

# PART 11

## MISSIONARY PROFILES



*The Adinkra symbol “ANANSE NTONTAN” simply means  
“SPIDER’S WEB” and signifies wisdom and creativity.*



**The love of Christ compels us.**



## Vision

The vision of SIM is to see a witness to Christ's love where He is least known, disciples of Jesus expressing God's love in their communities, and Christ-centred churches among all peoples.

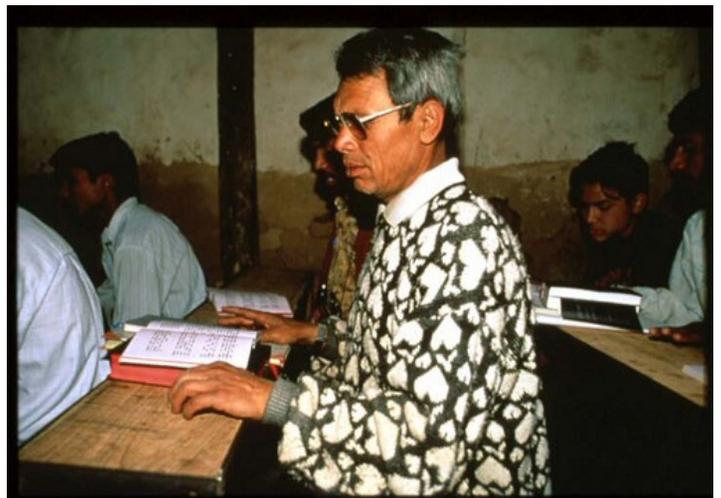


## Purpose and Mission

Convinced that no one should live and die without hearing God's good news, we believe that He has called us to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in communities where He is least known.

Therefore, compelled by God's great love and empowered by the Holy Spirit...

- We cross barriers to proclaim the crucified and risen Christ, expressing His love and compassion among those who live and die without Him
- We make disciples who will trust and obey Jesus, and become part of Christ-centered churches
- We work together with churches to fulfil God's mission across cultures locally and globally
- We facilitate the participation in cross-cultural ministry of those whom God is calling



Whatever your gifts and experience, God has created you to worship Him and make His name known. Thousands continue to live and die without hearing God's Good News. Is God calling you to take His Good News to other nations, to those who have not heard?

SIM works with sending churches to prepare those whom God is calling to overseas mission as they build a team of people who will support them in prayer and financially.

## PAA WILLIE

### A MISSIONARY STATESMAN PAR EXCELLENCE

**Abraham Debrah Narh**

**O**ne name stands out tall in both the history of Ghana and the history of indigenous missions in Ghana – William Ofori-Atta. William Ofori Atta generally called Paa Willie was a well-known son of Nana Sir Ofori Atta, the Paramount Chief of Akim Abuakwa. He was also the nephew of Dr. J. B. Danquah, a man accorded the title, the doyen of Gold Coast politics.

Paa Willie was an economist, teacher, politician and lawyer in professional life. He was a man with many parts. He was a founding member of the United Gold Coast Convention. He is memorialized as one of the illustrious and eminent Big Six that Ghana prides herself of.

If there ever was a courageous Ghanaian, then, it was Paa Willie. He made a unique impact as a professional politician during the most tempestuous periods of Ghana's modern history. He was detained five terms as a political prisoner because he was a resolute democrat. This made him clash with autocratic and military regimes. It is said by the famous Kwame Bediako that, "He brought to politics a new breath of sincerity, modesty, and honesty...He did not use his talents or office for the acquisition of personal wealth, and he worked, lived, and died a simple and devoted patriot."

We could read volumes of writings concerning the life of Paa Willie but most important is his life as a missionary. He started off as a politician but lived his later years as a missionary par excellence. His memories and deeds still live on.

The missionary life of this great man started off in prison. For him, this was a breathtaking period of coming into contact with Truth. It was during one of his jail terms in 1964 that he was sent a cake and a Bible by his wife Auntie Mary. It was this Bible that will turn his zeal and passion into a very fulfilling call. The cake was rejected but the Bible passed inspection. His only reading material in prison was a Bible.



he had gone astray with a focus on his desires and asked for forgiveness, accepting Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord.

**'It is inescapable that the Christian has been placed where he is to influence his society for good.'**

Reading the Bible with his legal eyes critically, he came to the conclusion that, the Bible was the absolute truth and all others faded by comparison to it. This conviction and his late conversion transformed him into a twentieth century Paul. His freedom from jail after the coup d'état in 1966 marked the beginning of a significant profession as an evangelist and Christian.

At age sixty-four, Paa Willie was at the Scripture Union Easter House Party. He was with men and women who could be his children. This was when the vision to form an indigenous missionary organization was born. Paa Willie's humility and passion for evangelism and for that matter the C.O.F. vision informed his decision to step in to accept the position of Field Director when others were reluctant to assume that responsibility. He worked tirelessly creating mission awareness, surveying the mission field and mobilizing prayer support by forming C.O.F.

core Groups until his retirement in 1987 at the age of 77. Paa Willie died the following year. He was 54 years when he was born again and died in 1988. A solid 24 years of impact as a missionary for the Lord Jesus Christ. Though he is dead, his life marks keep ticking.

It was written of him by his son, Bernard Ofori-Atta that, “at various stages of his life, he was an economist, a teacher, a lawyer, a politician and an evangelist and he excelled at all of these callings.”

It is recorded that, the motivating force of his life was service – service to his neighbours and to the nation. He often did this at great personal discomfort and detriment to himself. He devoted the evening of his life to evangelism and died in peace and contentment knowing that he had performed his duties to the best of his ability.

“He took the words of John 20:21 seriously and personally, and they became the dominating factors in his life: ‘As the Father sent me, even so I send you.’ It became the ruling passion of his life to take the good news of man’s salvation to everybody. His method of approach was to make disciples who would in turn take the Word to others.”

His life practice as a Christian is characterized by some achievements of co-founding the Maranatha Bible College with the Reverend John Bergen and being an active member of the Board. He also conceived the idea of a missionary society, an indigenous Missionary Society taking the Gospel to Ghanaians, Africans and eventually even to other continents and it was through this vision that, the Christian Outreach Fellowship was born. Paa Willie nursed it into a full-fledged mission society as Chairman and Director. He was also Vice-Chairman of the National Council of the Bible Society for five years and a member of the Distribution Committee.

He was chairman for the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation, (GILLBT), Challenge Enterprises and the Ghana Evangelism Committee; and he was a member and mentor of many other evangelical societies. He was an Honorary Patron of the Scripture Union.

The impact of Paa Willie was summed up succinctly by a military officer at the time of his funeral when he said; “Paa Willie belonged to all of us!” – the clergy, and society and the politician.

Paa Willie was a man for all. He defended the Chris-

tian faith in all angles. He was one person who made clear his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in word and action whether at home, on the move or abroad.

In the preface of Remembering “PAA WILLIE”, K. Y. Boafo wrote, when he was addressing him as evangelist, “Not for him the Christianity emasculated by culture, sectarianism or careerism. Paa Willie stripped it of all these, and let it stand as it really is – a great commission, a commandment, a serious assignment to spread the good news of mankind’s salvation through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to live by the word of God. And, in so doing, in laying bare the essence and endeavouring to live it, many were those who were drawn by the power of that word into the fold of the Christian community of this nation.”

Captions of the tributes on his life as a missionary are emboldened as an inspiration for the reader to do more, to pray, to go, to give and to send.

### **Christian Outreach Fellowship (COF)**

Paa was not just one of the founding members of COF, he was one of two people who dreamed and were convinced that there were many people in Ghana who had never been reached by the gospel of Jesus Christ, and who were urged to form an indigenous Missionary Society (COF) to reach out to such people.

He was not just an Executive/Council member of COF, but he was the one who held the core groups, the COF Council, the Missionaries in the field, the office staff and the entire organization together like a centripetal magnetic force. He also accepted appointment as a COF missionary and raised his own support to carry out the work of COF.

He singlehandedly travelled to places in the Northern, Upper, Western, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Volta regions to survey the mission field and the unreached peoples of Ghana.

### **The Bible Society**

“We shall always cherish his memory in our midst, for he was indeed a Man of God”.

Paa Willie was associated with the Bible Society of Ghana, right from its very beginning in the mid-sixties. Unlike many leaders, Paa was not an empire

builder. He was a Kingdom seeker and sought to promote the interest of the Kingdom of Christ in a definite way.

### Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT)

Paa Willie's commitment and dedication to the cause of Jesus Christ was so refreshing that he was in demand in every evangelical circle as a Board Member, or a speaker, a counsellor or simply as a brother in fellowship.

During his Chairmanship, the work of GILLBT expanded and prospered. By 1987, GILLBT was working in 23 of the 60 indigenous Ghanaian languages.

Under the loving and fatherly counsel of Paa Willie, GILLBT also carried on its translation of the Bible. Paa Willie recognized that the message of Jesus Christ was best understood in the language of one's native tongue. The completion of every single translation of the Bible was for him a special occasion for rejoicing.

He was a great source of encouragement.

### Maranatha Bible College

Paa's zeal and passion for evangelism knew no bounds and he sought in his Christian ministry to train men and women who would carry on the same ministry to the remotest parts of the country.

His goal was to reach the unreached people by any means in any part of Ghana during his lifetime.

### NOTABLE QUOTES OF PAA WILLIE

*'We are too enslaved to materialistic considerations and to social ties to obey the dictates of the Spirit of Christ.'*

*'I should think that we should consider it the greatest abomination to see a child who does not know Jesus and to let him pass by without doing anything.'*

His goal was to reach the unreached people by any means in any part of Ghana during his lifetime.

*'We Christians believe that revolutions achieve nothing if they merely set out to change or destroy structures and leave unchanged the men and women that run them. We believe and we assert that only Jesus has power to change man's nature and to make him able to change his own society.'*

*'It is inescapable that the Christian has been placed where he is to influence his society for good.'*

### Paa Willie had this to say in 1978 in a pamphlet as he made this conclusion:

"I know that very soon I shall, in the words of Peter, "put off this tabernacle" and be with the Lord. And my constant prayer at my age is and should be that in my remaining few years or months or days or hours, I should by His grace and enablement live only for the Lord, grow daily into maturity and be able at my death to say with Paul (in Timothy 4: 7-8) "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day and not me only but unto all them also that love His appearing".

Of him, it is said, "he felt at home in the company of world leaders like Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, and Pandit Nehru of India, yet ordinary people of our society were drawn to him and he regarded them as brothers and sisters." He used to call himself the five-star detainee as he was detained five times. He loved and forgave all. His sense of humour is admirable.

His deeds are worth emulating and his mind and word coordination a thing to be learnt.

Paa Willie is a missionary statesman par excellence!

We thank the Lord for the life of William Ofori-Atta. May his legacy continue to impact generations to come for the Great Commission and for true transformation across Africa and the nations.

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**Abraham Debrah Narh** is a young gentleman whose desire is to see young people live purposefully and fulfilled. His inspiration is Jesus and he believes in leadership through service. He is currently working with Oneway Africa Ministries. He is interested in writing, speaking, serving and encouraging.



## DR. KWAME BEDIAKO

### Outstanding Ghanaian Missiologist

Odoba Walton

It is an honour to write briefly on Dr. Manasseh Kwame Dakwa Bediako, an outstanding African theologian and missiologist as well as the founder and late rector of the Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture, (ACI) in Akropong, Ghana.

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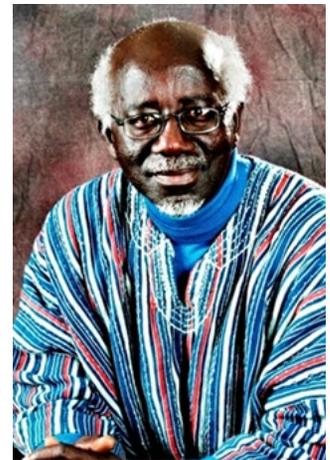
Just before the COVID-19 lockdown early this year, I had the privilege of enrolling at the ACI to study Holistic Mission and Development as a Master of Arts in Mission and Theology Option.

