceased is missing and reinvesting in new relationships.

Field data showed that the clergy sent out the lay readers to the bereaved families immediately after receiving the information about the death, usually one to two days if the clergy were not available. Kathoni (O.I 10-10-2011) and Muthondu (O.I 08-11-2011) who are lay readers themselves stated that they are often sent out to visit the bereaved, pray and condole with them and even bury the deceased when the clergy are otherwise unavailable. The researcher did not elicit information as to whether the bereaved felt dissatisfied with the presence of the lay readers instead of the clergy.

The local church council members or parish council members who are representatives of local churches at the parish level are an extension of laity and they are congregation representatives in church matters such as church finances, church projects, church administrative issues and any other duty as assigned by the clergy. The ACK Constitution (2002) points out that the church council members are men and women elected by the congregation annually. Their candidature is measured on the scale of their being full members of the church through baptism and confirmation (ACK, 2002:25).
Responses from the church council members showed that the church supports the bereaved and comforts them mainly in the period before burial. Only a small minority of church council members reported supporting the bereaved after the burial of the deceased. They reported having offered financial help as well as counseling services.

Mugo (O.I 05-12-2011), a church council member, said that the church council members had no specific training aimed at supporting the bereaved. As a result of this, they lacked the skills to comfort the bereaved and were likely to say hurtful things without intending to. Kamau (O.I 01-10-2011), a church council member recounted how a young widow who had just lost her husband broke into a bitter cry when in his bid to console her told her that she was still young enough to marry again.

Just like the lay readers, the church council members provided pastoral care but this was limited to as far as they were available to do so. The researcher noted that the church council members were sent to the bereaved families by the clergy immediately the clergy received the death report, usually within two days if the clergy were not available or would otherwise accompany the clergy on these visits. Although the church council members are elected representatives of the congregation, it is not their bounden duty to visit the bereaved. Therefore the clergy can only ask them to visit the bereaved on voluntary basis.
Data from the bereaved respondents showed that the church leaders who visited them least were the church council members. This can be attributed to the fact that their ministry is not authenticated like that of lay readers. Secondly they were elected by the congregation for a brief period of one year and finally many lacked the necessary training as compared to the lay readers.

It can therefore be concluded that the mandate of the various offices with the ACK structure directly influences the extent to which the church leaders can support the bereaved. For example, the Bishop’s pastoral role is secondary to his oversight role. At the local church level which in most cases had a single clergy, it was difficult for the clergy to attend to all bereaved families and execute other duties so the clergy normally sent selected church council members and lay readers to represent the church in bereaved homes. Secondly the mandate of the various offices was not explicit on post-burial support to the bereaved.

Karia (O.I 21-12-2011), one of the church council members revealed that he was sent to visit a bereaved family immediately the death was reported and he consoled with the family until burial. During those sessions he preached to the mourners and contributed towards the burial expenses. Njiru (O.I 21-12-2011), another church council member revealed that he too supported the bereaved from the time of death, that he openly shared in the grief of family and prayed with and counseled the family. He suggested that the church could
improve the level of support offered to the bereaved through soliciting for
funds from able well-wishers after they have been sensitised on the
importance of supporting the bereaved.

The study established that besides the spiritual care provided by the church
leaders during the pre-burial period, they also provided monetary and material
support when they visited the bereaved families. Material support was
composed mainly of food stuffs. The monetary and material support was
mainly provided on free will basis. However, Mwai (O.I 23-10-2011) and
Muchiri (O.I 17-11-2011) pointed out two churches, Kiangai and Kiburu, were
unique in that they had a structured framework whereby the church
contributed Ksh. 2000 and Ksh.1000 respectively to every single bereaved
family belonging to their church. Although this help would not be adequate to
meet all the family needs it would enable them meet their urgent ones. This
help was provided in the period before the burial. In most instances the church
leaders were also included in the burial committee to represent the church and
provide the church’s perspective in the whole burial process. This assured the
family that the church shared their sorrow. The researcher opines that
although their support to the bereaved does not go beyond burial, the
programmes that these two churches have, are good examples to the rest of the
diocese.
Focus Group Discussion with the bereaved female respondents revealed that the bereaved were positive about the help they received from the various church leaders during “maombolezi”, saying it minimised their sorrow and that this help made them feel loved and cared for and gave them hope to continue with life in anticipation of seeing their loved ones in heaven. Thiga (O.I 23-11-2011), a bereaved male respondent held a similar view.

Field reports showed that the bereaved families would have been happier to receive more monetary and material support from the church because the ones they received were inadequate and were used mainly to meet the burial expenses. Furthermore guidance and counseling were also cited as other forms of expected help. This can be attributed to the fact that in most instances the bereaved felt comforted when among the many mourners. The fellowships during “maombolezi” served their purpose but once the burial was over, the bereaved felt lonely. If they had been continued, they would still have been more beneficial because grief is a process which does not end at burial. The researcher is of the opinion that due to the lack of post-burial support, the bereaved were not adequately supported in grief resolution.

Participation of the church leaders in “maombolezi” through sermons that point out that death is a reality helped the bereaved to accept that death had occurred and that the deceased was gone forever. This helped the bereaved meet Worden’s first “grief task”, that of accepting the reality of loss. It is
therefore clear that the church council members play an important role in supporting the bereaved as they work out their grief.

3.7 Visits after Burial by Church Leaders

Responses from bereaved respondents revealed that the church did not adequately carry on with post-burial visits to support the bereaved. Where they occurred, they lasted one month which helped them to recover from grief only partially because grief is a long term process. Parkes (1975:21), Talitwala (2002:5), Kubler-Ross (1969), Taylor (1994:222), Payne, Horn and Relf (2000:72) and Wright (2004:83) concur that grief is a long-term process and that it takes a long time, usually one to two years for the pangs of grief to become relatively self-contained and for social functioning to be restored, although it may take much longer.

Dominica (2009:6) says that ‘we live in a culture which tries to sanitise death and to do what is necessary as quickly as possible’. Bereaved families are expected to be “getting back to normal” in about six weeks whereas it has been learnt that the second year of bereavement is often worse than the first. Wright (2004:19) furthers says that people want the bereaved to be “normal” as soon as possible or they act as if they are.
From Focus Group Discussions, it was observed that the bereaved adults who were visited after burial received support in the form of pastoral care. They further pointed out that they received some monetary and material support during those visits. They appreciated that that support enabled them to make the burial arrangements and they felt that they were not alone in their sorrow. This is in keeping with Collins (2009:3) who says that church people are ‘very good in offering moral and spiritual support initially but after the burial, their support is minimal’. Zimpfer and Humphrey (1996:161) also observe that the churches do not provide on-going support after major losses such as death.

3.8 Support Programmes to the Bereaved.

The church organises various programmes to cater for its congregants who are of different ages and have different needs. Although not all these programmes originate from the church leaders or are provided for in the church calendar, the leaders provide a conducive environment for them to be conceived and nurtured to the benefit of the target group in the church. This subsection looks at the church departments and programmes that support the bereaved in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga.

Chege (O.I 13-12-2011) reported that the church does not have set programmes for the bereaved families. The researcher noted that even where the church organized talks and seminars for the bereaved, they were not regular church programmes but impromptu. Kamau (O.I 31.09.2011)
observed that the church has never had any programmes designed for bereaved children.

When bereaved children were orally asked if they felt that the help served to reduce their sorrows, Mwai (O.I 31-08-2011), Munene (O.I 18-09-2011) and Muthee (O.I 17-10-2011), all aged below 18 years said that it did not, arguing that the “maombolesi” focused on the adults. Muthee observed that while he was allowed to attend the “maombolesi”, he was excluded from attending the meetings held to make the burial arrangements and that no church leader openly discussed the death of his father with him. While the children may not have made contributions in the meetings, it is the opinion of the researcher that if they were allowed to attend the meetings this would have indicated to them that other people were concerned about their loss and would have made them happier.

Maina (O.I 13-12-2011) said that he was left at home when the family members visited the mortuary. The researcher’s view is that Maina’s family was trying to shield him from the reality that his father had died. This is contrary to Worden’s “Grief Task” model that states that it is necessary for the bereaved to face the reality of death for proper grief resolution. Waruinu (O.I 02-12-2011), a widow, said that when she lost her husband, she kept on telling her young child that his father was in hospital even when she knew he was dead. She added that in so doing she thought she was protecting the child
from the fact that his father had died. Goldman (2001:172) states that breaking the silence on children and funerals by including children is an idea whose time has come and that the memorial service and funeral can become a shared family experience. This allows the bereaved child to face the reality of death for proper grief resolution thereby accomplishing Worden's first “grief task”.

Data collected from questionnaires from bereaved children showed that church leaders offered emotional support in form of prayers which ended at burial. In contrast, relatives continued to offer support in the post-burial period.

Focus Group Discussions revealed that the clergy did not support families that lost a child. One participant in the discussion added that normally the clergy did not bury children but sent lay readers instead. Consequently, after burial, support for families that lost a child was not given emphasis. As a result, these families were only partially helped to accomplish Worden’s third and fourth “grief tasks” to resolve their grief. The researcher’s opinion is that the practice of not giving emphasis to the death of a child seems to be similar to the way the Anglican church does not give importance to the death of a child.

This is at odds with what the clergy, church council members and lay readers reported that the church has programmes for the support of the bereaved. Further investigation revealed that the programmes as described by the church
leaders are in reality, not formally laid-out programmes which are universally offered or made available to all members of Kirinyaga Diocese or even individual parishes.

Chege (OJ 13-12-2011) further stated that ‘each parish is as unique as its clergy’ and that each parish priest has the leeway to run the parish as he wishes as long as he does not deviate from the doctrines laid out in the BCP and “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya”. While the church leaders agreed that it was their duty to support the bereaved with prayers, fellowship and eventual burial, it was established that the extent to which the bereaved in each parish received the support of the church, depended on the ability of the parish priest to empathise with the bereaved.

