

A COMMUNION OF THE FIRST A VOICE OF ALL NATIONS APRIL 25 2017



Did you know that Easter story is the greatest Story ever told? Is this why Jesus rose from the dead on the **first** day of the week? Interestingly, those who witness the empty tomb were **first** in something. Mary Magdalene (a mental patient who was healed by Jesus) was first to witness the empty tomb, first to report to the disciples that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb, first to see and hear the voice of the Risen Lord, first to talk with Jesus and first to report to the disciples that Jesus is risen from the death. When Peter and John got the news of the empty tomb, they both ran to the tomb, John outran Peter and reached the tomb first and he became first to believe that Jesus has risen from the dead. Peter was first to enter the tomb. Thomas became first to doubt the story; first to touch the Risen Lord and first to worship Him: *My Lord and my God*.

As the Ester community, we are called to venture for mission and to be first in doing something for the Kingdom of God. It may be as you read this message you will find that the Holy Spirit has led you be first to do something for the Kingdom of God. There is both joy and challenges to tread a new path. In 1985 I was requested by World Council of churches to be the first local organizer of the first Consultation on African Pastoral Counseling. During the consultation, it was resolved that we form an African Association for Pastoral Studies and Counseling and I was elected the first President. After the Consultation, I was left with a challenge of how to convince the Executive Committee. The members of this small committed were in different African Countries and German. The first meeting which had to prepare the constitution and plan the first Congress on African Pastoral Studies met in German where we also attended German Association for Pastoral Counseling. We planned to hold the Congress in Kinshasa, Congo, DR. in 1988. It was funny and challenging to Preside over the Congress. The Congolese were amused to see a President who cannot speak French. In Francophone, it is believed that anybody who is educated must speak French. As I was presiding, my colleague found that I was too democratic. "we live in dictatorship. Democracy is not going to work here." With this advice, I had to shift the gear and employed a bit of dictatorship. There were some challenges but the reward was greater than challenges.

This message is intended to challenge you to be first. It is also intended to encourage you if are first in doing something for God and humans. I praise God for our seminary students who have planted 125 churches in the USA, Canada and Africa. These students work full time, going to school and yet they have time for venturing in mission. I am writing to invited you to be first to give a big donation to support the seminary. Be first to give one or two million dollars. If you do this you will help us to train and educate church planters. If you do this the Lord will reward you immensely. We also appreciate you if you can give a gift of any size. To donate visit www.allnationscci.org and press donate button or make a check payable to **ANCCIU** and mail it to **P.O. Box 19805, Amarillo, TX 79114**.

And now to Him who is able to keep from falling and present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty and dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 24

++John Githiga