Before this opportunity, there was little I knew about this school. I had not come to a full appreciation of it though a close relative was on the faculty. This was probably because of my inadequate information about the school and its small campus making it appear ‘un-inviting’. On the contrary, I got to realize that was a blinkered view. The knowledge and experience Akrofi-Christaller gives is beyond one’s expectation and invigoratingly life transforming.

This I would contribute largely to the good foundation set for the establishment of this remarkable institution by its founding rector, Dr. Manasseh Kwame Dakwa Bediako, known simply as Kwame Bediako. I came to realize that as the brain behind Christian scholarship in African theology in Akrofi-Christaller, Kwame Bediako’s insights on African Christianity and culture is enriching and edifying. He brings into perspective the need to appre-

ciate our diverse and rich cultural background and to build our Christian heritage from such non-negotiable end.

Bediako establishes that we end up building in the air when we cut off our cultural roots or foundations. Though some portions of our cultures may be corrupted due to the fall of man, our task as ‘missioners’<sup>[1]</sup> is to redeem cultures. He establishes that the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-



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20, is mainly about the discipling of the nations and thus explains the Gospel (good news) as the transformation that Christ brings to us and our cultures. The Gospel should relate to human nature at its very core, and to human existence in its totality, in all its dimensions—historical, social, cultural, economic, political, as well as personal.<sup>[2]</sup> This, as one of the main ideas Bediako propagates, was my greatest highlight. He strived to make Africans confident about both their Christian and African identity.

Born on July 7, 1945, Kwame Bediako was the son of a police inspector and the grandson of a Presbyterian catechist and evangelist. Though his parents came from the Central Region, he grew up in Accra, at the Police Training Depot. His first schooling was in Ga and not in his mother tongue,

1 Churches, mission agencies and Christian bodies

2 Kwame Bediako, “What is the Gospel?”, Asempra Jubilee Lectures, 27-29 September 2005, Christ the King Hall, Accra, p.7.

Twi, but was fluent in both. As an outstanding pupil, he was able to gain Senior High education at Mfantshipim School, Cape Coast, which was one of the best schools established by the British Methodist missions. Kwame received an excellent education there, and left Mfantshipim as its head prefect and in 1965 entered the University of Ghana. Here, he developed as an eloquent orator and debater, he could easily make a mark in politics. He also attained academic excellence in French that won him a scholarship for graduate studies in France and the promise of an academic career. During this time he was a confirmed atheist under French influence, apparently deaf to the pleas of Christian classmates.

In France he gained master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Bordeaux, choosing African francophone literature as his area of research. During his time in France, he underwent a radical Christian conversion right under his shower—so radical that at one stage he thought of abandoning his studies for active evangelism. Thankfully, he was persuaded otherwise; the time was coming when he would recognize scholarship itself as a missionary vocation. His new life brought him new associates—above all, a fellow student of French, from England, who joined him in a mission to migrant Arab children. His evangelism pursuits made him pursue a bachelor's degree in Theology at the London Bible College in London. He met Gillian Mary around this same time and in 1973 they were married, forming a wonderful partnership that was rich intellectually and spiritually. They came back to Ghana, to teach for two years at the Christian Service College in Kumasi. With family links rebuilt with the Presbyterian Church he was accepted for ordination in that church.

Kwame's evangelical convictions and credentials were manifest, but he wrestled with issues that were not at the front of most evangelical minds, or on the agenda of most evangelical institutions during his time. Could Africans become fully Christian only by embracing the mind-set of Western Christians and rejecting all the things that made them distinctively African?

It was such concerns that brought the Bediakos back to academic study, and Kwame to a second doctorate in the Department of Religious Studies

at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. With such astounding academic credentials Bediako now had, he strongly declined all invitations from the Western institutions. In Ghana, he could readily have returned to the university world or he could have become a well sought-after minister. But he had a unique call to theological scholarship that neither universities nor seminaries were yet able to bring to the fore.

The outcome was the Akrofi-Christaller Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology, later called the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission, and Culture. Its establishment and development aim at promoting scholarship rooted in Christian mission. The focus of the scholarship of the institute was on Africa—its religious, cultural, social, and linguistic realities, and the history, life, and thought of its Christians. The preparatory courses in the master's degree program explored the principles underlying the interaction of Gospel and Culture, the worldviews of primal societies, theology in Africa, Christian history as mission history among others. As a post-graduate Mission and Theology institute, it continues to train many well-equipped workers for the Kingdom. His departure following a serious illness, on June 10, 2008, is a great loss to the body of Christ especially in Africa, nevertheless he invested in many and left a rich legacy.

Professor Andrew Walls describes Kwame Bediako as “an outstanding African theologian of his generation; a distinguished academic.” May his legacy live on!!!<sup>[3]</sup>

**Odoba Walton** is a former student of the Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture, (ACI). She currently serves at the Operations & Partnership Development Officer of OneWay Africa.



<sup>3</sup> Culled from Dictionary of African Christian Biography, 'Kwame Bediako', accessed on 28th November, 2020, <https://dacb.org/stories/ghana/bediako-kwame/>

## PAUL ADU

### The first African Methodist missionary to Northern Ghana

“**Y**esu Christo wanna, I wanna kusinti.”  
This translates in Walla language as *Jesus Christ is coming, and He will soon come.*

The thunderous words of a man whose love for his Master and savior were not kept to himself. He responded to a call to serve people His master loved. And like Paul and Silas, Christ has always used people- Paul Adu said yes to serve Jesus.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1915, Reverend Paul Kwabena Mensah Adu was born to his parents Opayin Kwame Adu and Obaapyin Akosua Oweridua in Kintampo. His parents lived in Kintampo to serve an idol in their quest for a solution concerning child mortality which they suffered. His parents led Paul and other siblings into idol worship. It was also in Kintampo that Paul Adu met Jesus.

Around 1922, a Methodist missionary from Wenchi traveled to Kintampo to preach the gospel. This led to the conversion of his older brother which was met with great disapproval by their Father. Paul and his older brother added salt to the sore when they joined the singing band of the church. Their father tried to get them out of the church, but this attempt was short-lived when he was rather encouraged by the priest of their traditional cult to permit them. The priest commented that he perceived the Spirit in their new faith was stronger than his. This revelation facilitated an opening for Kwabena to be baptized, which led to a change of name from Kwabena to Paul. Before the death of Paul Adu’s father, he too received Christ.

In 1937, Paul Adu was recommended by Rev. C. C. Ohene, the Methodist superintendent minister of Koforidua to study at the Wesley College in Kumasi. He finished in 1939 as a teacher – catchiest. Paul’s Christian service was characterized by urgency and determination. As a lay minister, he founded a school and a church in Atebubu. He also founded more churches in other places like Yeji and Kwadwo-Bofokrom in the Brong Ahafo regions (Bono East Region) of Ghana.

His zeal for the Lord was further encouraged when Rev E. Sawyer entreated him to apply to train for the ministry at Trinity College, a Methodist training institution. So, in 1946 he started his training and completed it in 1949. He was then sent to Agona Swredu the following year. In 1953, aside from being ordained into the ministry, he was appointed to a five-member commission by the Methodist church to study the northern territory properly, as the church had begun to consider the need to propagate the gospel to those areas too. It was in this quest by the Methodist church that led to Paul Adu being sent to the northern territory two years after this commission. He became a pioneer missionary of the Methodist church to the northern territory of the Gold Coast.

Paul Adu’s entry into the northern territory was a miraculous breakthrough. It was the resurrection of almost forty years of tormented mission endeavors by the Methodist mission. Early attempts suffered for many reasons, but Paul Adu was the breakthrough pioneer missionary to these unfriendly and unchartered territories.

These northern territories were predominantly Muslim, but Paul was not shaken at all. His determination to serve God in these lands could not be swayed. He started local worship meetings with the Akan Speaking people in Tamale which led to the beginning of the Tamale United Methodist Church. In Tamale, his work saw progress due to his heart of tolerance for the Muslims. He encouraged believers to love the Muslims, and he was the leading example. After a year of tireless ministry and successful work in Tamale, he was sent to Wa. In Wa, he started a school for the blind, as he thought that would be a great way to reach the people there, and it was tuition-free. He also helped provide people with free medical care. His tenacity led him on to yet another mission. He started a night school for the farmers and all who were not available in the day. He did everything to befriend the locals. Through his work and service, the people began considering the

gospel of Jesus Christ. The message was welcome in neighboring villages and towns, which also led to the establishment of nine primary and middle schools. He also started schools for children of farmers. This was a response to a call to be educated. He taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and gave religious instruction. Paul Adu took advantage of every opportunity to get close to the people in Wa and through this won some of the students for the Lord.

His work in the north of Ghana produced people who continued in the ministry of the Lord. Men like Edison Tinsari, Peter Bakpanla, Nathan Samwini, Edward Diuri, and Iddi Musa.

Paul Adu was not only a minister of the word but also a linguistic example of who a missionary should desire to be. He fluently spoke Waala, Dagbani, Dargaati, and Hausa. And like Paul the Apostle, this grace was not in vain. He laboured to translate the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed, and some hymns and choruses into Walla. Anytime the Walla Church prays the Lord's prayer, they declare the faithfulness of a faithful, determined, tenacious missionary: Paul Adu.

Like many pioneer missionaries of Jesus, he had some painful marks on his body. He lost his first wife in 1942, before serving the Lord fully in the ministry. In 1956, he lost a son while serving the

Lord in the north of Ghana. His second wife also lost her life upon their return to Ghana in 1965, after an unsuccessful surgery in the United Kingdom due to a terminal disease. He married for the third time, in 1967, and was blessed with four daughters.

Paul's tenacity, passion, and determination to bring the gospel to all, and particularly, his unwieldiness to send the gospel to a previously failed mission field - northern Ghana - are extremely commendable. His love for people who were not from his native town was a clear sign of the power of His master's Love at work in a man who was willing and obedient.

He retired in 1981 and went home to be with His Lord and master in 1991. Paul Adu was an Energetic preacher, a faithful missionary, and a memorable example of faithful Christian service. He served the Methodist church for forty-two years.

*This article was sourced and summarized from Edusa-Eyison, J. M. (2011). The History of the Methodist Church Ghana and his article in 2003. <https://dacb.org/stories/ghana/adu-paul/>*

## DR. SETH KOFI ANYOMI

### A Pioneering Mission Leader

**A**t the age of 31, Dr. Seth Kofi Anyomi founded the African Christian Mission. At the age of 37, he became the founding President of the Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA).

“It is the doing of the Lord,” he says categorically, that enabled him to play those roles. Dr. Anyomi, as he is fondly called, is a Ghanaian born visionary leader, used by the Lord in pioneering many works in His Kingdom.

From humble beginnings at Amedzofe in the Volta Region of Ghana, his passion for missions came through the inspiration he got from seeing the tombs of earlier German Missionaries at the Amedzofe Missionary Cemetery.

His early Cross-cultural exposure also happened while schooling at the Awogeya middle School in Bolgatanga and Bawku Secondary School, (both in Northern Ghana), Berekum Training College and Winneba Advanced Teachers College. Those cross-cultural settings gave birth to his intense interest in Northern missionary and Church Planting endeavours, especially among the Balsa and Kokomba people.

His early missionary experiences also include undertaking village evangelism with Dr. Wilson Awasu and others in the Avatime area.

Considered a “born leader” by many, Dr. Anyomi founded the Burma Camp Christian Fellowship while teaching at Arakan Middle School in 1971-72. A fellowship that has birthed over 40 Pastors and from which the 37 Military Fellowship and the late Dr. Sam Annakra’s Christian Mission Resource Foundation (CMRF) emerged. His other early leadership encounters included leading Street ministry outreaches in Tulsa Oklahoma, USA, and serving as President of Africa Christian Students Fellowship in Tulsa.

He recalls that he received God’s call to ministry and missions in a small Chapel at the Oral Roberts University (ORU) in November 1977.

Together with his wife Christiana, they founded the African Christian Mission (ACM) in 1983. From 1989, Dr. Anyomi represented Ghana in the newly established Third World Missions Association (TWMA), now renamed as World Link Missions Association. With encouragement from Dr. David Cho (then Chairman of the TWMA), Dr. Anyomi led in the founding of the Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA) in 1990 and became her founding President.