Kamau (OJ 10-10-2011) and Mugo (OJ 10-10-2011) explained that it was important for the congregation to come up with post-burial support programmes themselves. They opine that this would ensure ownership and continuity and the clergy would facilitate and support them rather than them initiating programmes that die out when they are transferred from those congregations. It is the researcher’s view that the bereaved at this time are already going through a crisis and may therefore not be able to organize programmes to support themselves.
It was evident that the church leadership especially the clergy recommended that their congregation members should be members of church departments such as Mothers’ Union (MU), Kenya Anglican Men Association (KAMA) and Kenya Anglican Youth Organisation (KAYO). In addition, they also recommended that congregation members join home units, also called home based fellowships. This gives the members a sense of belonging and also necessary support in times of need such as when a member has lost a loved one.

These church departments have specific objectives in enhancing warmth, sense of belonging, love and unity in the congregation. This is vital in post-burial support to bereaved members. Below is a discussion of the various departments and the support they offer to the bereaved.

3.8.1 Kenya Anglican Men Association (KAMA)

KAMA is guided by ten aims and objectives, four of which are: to help its members to grow in spirit, mind and body and be nurtured in faith of good work; to promote Christian principles in national, civic and community life; to encourage members to undertake acts of Christian service for the distressed, disadvantaged and the disabled; to promote Christian fellowship, love and unity in the church and society (Gitari, 2005:3).
These aims and objectives directly and indirectly contribute to enhancing the welfare of the bereaved after burial. The bereaved need fellowship and love to overcome grief and help them have spiritual enthusiasm. Fellowship also helps them grow in spirit, mind and body in their new state. It will create a sense of unity and belonging as a man despite the loss of a significant other. The bereaved are distressed and would need time and support to overcome the loss of a significant other.

Data from the field revealed that little if anything was done on the part of the widowers. KAMA did not take care of its bereaved members after burial, though it supported them during the period between death and burial through fellowship, financial and material contribution. During this period, KAMA mourned with its bereaved members, fulfilling the biblical call to mourn with those who mourn. However, the researcher observes that none of the ten objectives listed in Gitari (2005:3) includes or discusses the issue of support of bereaved KAMA members.

Ngari (O.I 17-03-2012) and Thiga (O.I 17-03-2012) concurred that the church did not consider them when organising meetings for the bereaved. The focus in such meetings was mainly on the widows. The widowers felt neglected by the church and society to the extent that while conducting this study some respondents were still so bitter with the church that they declined to fill the questionnaire. Murage (O.I 25-10-2011) a bereaved male respondent said that
the church failed to put a cross on his wife’s grave during the burial, over which, four years down the line, he still felt bitter.

Gitari (0.1 03-01-2012) confirmed that the church does not consider the plight of the widowers because “men are difficult” and secondly it is assumed by society they will easily remarry and move on with life. This agrees with Kinoti (1994:182) who observed that the church has more or less confessed that it has failed to cater for the widower who is also facing bereavement without support.

Gitari went further to say that the Anglican Church in Kenya has also neglected its own bereaved clergy. In an illustration, he cited an incident where the family of a deceased bishop who was the bread winner has complained that the church has not given it any financial support and has abandoned it to suffer. This agrees with Parkes (1975:123) who states that families suffer a drop in income after the death of a wage earner. This family is also bitter and angry at the church because the current presiding bishop of the Diocese in which the family congregates declined to conduct the ceremony of blessing of the cross saying he was busy with a confirmation service elsewhere. From this incident it is clear that the bishop did not consider supporting the bereaved to be a priority (Gitari O.I 03-01-2012).
3.8.2 Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union (MU) is a Christian Organization of the Anglican Communion which has spread to many parts of the world. The Mothers' Union of the ACK is affiliated to the Mothers' Union Worldwide and operates under the guidance of the Archbishop and the Diocesan bishops. Its aim is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life (ACK, 2006:6). The Constitution further states that The Mothers’ Union (MU) is guided by five vows two of which are: to maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians, united in prayer, worship and service and to help those whose family life has met with adversity.

These two vows provide for establishment of fellowships for mothers including those who are bereaved and assisting one another to overcome problems that face mothers in their families including bereavement at all stages. Field data from Focus Group Discussions established that the MU supported its bereaved members especially during the period following death until burial. Post burial support was rare.

The Mothers Union, like other church departments, sometimes organized seminars and talks on bereavement mainly aimed at supporting the bereaved especially the widows. However, these talks or seminars were not regular activities within the calendar of the departments.
During Focus Group Discussions, it was observed that the same church departments were at times a hindrance to supporting the bereaved after burial. For example, the Mothers Union (MU) sometimes opposed seminars organised for the widows without its involvement.

Gitari (O.I 03-01-2012) emphasised that church departments were a hindrance to support efforts geared towards the bereaved after burial, by giving a case where, while he was the Bishop of ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga, he hosted three meetings for widows to discuss their problems. He further said that the Mothers’ Union opposed these meetings because they had not been involved in organising and running them.

In another case, Njogu (O.I 20-10-2011) illustrated how he had asked the widowers and widows to organise themselves and he would empower them. The widowers did not show up nor did they make the effort to form a support group. For the widows, they formed a support group which was shot down by the Mothers Union. He went further to say that programmes for the bereaved can only be sustainable if they originate from the bereaved congregation themselves to have ownership. The researcher is of the opinion that the bereaved in such a case could form a group in which they could give one another any necessary support.
Where the Mothers' Union was involved, the widows felt that their plight was not well represented and they felt neglected. In Focus Group Discussions, they cited the fact that widows were often not invited to MU outings or activities as an example of this neglect. During this discussion, one widow further said "Mutungatiri nitwamacuka" meaning "Pastor, we have reported them", to suggest this was a forum where they felt grateful to air their views.

The researcher noted that the Mothers' Union of The Anglican Church of Kenya Constitution (2006:7) is discriminatory. It does not allow widows to become full members of the Mothers' Union. Instead, they are only eligible for Associate Membership and only on the condition that “they should have lived a pure life for a period of not less than five years since their husband’s death” (Ibid: 7). The constitution further adds that associate members cannot vie for or hold any office in the Mothers' Union thus widows have no representation in the union. The researcher holds the view that the Mothers’ Union not only fails to offer support to the widows when they need it most, but also discriminates against them.

However, Kamuiru Parish stood out because there was a ministry for the widows called “Tabitha Ministries” modelled on the story of Tabitha, a Christian woman disciple who lived in Joppa and made clothing to give to poor widows (Acts 9: 36-42). She was a supporter of the bereaved (Keener, 1993:349). A group of women, in emulation of Tabitha’s charitable practice
have compiled a list of all the widows in their church to which they keep adding the names of the new ones for membership. They support each other with prayers, fellowship and making burial arrangements after bereavement.

The group provides support to each other as the need arises, mainly with household chores like washing the family’s clothes and cooking in case a widow is incapacitated and cannot afford the services of a house help. They also contribute money to buy medication for sick widows in need. Nyaguthii (O.l 04-12-2011) a widow, recalled a time when she had been hospitalised for a week. During this time, the widows of Tabitha Ministries would cook for her children and ensure that they went to school.

3.8.3 Kenya Anglican Youth Organisation (KAYO)

KAYO is a church department which caters for the youth in the Anglican Church. Guided by its mission statement, KAYO has lined up numerous activities among them acts of mercy to the aged, orphans and vulnerable children. From the field data, the researcher established that the department engaged the youth in practical ways of serving the community, for example in environmental clean-up and visiting the sick, old, orphaned, widows, widowers among other activities. However, KAYO mainly focuses on supporting the youth.
Mwangi (O.I 25-10-2011) said that KAYO members supported one another during the "maombolezi" period but little if any support was given after burial. Kieba (O.I 23-12-2011) had the view that because KAYO often lacked funds to financially support their bereaved members, the visits they made in the post-burial period were irregular. Mwangi (O.I 25-10-2011) and Kieba (O.I 23-12-2011) further noted that the main type of support given was in the form of fellowship and moral encouragement. They helped the bereaved to work out their grief but were hindered by the lack of funds.

3.8.4 Home Based Fellowships

Home based fellowships, also known as home units, are designed to create a sense of belonging, warmth and support to church members living in a particular area. It is in these fellowships that the welfare of the congregation members including bereavement is addressed. The members within these fellowships are closest to each other and in touch with each other's welfare at all times (Coombs, 1999: 124-135).

The clergy recommended that any bereavement information be channeled to them through the home fellowship leadership. It was observed that in all the sampled churches the respondents revealed that the home-based fellowships supported the bereaved during the period between death and burial. This support included material, monetary, moral and fellowship. The home-based fellowship failed to extend this support to the post-burial period.
Focus Group Discussions revealed that home-based fellowships were a great source of support to the bereaved. Members of these fellowships were usually the first ones to arrive at the home of the bereaved during the “maombolezi” and were often the last to leave. They helped the bereaved make the initial arrangements such as setting up the funeral committee, pitching tents and bringing chairs to make a meeting place. They assisted with household chores such as preparing refreshments for those attending the meetings during the “maombolezi” period. They were instrumental in supporting the bereaved and assisting them to accept their loss with courage and faith.

They also contributed financially towards the funeral arrangements and indeed, most home units had a specific amount of money that they contributed to each bereaved family in their unit. They held a meeting one week after the burial to officially dissolve the funeral committee. As a unit, the fellowships did not make post-burial visits although individual members would support the bereaved by visiting them for prayers (Nyaga, O.I 10-10-2011).

3.8.5 The Boys and Girls Brigade

In the Sunday school the ACK has the boys and girls brigade that aims to promote growth of the boys and girls into Christian men and women. Though their objectives lack a clause on bereavement support, the brigade’s motto is to seek, serve and follow Christ. They aim at promoting a just society where all
people are equally valued. However, the researcher noted that this church department did not have structured programmes to cater for bereaved children.

3.9 Complementary Assistance to Church Support

The church is not alone in its effort to support the bereaved. The researcher established that social groups supported the bereaved. These social groups do not consist purely of Anglican Church members but they provide support to the bereaved in the community neighbouring the church.