Dr. Anyomi was invited in 1993 to serve on the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) Missions’ Commission where he still serves. Seth & Christiana Anyomi are also founders of the Destiny International Churches. Together with Dr. Dela Adadevoh, of CRU (Campus Crusade for Christ), they founded the Destiny University (an online Distance Education institution). His passion is to spearhead transformation in Tertiary Education and Missions in our contemporary World

A graduate of Oral Roberts University and Tulsa University where he earned a doctorate degree in Educational Administration, Dr. Seth Kofi Anyomi has served for several years as the International Chancellor of the World Link University.

Dr Anyomi has been married to his beautiful wife, Christiana Anyomi for over 40 years. They have been blessed with four beautiful children: Benita, Aba, Loretta and Jeffery Anyomi. They have been blessed also with two grandchildren: Atalie and Neria.

He continues to serve on some International Mission Networks and was instrumental in the founding of the Africa Missions Association (AfMA). Dr. Anyomi is the author of “Memoirs of Missionary Pioneers from the Emerging Fields”. He also continues to impact and serve the world missionary movement in many ways including mentoring young pastors and missionaries even as he oversees the Destiny International Churches and provides leadership for the Destiny University.

## THE BIG SIX!

### The men the Lord used to start TORCHBEARERS

#### Joseph Darling MacCarthy

*Editor's note: In the history of Ghana, we have the "BIG SIX" who are referred to as the Founding Fathers of our country. On the Christian mission front, there is another "BIG SIX" who are the Founding Fathers of one of the key and foremost indigenous Mission Agencies in Ghana.*

In 1987, Albert Seth Ocran returned from Maiduguri, Bornu State, northwestern Nigeria convinced that the Lord had called him to return to Ghana to start a mission agency that would take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. With this conviction, he started Worldwide Missions and began mobilizing like-minded people to place Africans on the missions map.

He shared the dream with a number of us and before long it became apparent that we had to plan for an indigenous Mission agency. Among those who expressed a keen interest in the idea were Joseph Darling MacCarthy, Dr. Solomon Aryeetey, Francis Osei Kusi, Albert Saah and Victor Akwetey. The common thread that held the six of us together besides our commitment to the lordship of Jesus Christ was our shared passion of taking the gospel to our generation which we had been doing through Joyful Way Inc.

With our shared experiences in Joyful Way, we had a bond of love and each of us had his own particular sense of call to missions.

Dr. Solomon Aryeetey responded to the call to abandon furthering a career in medicine to take the gospel to the Fulani people in Mali. As a senior brother, he guided several discussions that culminated in the formation of Torchbearers Mission Inc.

Joseph MacCarthy felt the need to mobilize more people from the south of Ghana to the ripe mission fields of northern Ghana where he had laboured for

two years as a church planter. He had also returned to Accra with the hope of forming a group that would be interested in sending more mature Christians to work as missionaries in the north.

Victor Akwetey, a banker, had shared fellowship with missionaries working with GILLBT and had been involved in planting the Faith community Baptist church in Tamale. The prospect of multiplying that ability to extend the frontiers of the gospel in the north appealed to his adventurous spirit.

Albert Saah had started the Labourers Ministry, a prayer ministry that envisioned mobilizing Christians to ministry through prayer. He saw the idea of an indigenous mission agency to be in line with an effective mobilization drive. He joined the team.

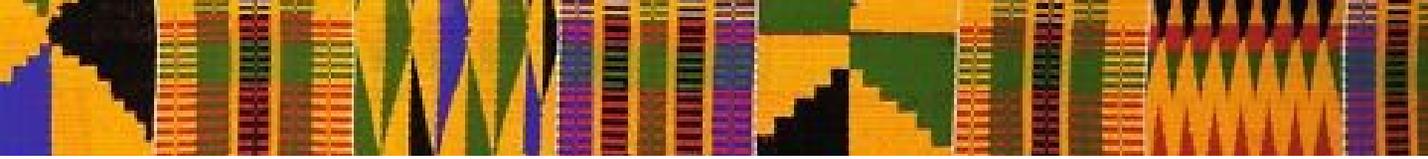
Francis Osei Kusi, popularly known as FO, also a banker was hungry to see the word of God propagated throughout the sub-region because in it lay the hope of transforming Africa. He also lent his support.

Albert Ocran, Joseph MacCarthy and Dr. Solomon Aryeetey became the midwives who laboured in coming up with the framework leading to the inauguration of Torchbearers Mission Inc., on September 3rd, 1988. As the Lord would have it Albert Ocran received a scholarship to go and study missions at Bulstrode through the efforts of Mr. Ross Campbell.

A new era was thus birthed in the annals of Christian Mission in Ghana.

Albert Ocran served as the General Director of Torchbearers faithfully for many years and was succeeded by Joseph MacCarthy.

After 32 years, the burden that was laid upon the hearts of these six Ghanaian Christian men whose vision was to "begin a movement that would have a commitment to reach out to people in Ghana, Africa and the rest of the world with the gospel of salvation



through Christ Jesus" continues till date.

Torchbearers has been working towards this vision through missionary work, church planting, missions mobilization, missions training, sports ministry and

literacy programmes, among other activities. The vision of the six men, indeed continues unabated! Glory to God!

## DR. SOLOMON ARYEETEEY

### A TRUE MISSIONARY STATESMAN

*Editor's note: Dr. Kenneth Attobrah-Apraku, an Associate Editor of the Ghana Missions Handbook, had this inspiring and intriguing interview with Rev. Dr. Solomon Aryeetey. It is thought-provoking and we believe the Lord will challenge you into action as you read. We celebrate him and his amazing wife and co-missionary, Mrs. Leticia Aryeetey.*

**Ghana Missions Handbook (GMH): Tell us about your childhood. What was it like growing up and what were your ambitions?**

**Solomon Aryeetey (SA):** I grew up in Koforidua in a Polygamist home. My father had 7 wives and my mother was the 5<sup>th</sup>. I attended the Anglican Primary School in Koforidua where I wrote the Common Entrance exams when I got to JSS 1 and gained admission to Achimota School.

My dad always encouraged me to study hard and I wanted to be a doctor because that seemed to be a sure way of lifting me out of poverty because my family wasn't rich. I thus took my studies seriously.

Growing up I had an elder brother who was in the Scripture Union (SU). He taught me a lot of things about Christianity, especially how to witness. I was witnessing to people back then but I had no assurance of my salvation. I finally got the assurance in Form 4, and that was in 1968/69.

I got involved with Joyful Way in Achimota School, through my then Housemaster, Franklin Dove

**GMH: Tell us about your call to missions.**

**SA:** It was during a nationwide tour by the Joyful

Way group soon after its formation. This was during one long vacation in 1972. I became convinced God was calling me to something way beyond medicine. When I got to the University of Ghana, Legon, I was the Campus Evangelism Secretary. I remember waking up at 4:30 am with some colleagues of mine and we will move from hall to hall to undertake dawn broadcasts. On a campus like Legon, people will insult you for disturbing their sleep but we did not mind.

Whilst at Legon, I struggled with the call. I thought it meant I had to forsake medical school and it was a big conflict in my heart. One day I went to one sister who was my mentor and spoke to her about this challenge of mine and she told me, God can use doctors too? She said "why don't you finish your medicine? The medicine will equip you and then you use it as a tool in a place that they can't pay you for your work but you will be able to get into their society and preach Christ to them."

Another milestone in the calling was when I encountered the Mission organization called Operation Mobilization that was embarking on a Christian Literature distribution campaign. I got the chance to board their ship called Logos where they also trained people for missions and they gave us a prayer tag with 3 countries on them. One of my countries was Mali and I will later find myself in Mali serving as a missionary for 8 years. The others were Mauritania and Libya. Before Mali, I had been to Liberia after I finished my Housejob, where their doctors had fled the country due to a coup d'état that had just happened. They came recruiting young Ghanaian doctors and I knew that was an opportunity since I missed going there some time with Joyful Way. I had told myself that I will one day evangelize in Liberia.

My going to Liberia was more of economic immigration but later became like a tent-making ministry. I will go out during the weekends with the SIM Chris-

"If you can speak their language you earn the right to be their friend. I was learning the Fulani language at the same time

tian radio station Team in Liberia. We went about planting churches and sharing the gospel and I also attended to the health needs of the people. I didn't know then that God was training me on how to use medicine as a tool for preaching the Gospel.

**"We should all keep fighting and working till the last man has heard"**

From Liberia, we traveled to the US. I planned that after the trip I was going to stay there and specialize in Paediatrics because I had done some residency in Paediatrics in Liberia.

Whilst attending a service in Canada, I heard someone preach and he said "why should someone hear the Gospel twice when others haven't had the chance to hear even once?" That statement broke me. And then in a church in Atlanta, I remember the preacher speaking and crying that the African church was ready to send missionaries to their own people. He had served among the Zulus in South Africa. During that sermon, he said as he cried that "we are looking for someone we can send to Mali.

There was a need for someone who could speak a bit of the French language, and someone who could use medicine as a tool to advance the Gospel". And God said, "Solo, now you understand why you were doing all the medical missionary work in Liberia. I want you to go back to Africa. Don't be in America."

I cried and begged God several times, but finally, I went. We went to a village called Masinda on the Niger river 400km away from Bamako and that is where we settled. The people there hadn't heard the name Jesus before and it was a good feeling taking the word of God to such a community. There we learned the local languages of the tribes and within 6 months we could say most things in the Bambara language. If you can speak their language you earn the right to be their friend. I was learning the Fulani language at the same time.

Now there are 7 or 8 couples who are in Mali serving the natives as missionaries from Pioneers after my family and I left and they are doing marvelous things. Many of them are

former Muslims.

It was at the time that strong missionaries were being carved out of the natives that Pioneers said, "why don't you go to Ghana and work towards building an army of African missionaries to go all over Africa with the Gospel."

Now I help train missionaries. We are now involved in about 16 different countries in Africa with about 1600 missionaries on the team.

***GMH: Where did you meet your wife?***

**SA:** We met on the Legon campus. We became friends because of missions. I organized that meeting where she was saved. She had some questions and someone else directed her to me to answer her questions. She said she was feeling called to missions so she wanted to leave Law School. Hence someone told her to come and talk to me since I had gone through that before. It was missions that brought us together. We knew that God had called us.

***GMH: How long have you been married and how many children do you have?***

**SA:** Leticia and I got married in December of 1978. Before our 7th wedding anniversary, we had all our children, 6 of them but the last one was a set of twins. There were 3 boys and a girl and when we wanted one more girl to seal it off, the twin boys came. Now they are all old and married and the grandchildren are coming in. We are expecting grandchild number 9 soon.

***GMH: What advice will you give young people concerning marriage with regards to missions?***

**SA:** God never calls a man alone. God calls a family. You dare not go to the mission field not convinced about whether your wife has the same burden. Discordant couples are one of the leading causes of missionary attrition. That makes marriage non-negotiable. If God has called you please be patient for Him

**It's just so hard to get churches willing to send people and resources into these 'dry' areas. Everyone seems to be focused on big cities**

to bring one who bears the same vision, not one who is going because they have to follow the husband but one who is going because she has the same calling on her life.

**GMH: What advice will you give readers when it comes to finances and missions?**

**SA:** When Jesus spoke about money and missions, He said “Don’t worry about what you will eat or wear for your father knows your needs.” It is not about money. If money is a reason why you are going into missions you are fooling yourself. The mission field is sacrifice. You don’t go to receive from the people. You rather go to lay down your life for the people and that should be the motivation. In all, this God will not forsake you. The testimony is that God has taken care of us and all our children. We were able to put them through the best schools in Ghana and give them the best education. All that God showed us was to give us a market space in the US and how we could export foodstuff. God is faithful.

**GMH: Who has been the greatest influence in your life?**

**SA:** I have had many great influences in my life. There is my big brother, who mentored me and introduced me to some really good Christian books by teachers such as Watchman Nee. There is also Mr. Franklin Dove who was my housemaster and who mentored me. And there was also Mr. Akushie who was the president of Joyful Way in those days. He went to Nigeria to teach in one of their technical universities with the missionary aim of reaching out to Muslims at a time when many people went to Nigeria seeking money. Unfortunately, he died at the young age of 33 years. Many other people mentored me while on campus and when I joined Pioneers.

From the bible, Apostle Paul is my model. I like to follow his example and learn from how God used him.

**GMH: What is your view on the way missions is conducted in Ghana? What are we doing right and what can we do better?**

**SA:** Well, awareness has been rising in the last few years but I think it has taken far too long. I feel the church is sometimes too focused on ‘blessings’ and ‘money’ and not much is said about using what you have as an avenue to honour God. The Church is supposed to be focused on missions. Missions is supposed to be the engine that drives the life of the church. When Jesus said He will build His Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it, He meant that we are a church that goes on the offensive and goes through those gates to snatch people out of the fire of hell. I speak with a lot of Christian leaders and sometimes, I think that their role in equipping the church for the work of the ministry is lost, though this is a mandate stated verbatim in the bible. The focus seems to be on the benefits we get from the cross but we forget that the cross was an example to be followed also. Jesus took up his cross and we must take up ours also. He was crucified on His cross and we should be ready to die for Him on our “crosses”. If that is the way the Master went, shouldn’t the servant walk that same road? The directive is very simple; ‘Go and make disciples’. What is there to not understand about that? Our attitude towards the call causes me a lot of pain and I wonder how long it will

The directive is very simple; ‘Go and make disciples’. What is there to not understand about that? Our attitude towards the call causes me a lot of pain and I wonder how long it will take for us to respond to the call.

take for us to respond to the call.

**GMH: What are some of the greatest challenges you face?**

**SA:** Getting churches to partner with us for our missionaries. It’s just so hard to get churches willing to send people and resources into these ‘dry’ areas. Everyone seems to be focused on big cities. It is like we forget that mission work is an act of love. Do you know the impact it will have on a missionary field if you can set up a health facility or a school where Muslim children can also come and be taught? Sadly, the Churches don’t seem to be interested in these areas and everyone who says God has called them nowadays wants to be in the cities. I believe I have

every right to question that call because I doubt God will pour water into the sea instead of dry land.

But I have a lot of hope for the future because of the words of Jesus. He let us know that the gospel will be preached to the ends of the earth and then the end will come. I believe the words of the one who said 'Let there be light' and light appeared so I know even Saudi Arabia will be full of the gospel. We should all keep fighting and working till the last man has heard.

**GMH: Do you have any hobbies?**

**SA:** I like watching soccer. I like the EPL and I support Manchester City. I used to support Arsenal but they nearly gave me a heart attack! And I like cooking and do a lot of it as well.

**GMH: Any last words?**

**SA:** I wish someone will take a megaphone and go to the churches in Ghana and tell them to stop wasting God's time. We call it the Great Commission but I call it the Great Omission because we have omitted to do what the Lord has commanded. It is the biggest frustration I have about the Ghanaian Church. But I believe the word of God and if we won't go, God may raise up stones to go.

I wish someone will take a megaphone and go to the churches in Ghana and tell them to stop wasting God's time.

## A CHAT WITH REV. EDITH LARBI

### A Missionary to Klonu

***Voice of Missions (VOM):*** Can you tell us about yourself and your background?

**Edith Larbi (EL):** My name is Edith Enyonam Larbi, I am an ordained Reverend Minister with the Global Evangelical Church of Ghana. I was born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1943 at Peki Bambo, where I had my Nursery and Elementary education in the '50s. Though I had the desire to further my education to the tertiary level, lack of needed funds made this impossible.

I later come to Accra in search of a job. I got involved in lots of factory work. I also worked with AGIP, which later became the Ghana Petroleum Company.

***VOM:*** What in your childhood prepared you for your missionary service?

**EL:** One significant incident in my childhood that I believed laid the foundation for my ministry was a story recounted to me by my grandmother. According to her, something happened in our compound that made her believe I am a unique child. She narrated the story of how a goat was undergoing difficult labor and everyone just watched the goat in pain not knowing what to do, but I was the one who came to the rescue of the animal.

Another remarkable incident was when I was about 5 years of age. The family went to church and for reasons I could not explain; I chose not to attend the children's church that Sunday but rather went to the adult church. It was during the Easter season. The message of the pastor that day was on the Crucifixion of Christ. He elaborated on how Jesus was mercilessly beaten, this message got me curious, I could not understand the crime of the man for him to be so beaten up. As we walked back home, I asked grandma what the sin of that man was, I cannot remember the answer she gave me. However that message impacted me more than I can imagine, from that time on, the Holy Spirit began His works in me.

As a young lady, I was involved in virtually every

Christian activity around me. I joined the Volta Evangelical Association, travelling with them for open-air crusades. I did dawn broadcast preaching, all night programs, I mingled with every creature on the floor, scorpion, snakes, mosquitos, you name it but all these did not deter or discourage me in my quest to serve God. I served the Lord with excitement with no thought of comfort crossing my mind.

When I relocated to Accra, I joined the church choir. We were then staying in the Awodome area. I was in my early 20's and on my way back from the choir practice one of the days, I told the Lord that all my friends had boyfriends, as such He should also give me my boyfriend. As if in answer to my request, I heard an audible voice, it was as if someone spoke clearly into my ears. I heard the word "Repent" repeatedly in my local language. That very week a friend invited me to a yearly Intervarsity Christian Program. It was at this program I gave my life to Christ. That was in December 1966.

***VOM:*** How did you receive the Call into ministry/missions?

**EL:** I can say the call came suddenly. While attending Maranatha Bible College, one of our colleagues, aunty Grace, a midwife by profession lost her mother. Another friend suggested that it will be good for us to travel with her to the village to support her at the funeral. We bought into the suggestion and travelled with our bereaved colleague to Klonu village in the Volta Region of Ghana. In the night, about 20 of us slept in one room amidst mosquito bites. It was in this mosquito blood bite that I heard the audible voice again "I am going to bring you here to work for me" it was so clear, it entered my heart. When I returned to Accra, I told one of our lecturers, Rev. Beaden that I was going to return to Klonu to do evangelism. He asked me to wait till I had completed my program. Though I agreed with it, I still traveled to the village before I completed my course. I preached and one elderly woman gave her life to Christ; I was overjoyed. I must say that there was

nothing to write home about as far as this village is concerned. But this did not stop me from going back. After my program at Maranatha, I went back to Klonu where I spent 9 years of my life as a single missionary. It should be noted that I was neither sent by a Church or a mission agency. I however later became a Missionary of the Christian Outreach Fellowship (COF).

***VOM: Were family/friends supportive?***

**EL:** I can say that my family was supportive because they did not discourage me. They knew that getting involved in Christian activities was my lifestyle. My uncle once told my mother that when anyone is looking for me and they find a nearby Chapel, they should enter, I will surely be there. My fellow workers often remarked that the only thing that they know will move me is anything that has to do with Christianity. When I decided to resign from my job and relocate to Klonu, my employer immediately increased my salary but this did not dissuade me. I was determined to leave. Mr. Lamptey, my boss told me that anytime I have a change of mind, and came back, my job will be given back to me, though this was not the company practice. Immediately I left my workplace that day, I gave out some of my office wear and turned the rest into rags, I did all these because I did not want anything to encourage me to go back to the secular job.

***VOM: What are some of the challenges you faced on the field?***

**EL:** I had lots of challenges. I remember on my way to Klonu, I met a pastor who when he learned of my decision, exclaimed that there is nothing there, not even water to drink or wash. Indeed it was difficult terrain, after boiling the rainwater for drinking, the water will still be foaming, but this was my drinking water. Indeed the Lord's presence was mighty with me, I cannot explain the supernatural force that kept me through those times.

***VOM: Were you not scared by the reality on the ground?***

**EL:** I do not think so. I walked through the dark al-



*Missionary Edith Larbi (middle) with Rhoda Appiah and Colleague*

leys by night without fear, at times as late as 11 pm. I remember walking through the Klo River around midnight and I saw a water snake. I told the snake that I am on my way home, so the snake too should go its way, and that was how we both parted ways without harming each other. One day a lady called Maggie spotted me on my way to the river to fetch water. She quickly came out to help. Afterward, she inquired to know why I was not married. I was dumbfounded, for I did not know what to tell her. Right there and then, the Lord told me to tell her that it was because of her that I was not married. The woman later gave her life to Christ but unfortunately, her husband abandoned her with five children because of her faith in Christ Jesus.

***VOM: As a single lady did you ever suffer loneliness?***

**EL:** No the Lord did not allow me to suffer from loneliness, He completely took such feelings away. My lonely moments were when I didn't see people around, then I would begin to ask if the rapture has taken place. Then I will start going to people's houses to check on them. Though I went alone to Klonu, later on, I got a younger brother and one or two people who came along to support me in the work.

***VOM: Who or what was most helpful in preparation times (Books or People)***

**EL:** As at the time I went to Klonu, I knew very little about missions. But I had read lots of books while in Bible School. Each student needed to read 40 books per semester. I read all these books which included books by Kathryn Kuhlman. I drew a lot of inspi-

ration from these books and it was through these books I got my firsthand information about missions.

***VOM: What do you perceive are your strengths in ministry/missions?***

**EL:** The word of God, the Holy Spirit and my passion for the lost.

***VOM: What do you see as your weak points in ministry/missions?***

**EL:** I can't think of any. At times I look back and I think I should have done more or better than I did. Many people did not understand me, especially the people in the village, they asked me "have you come to marry or you are a Miss (A 'Miss' at that time was a teacher). I often told them that I have come to tell them about God. According to the chiefs in the village, they have seen people doing God's work but they are yet to see one with my level of attachment to serving God.

***VOM: What parts of missionary work did you enjoy the most?***

**EL:** I enjoyed every aspect of Christian service. I am an all-rounder. I served as a pastor in the village, a teacher, doctor, evangelist, I mean everything.

***VOM: What aspects of missions would you like a change or do differently?***

**EL:** I will want to look at the issue of financial support. For instance, when I was working with COF, it was expected of every missionary to raise their support out of which they will get their monthly stipend. It was not difficult for me to raise the support, however for many others, this was a very difficult task hence the need to do a secular job to raise money, the effect was that they ended up losing focus.

***VOM: How were you sustained before you join COF as a missionary?***

**EL:** Sincerely I cannot remember exactly how, but I remember that I led a very simple life, I come from the part of Volta Region where we like soup, as such I relied on that with crabs I harvested from the river. I managed with my few clothes and small money. At

a point in time, the children of some of the brethren shopped for me when coming from Accra, and when I started getting support from COF, I shared the support with others. I even raised support for Maggie's family. The woman whose husband abandoned because of her faith. Though she was without her husband, her family was living well due to the support. But all I can say is that what to eat or drink was the least of my worries then because the Lord was faithfully providing even without me asking.

***VOM: What is your greatest disappointment or disillusionment?***

**EL:** None. I did have issues with people I worked with because they do not seem to understand me, but I did not hold anything against them nor hated anyone.

***VOM: What are your most treasured memories?***

**EL:** When people turned away from idols to Christ. One particular incident stood out though. There was this veteran idol worshipper and his wife in a nearby village. I often went there to witness to him and his wife, but the wife was just not willing to give in, this was because she was afraid that if the husband should give his life to Christ, the gods will kill him.

One day while this man was coming from another village where he had gone for another idol, he heard us singing a song in our local language during our night vigil. The lyrics of the song revolves around our satisfaction in Christ, he was puzzled. The Lord used this song to minister to him and he got saved. Afterward, he brought out 12 baskets full of idols to be burnt, there was this particular smock-like garment that will just not catch fire for nothing less than 15 minutes. I had to call another pastor to join me in prayer until it eventually burnt. When the woman saw that the husband did not die, she readily surrendered to the Lord. Both of them were baptized in water as Abraham and Sarah.