Njagi (O.I 25-10-2011) a bereaved male respondent, said that the help given before and during burial by the church including church departments and its leaders was adequate because it was complemented by other social groups such as the clan and family members, friends, neighbours, and welfare groups.

Murimi (O.I 28-10-2011), a bereaved male adult pointed out that other social groups such as friends, neighbours and welfare groups to which the bereaved and/or the deceased have subscribed such as ‘Kiratina- Kang’ei Welfare Group’, ‘Hospital Bill Association’ and “Withike wi Muoyo” which literally means ‘bury yourself while alive’ in which a member contributes towards one’s own funeral expenses were also important though their support ended at burial. He further pointed out that the clan was instrumental in supporting the bereaved before, during and after burial which can be attributed to the kinship ties.
All these social groups provided such support as food stuffs, firewood, sufurias, seats, tents, transport and hoes for digging the grave among other material items. They also offered to undertake chores such as cooking, cleaning up the home, digging the grave and others as was necessary. In the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga, young men often show their support to the bereaved by volunteering to dig the grave. There is a similarity between this form of support and the traditional Agikuyu practice of young men digging the grave on the rare occasions when burials were held.

The church’s effort in supporting the bereaved mainly before and during burial was important in supplementing the kinship ties and African solidarity of coming together for a common goal. This concurs with Collins (2009:3) who observes that in the African context the cruelty of death is felt far and wide due to the fact that Africans still value the extended family. So when death strikes it not only affects the immediate family but also the extended family. Relatives from all walks of life attend funerals and contribute some money to assist in funeral arrangements. This cultural and traditional practice helps a great deal in enabling the bereaved cope with the grief.

3.10 Summary

This chapter affirms the premise that the ACK policy on bereavement support is not clear-cut and is not fully implemented.
The church leadership offered support in form of fellowship and prayers as well as counseling the bereaved. Some financial assistance was also given. The church also conducted burial ceremonies for its bereaved. It emerged that these forms of support helped the bereaved to accept the death of their loved ones and to experience the pain of grief. The church thus enabled the bereaved to go through the first two “grief tasks” which are necessary for proper grief resolution. However, the support ended at burial and post-burial support was lacking.

The laity’s support made the bereaved feel better. However, their services were limited due to their other busy schedules. Their services were voluntary.

It emerged that the church did not support bereaved children. Even where the church leadership visited bereaved families, children were mainly “protected” from the reality of death. In most cases the bereaved children received post-burial support from social groups especially the clans. It was therefore clear that church support to bereaved families complemented the social groups.

It was notable that though the support given was shortlived, the study established that the church made useful contributions to the bereaved. First, the mere presence of the church leaders and members during the “maombolezi” made the bereaved feel better since they were not alone in their grief. The visits that the church made before burial enabled the bereaved to
come to terms with the reality of death. It was also notable that the church
gave financial and material support to the bereaved making them able to
prepare for the burial. It emerged that guidance and counseling services were
offered making them feel better. It was clear that the seminars which the
church occasionally held for the bereaved were beneficial in grief resolution.

The next chapter discusses the challenges faced by the ACK, Diocese of
Kirinyaga in relation to post-burial support to the bereaved families within it.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 CHALLENGES FACED BY ACK, DIOCESE OF KIRINYAGA IN SUPPORTING THE BEREAVED FAMILIES AFTER BURIAL.

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three discussed the support that the church leadership of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga gives to the bereaved and the implementation of its policy on post-burial bereavement support. It was concluded that the church provides support from the time of death to burial but that post-burial support was lacking. The church policy on support to the bereaved was not clear-cut and was therefore not fully implemented.

This chapter investigates the challenges faced by the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in its endeavour to support bereaved families. It affirms the premise that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga encounters numerous challenges in its effort to support bereaved families after burial as revealed by church leaders who included the clergy, church council members and lay readers.

4.2 Geographical Constraints.

The study established that there were geographical constraints that hindered effective support of the bereaved families by the church. Ngechu (O.I 26-09-2011) and Muthii (O.I 26-09-2011), two clergy, pointed out that these geographical constraints include the terrain of the jurisdiction areas of some
churches. The ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga covers the entire Kirinyaga County which is located in central Kenya and covers a large area of 1,479.1 Km².7

The church leaders in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga face accessibility constraints in some areas due to poor road network and transport linkages. The county has 1096.5km of road, of which only 150km is tarmacked, while gravel road surface is 650 Km and earth surface is 296.5Km. In some areas, the roads are impassable, particularly during the rainy season.

According to Maina (O.I 23-12-2011), majority of the lay readers, church council members and some clergy do not have motorised means of transport for official duties. Public transport using “bodaboda” (motorbikes and bicycles), taxis and matatus is expensive. This, in essence, means that without proper and reliable modes of transport, the church leaders find it difficult to reach the bereaved as regularly as they would wish to.

The researcher’s view is that the church should provide transport allowance to allow for efficient and effective movement of the church leaders to and from the bereaved families’ homes to enable them to provide post-burial support promptly and with ease.

7 http://kenyadecides.co.ke/county/kirinyaga accessed on 21-7-12
4.3 Inadequate Human Resource

The Administrative Secretary of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga, Ven. John Mararo (O.I 24-03-2013) observed that in the diocese there are adequate clergy to provide pastoral support to the bereaved. However, Njogu (O.I 12-11-2011), Ngechu (O.I 12-11-2011), Mugi (O.I 15-12-2011) and Munene (O.I 21-11-2011) stated that there is shortage of church leaders needed to serve the congregants and more so the bereaved effectively. The researcher opines that the difference in the opinions of the administrative secretary and the clergy could be due to the fact that the former is more engaged in administrative rather than pastoral duties. Thus he may not have first-hand experience of the challenges encountered by the clergy who provide pastoral support to the bereaved. The diocese has an approximate membership of 130,000 registered parishioners, served by approximately 130 clergy who also have priestly and administrative duties in their respective churches. This shortage of clergy leads to inadequate time for post-burial bereavement support due to their overwhelming workload. Nyamu (O.I 21-10-2011) also opined that some clergy have wide administrative areas because of several widely separated congregations.

This underscores the need to have adequate church council members and lay readers to supplement the pastoral duties of the clergy. However, Murimi (O.I 03-09-2011), Mwai (O.I 15-09-2011), Kinyua (O.I 15-10-2011), Muthui (O.I 23-10-2011), Mbui (O.I 03-11-2011) and Karani (O.I 10-11-2011) pointed
out that church council members and lay readers lack the time to support the bereaved after burial due to their busy schedules and overwhelming church work.

The researcher’s opinion is that the church needs to enlist the help of many more lay readers and encourage them by giving them a stipend so as to make them more committed. In addition, the church could sort out this problem of overloading their personnel by employing many more clergy to ensure that there is a clergy in charge of every congregation.

Mundia (01-12-2011), a local church council member, noted that there has been an increase in the number of Christians and congregations within the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga. Samita and Kabiru (2010:129) in their discussion of the challenges facing the ACK, Diocese of Nairobi point out a similar challenge where the congregations are too large for the clergy to adequately provide the needed pastoral direction.

4.4 Lack of Proper Training for Church Leaders

Coombs (1999:125) observes that few churches give any sort of training to the church leaders and that communication skills are not taught. Maina (01-12-2011) opined that majority of the church council members and lay readers are hardly equipped with communication skills while in service. As a result when asked to visit a bereaved family, they are at a loss on what to say and
how to console the family. They end up embarrassing the bereaved and saying things that hurt them. For example, Kamau (O.I 01-10-2011) recounted how he caused a young widow to cry bitterly when he told her that she was still young enough to remarry. Mbeu (O.I 01-12-11) told the story of how, after losing his mother who was over seventy years old, one church council member told him that since his mother had attained the biblical age at which death was expected, he needed not worry or grieve. The researcher opines that well-trained church leaders would be able to better handle the bereaved.

Waruinu (O.I 02-12-2011), a widow, confessed to having been utterly astounded by a lay reader who asked her how she had spent the money she had been given during her husband’s burial to which she responded she had bought a cardigan to keep herself warm. The researcher’s view is that the lay reader in question was being insensitive to her feelings.

Coombs (1999:100) points out that without proper training and skill, the church leaders will continue facing a challenge of saying hurtful things to the bereaved such as: “it’s all for the best”; “think of those who have no children”; “you are still young enough to have more children”; “Jesus needed the deceased in heaven or it was God’s will”; “your son would have been a vegetable”; “he is not dead”; “if you had faith God would raise her from the dead”; “God may be trying to say something to you through the death”, and many other gruesome remarks. Dobihal (1975:136) points out that the church
Mathers (1970:44) observes that the business of caring for the bereaved is not easy. He states that few enjoy entering a house of mourning and that people who have suffered a severe loss are seldom at their most attractive. Coombs (1999:97) and Wright (2004:14) similarly observe that one of the challenges that confront clergy is the inability to know exactly what to say to the bereaved, because few people seem willing to talk about the loss of their loved ones. Mathers further states that in the face of the tension and irritability which are evoked by crisis, it is all too easy and all too common, for well-meaning comforters to aid and abet the sufferer in escaping the tension rather than facing the problem realistically. The reason they offer this cheap comfort is that they themselves are unwilling or unable to face the reality of the experience of death and bereavement.

Mwangi (O.I 10-12-2011) pointed out that there is an erroneous perspective in the church that if one can lead the congregation during the services they can equally empathise with the bereaved. This poses a challenge where in the church it is expected that the lay readers and church council members who have voluntarily offered to help in church matters without any training can acquire the skill of supporting the bereaved automatically. Mwangi further
stated that from his own experience, he has always felt uneasy when called upon to console the bereaved and finds himself fumbling with what to say, making the experience uncomfortable both for himself and for the bereaved. He said whenever he is called upon to visit the bereaved, he avoids the encounter by making excuses such as having a prior commitment in order to cover his inadequacies.

In Ephesians 4:7, Paul says “But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ appointed it”, affirming that God has given believers different abilities and all cannot do the same work. These church leaders may not have the grace or gift in bereavement support.

Coombs (1999:21) observes that if a person has the grace for a particular ministry, then they can be trained towards a more mature exercising of that ministry. It would be prudent for the church to start a bereavement support programme run by people with the grace to empathise with the bereaved and who can be trained to better handle the bereaved.

4.5 Death as a Taboo Subject

Nowadays, death at home amidst relatives and friends is not as common as it used to be hence the Christian’s experience of it is limited. Karanu (O.I 01-12-2011) and Maina (O.I 10-12-2011) pointed out that the church hardly prepares the congregants for death because it is a taboo subject
and it is not discussed openly in forums other than funerals. Taylor (1994: 232) states that even among Christians, phrases like ‘fallen asleep’ (1 Thessalonians 4:13) and ‘gone to be with the Lord’ are used in place of death. Field data revealed that majority of people will frown on anyone speaking about death unless it has occurred. Karanu (O.I 01-12-2011) said that matters of death are best not discussed once the deceased has been buried since discussing death could be construed as inviting it to strike again. This view was corroborated by Thiga (O.I 28-09-2011) a widower who said that after the death of his wife he wanted to plant flowers on her grave to keep it looking neat. He stopped midway when a church leader said that doing so would be to invite another death in the family.

Collins (2009:3) holds a similar view by observing that coffin-makers who erect their workshops near hospitals are not allowed to display coffins openly because it suggests that the patients will not recover. He further laments that sermons that mention death are openly frowned on because it will be construed to mean that death will strike soon in the vicinity. Dobihal (1975: 137) reports that even amongst church leaders, a discussion of death results in feelings of anxiety and an urge to change the subject, reflecting the fact that the issue had never before been adequately discussed in an open way.
Jackson (1978:16) points out that one or two generations ago death was not uncommon because of the fact that there were limited hospital facilities and technological advancements in the fields of medicine and healthcare were not as advanced as today. Many died either in infancy or in their prime and death like birth was part of home life. Death was therefore an inevitable part of life for most people and most would die at home amidst relatives and friends. Morgan (2009:1) observes that nowadays many live to reach their middle ages before they have any direct experience of bereavement and an increasing number of people die away in hospitals or hospices making death unreal and not as personal as it was in those former days. As a consequence, in today’s society, many people are not prepared for death.

In Focus Group Discussions held with bereaved female adults, it emerged that most of them had not witnessed the death of their loved ones citing the reason that they had rushed them to hospitals where they died behind “curtains”. One widow said that when her husband was dying, the medical staff asked her to stay in a waiting bay while they attended to him. She elaborated that after he died, she was not allowed to see the corpse and had to wait for relatives so that the news could be relayed to them.

Collins (2009:3) further states that the church should prepare people for death. It is high time the church puts in place programmes to address this silence, an old social problem that has been neglected and wished away as if it does not
need an answer. The church needs to break away from viewing death as a taboo subject to enable the members to live in anticipation of it.

Mathers (1970:40) notes that birth and death are the only two experiences that are entirely inescapable for human beings. They occur only once in a lifetime, so each of them presents us with a crisis, a situation which is new to us, which involves a drastic change in our relation to the environment to which we have become accustomed, and the outcome of which we cannot foresee. There is a need to prepare Christians for these inescapable realities to enable them to pass through Worden's first "grief task" that of accepting the reality of death. Qoheleth affirms that there is time for everything and a season for every activity under the sun, a time to be born and a time to die (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2).

The researcher's view is that death being a taboo subject is an all-round problem arising from the Agikuyu culture where people did not talk about death openly. It also emanates from the church since to mention death in sermons when it has not occurred is frowned upon (Collins, 2009:3). Kabecha (O.I 01-09-2011) said that when a person brings up a discussion on death, people feel uncomfortable, look at the speaker questioningly and quickly change the subject. Finally, as Dominica (2009:6) asserts that we live in a culture which tries to sanitise death, the researcher is of the opinion that contemporary society also does not encourage people to talk about death.
4.6 Financial Challenges

The ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga faces financial challenges in its endeavor to support the bereaved. Thendi (O.I 03-12-2011) and Bundi (O.I 03-12-2011) observed that the churches in the Diocese of Kirinyaga do not have a consolidated fund to support its bereaved members. The church depends on voluntary contributions from the congregations and well-wishers in the financial support of the bereaved after burial. This is mainly through ‘harambees’ and church appeals for assistance. In most instances, the church is overwhelmed by the needs of its members.

Samita and Kabiru (2010:129) state that there are many members’ physical needs that the church cannot adequately attend to for reasons of inadequacy of monetary resources and physical infrastructure. Focus Group Discussions with bereaved adults revealed that the church exhausts the congregation with numerous appeals for contributions towards various church needs such as building projects, helping the needy, offerings and tithes, among others. Nyaga (O.I 25-09-2011) and Mithamo (O.I 25-09-2011) concurred with this view.

Collins (2009:3) observes that in Kenya, churches including the Anglican Church still depend on voluntary offerings and lack revenue-generating projects to anchor their financial base to meet the financial demands on them. The researcher’s view is that it is necessary for the Anglican church to start
income-generating projects to avoid such dependence. Collins further observes that Christians are very good at providing moral and spiritual support initially but after burial, their support dwindles. The church should encourage Christians to continue supporting the bereaved even after burial.

In a Focus Group Discussion with the bereaved adults, it was established that the church finds it difficult to cater for widows and widowers if they lose a spouse who is the bread winner. Gathoni (O.I 03-12-2011) revealed that the church is not able to educate the orphans, let alone to provide them with basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and school fees. As a result, the orphans are left in the care of their aging grandparents who may not be able to provide the necessary basic needs. She further pointed out that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga lacks a special fund to cater for these orphaned children. This problem is not limited only to the Diocese of Kirinyaga. Tamasha (2009:2) states that in the Democratic Republic of Congo the Anglican Church in Kinshasa takes care of orphans only partially because of lack of funds.

In the New Testament, James 1: 27 states that external religious worship [religion as it is expressed in outward acts] that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the Father is this: to visit and help and care for the orphans and widows in their affliction and need to keep oneself unspotted and uncontaminated from the world. This presents a biblical need for the church to support the orphans in their needs. It is also a reminder that the church
needs to put their faith into action by practically supporting widows and orphans.

4.7 Lack of Commitment by Church Leaders

A form of laxity from the church leaders in visiting the bereaved after burial was reported. Njogu (O.I 13-10-2011) observed that the church only visited special cases such as the death of a young spouse, where the deceased played a prominent role in the church or where the death was sudden and traumatic like through an accident or suicide. Hawke (2009:9) points out that the journey of grief is long and fraught with pain particularly when the loss has been sudden and especially when it has been due to suicide. It is the researcher’s view that death, whether sudden or not, remains tragic and so the church ought to support all bereaved families despite the nature of death.

It was also observed that the church council members and lay readers give their personal issues priority over church matters. Githinji (O.I 11-10-2011) argued that the church council members and lay readers are not in the church pay roll and so their commitment is first to their personal duties and businesses. This implies that these church leaders have limited time to visit and condole with the bereaved.
4.8 Lack of Clear-cut Policy

Githinji (O.I 11-10-2011) and Karuri (O.I 5-11-2011) were of the opinion that the church lacks a clear-cut policy on post-burial support to the bereaved families. They elaborated that the church policy uses “if” clauses in stating how the bereaved should be handled which leaves the interpretation and implementation to the discretion of the individual clergy. Chege (O.I 03-11-2011) observed that the various churches were run as uniquely as their clergy since there was no mandatory clause in the policy.

According to Karimi (O.I 02-11-2011), Kinyua (O.I 02-11-2011) and Gitari (O.I 03-01-2012), the existing policy was being resisted by the clergy because they felt that they had not been consulted when it was being drafted. It was evident that many of the church leaders especially the church council members and lay readers had not seen or heard of the policy. This implied that because they were not well informed, they could not implement the policy. This is one of the reasons that the post-burial support was lacking and the bereaved were therefore not assisted to accomplish the third and fourth Worden’s “grief tasks”, those of adjusting to the environment in which the deceased is missing and reinvesting in new relationships.

4.9 Lack of Co-operation from the Bereaved

Gitari (O.I 03-01-2012), Njogu (O.I 13-10-2011) and Karuri (O.I 5-11-2011) cited a challenge that emanated from the bereaved church members especially
widowers. They explained that many widowers were very unapproachable and they hardly wanted to discuss their loss. They further stated that even when the church organized seminars for the bereaved, men were hardly willing to participate in them and so their problems could not be identified and addressed by the church. They observed that widowers were a hindrance to church programmes that were tailor-made for them. The researcher also noted that it was difficult to arrange Focus Group Discussions with bereaved males. As a result, she held fewer Focus Group Discussions than earlier planned. Thiga (O.I 10-11-2011) explained that men are socialized to be strong and are expected to keep their feelings to themselves. The church needs to encourage widowers to openly discuss their problems emanating from the loss of their loved ones to enable the church to offer them help in grief resolution.

Njogu (O.I 05-10-2011) further argued that families with conflicts especially over inheritance were in most cases uncooperative to the church when it extended its help to them. He gave a scenario where he had taken the initiative to assist solve a dispute in a bereaved family when the children and their widowed mother were disputing over the contributions made to assist the family during the burial. He added that the widow refused to entertain a discussion saying that Njogu was an outsider and thus needed to keep away from the issue as it was a family problem.
Karuri (O.I 05-11-2011) opined that families that were not committed church members in tithing and supporting church programmes posed a challenge to church leaders. Murithi (O.I 05-11-2011) pointed out that in those bereaved families where members belonged to different denominations it was difficult to get cooperation from all the parties involved. He added that the differences in beliefs were a hindrance in the church reaching out to such families.