Another memorable time was when I went to another village to preach. Due to my phobia of bicycle riding, I chose to walk home, when the evangelistic program ended. While the others rode on bicycles, I as walked alone, I followed the cow footsteps, which ended me in thick mud, as I walked, I kept hoping that the next step will land me on dry ground but the reverse was the case. I sank in mud neck deep. All

of a sudden someone came around, pulled me up, and carried me to the dry ground. I never saw the person again. From there I saw a coconut tree which suggested that there was a village nearby. As I walked through, I got to the hut of an old woman who was a bit apprehensive as to who I was, but thanks to God, her young daughter recognized me as Sister, (that was how the village people called me) the lady that has been coming to preach to them. That was how I was led to the nearest bus station that took me back to Klonu. By the time I got back, it was late, the gong beater was about to beat the gong in search of me. I believe I experienced an angelic intervention that day.

**VOM: What is/are your favorite scripture(s) that relate to your experience?**

**EL:** Jude 23. I always visualize the Lord holding me and keeping me from falling. Temptations came from left and right. The so-called evangelists will travel from Accra to visit me, but when they talked, I could see through their ulterior motives, but the Lord always kept me from the evil ones.

**VOM: What advice will you give to women or people who are in missions or about to go into missions?**

**EL:** My advice is that they should not be greedy. Their mind should not be on what they can get. The words of a song encourage me a lot, it says “Make the Lord your delight and your want will be his care.”

**VOM: Your commitment and love for God is unparalleled. What went wrong with the Christian faith in today’s generation as far as commitment and love for God is concerned? Where did we miss it?**

**EL:** When the tree is crooked and you put fire on it, the ashes will also be crooked, but when the tree is straight and one puts fire on it, the ashes too will be straight. What happened with the church is “small Christianity, small worldliness.” Some of our leaders have become crooked, and it has spread like ashes to the body.

**VOM: So what is the way forward?**

**EL:** We should allow the Bible, the word of God to guide us. We must watch and pray. We must be alert with the knowledge of God’s word. What went wrong is that we have walked away from the Holy Spirit, we have closed our ears to Him, and we are no longer depending on the Holy Spirit. The way the disciples were with Jesus is how we should be with the Holy Spirit. Today the church is not different from the market, no difference between us and the worldly people.

**Interview by Rhoda Oluwakemi Appiah.** Rhoda is married with three children. She is a pioneering missionary of Fullstature Missions International together with her husband, Rev. Daniel Hyde Appiah. She is a lover of God and His word, with an overwhelming desire to see God’s kingdom advance in every sphere of society. [kemiappiah@gmail.com](mailto:kemiappiah@gmail.com)

## A CHAT WITH DR. MARGARET MENSAH - A MEDICAL MISSIONARY

*Voice of Missions (VOM): Can you tell us about yourself, your parents?*

**Dr. Margaret Mensah (MM):** My name is Margaret Mensah, a medical doctor by profession. I graduated from the Ghana Medical School as a Community Health Specialist. I was born more than 7 decades ago into a polygamous but very religious Roman Catholic family. I had all my education through a Convent where I served as a Nun for 37 years. I became born again in 1999 while serving at St. Luke's Hospital in Ejura. As a young convert, in 2002, I joined my brother Apostle J.F.K. Mensah together with his family to Mauritania for 4 years under Pioneers Africa and I spent another 5 years serving with Pioneers Ghana as a Medical Missionary at Banda Ahenkro, in the Southern part of Sunyani. Presently I am with Theovision, also as a Medical Missionary.

*VOM: What in your childhood prepared you for your missionary service?*

**MM:** I want to believe my training at the Convent prepared me for what I am now doing. I had my 13<sup>th</sup> birthday at the convent where we were trained to live a selfless life that is dedicated to the good of mankind. We were expected to be rich in good works. My professional training as a Community Health Officer also prepared me for the work of mission. I worked as a Community Medical Officer for 9 years at the Manya Krobo District of the Eastern Region. That period was the advent of AIDS /HIV

in Ghana. I was involved in what was termed “Meet them at home.” This was how we ministered to the AIDS patients then. I was trained for selfless dedication to mankind and the need to show compassion.

*VOM: Were family/friends supportive?*

**MM:** I have and continue to enjoy lots of support and encouragement from my brother J.F.K Mensah and his family.

*VOM: Who or what was most helpful in preparation times (Books/People etc)*

**MM:** As a single missionary, a book by another single missionary, Dr. Helen Roseveare was very helpful. It still serves as a source of great inspiration to me.

*VOM: If the clock could be turned back, what changes (if any) would you want to make in your preparation for ministry or/missions?*



**MM:** I will seek training, i.e. preparatory training before venturing into mission work.

**VOM:** *What do you perceive are your strengths in ministry/missions?*

**MM:** I consider my love for rural areas and my desire to lift people as my strengths.

**VOM:** *What do you see as your weak points in ministry/missions?*

**MM:** I am too rash in making decisions; often I don't think or pray through before making decisions. I am like Peter "Lord, I will die with you".

**VOM:** *What parts of missionary work do you enjoy the most?*

**MM:** I enjoy medical missions the most. I derive a lot of joy when I see the sick and the vulnerable being healed. This is because I know it is not our medicine that heals them. After all, more often than not, all that we have to offer them was just our First Aid medications.

**VOM:** *What parts of missions would you like a change or do differently?*

**MM:** It will still be the issue of training. The need for training, spiritual mapping, language acquisition, raising of prayer and financial support before venturing into the field and the need to have mentors for would-be missionaries.

**VOM:** *What is your greatest disappointment or disillusionment?*

**MM:** None. The Lord has been faithful, His grace has always been sufficient.



I enjoy medical missions the most. I derive a lot of joy when I see the sick and the vulnerable being healed

**VOM:** *What are your most treasured memories?*

**MM:** When people turn away from idols to Christ. I remember a Muslim man in Mauritania who gave his life to Christ and was going about with Jesus Film video Cassettes even to the point of playing it at the Mosque before he was driven out; this is one of my treasured memories.

**VOM:** *In what specific ways has life been richer because of your commitment to missions?*

**MM:** When I was working as a Nun, I experienced a lot of burn out but working as a missionary is different; because of the privilege of laying every burden at the feet of the cross. I have also enjoyed renewed strength.

**VOM:** *What is/are your favorite scripture(s) that relate to your experience?*

**MM:** Psalm 121. The Lord used this Psalm to lift me at one of my very low moments after which I received a definite miracle. Also Psalm 103.

**VOM:** *Who is your missionary model?*

**MM:** Dr. Helen Roseveare

**VOM:** *What advice will you give to women or people who are in missions or about to go into missions?*

**MM:** I will advise an aspiring missionary not to be rash in making decisions. They should seek training. Know themselves very well, as in their strengths and weaknesses, as well as their breaking point. They

I remember a Muslim man in Mauritania who gave his life to Christ and was going about with Jesus Film video Cassettes even to the point of playing it at the Mosque before he was driven out; this is one of my treasured memories.

know the specific area they will function in on the

should seek to know the culture of the people group they want to reach. They should be mature Christians, who observe regular Quiet time and know the Bible. They should work on character development before venturing into the missionary field. They should seek to

mission field and then pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance or direction.

**VOM:** *What is your view on this COVID-19 Pandemic?*

**MM:** I see it as a wake-up call to mankind to acknowledge the sovereignty of God. It is one of the signs of the last days. Considering the alarming increase in wickedness and lawlessness in our society, even in the church; it is a wake-up call to discipleship and the need to go back to the Bible.

Interview conducted by **Rhoda Oluwkemi Appiah**. Rhoda is married with three children. She is a pioneering missionary of Fullstature Missions International together with her husband, Rev. Daniel Hyde Appiah. She is a lover of God and His word, with an overwhelming desire to see God's kingdom advance in every sphere of society. Contact: kemiappiah@gmail.com

*This article was first published in the Voice of Missions (a quarterly missions publication of GEMA) in July 2020*

# THEY SAID YES!

## The Story of Pioneer Missionaries of FAME Ghana

Enoch Nyador

### Introduction

The seed of cross-cultural evangelism was planted in my heart during my days of ministerial training at the Ghana Christian College (1978-1982) and Emmanuel School of Religion (Johnson City, Tennessee, USA, 1983-1986). God used Dorothy Eunson, Dr. Carl Bridges, David Kalb and other former missionary teachers in Ghana to plant the initial seeds. Later in the U.S.A, my late teachers, Professors Charles Taber, Fred Norris, Delno Brown and others planted more seed in my life. The seed was watered by the late Dr. Robert Reeves, former Executive Director of Fellowship of Associates of Medical Evangelism (FAME), who met my wife, Dr. Lydia Glover-Nyador and I in Johnson City, Tennessee, U.S.A in 1985 and agreed to partner with us in cross-cultural medical missions upon our return to Ghana.

With a burning passion in my heart for cross-cultural evangelism, I started FAME Ghana in 1987, a year after, I started teaching at the Ghana Christian College. One of my first tasks was to recruit three Ghanaian Church Planters who would be willing to go to work among the Achode, Adele and Ntrubo People Groups. There was ongoing Bible Translation and Literacy work among them being led by missionaries of the Ghana Institute of Linguistics Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT). After much prayer and critical search, I contacted Pastor Hayford Ahiabu, one of my best students in the Cross-Cultural Evangelism Class who said YES to the Ntrubo People Group. Two of my former classmates at the Bible College also said Yes; Pastor Christopher Adjei to the Achode and the late Pastor Francis Budu Nyarko to the Adele. Later, I recruited more of my students to go the Nchumburung, Konkomba, Mamprusi and Chakali. Isaiah 6:8 says, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” (NIV). I am glad over 20 others have said Yes to serving as missionaries to Unreached People Groups in our own country, Ghana. Part of their story is told below.

### A Reason To Say Yes

An Ewe proverb translates to say, “One does not hurry to embark on a journey of no return.” Likewise, Jesus admonishes us to count the cost of following him (Luke 14:28-33). The journey of a cross-cultural missionary begins with sacrifice. The Ultimate Missionary, Jesus, said “...you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything” (Luke 14:33, ASB ). This was the dilemma one of our church planters, Pastor Dzobo faced when responding to the call for missions. As, John Jusu once wrote, “there is a ...fine line between faith and presumption.” He and his wife were professional Fashion Designers in Kwashieman-Accra with over 20 apprentices learning from them. They were successful in their trade: “The decision to say yes was never easy. How to forsake 17 years of experience in fashion designing business was a difficult task. I had no one sponsoring my education in the Bible school, it was only by Faith (SIC).” However, Pastor Dzobo responded to the call with only one expectation, “to see souls saved into the kingdom of Christ.” Dzobo has been a missionary to the Nchumurus for over 25 years now. Missionaries to the northern parts of Ghana can testify that it is not an easy feat. The people one would wish to lean on for encouragement, such as friends and family, would rather desert you in those moments of decision making.

Relatedly is another church planter, Francis Addae who chose missions over comfort. After his training at Ghana Christian College and Seminary, he had the option to go back to Abidjan where he was a pastor of a local church (he and his wife had lived in Abidjan for 16 years), with all the necessary benefits of a resident pastor, yet he chose to say “yes” to missions and has since planted 15 churches among Komkombas and Gonjas. His motivation is “to serve my mother Ghana by spreading the Good News of the Gospel of God in communities and isolated villages where churches are not being found.”

Another missionary worth noting is Hayford Ahiabu who worked among the Ntrubos in the then Volta

region (now Oti region). He had already planted five churches in the south but chose to respond to the call to reach out to other lost souls. His missionary work began in 1988 and he planted 10 churches until his call to help in the FAME office in Tema. Others such as Christopher and Haruna also had the expectation to win souls, by moving from their comfort zones into the mission field for the Lord.

Unlike Dzobo, Francis and the others, there arose a youthful generation who had sheer resilience, energy and spiritual life that were willing to go into the mission field to be part of the soul harvesters. With many opportunities available after their College studies, they chose to say “yes”, so they could be part of the Harvest Team. Didn’t Jesus say, “the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few”? According to Joshua, one of the youngest missionaries we have now, “I yielded to yes, because after couple of weeks’ prayers and fasting, I was fully convinced and convicted in my heart that this is the will of God for me now to go and reach the unreached with the Gospel of Christ.” Joshua after his first degree had a full scholarship to undertake Graduate studies in Political Science, but with faith and conviction, he serves as a missionary among the Chakali in the Upper West region of Ghana.