4.10 Social Gossip

It was noted that social gossip posed a challenge in the church. This was a situation where church members spoke ill of each other and spread rumors about each other. Thendi (O.I 03-12-2011) and Bundi (O.I 03-12-2011) revealed that social gossip is a common trend that hinders the church leaders from freely supporting the bereaved. This social gossip included situations in which a male church leader was seen frequenting the home of a widow or vice versa leading to rumours about relationships. They elaborated that the widower or widow is unattached and thus seen by the society as sexually available and therefore a threat to the church leaders, who might fall into sexual immorality. Thiga (O.I 28-09-2011), a widower observed that in case a widower invites a female friend to socialise and church leaders get to hear about it, it generates a lot of ill talk to the effect that the widower is wooing the lady even when there are no such intentions.
Kinyua (O.I 15-10-2011) pointed out that when it is observed by the congregation and community that the church leaders are paying more attention to one bereaved family than another despite both having similar issues, it is rumoured that they were favouring one over the other. This threatens the unity of congregations and the credibility of the church leaders who in most cases shy away from reaching out to the bereaved.

In a Focus Group Discussion, one widowed lay reader recounted how he fell out with church authority when he announced his intention to remarry barely a year after his wife’s death. The social gossip was that he had been keeping the intended wife as a concubine meaning that if, following his loss he had needed any support, the church leaders were likely to be of no assistance.

4.11 Age Gap

The age difference between the church leaders and some of the bereaved church members posed a challenge to the provision of support to the bereaved. Mwai (O.I 15-09-2011), Kinyua (O.I 15-10-2011) Ngando (O.I 23-10-2012) and Karani (O.I 10-11-2011) strongly pointed out that the age gap between the church leaders and the bereaved family members tends to be a challenge in supporting the bereaved families after burial. Mwai (O.I 15-09-2011) opined that the bereaved of the older generation find it hard to share their problems with young clergy. Thiga (O.I 15-09-2011), a widower, said that he found it hard to open up to the clergy, church council members and lay readers in his
church because they were too young to understand his problems. As a result of this, he did not get support in grief resolution. The clergy themselves need to be sensitive to the bereaved so that when sending out people they send those who are closer in age to the bereaved.

4.12 Church Bureaucracy

The bureaucracy in the ACK hinders the provision of support to the bereaved. This is because the church leaders need the permission of their superiors to visit the bereaved if they are visiting in their official capacity. However, if they are visiting as friends of the family, they are free to do so. Murimi (O.I 03-09-2011) and Mwai (O.I 15-09-2011) pointed out that the church council members and lay readers could not freely visit a bereaved family without the direct authority from the priest in charge. Kinyua (O.I 15-10-2011) and Ngando (O.I 23-10-2012) pointed out that the ACK Constitution (2002) gives the functions of the clergy and as it is within their liturgical book, “Our Modern Services: Anglican Church of Kenya” does not specifically mention the post-burial support of bereaved families.

There are also situations where church departments become a hindrance by thwarting efforts by church leaders to support the bereaved after burial. Gitari (O.I 03-01-2012) gave an account of a time he had called for three meetings of widowers and widows. He said that the widows’ meetings were well attended
although they were initially opposed by the Mothers’ Union because they were not involved in organising the meetings.

4.13 Summary

It is evident that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga faces many challenges in its efforts to offer post-burial support to the bereaved. It was established that geographical constraints, lack of proper training for church leaders and viewing death as a taboo subject by the church and Christians as well hindered the provision of post-burial support to the bereaved. Other challenges included inadequate finances, lack of commitment from church leaders, lack of a clear-cut church policy and lack of cooperation from the bereaved. Social gossip and church bureaucracy also prevented the bereaved from receiving adequate post-burial support. The age difference between the church leaders and some of the bereaved adults was also a hindrance.

As long as these challenges remain unsolved, the bereaved in the diocese will continue to receive short-lived and inadequate post-burial support from the church. One way of overcoming these challenges is to involve all Christians in the healing ministry of the bereaved. This is because Christians are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God (I Peter 2:19).

The researcher therefore presents her envisaged model of holistic support in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 TOWARDS A HOLISTIC SUPPORT FOR BEREAVED FAMILIES
IN ACK, DIOCESE OF KIRINYAGA

5.1 Introduction

In the foregoing chapters we have discussed the mechanisms that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga has put in place to enable it to assist bereaved families to come to terms with the ensuing grief. The support that the church gives bereaved families after burial is short-lived and inadequate. Church policy on bereavement support is not clear-cut, many church leaders are not familiar with it and it has not been fully implemented. The church leadership conducted burial ceremonies for its members. Support in the form of fellowship, some financial assistance and in some cases guidance and counseling was offered to the bereaved. In most cases, the church did not support bereaved children. Church support to bereaved families was complemented by social groups. Post-burial support was lacking.

It was also found that there were similarities between some Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement and the way the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga supports the bereaved. For instance, the death of children was not given a lot of emphasis and their funerals were hushed up. In contrast, though the Agikuyu had a ritual called “hukura”, meaning “to unbury”, which marked the end of the mourning period, it emerged that the church did not have a
ceremony which serves a similar purpose. While the researcher does not recommend that the church adopts the “hukura” ceremony as it was practised by the Agikuyu, she holds the view that a Christian church ceremony that marks the end of mourning would be beneficial to the bereaved.

This study also revealed that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga faces many challenges in its efforts to offer post-burial support to the bereaved. Lack of proper training for church leaders, church bureaucracy and lack of adequate finances hindered the provision of post-burial support to the bereaved.

Since grief is a process and not a state, the bereaved need to be supported to work through it. This in essence means that the church needs to devise a holistic model of the ministry for the bereaved.

This chapter therefore discusses what the researcher envisages as a proposed comprehensive model for the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga to adopt in its endeavour to offer holistic support to bereaved families. The proposed model is designed in line with the researcher’s conceptual framework which incorporates key elements of Worden’s “Grief Task” theory, Kubler-Ross’ stages of grief and biblical concepts on bereavement support.
5.2 The Proposed Holistic Model

For bereavement support to be holistic, the researcher envisions a model having four pillars of support to the bereaved: psychological, social, material and spiritual support. Psychological support refers to help offered to the bereaved in order to safeguard their emotional and mental well-being. Social support is the help given in order to make the bereaved feel that they are part of society. Material support includes the provision of physical commodities such as food, tents and chairs for use during the "maombolezi" period, clothing and even money that would assist the bereaved following their loss. The bereaved also require spiritual support in the form of prayers and fellowship.

The four pillars of support will rest on a solid foundation formed by a clear-cut ACK policy on bereavement and adequate human resource comprising skilled, well-trained church leadership, church departments and a supportive congregation.

In providing support to the bereaved, the researcher proposes that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga needs a revised policy on post-burial support to the bereaved. This policy would be formulated at the diocesan headquarters in consultation with representatives from all parishes at various levels of church leadership, including the church council members who represent the laity. This would ensure that it is embraced by the church leaders. In addition, the
language used would be definitive so that all church leaders would understand that implementing the policy would be mandatory rather than a matter of choice. This policy would be presented as a policy document and translated into Kiswahili and Kikuyu. This revised policy would be disseminated to the entire diocese through seminars and workshops. The church would incorporate in the policy positive practices on bereavement from Agikuyu culture. The Agikuyu had a ceremony called “hukura” to mark the end of the mourning period. The church can inculturate the “hukura” to fit the Christian context.

The researcher envisions that this policy would borrow from the existing policy as laid down in the OMS, the biblical teaching on bereavement and Worden’s “Grief Task” model. The policy would state how soon following bereavement the church would give support to the bereaved and how long it would continue to do so. Since Parkes (1975:21), Talitwala (2002:5), Kubler-Ross (1969), Taylor (1994:222), Payne, Horn and Relf (2000:72) and Wright (2004:83) concur that grief is a process that normally lasts two years, the new policy would recommend prolonged post-burial support to be offered to encourage the bereaved in their new journey where the deceased is missing. It would also specify the support the church would give to the bereaved so that cases of some bereaved families feeling discriminated against would not occur. In the policy, the lay readers and church council members would be tasked with visiting the bereaved without having to seek authorization from
the clergy every time someone died. They would only be required to inform
the clergy in charge of bereavement programme once they had been to see the
bereaved hence avoiding the difficulty posed by the bureaucracy of the
Anglican Church.

The holistic approach to church support to the bereaved requires the ACK,
Diocese of Kirinyaga to have certain human resources. These would include
various cadres of church leaders such as the bishop, clergy, lay readers, church
council members and a supportive congregation. The bishop, as the head of
the diocese, would be instrumental in ensuring that the policy on bereavement
is revised since the other church leaders take their direction from him. He
would oversee the implementation of church policy on bereavement at the
diocesan level while the clergy, lay readers and church council members
would actively participate in providing support to the bereaved.

All church leaders would be exposed to seminars and workshops geared
towards equipping them with theological and other resourceful training
including topics on loss, bereavement and grief counseling. This would better
equip them to be sensitive to the feelings and sensibilities of the bereaved. In
particular, the emphasis would be on ensuring that the bereaved are allowed to
grieve and express their feelings in a safe, healthy way hence enabling them to
accomplish Worden's second "grief task", that of experiencing the pain of
grief, instead of repressing the painful emotions arising from the loss of the loved one.

It is also necessary that during this training, the church leaders are taught what the Anglican Church policy concerning post-burial support is. This would not only enable the church leaders to live up to the expectations of the policy in providing adequate support to the bereaved but also allow them to disseminate correct information concerning the policy to their congregants. Once this is achieved, the bereaved themselves would also be familiar with the policy and also know what support to expect.

For this proposed model to be effectively implemented, the church would task one clergy in each parish to oversee church support to the bereaved. He/she would be freed from other duties to work in liaison with all other church leaders to coordinate bereavement support activities in the parish. The clergy in charge would be empowered financially and facilitated with a means of transport to ensure that bereaved families are adequately supported before, during and after burial to resolve their grief. The designated clergy would be assisted in his/her duties by lay readers and church council members, who by sheer numbers alone, are in a better position to visit the bereaved. The lay readers and church council members tasked with giving pastoral support to the bereaved would inform the clergy in charge once they had visited the bereaved so that he could have comprehensive records of all the bereaved in the diocese.
This would avoid the difficulty posed by the bureaucracy of the ACK in ensuring better support for the bereaved. It would also free up the clergy to participate more fully in their priestly role that cannot be played by the other church leaders, leaving the pastoral role to the lay readers and church council members.

In addition, a professional counseling psychologist would be employed by the church to offer grief counseling services to the bereaved. The church leaders would refer those bereaved persons with unhealthy grief to him or her.

Church departments such as Mothers Union, Kenya Anglican Men’s Association, Kenya Anglican Youth Association and the Boys’ and Girls’ Brigade have been found to play a key role in supporting the bereaved. They provide emotional support to their members. The chairpersons of these departments would therefore receive the same training as the church leaders. They would be urged to continue offering their support voluntarily as a demonstration of their love and in obedience to the law of Christ, that of loving one’s neighbour as oneself (Mark 12:31) and to carry each other’s burdens (Galatians 6:2). The church departments would outline in their objectives specific support that they would give to their bereaved members. These church departments would also review and revise sections of their constitutions that discriminate against the bereaved such as the Mothers’ Union constitution which prevents widows from being full members.
effective church leaders from whom to take direction on the matter of providing support to the bereaved.

The researcher is of the opinion that with such a firm foundation, the four pillars of support provided to the bereaved, those of psychological, social, material and spiritual support, would assist the bereaved in their grief resolution.

5.2.1 The Pillars of the Holistic Model

For the church to have a comprehensive model, pillars of support to the bereaved would be necessary. The first pillar; that of psychological support to the bereaved, encompasses all help given to the bereaved in order to ensure their emotional and mental well-being. It also includes moral support, that is sympathy to the bereaved even without any specific action. Although one may not know what to say or do when someone is grieving, simply being there makes a difference.\(^8\) In this pillar, the support that the church would offer would mainly be in the form of grief counseling and support groups and seminars.

Once the death is reported to the church, the church leaders would visit the bereaved during the “maombolezi” period. They would enlist the support of the church departments, the home-based fellowships and the rest of the

\(^8\) http://www.helpguide.org/mental/grief_loss.htm accessed on 19-02-2013
congregation to make the bereaved aware that even in their loss, they have not been abandoned by the church. They would encourage the bereaved to express their emotions without condemning their feelings as a sign of weakness or lack of faith. They would assist them in making burial arrangements and conduct the burial ceremony taking into consideration, as much as possible, the cultural practices and way of mourning of the bereaved that are not repugnant to the faith. This would help the bereaved to accept the reality of their loss.

After the burial, they would make regular pastoral visits to the bereaved to support them in their new journey of bereavement. Since the general consensus is that grief is a long process that takes two years to resolve, a two-year period of support would be adequate for grief resolution. The bereaved would receive counseling during the pastoral visits and those with unhealthy grief would be referred to the grief counselor. Support groups would be organized for the bereaved to share experiences and encourage one another. Seminars on topics such as parenting now that they are alone would be held to assist the bereaved adjust to their new circumstances.

Children often feel isolated and are left out of fellowships and other activities that would help them accept the reality of the loss and experience the pain of grief such as visiting the mortuary. To aid with Worden’s “grief tasks”, it is necessary that the clergy and other church leaders take the time and trouble to talk to and condole with the bereaved children.
The social pillar forms an integral part of the holistic model of grief support. The purpose of social support would be to assist the bereaved to feel appreciated and to integrate them back into society. Such support would be provided by the entire Christian community in the church including the church leadership, home-based fellowships, church departments and the congregation. To support the bereaved, they would organize social retreats and outings. In addition, the bereaved would be included in church programmes such as church outings and trips. Such outings and trips provide a forum for the bereaved to meet new people. The relationships formed during such outings have been known to lead to marriages in some cases and the bereaved may remarry thus enabling them to accomplish Worden’s fourth “grief task”, that of reinvesting in new relationships. It is noteworthy that among the Agikuyu, the widowers and widows were encouraged to remarry. Biblically, young widows were encouraged to remarry and have families.

For the bereaved children, social interaction is especially important to ensure that they do not feel isolated. Children would have the opportunity to interact with each other and share their experiences thus reassuring them that they are not alone in their grief.

The church leaders and the congregation together with other social groups would provide material support during the “maombolezi” and burial period. Material support would be provided in the form of foodstuffs to meet the
hospitality needs of the mourners easing the strain on the bereaved. In addition, the mourners usually provide chairs and tents which help the bereaved host the mourners comfortably. The church would also organize the donation of food, clothing and money for the needy bereaved.

Material support would also include financial assistance to the bereaved especially in cases where the bereaved was the breadwinner and the family is truly needy. The church, where possible, could look for other means of raising funds to support the very needy cases. Funds for this purpose can be raised from well-wishers.

Secondly the church can put in place income generating projects to anchor its financial base to enable it support its bereaved. Money generated from this would enable the church support orphans to pay for their education in addition to appealing for scholarships for them from schools, well-wishers and government bursaries. The researcher opines that given the fact that some churches such as All Saints Cathedral, Nairobi have support programmes for orphaned children, it is possible for the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga to support the bereaved. The All Saints Cathedral is a success story in that the church supports orphans to attain the highest level of education by mobilizing the community to raise funds for their school fees. It also protects the children's rights in case of harassment by relatives by paying for legal representation for them. The church also discourages separation of these children and
Worden's model postulates that for proper grief resolution, the bereaved would need to accomplish the four "grief tasks" including adjusting to the environment in which the deceased is missing and reinvesting in new relationships. To this end, the church needs to encourage the bereaved to take on new roles especially where the deceased spouse was the bread winner. This can empower the bereaved to earn a living and in so doing accomplish Worden's third "grief task".

When employment opportunities arise, the church would give priority to its bereaved members. By the church employing its bereaved members it would be putting into practice Paul's teaching that needy widows need to be paid for their labour in the church. Similarly, if the church were to employ security personnel, it would give first priority to widowers to enable them to take care of their families in cases where the deceased spouse was the breadwinner. This would in essence assist the bereaved to work creatively and meaningfully so as to find a fulfilling life that is worthwhile and sustaining, thereby accomplishing Worden's third "grief task".

The church would also organise talks and seminars on succession, inheritance and financial management in which the bereaved would be taught how to run
businesses, manage finances and be encouraged to join savings and cooperative societies. This would help them to be self-reliant and find personal fulfillment in life. The church would ensure that where the widows have difficulties in inheriting their husbands' property, it would connect the bereaved with such groups as human rights organisations and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) which gives free legal advice. These organisations would assist the widows to inherit their property in accordance with the new Kenyan Constitution which eliminates gender discrimination in relation to land and property and gives everyone including women the right to inheritance and unbiased access to land (Article 60 (1) (f) (Kenya Law Reports, 2010).

Finally, the pillar of spiritual support to the bereaved would be necessary to take care of the spiritual needs of the bereaved. Church leaders especially the clergy and lay readers along with the home-based fellowships and a supportive congregation would support the bereaved spiritually. This would be achieved through holding fellowships and prayer meetings with the bereaved where they would be encouraged through sermons such as John 14 which exhorts Christians not to let their hearts be troubled but to believe in God. In this biblical passage the bereaved are given hope that though they die physically, they will continue to live spiritually and this encourages them to accept the reality of death thereby accomplishing Worden's first "grief task".
The bereaved would also provide each other with support. To this end, widows, widowers, bereaved parents and children would join support groups formed by the church. This would give them an opportunity to share their experiences with each other and would reinforce to them that they are not alone. It would also provide practical solutions to problems encountered in bereavement thus helping them accomplish Worden’s third “grief task”, that of adjusting to the environment in which their loved one is missing. The support groups would also provide a forum for social interaction and opportunity for new relationships to be forged thus assisting the bereaved to accomplish Worden’s fourth “grief task”.

The church would also enlist the help of other groups outside the church in supporting the bereaved. These groups include the clan or extended family of the bereaved, workmates, friends and welfare groups. These groups would provide support comprising any of the four pillars of this model, that is psychological, social, material and spiritual support. To this end, the church would work with these groups in making burial arrangements and would also sensitise them on the need for this support to continue even after burial.

Two years after burial, when most of the bereaved are expected to have resolved their grief, the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga would encourage them to hold a ceremony to mark the end of the mourning period. During this ceremony, prayers would be held with family members assembled at the
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graveside. This would be a regular church programme initiated by the church for all bereaved families. For the bereaved, it would not only mark the end of the mourning period but also remind them of the need to reinvest in new relationships, thus enabling them to accomplish Worden’s fourth “grief task”. It would serve a similar purpose as “hukura” ceremony in Agikuyu culture and the “haus krai” ceremony in Papua New Guinea.

5.3 Summary

With this model, it is hoped that the bereaved would receive adequate assistance to enable them to meet Worden’s four “grief tasks” thus culminating in successful grief resolution.

The researcher envisions the holistic model of support to the bereaved as a church having the strong foundation of a good policy and adequate human resource, four pillars supporting the bereaved and the steeple that is grief resolution. This church has its doors wide open to the bereaved and has links to other groups offering support to the bereaved such as the clan and legal organisations.
CHAPTER SIX

6.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the entire study. First, it presents the main findings. Second, it presents the recommendations arising from the study. Finally, it proposes areas for further research in post-burial bereavement support.

6.2 Summary and Conclusions of the Study

This study dealt with the ministry of the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in supporting bereaved families after burial. The first chapter gave an introduction to the study. In the second chapter the Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement and their influence on the ACK support to the bereaved were explored. The third chapter determined the support that the diocese gives to bereaved families and also explored the extent to which the diocese implements its policy on post-burial bereavement support. In the fourth chapter the challenges faced by the aforesaid diocese in supporting bereaved families after burial were evaluated. Finally, chapter five presented a holistic model of support to the bereaved as envisaged by the researcher.
The study employed a Conceptual Framework with concepts borrowed from the Biblical teaching on bereavement, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross’ stage model of grief and Worden’s “grief tasks” model. There are Biblical concepts that correspond with the theories that the bereaved need to be supported to deal with grief. The framework formed the basis for evaluating whether the church gives support and whether that support helps the bereaved in grief resolution.