Another servant leader who said YES is Tevi Lawson who forsook Political Journalism for missions in the northern region of Ghana. After his Pastoral training, he also decided to join the missionary team, despite the available option to continue his political journalism either in Ghana or Togo. His youthfulness and experience would be more needed for God’s work of plundering hell than engaging in partisan politics. He is currently serving at Yezesi, among the Mamprusi with his wife. They are not only winning souls, they also are training young girls in vocational skills to curb the unemployment and teenage pregnancy rates in the community.

It appears from the above that all the missionaries said yes despite the easy options they had available. One underlining factor that is traced through their commitment is the desire to serve the Lord and win Souls. There were no second reasons for saying yes. In fact, many of them had never lived in the North prior to saying yes and therefore, had no idea what was really awaiting them. It was a risk-taking decision for many of them.

This does not also mean they were the only ones who were contacted to go. Some others also had the

opportunity to serve but chose to decline for various reasons just as Jesus mentioned in Luke 9:59-62. Affirmative response to the call for missions, however, comes with its own challenges, even on the mission field.

### Overcoming cross-cultural challenges

Our early church planters were faced with language barrier. Language carries lots of values and the worldview of people. It is one of the important tools in effective communication. We use language in almost every sphere of our human lives: social, religious, political, educational, arts, music and dance. According to Kwame Bediako, ‘In matters of religion, there is no language that speaks to the heart and mind and to our innermost feelings as does our mother tongue.’ Therefore, there was the need for our church planters to learn the local language of the people. Though they resorted to the use of the lingua-franca (of the community) at the time (mostly Twi), with local translators, they had to learn the mother tongue of the people for effective missionary work. Subsequent church planters are first sent into the community to learn the language of the people before any church planting took place. We could also note that to learn the language, the time frame varied from person to person, but it was generally within the first two years.

Another the cross-cultural hurdle, they had to deal with isolation from the extended family. As Jusu rightly wrote, “...Missionaries no longer have the church and extended family around them that they enjoyed...The support of others help us cope with difficult situations...But missionaries frequently have no one to help them deal with difficulty.” This was the exact situation Pastor Sam Dzobo found himself in; “My friends, family and siblings disregarded the idea of cross-cultural evangelism in the northern part of Ghana”. Thus, even in financial difficulties and emotional distress, he got limited support from family and friends.

Pastor Francis Addae resorted to quickly adapting to the culture of the people and integrating himself as family. Joshua uniquely buried all cultural differences and was ready for the new experience: “My submersion into the culture, for me, was nothing more than being a native. I was more like one of them and was highly cherished and admired by all. This, most times comes with the spirit of humility, patience and self-control. But one thing that is key is me knowing my identity, who I am and

why I am in their midst.”

Most of our church planters relied heavily on nearby sister churches and pastors for directional and emotional support. In recent times however, we have provided pastoral care and counseling for all our church planters through the Member Care Coordinators. There are other challenges that I would have loved to enumerate, however, an Ewe proverb translates to say “The young crocodile does not grieve on its way into water (because water is its element).” Meaning, “One does not worry about the consequences of an action if one is already aware of them.”

That notwithstanding, it is important for modern missionaries, especially Africans, to prepare adequately in their planning, prayer and stay on the mission field. With availability of internet and other information technology, cultural studies about the target groups and their language should be easier. We must also make use of other available information about the people groups we wish to reach out to.

### **A Worthwhile Labor**

Jesus said “...I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit...” (John 15:16), and indeed, these gallant missionaries, despite all the challenges, have glorious fruits to show for the sacrifice on the mission field. Not only have they won and discipled many souls into the Kingdom of God, they have also extended their missionary works to other neighboring communities, established churches and have been able to raise leaders for these congregations. As mentioned earlier, some run vocational training centers, clinics and large farms to reduce the unemployment and vices in the communities. These missionaries are community developers and visionaries at what they do. Their

presence led to provision of boreholes and other social amenities in deprived communities. They are agents of transformation. The journey has not been easy and smooth, but all that matters is responding to the call of Jesus, “follow me” and “Go into all the nations”.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I wish to thank God and all his people in Ghana, the U.S.A, Europe and other places who have helped our missionaries to say Yes. My plea is for more disciples of Christ to say Yes because there are more people groups in Ghana and the rest of Africa and the world waiting for cross-cultural evangelists to bring them the Gospel in their own heart language and culture. We also need a second group of committed disciples who would be ready to say Yes to support those who go in finances and other needed resources and above all in prayer. May we, the followers of Christ unite, irrespective of our denominations and other affiliations to focus on the task our Lord has given us and to collaborate to fulfill it.

**Enoch Nyador** is the Executive Director of the Ghana Christian Mission/FAME Ghana. He is also the Chairman of the Agave Christian Union and served for six years as the President of GEMA. He has a bachelor’s degree in Christian Ministries from Ghana Christian College and a master’s degree in Divinity (with honors) from Emmanuel School of Religion (now part of Milligan College) USA. Enoch is married to Lydia, a family doctor and Ophthalmologist and they are blessed with three grown children and two grandkids.

## ALHASSAN & CECILIA AKWAKA

### Pioneer Urban Missionaries

**W**e stand in awe of the Grace and Goodness of God as we celebrate the story of an unlikely pair who became world changers in their own right.

Unlikely because, they share a similar background and story of God, using weak things to defeat the strong and creating something out of nothing.

*“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? the weak things to confound the wise” (1 Corinthians 1:19-20).*

So let us delve a bit into their early lives. They were born ten years apart in the then Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Cecilia Ayaaba was born on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1955 at Denugu in the Bawku area of Garu district.

Her parents Mr Ayaaba and Madam Mary Ayaaba were idol worshippers and she was expected to follow in those footsteps, however, God had a plan for Cecilia's life. A gospel campaign came to her village and she gave her life to Christ whereas the parents remained idol worshippers until much later. The pastor wanting to take her away from the idol influence negotiated with her parents to allow her to stay at the mission house. There she grew and developed in her walk with God. She stayed serving in the church faithfully until one day the love of her life surfaced.

Reverend Alhassan Akwaka was born on August 21<sup>st</sup> 1945 in the Bawku suburb of Nayoko in the then Northern Territories of the Gold to Mr Akwaka Akonga a farmer and merchant and heir to the Nayoko skin. His mother, Madam Aseda Damata was a farmer and petty trader.

His father a prince of the Nayoko skin was adept at problem solving and was the Chief's preferred emissary on conflict resolution assignments. He

was also a wealthy merchant trading between the surrounding towns and villages. Mr Akonga and Madam Aseda had a good life except that they had lost their children under mysterious circumstances.

Being adherents of African traditional religion and Islam, they sort help from the fetish and after a while the little Alhassan was born.

The unexpected demise of her grandfather, the Chief and family patriarch brought intense competition and jealousy within the larger family most of whom had multiple wives and were determined that Akwaka Akonga who was hand-picked by the Chief would not inherit the chieftaincy. They ganged up against Akwaka Akonga and he died mysteriously.

Alhassan was only 12 years old when his father died and that brought untold hardship to the family. With no support to pursue formal education, he was compelled to seek his fortunes in the south, Kumasi to be precise.

In Kumasi he found work as house help with expats working for CFAO. He made himself useful to the extent that his boss was willing to take him along when he was reassigned to Tamale.

Tamale would mark a turning point in young Alhassan's life. One evening on a night out with friends, they came across a preacher preaching in the open air near the cinema in town. While his friends moved on, Alhassan heard a voice telling him to listen to the man, an American missionary who was preaching for Tamale Central Assemblies of God.

He obeyed and responded to the altar call to give his life to Christ.

Alhassan submerged himself totally into his new found faith and Lord, driven in no small measure by the grim pictures some members of his family painted about the consequences of abandoning the family gods. At this point his life was marked by intense prayers and fasting.

His boss's assignment in Tamale came to an end but he recommended him to Mr Robert Anderson, Country manager of Pan American Airlines (PANAM) who was based in Accra.

Mr Anderson became a great mentor and father figure to Alhassan and took a keen interest in his welfare. He engaged the services of a British lady who taught at the Ghana International School to offer lessons in reading, writing and arithmetic.

Alhassan applied himself to this endeavor with characteristic commitment. In no time at all, he could read and write with fair fluency.

In Accra he came under the pastorship of Rev Joseph Gyan Fosu of Evangel Assemblies of God. He was a very active and useful member of the church but he wasn't fulfilled. He felt something was amiss. As he went before God in prayer, he began developing a heavy burden for souls but the strange thing was that he was having this burden for a specific group of souls. As he prayed he felt more and more burdened for souls from the Northern part of Ghana. He was led to Romans 9:1-3 and he knew there was a specific task he needed to accomplish.

*"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Romans 9:1-3).*

Evangel Assemblies of God Church at the time conducted services in English with interpretation in Ga and Twi. This meant that a substantial part of the congregation who were Nigeriens, Malians, Burkinabes, as well as emigrants from northern Ghana like himself were largely ignored. Increasingly he felt indebted to these people groups to help them better understand and worship God. He was sad at what could be described as an Acts 6 situation where a constituency of the church were neglected.

*And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Acts 6:1.*

Unlike in the Acts scenario, God had prepared his servant to stop any murmuring from arising. Convinced that he had heard from God, he courageously approached his pastor, Rev. Joseph Gyan Fosu and shared his vision with him. Rev.

Gyan Fosu agreed to his request and allowed for a separate meeting for the northern people's group including the other West African nationals under the auspices of Evangel church.

This is how Rev. Alhassan Akwaka was launched into ministry which was ministry at the deep end - Urban, Cross-cultural and Inter-cultural Missions, boom! With no experience, no formal education or theological training. God had birthed such important ministry in his life.

With the green light from his pastor all was set to go until he encountered an unexpected resistance. This was similar to Moses' experience with the Israelites in Egypt;

*And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Exodus 2:14a.*

The Nigeriens, Malians, and Burkinabes insisted that he either spoke French or Moore otherwise they would have nothing to do with him, phew!

Here he displayed real courage and carried on with the northern Ghana people group while taking language lessons in Moore from a Mossi prince. That probably was a Midian moment for him as his 'Miriam' would surface in the midst of that.

Other pastors in the north heard of his work, and invited him to visit the north to speak and lo and behold the host pastor was the mentor of the young Cecilia who would become his sweetheart. Cecilia Ayaaba had been preserved in the house of the pastor for this special moment.

They both had huge passion for missions when they met and therefore it was a natural match. She would support him with her porridge (kooko) sales and also help with the Kokomba and Bimoba language groups.

They started seeking out the whereabouts of their Northern brothers and sisters as well as the other nationals and preached to them.

The determined Rev Akwaka quickly developed proficiency in the Moore language and could read the Moore bible. With that his ministry took on an international dimension.

As time went on he sensed a growing desire to go to bible school so he could be of better help to his people. But he had to make a difficult choice to leave his job and go to bible school with no guarantee of

income and a young family. By this time, he had a new boss as Mr Anderson being an ex-military man had been called to Vietnam to help with the deployment of US forces. His new boss Mr Bull was not exactly friendly as Mr Anderson.

One Christmas day, Mr Bull demanded he stayed home and not go church as he was expecting guests. Being the lay preacher that he was he could not imagine missing church, so he declined the request. Mr Bull literally told him to choose between his church and job and he chose church and that was how God made a way for him to go to bible school.

The song on his heart would have been more like Jim Reeves'

*I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold I'd rather  
be his than have riches untold*

*I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land*

*Yes I'd rather be led by his nail pierced hands*

*Than to be the king of a best domain and beheld  
in sins dread sway*

*I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world  
affords today*

*I'd rather have Jesus than worldly applause I'd  
rather be faithful to his dear cause*

*I'd rather have Jesus than world wide things I'd  
rather be true to his holy name*

*Than to be the king.*

Again there was a hurdle to overcome. The Missionary instructors at the Bible school were sceptical he could cope with the rigours of Bible school work due to his limited formal education.

At this juncture once again God showed up on his behalf and sent an Aaron to him in the person of Dr J.J. Achiriga of blessed memory to attest to his ability to cope with the demands of bible school education.

After graduating from Northern Ghana Bible Institute in Kumbungu, he returned to Accra and his ministry took on a new dimension.

He approached the leadership of Evangel Church this time to allow the fellowship to become autonomus so they could focus on reaching Northern emigrants and it was granted.

United Assemblies of God Church was birthed with a focus on reaching out to people of Northern descent in the Accra metropolis. This approach to ministry was a first as it was not common therefore

he faced a lot of opposition even from within the denominational setting to abandon the idea as it wasn't viable.

Determined to obey God, Rev. Akwaka sought for land at Ofankor and started subsistence farming to support himself and ministry for years and years as United Church struggled financially.

## Ministry Impact

His calm and humble persona has meant that he never sought the spot light and even now still wants to be in the background. He was once described by a close pal in this way; "some great men are best likened to the hidden iron rods in a buildings foundation. Rev Akwaka is a hidden steel pillar but part of a great foundation".

It is from such quiet places that God has worked wonders with his life and ministry. From a classroom in Adabraka for 30 years to a beautiful multi – purpose facility edifice at Achimota mile 7. To God be the Glory.

Rev Akwaka has been involved directly and indirectly with the establishment of many Assemblies of God churches in the Accra area. As his manner is, he always wants things to be on the quiet.

Rev Akwaka always pastored the United Assemblies of God Church, but reached out beyond its four walls.

He held outreaches and crusades in Nima, Maamobi, Zongo, Kokomba market, Dome, Nii Boi Town, Agbogbloshie, to mention a few in the early days. His focus was always to invest in and build kingdom people. Many ministers and ministries have been born as a result of his ministry.

From his meagre resources and with no foreign assistance, he developed innovative and creative ways to make United Church a bastion of missions to the north.

His strategic location in Accra made him a succour to many ministers in northern Ghana whom he relentlessly hosted and assisted. He made it possible for many ministers from northern Ghana to experience life and ministry in Accra, among them the Former General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Ghana Rev Dr S.B. Asore of blessed memory.

His wisdom and counsel is much sought after and is a source of guidance and mentorship to many young ministers who take inspiration from him.

Rev Alhassan Akwaka also collaborated with Mr Ross Campbell for the Northern Outreach Project by making available personnel from United Church to facilitate work among northern people groups in Accra. The Project had an immense impact on missions in Ghana and Rev Akwaka and other leaders from Northern Ghana based in the South made that happen to God's Glory. At Christmas time, many churches organized "Operation Go Back Home" outreaches to their traditional homelands up North.

Rev Akwaka was a pioneer of radio ministry in the 1980's preaching on GBC radio<sup>1</sup>. That ministry reached far and wide across Ghana and set a mark for reaching the northern people groups via radio.

Today thanks to the faithfulness of God, United AG can count a whole raft of Christian professionals who are contributing their quota to the development of the Assemblies of God Ghana and the nation.

After 52 years in ministry Reverend Akwaka's ministry touched almost all the people groups of Northern Ghana. In his pursuit of Urban and cross-cultural missions, he has acquired the ability to

communicate the gospel very fluently in the Hausa, Kusaal, Mamprusi, Frafra, Moore and Twi languages.

Mrs Akwaka is fluent, in Konkomba, Nanung, Hausa, Kusaal, Dagbani, Bimoba and Gurune.

Reverend Akwaka has held a lot of leadership positions in Assemblies of God, Ghana including Zonal Chairman, Modality committee member and District pastor for Adabraka from 1995 to 2008.

It was during his term of office as district pastor that Evangel Assemblies of God experienced the crisis that threatened to tear it away from the fold of Assemblies of God. Rev Akwaka worked assiduously with the then executive presbytery of the Assemblies of God to keep Assemblies of God Ghana from being divested of Evangel Church and to return the assembly to normalcy.

Rev Alhassan and Mrs Cecilia Akwaka are blessed with six children and five grandchildren. A number of their children are in fulltime ministry serving the Lord also in cross-cultural missions. Rev Alhassan and Mrs Cecilia Akwaka continue to serve the Lord faithfully to this day and their passion for the gospel and for lost souls continues to burn and their impact and mentoring of the next generation continues unabated.

## ROSS AND AVRILLE CAMPBELL

### Over 50 Years of Faithful Service to Ghana



Independently Ross and Avrielle heard the call to missions. Avrielle was a teacher in Australia and Ross a chartered accountant in New Zealand. Unknown to each other they were called to serve with WEC International in Ghana out of a burden for the unreached peoples in the north. Avrielle arrived in Ghana in January 1969 and was assigned to Damongo to work amongst the Gonja. Ross arrived a few weeks later and assigned to student chaplaincy in Kumasi. In the course of leading university student teams to the Gonja area Ross got to know and appreciate Avrielle and they married in May 1971.

As they grappled with the challenge of reaching more than 40 unreached northern tribes, they realized that the key was to mobilize the churches of Southern Ghana. But at that time the older denominational churches were not preaching a compelling gospel message and lacked a vision for evangelism and missions.

In 1973 while on furlough the Lord spoke to Ross and Avrielle through the story of the dry bones coming to life to form a mighty conquering army (Ezekiel

chapter 37). On their return to Ghana in early 1974 their mission leaders accepted their vision to mobilize the older denominations.

In February 1974 the Ghana Evangelism Committee was constituted and Ross became its founding National Director. The mandate was to mobilize the churches of Ghana to fulfil the Great Commission under the New Life for All slogan, *Total Evangelization through Total Mobilization*.

What happened over the next 20 years can only be described as a sovereign move of God. The 'dry bones' prophecy of Ezekiel 37 became a reality. Later research documented a

net increase of close to 9,000 churches in the first ten years and over 6,000 churches in the next five years.

In 1985 Ross lead GEC to develop a *National Church Survey* to identify unchurched areas and the people groups still to be reached. More than five million people were identified as belonging to unreached tribes and 1,417 towns and villages were identified as having no church.

In 1993 a second National Church Survey was presented to National church leaders. The unity of vision and impact of the survey also caught the attention of visiting global missions leaders who requested that the Campbell's be released by Ghana to head an international network to facilitate Country-wide Initiatives for the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

From late 1994 till March 2001 the Campbell's worked and travelled Africa and the world facilitating National Initiatives for the fulfilment of Great Commission. A total of 44 African nations were visited and 38 Initiatives launched during this time.

In May 1997 the Campbells brought together over 1,100 African leaders from 46 countries at GCOWE 97, in Pretoria, to consider the challenge of National Initiatives. This catalytic event led to the proliferation of national movements and later in 1997 the Evangelism and Missions Commission of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA) adopted African National Initiatives as their basic strategy.

In 2001 the Campbells facilitated a meeting of delegations from 36 African nations in Jerusalem for the African Millennial Consultation. Recognizing that the AD 2000 & Beyond Movement was ending, and that much remained to be done, the delegates resolved to establish a continuing African movement to encourage the development and networking of National Initiatives across the continent. Thus the Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI) was born and the Campbells asked to serve as the Continental Coordinators.

In 2006 Ross handed over the continental coordination role to Rev Dr Reuben Ezemadu of Nigeria but still serves on the Continental Team as International Liaison.

Since transitioning leadership to Dr Ezemadu, the Campbells have given much time to pursuing the

challenge of mobilizing and mentoring leadership for the remaining unchurched areas and unreached peoples of Ghana and Africa.

I think our role has been so often to not only see challenges and needs but also think outside the box and come up with and initiate creative steps to address them” says Ross. “Many of these now have a life of their own e.g. National and Regional Pastors Conferences which evolved into the Challenge Book Conferences which have gone global, GEMA, Sowers open air ministry, National Church Survey – a global first, Country Assessment Process (CAP) developed out of initial work done with CRAF conferences in Francophone West and Central Africa, African National Initiatives – MANI etc. Yes the Lord has been bountiful in His blessings and to Him be all the glory”.

After more than 50 years of missionary engagement in Ghana the Campbells are conscious that that the Great Commission mandate must be fulfilled in each generation; that a new generation of leaders must be identified and equipped to complete the task in their generation.

In October 2019, GEMA honoured Ross & Arville Campbell with the Lifetime of Service Award.

## SETH & VICTORIA NYAMPONG

### GOD'S WILLING SERVANTS TO THE SISSALAS

Seth Ephson and Victoria Nyampong, from Akwapim Tutu and Akwapim Obosomase in the Eastern Region of Ghana respectively, responded to God's Call to the Sissala People Group in the Upper West Region of Ghana in May 1995.

#### THE EARLY DAYS

Born on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1959, Pastor Seth Nyampong was used by God to reach the Sissalas in Northern Ghana. To raise indigenes to multiply disciples among their own.

He married his wife, Victoria in July 1986, and are blessed with 6 children, 2 of whom have passed away.

The entire family has God's passion for missions and discipleship in reaching the unreached for about 22 years.

Pastor Seth's zeal for God's work begun in 1975 after his elementary school but he lacked knowledge of God's ultimate purpose for man - Salvation.

After 11 years, he realized the emptiness in his life and committed himself to the study of God's Word. He surrendered and gave his life to Christ and went to Bible school from 1988 to 1990.

#### THE CALL TO MISSIONS

The Nyampongs had their call when Seth was asked by the Director of the New Life Pastors Training Institute in Accra, Rev. Andre, a German Missionary, to do a Demographic study on the Sissala People Group, 5 years after graduation from the school. After the studies, he got the conviction that the Lord had a purpose of connecting him to Pastor Akase Akpenkpuun of Blessed Memory, a Missionary with the Mission House International, Makurdi, Nigeria who had come to serve in Ghana and was based at Suhum. He trained and guided him into Missions and said to him, "Brother Seth, God has called you as a Missionary, only you have no idea, therefore pray about it."

After the Demographic studies, God in His divine wisdom connected him to Pioneers-Ghana, then in its inception in Accra, Ghana, and was commissioned on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1995 and was sent among the Sissala People Group on the 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1995.

#### MISSIONARY WORK.

As a Pastor and a Teacher of the word of God who had accepted the call to Missions, the approach became initially frustrating.

Yet, the Lord knowing the heart he had for His glory and the people, worked out His plan by bringing an indigenous Christian brother, Moses who encouraged and directed them to go to Lilise, a village 17 kilometers from Tumu, to start the first church there.

The Lord touched other indigenous brothers; Solomon Zaato, Sam Batuame, Saliah Gomina, Paul Tontie, Johson Baah, etc. to be co-workers with them in the task entrusted to them.

The work of Church planting spread very fast with the yearly coming in of the Short-term Summer Teams.

Later, they realized the need for discipling the indigenes, as such more time was given to Discipleship, which sustained the work in the "Eastern Corridor" i.e. Fachoboi, Guosi, Santijan, and Gbenebisi, where literacy was very low, especially among the brethren.

This Discipleship undertaking, in partnership with SILAP (The Bible Translators under GILLBT), yielded good results by seeing some of the uneducated brothers e.g. Dokta (2nd. Generation) of Fachoboi; Francis, Daniel, etc. (3rd. Generation) of Gbenebisi starting to read their Mother Tongue Bible and to teach and lead others into the faith.

Francis in less than 2 years in the faith started to share his faith with his Uncles in the village of Kunkuna in the Builsa District of the Upper East Region and

started a church which the Church of Pentecost took over later.

### CHALLENGES

- Every family's precious earthly inheritance is their children, and raising their children in such an environment was a big challenge.
- The challenge of spending time (at least 2 years) to learn the Sisaali language, so they relied on some of the wonderful brothers the Lord brought on board for interpretation.
- Also, there was the challenge of the lack of co-operation with denominations in the various mission fields as they thought missionaries were fishing for their members.
- Some of the churches established by the team collapsed as a result of a lack of understanding from the communities.
- The sad reality of the persecution Muslim converts to Christianity face was heartbreaking.

### SUCSESSES

At the end of 22 years on the Mission Field, 19 churches were planted, out of that 14 stood the test, 6 out of the 14 were given to other denominations while the other 5 collapsed due to unforeseen circumstances.

The team also started a basic school in Gbenebisi in 2010, which was later on handed over to the district administration. The first candidates wrote the final external exams this year, 2020.