Data for the study was obtained through Focus Group Discussions, oral interviews, questionnaires and secondary sources. The data obtained was categorized and arranged in themes according to the objectives of the study for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. Below is a discussion of the summary of the study objectives.

The first objective of the study was to explore the Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement and its influence on church support to the bereaved. It was established that death among the Agikuyu was a family affair and that the death of children was not given due importance. It was further noted that the Agikuyu had a ritual for lifting mourning and reintegrating the bereaved back to the society.

The study established that there were some Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement that influenced the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga practices on
bereavement. For instance, in both, the death of children was not given emphasis.

In some cases it was noted that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga had not been influenced by the Agikuyu cultural practices on bereavement. For example, the Agikuyu did not visit homes where death had occurred and shunned the bereaved. Currently this has changed; bereaved adult and church leaders respondents all agreed that homes of the bereaved were visited during the “maombolezi” period and the bereaved families had to feed the mourners who visited them.

The second objective of the study was to establish the support the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga gives to bereaved families after burial. Under this objective the study also explored the extent to which the Diocese implements its policy on support to bereaved families after burial. It was found that the clergy conducted burial ceremonies for its deceased members and this helped their bereaved families to come to terms with the reality of death. It was established that the support given to bereaved families was mainly up to burial and post-burial bereavement support was lacking. It was further noted that the laity offered support to the bereaved making them feel better since they were not alone in their grief.
It emerged that although the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga did not have concrete programmes for the bereaved, the seminars which the church occasionally held for them were beneficial in grief resolution. It was established that the church did not support bereaved children even before burial but ‘protected’ them from the reality of death. However, the clans and friends offered them post-burial bereavement support, especially financially. The study showed that church support to bereaved families supplemented the help offered by social groups.

The study affirms the second premise that church support to the bereaved ends at burial. This in essence means that the church enables the bereaved to accept the reality of death and to experience the pain of grief which are the first two “grief tasks” towards the healing process. Nevertheless, the church leaves the bereaved at a point where they have partially, not fully resolved their grief, having not accomplished the third and fourth “grief tasks”. They have not adjusted to the environment in which the deceased is missing and have not been able to re-invest in new relationships.

In the light of Worden’s model “tasks of mourning”, the bereaved would need to accomplish the four “grief tasks” to be able to resolve their grief. This can be achieved if the church offers post-burial bereavement support which is lacking.
It emerged that the ACK policy on support to the bereaved families after burial is not clear and therefore not understood by the clergy and the laity. As a result, it has not been wholly embraced by the church leadership which has led to its partial implementation.

The third objective of the study was to examine the challenges faced by the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga in supporting bereaved families after burial. The study affirmed the premise that the church faced numerous challenges such as inadequate human resource, lack of proper training for church leaders, death as a taboo subject, financial challenges, lack of clear cut policy and age gap. The study also suggested some solutions to enable the church overcome those challenges and enable it to give post burial support to the bereaved for proper grief resolution.

Having found that the church support to bereaved families is short-lived and inadequate, that the policy is not clear-cut and that the church faces challenges in providing support to the bereaved, the premise that the church requires a holistic ministry towards bereaved families has been affirmed. Thus, in the fourth objective the researcher proposed a holistic model to the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga for effective grief resolution. This model is founded on a clear-cut policy and adequate human resource. The four pillars of psychological, social, material and spiritual support would aid the bereaved to accomplish Worden’s four “grief tasks” and resolve their grief.
Given that the study was carried out in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga, the researcher made recommendations both to the diocese and to the rest of the ACK.

6.3 Recommendations

First, the study recommends that the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga should borrow positive cultural practices on bereavement from the Agikuyu culture and incorporate them into their support to the bereaved. To this end, the church should have a Christian ceremony to mark the end of the mourning period for bereaved families.

Secondly, the study recommends that the ACK provide long-term post-burial support to assist the bereaved in proper grief resolution. The church should do this by continued visits to the bereaved even after burial. Towards this end, the church should organise income-generating activities and solicit for funds from well-wishers to anchor its financial base to enable it support the bereaved.

Thirdly, the ACK should rewrite its policy on post-burial bereavement support clearly and concisely for it to be well-understood and implemented by church leaders. It should disseminate the policy statement widely to the entire Anglican Communion in Kenya. The policy should clearly stipulate the support that the church would give the bereaved.
Fourth, the study recommends that the ACK should have programmes for bereaved children to enable them to resolve their grief.

Fifth, the study further recommends that the ACK should strengthen home-based fellowships. The church needs to encourage Christians to belong to home fellowships in their home areas. These home-based fellowships should meet regularly for members to form close relationships. The clergy need to maintain contact with the leaders of such home-based fellowships.

Sixth, the church should ensure that the church leaders are well-trained and equipped with necessary skills to handle the bereaved. This includes exposing the lay readers and church council members to regular seminars and workshops to gain counseling skills which are vital in dealing with the bereaved. The church should organize regular refresher courses for the clergy.

Seventh, the study recommends that the church should openly talk about death. Sermons touching on issues of death need to be preached even when death has not occurred. This would prepare Christians to view death as a reality and as part of life.

Eighth, the study recommends that the bereaved should embrace the support offered by the church. The bereaved adult males should be encouraged to
speak about their problems so that the church can assist them resolve those problems.

Finally, the church should designate a clergy to co-ordinate all the bereavement activities. He would be in charge and thus freed from all other duties. The clergy in charge should involve the community of believers in the healing ministry since all of them are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and a holy nation.

6.4 Recommendations for Further Research
The study investigated post-burial support to the bereaved in the ACK, Diocese of Kirinyaga. The researcher recommends that study of best practices of post-burial bereavement support should be done in different dioceses of the ACK. The results of those studies should be used to further inform the ministry of support to the bereaved.

The researcher recommends that studies on the topic of remarriage among the bereaved be carried out. In the course of this study, incidental information from several respondents intimated that society expected widowers to remarry while widows are expected not to. It would be interesting to investigate whether this impression is true and what the attitudes of Christians in the Anglican Church on the issue of remarriage are. It would also be of interest to explore the challenges faced by those who remarry in contrast to those who do
not. This would guide the ACK on what advice to give when the widows or widowers seek help on this issue.

The researcher also recommends further study in the area of bereavement support following the death of a child. It is recommended that a comparative study be done on how other cultures other than the Agikuyu treat the death of a child.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Questionnaire for the Bereaved Adults.

My name is Florence Wanjohi, a Kenyatta University MA student conducting a research entitled, “The Ministry of the Church in Supporting Bereaved Families: The Case of Anglican Church of Kenya, Diocese of Kirinyaga, Kirinyaga County.” Please fill in all parts of the questionnaire and give additional information in the blank spaces provided. The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the MA Thesis. Answer all questions by either filling in the blank or ticking in the option that applies to you.

SECTION A

1. Personal details

   a) Age: i. 19-28 [ ] ii. 29-38 [ ] iii. 39-48 [ ] iv. 49-58 [ ] v. 59 and above [ ]

   b) Gender.

      i. Male [ ] ii. Female [ ]

   c) Marital status.

      i. Married [ ] ii. Single [ ] iii. Divorced [ ] iv. Separated [ ]

      v. Widowed [ ]

   d) Occupation.

      i. Civil Servant [ ] ii. Unemployed [ ] iii. Self employed [ ]

      iv. Casual [ ] v. Privately employed [ ]
e) Highest level of education?
   i. Primary [ ]   ii. Secondary [ ]   iii. University or College [ ]
   iv. None [ ]

f) What position do you hold in the church?
   i. Clergy [ ] ii. Layreader [ ] iii. Church Council Member [ ]
   iv. Ordinary Member [ ]

2. Background Information

a) Age of the most recently deceased at the time of death?
   i. 0-10 [ ]   ii. 11-20 [ ]   iii. 21-30 [ ]   iv. 31-40 [ ]   v. 41-50 [ ]
   vi. 51 and above [ ]

b) Year of death
   i. 2005 [ ]   ii. 2006 [ ]   iii. 2007 [ ]   iv. 2008 [ ]

c) Your relation to the deceased.
   i. Wife [ ]   ii. Husband [ ]   iii. Brother [ ]   iv. Sister [ ]   v. Son [ ]
   vi. Daughter [ ]   vii. Father [ ]   viii. Mother [ ]

d) Cause of death.
   i. Short illness [ ]   ii. Long illness [ ]   iii. Accident [ ]   iv. Suicide [ ]
   v. Murder [ ]

e) Place of death
   i. Hospital [ ]   ii. Home [ ]   iii. Abroad [ ]   iv. Unknown [ ]

f) Where were you at the time of death?
   i. Present [ ]   ii. Absent [ ]
SECTION B

To establish the support to the bereaved by the Church Leadership.

1. (a) For how many years have you been a member of ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga?

(b) When you lost your family member, did the church representatives visit you?

Yes/No

If Yes, tick in the list below those who visited you.

i. Bishop [ ] ii. Clergy [ ] iii. Church Council Members [ ] iv. Layreaders [ ]

Briefly explain who informed them about the death.

2. How soon did they visit you after they learnt about the death?

i. Same day [ ] ii. One day [ ] iii. Three days [ ] iv. Seven days [ ]

3. In the list below, tick the help they offered you. (You can tick more than one as it applies to you).

i. Financial [ ] ii. Material [ ] iii. Fellowship [ ] iv. None of the above [ ]

4. What other help would you have expected from them?

Briefly mention.
5. If your answer in question 3 is that the church leadership gave you some help, did that help minimize your sorrow?
   Yes / No
   If Yes, briefly explain how.
   ........................................................................................................................................

6. Name any other groups of people who assisted you.
   (i) .................................... (ii) ..................................................

7. Mention the help the groups gave you.
   ........................................................................................................................................

8. Did the church leadership encourage you to openly express your grief as a result of your sorrow?
   Yes/ No
   Briefly explain their reaction.
   ........................................................................................................................................

9. How else did they show that they shared in your sorrow?
   Briefly explain.
   ........................................................................................................................................

10. After burial, did the church leadership continue visiting the family?
    Yes / No
If Yes, how long did the visits continue?

i. One week [ ]  ii. One month [ ]  iii. One year [ ]  iv. Two years [ ]

11. If your answer was Yes in number 10 above, state the type of help church leadership offered in the follow-up visits.

i. ................................................

ii. ................................................

iii. ................................................

12. In your view, did you feel that the church support enabled you to recover from the grief?

............................................................................................................................................................................

............................................................................................................................................................................

SECTION C

To explore the ACK policy to bereaved families

13. Are you familiar with ACK policy on support to bereaved families?

Yes / No

If Yes, briefly outline what it says.

............................................................................................................................................................................

14. Does the church make its members aware of the policy?

Yes / No

If Yes, explain how.

............................................................................................................................................................................

15. How often does the church leadership accompany the bereaved back?
home after burial?

i. Always [ ] ii. Sometimes [ ] iii. Rarely [ ] iv. Never [ ]
v. Not sure [ ]

16. Does your church have programmes to support the bereaved?

Yes/ No

If Yes, write down those programmes.

i. ........................................ ii. ........................................

iii. ........................................

SECTION D

To explore cultural influences on church support to bereaved.

17. Are there social groups outside the church which support bereaved families?

Yes / No

If Yes, write them down.

i. ........................................ ii. ......................... iii. .........................

18. (a) In which of the following stages did those social groups offer support?

i. Before burial [ ] ii. During burial [ ] iii. After burial [ ]

(You can tick more than one choice as it applies to you)

(b) List down the support they gave you before and during burial.

i. .............................. ii. .......................... iii. ..........................

19. If social groups offered help after burial, mention the type of help.
20. Are there cultural practices that are contrary to church practice after burial?

Yes / No

If Yes, mention them.

i. .........................................................

ii. .........................................................

21. Is there any collaboration between church leadership and other groups in supporting the bereaved?

Yes / No

If Yes, explain.

........................................................................................................

........................................................................................................

22. Are there groups that oppose church support to bereaved?

Yes / No

If Yes, mention them.

i. ............................................................

ii. ............................................................

23. Give reasons why they oppose the church.

........................................................................................................

........................................................................................................
APPENDIX II

Questionnaire for the Bereaved Children

Answer all questions by ticking the appropriate choice in the spaces provided.

SECTION A

Background Information.

1. What is your age?
   i. 10 – 12 years [ ]  ii. 13 – 14 years [ ]  iii. 15 – 16 years [ ]  iv. 17 – 18 years [•]

2. Are you in primary or secondary school?
   i. Primary [ ]  ii. Secondary [ ]

3. How old were you when a member of your family died?

   ________________________ years.

4. Was the family member who died, your
   i. Brother [ ]  ii. Sister [ ]  iii. Father [ ]  iv. Mother [ ]

5. When did the member of your family die?
   i. 2005 [ ]  ii. 2006 [ ]  iii. 2007 [ ]  iv. 2008 [ ]

SECTION B

To establish the support the ACK gives to bereaved families

6. Who were the first people to visit you when a member of your family died?
   (You can tick more than one)
   i. Neighbours [ ]  ii. Church representatives [ ]  iii. Relatives [ ]  iv. Chief [ ]
7. If the church representatives visited you, tick the help they gave you. (You can tick more than one)
   i. Food/ clothing [ ] ii. Prayers [ ] iii. Money [ ] iv. None of the above [ ]

8. Were there other groups of people who visited you before the burial?
   Yes/ No
   If yes, write them down.
   (i) ...........................................................
   (ii) ..........................................................
   (iii) ..........................................................

9. (a) Did your family have any problems after burial?
   Yes/ No
   b) If yes, write down the problems.
   (i) ..........................................................
   (ii) ..........................................................
   (iii) ..........................................................
   c) Did any group help your family after burial?
      Yes/ No
   d) If yes, write them down.
      (i) ..........................................................
      (ii) ..........................................................

   e) Write down the help they gave you.
      (i) ..........................................................
      (ii) ..........................................................
10. Did the church representatives (like clergy) visit your family after the burial?
   Yes / No.

   If Yes, after how long? .................................................................

   If they visited, did they talk to you about the person who had died?
   Yes / No.

11. Does the church have activities for the children to help them overcome sorrow?
    Yes / No.

    If Yes, write down the activities.

12. Write down three ways a church can help a child to overcome sorrow.

    (i) .................................................................

    (ii) .................................................................

    (iii) .................................................................
APPENDIX III

Questionnaire for Church leaders

My name is **Florence Wanjoji**, a Kenyatta University MA student conducting a research entitled, “The Ministry of the Church in Supporting Bereaved Families: The Case of Anglican Church of Kenya, Diocese of Kirinyaga, Kirinyaga County.” Please fill in all parts of the questionnaire and give additional information in the blank spaces provided. The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the MA Thesis.

Answer all questions by either filling in the blank or ticking in the option that applies to you.

SECTION A

1. Personal details

   a) Age: i. 19-28 [ ] ii. 29-38 [ ] iii. 39-48 [ ] iv. 49-58 [ ]
   v. 59 and above [ ]

   b) Gender.
   i. Male [ ] ii. Female [ ]

   c) Marital status.
   i. Married [ ] ii. Single [ ] iii. Divorced [ ] iv. Separated [ ]
   v. Widowed [ ]

   d) Highest level of education.
   i. Primary [ ] ii. Secondary [ ] iii. Tertiary [ ] iv. None [ ]
e) What position do you hold in the church?
   i. Clergy [ ]  ii. Layreader [ ]  iii. Church Council Member [ ]
   iv. Ordinary Member [ ]

SECTION B
To establish the support the ACK gives to bereaved families

1. After how many days does the church visit when a member dies?

2. Do you openly share grief with members of a family when they lose a loved one?
   Yes / No

3. How long does the church mourn with the bereaved?
   i. Till burial [ ]  ii. After burial [ ]

4. Does the church have specific programmes for its bereaved members of the church?
   i. Yes, before burial [ ]  ii. Yes, after burial [ ]  iii. No [ ]
   If Yes after burial, mention them.
   i. .................................................................
   ii. .................................................................

5. Do the church leaders have knowledge and skills to provide the necessary help to the bereaved?
   Yes / No.
   If Yes, explain
6. Does the church organize training programmes for the church leaders to enable them to help bereaved families overcome sorrow?

Yes / No.

If Yes, which programmes?

Mention the areas of training

7. What challenges do the church leaders face in supporting bereaved families?

i.

ii.

iii.

iv.

8. Is there a church policy to guide how the bereaved should be supported?

Yes/No.

If Yes, what does it say?

9. Does the church give preference to the needy bereaved family when an employment opportunity arises?
10. Suggest ways through which the church may improve their support to bereaved members.

(i) ........................................

(ii) ........................................

(iii) ........................................
APPENDIX IV

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Bereaved Adults

1. For how long have you been a member of ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga?

2. When you lost your family member, did the church representatives visit you?

3. Are there church departments that supported you?

4. How soon did they visit you after they learnt about the death?

5. What help did they offer you?

6. Did they continue supporting you after burial?

7. Did that support help you overcome support?

8. Does the church support families regardless of who has died in the family?

9. Did the church representatives encourage you to express your emotions a result of your sorrow?

10. Are you familiar with ACK policy on support to bereaved families?

11. What does it say?

12. How did you get information on the policy?

13. Does your church have organized activities to support the bereaved?
14. Are there social groups outside the church which supports bereaved families?

15. Are there Agikūyu cultural practices that influence church support to the bereaved?

16. Are there cultural practices that are contrary to church practice after burial?

17. Are there groups that oppose church support to the bereaved?
APPENDIX V

Interview Guide for Clergy/ Layreaders/ Church Council Members.

I am a Kenyatta University MA student conducting a research entitled “The Ministry of the Church in Supporting Bereaved Families: The Case of Anglican Church of Kenya, Diocese of Kirinyaga, Kirinyaga County.” You are kindly requested to respond to some specific areas of concern which I seek to explore. The information will be held with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the above said program.

SECTION A

1. How fast does the church respond when a member dies?
2. Does your church openly share grief with members of a family when they lose a loved one?
3. How long does the church mourn with the bereaved?
4. Does the church have organized programmes for bereaved members of the church?
5. What help does the church give to the bereaved?
6. Does the clergy have skills to support the bereaved?
7. Does the church organize training programmes for the church leaders to help bereaved families overcome sorrow?
8. What challenges do the church leaders face in supporting bereaved families?
9. Is there a church policy to guide how the bereaved should be supported? What does it say?

10. Suggest ways through which the church may improve the level of support provided to bereaved families?
APPENDIX VI

Interview Guide for Bereaved Children

1. How old were you when a member of your family died?

2. Who visited you when your family member died?

3. If the rest of your family was supported, did you feel like you were also supported by the church leaders?

4. What activities do you think the church can organize to support children?
APPENDIX VII

Glossary

| 'Kurutwo gikuu' | To be cleansed of death |
| 'Shiv’ah'       | A period of seven days in the Jewish culture when no work was done to allow the bereaved to mourn. |
| 'Thahu'         | Uncleaness |
| 'Bodaboda'      | Motorbikes and bicycles used as a public means of transport |
| 'Maombolezi'    | Derived from the root word 'omboleza' meaning 'to mourn'. The mourning period between death and burial during which people visit the bereaved family to condole with them. |
| 'matatus'       | Public service vehicles excluding buses |
| 'harambees'     | public fundraiser |
APPENDIX VIII

Map 1. Location of ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga in Kenya.
APPENDIX IX

Map 2. ACK Diocese of Kirinyaga.

SOURCE: EXTRACT FROM TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP, SURVEY OF KENYA SERIES Y503, SHEET SA-37-1 ED 45K 1983