Through it all, the Nyampongs praise and give God the glory for every good work done with their lives. They bless God for the indigenes He raised, disciplined, and equipped to disciple their own.

Indeed, "not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory" Psalm 115:1.

### PRESENTLY:

The Nyampongs are trusting the Lord to guide them in mobilizing the young generation on AVAILING their lives to the Lord and His Agenda to the Nations.

In summary, the Nyampongs thank the Lord for calling them to trail in His Steps in bringing His Eternal message to the nations of the world.

They are also grateful to all loved ones far and near, bearing them on their KNEES daily, encouraging and giving their substance to keep the work going, they say "SHEDA AHA NYEN."

*"OBEDIENCE TO THE GREAT COMMISSION MUST HAVE TOP PRIORITY IN ONE'S LIFE BECAUSE IT IS THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD."*

## EUGENE YAKOHENE

### The Making of a Missionary- Starting Early

By Dianah Akpene Marfo

#### EARLY YEARS

**B**orn and bred in Accra with four (4) brothers and two (2) sisters, Eugene was a shy child but ready to speak his mind when necessary. He was from a typical nominal Christian home. On Sundays, his mum would attend church leaving him, his Dad, and his siblings at home. This got Eugene to think and wonder about it a lot. He developed his hunger and thirst to know the Lord from this point and also from some Christian literature that loitered around the house from interactions with people from the Jehovah's witness group.

At age ten, when Eugene was in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade at Primary School, something incredible happened in class that would change him for the rest of his life. Whenever the teacher went out of class, one of his classmates, whom the children popularly referred to as 'Pastor' would get up to preach the gospel. On this particular day, the teacher went out of the class again and the boy got up to share the gospel. At first, Eugene was engrossed in a book that he was reading but when he heard his classmates whisper to one another when the boy got up to share the gospel, he also lifted his head and decided to follow what was happening. At this juncture, Eugene felt extreme hunger and thirst for the Lord. He responded to the call to salvation. Those who believed came together to start a small class fellowship and Eugene quickly assumed leadership of the group.

#### SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Joining Scripture Union in senior high school and playing various leadership roles, Eugene received a lot of discipleship training from here. This would help him to disciple other younger Christians later. Growing up, his aspiration in life was to become a very rich man in the future.

Eugene had a quiet composure when growing up, preferring to stay in the background most of the

time, except when it had to do with his faith and Christian service, then he would come upfront as possible.

#### UNIVERSITY AND MISSIONS

His passion for God and his keen interest in football were the things that drove him passionately. At the University, it became a struggle to set his priorities aright. Taking the issue to God in prayer, his attention was drawn to the fact that acquiring a University degree would equip him for forty years but his walk with God would serve him the next forty years and also for eternity. This was the beginning of his call to ministry.

Eugene got engrossed in Christian activities and flunked his first semester exams. It affected his grades. He talked to God about it and subsequently, though he was still very active with 'Chrife' things, his grades began to flourish.

Another remarkable experience that pioneered Eugene's missionary life was the short-term outreaches they embarked upon during vacation. The experience birthed in him a passion to reach those with the least opportunity to hear the gospel. Sharing this yearning with a lecturer, he mentioned Pioneers Africa and their work in missions. The bulk of his ministry experience was with the Ghana Fellowship of Evangelical Students (GHAFES), volunteering as a training secretary before and during his National Service in the Northern part of Ghana. This gave him significant insight into the rudiments of ministry in an Islamic dominant environment as well as ministry among students.

With curiosity and eagerness, he visited the Pioneers team, explored what they were doing, and slowly got sucked in....

He spent the first year of his missionary journey in the Pioneers Office in Accra, learning what the missions environment entailed.

## GUINEA CONAKRY

Later, he was sent to Guinea Conakry as a missionary where he met his wife Djenabou.

In Guinea, ministry involvement included church planting among the Balanta people group, student ministry, and church leadership development. The work with students involved short-term outreach work that served to introduce many of them to the work of missions, and groom them in the walk with the Lord. They also organized an annual Bible week on various campuses that provided Bibles and Christian literature at a subsidized cost to the students. It was a significant experience to work with the students. Many lives were affected positively by Christ.

After spending thirteen years in Guinea, Eugene and his family returned to Ghana, to continue serving at the Pioneers-Africa office where he has been serving as director since 2014.

## PASSION

Mr. Eugene Yakohene is very passionate about advocating to mobilize human and material resources for frontline missions. He believes that people must hear the gospel in a way they can understand and make an informed response. Similarly, his passion is to see that the resources God has made available to His church would be made available to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to hear the Gospel.

Uncle Eugene, as he is popularly known, says that growing up, he aspired to be a very rich man. Assessing his state now, he is not sure he is anywhere near that goal or might ever reach it. Yet, he has no regrets. None of his family's needs have gone unmet.

One profound statement that speaks to him is: *“God’s work, the pay is small but the end of service benefit is out of this world”*. This is what he wants to pass on to the younger generation. Stay the course, love the Lord and you will have no regrets.

## BEN AND MARION OWUSU-SEKYERE: Joined together for the Great Commission

By Priscilla Kyei-Baffour



### THE EARLY YEARS

Rev Benjamin Owusu-Sekyere was born to Mr. Kwadwo Owusu-Sekyere from Jamasi in the Ashanti Region and Madam Comfort Bamfo from Mpraeso in the Eastern Region in Ghana. He is the 5th born in a family of 8 siblings between his mother and father. His father however married several wives and had a total of 22 children.

His father was a policeman and he rose through the ranks until he retired as a Superintendent of Police.

They lived in many towns as his father was transferred to head various stations across Ghana. His Father married in almost every town he got transferred to

as a Policeman and as a result, his mother and father broke up finally just before his father was transferred to Elmina in the Central Region from Kumasi.

Ben's mother was a strong Christian and was deeply spiritual and raised her children that way. She bought them 'My book of Bible stories,' a large book with beautiful pictures of Bible Characters and he grew up reading it many times. After his parent's separation, his mother continued living in Kumasi with him and all his siblings. She was a petty trader and used this source of income to raise all her children, ensuring that all of them were educated. After a while, however, his mother decided to send him and his big brother to live with their father in Elmina at the age of 9 when they were in Primary 3 and Form 1 respectively as it was becoming difficult to discipline boys, especially his big brother.

The boys had a very difficult relationship with their step-mother which nearly resulted in the death of Ben from Malaria. He recalled the many times he had malaria continuously with high fever for days on end and in severe hunger which resulted

in malnutrition. It was during one of such bouts of malaria that he went to school on an empty stomach and came home. His step-mother still refused to serve him food and he eventually went into a coma. While in a coma, Ben remembered having an out-of-body experience where he found himself heading out of the house in a strange direction when he met a man dressed in a long robe who told him to go back home, so he turned back and at that point regained consciousness. He was saved by the timely return of his brother from school at about 5 pm that evening who found him unconscious. His brother ran to call their father and they both tried for several minutes to resuscitate him. That was when he sneezed and came back to life again.

At that age, Rev. Ben did not understand the experience but it had a profound effect on his life as he believed it was either an angel or Christ himself who saved him by telling him to turn back home. From then on Rev. Ben developed a voracious appetite for reading. The Bible became his favourite book to read and to meditate on, remembering the foundations he had reading “My book of Bible Stories.” Through reading, he developed a deep relationship with the Lord.

### ACADEMIC AND MINISTRY TRAINING

Rev. Ben recalls the traumatic experience of always leaving his school friends behind from town to town and from one school to another anytime his father was transferred until finally he and his brother joined their mother and other siblings in Kumasi. He attended over 7 different Schools including Opoku Ware School, Kumasi, for his Secondary education, Konongo-Odumase Secondary School for Sixth Form and finally Cape Coast University where he completed his first Degree in 1997 with a B.Sc. in Biological Science with Zoology Major and Diploma in Education.

Rev. Ben rededicated his life to Christ in 1987 in Form 5 at Opoku Ware School, through the Scripture Union and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit that same year. Even though his mother was attending a Spiritual Church in Kumasi which he also attended from time to time when he was at home from School, he never felt any connection there. It was his Uncle, Col Retired Samuel Bamfo (Deceased) who invited him to Living Waters Assemblies of God English Church in Kumasi in 1992 that led him to become very active in church. He served in different capacities in the Missions Prayer Team, Missions and Evangelism Outreach Team, Visitation Team, and as a Sunday School Teacher. He was mentored by the Pastors of the Church including Rev. and Mrs. David Vespa, Rev. and Mrs. Tony Amoakohene, Dr. Steve and Dr. Mrs Joy Lawn who started and led missions prayer in the Church, as well as his friend, Pastor and mentor, Rev. Emmanuel Nuamah until he was called full time into the mission field in 1999.

### Mrs. Marion Owusu Sekyere

Rev. Mrs. Marion Owusu-Sekyere was brought up in a Christian home in Radlett, Hertfordshire, UK,

and attended the Church of England until she was 16. She went to school in Watford. When she was 12 years old, she went to a Crusaders youth camp and gave her life to Christ. During the Camp, she recalls staying up all night praying hoping to see a dramatic change or flash of lightning. Although nothing happened, she knew deep down in her heart that she was changed from within and was saved. That was the beginning of her spiritual journey. Every summer holiday, she would go to different Crusader youth camps one of which involved helping children with special needs. This camp experience led to her training to teach children with special needs. It was only later when she went to a Pentecostal church that she received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and was baptized in water.

When she was at university in Nottingham, she joined a Pentecostal church called The Christian Centre. Here she later served in the Children's and Youth ministry full time, visiting 70 primary schools to take Christian assemblies around the city. Together with her friend, Jean Price, they developed children's learning materials and ran evangelistic kid's groups in people's homes around the city of Nottingham.

Working for The Christian Centre also opened up opportunities to be involved in missions and the chance to travel to other countries on short term missions program. She went to the Czech Republic and later to Guatemala. She traveled to Ghana in 1996 when she was 30 years old and saw the many opportunities to serve God on the mission field, but she needed to be sure God wanted her to be in Ghana. She returned to Ghana for six weeks and served in Northern Ghana in January 1997 and was convinced that God had called her. The Christian Centre sent her back to Ghana as their missionary in November 1997.

Marion saw that most of her friends were getting married and wanted to get married as well but she was willing to wait for God's timing. As soon as she came to Ghana, all the things God had been telling her about marriage and ministry started coming together in ways she had not seen before. She had become friends with Ben from her first trip to Ghana and observed a similar passion and vision for missions and Northern Ghana, through from the missions prayers Ben had been part of since 1993. Interestingly, before he made the move, God had already told her he was going to be her husband. Ben proposed and they got married the following year

on the 5th December 1998, just over two years after they first met in August 1996. They now have two beautiful children who live with them at the King's Village, Ghana and although education has been a challenge, they also feel part of the mission.

### **MINISTRY AND MINISTERIAL TRAINING**

Ben and Marion entered the ministry before proceeding to do their master's degrees together at Mattersey Hall, Assemblies of God Bible School in the UK graduating in 2003 with a degree in Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies. They also enrolled in the Assemblies of God Missionary Training at the International Bible Training Institute, Burges Hill near Brighton which they completed in 2004. They were accepted as Probationary Ministers of the Assemblies of God, Great Britain under the mentorship of Rev. David Shearman, and the ministers and elders of The Christian Centre in Nottingham for two years and attained the full ministerial status of the Assemblies of God, Great Britain, in 2006 as a Commissioned Missionary serving till date.

### **MISSIONS FIELDWORK, EXPERIENCES, AND CHALLENGES**

On entering the mission field, Ben and Marion worked hard to encourage rural churches and while reaching out to plant new churches. There were initial challenges of cultural adjustment and a few personal challenges especially in the early days especially working in a different culture.

When their ministry began, one focus was to raise money for work and every donation went into that. Though Marion had to resign her main monthly paid job with her church before entering the mission field, a few individuals from her church came together with gifts to support her personally before coming to Ghana. This was what they both relied on to support themselves as a couple for a long time together with gifts from the church whenever there was a need. According to them, they never had to speak about their personal needs, though they had challenges with personal support. God was faithful and always provided whenever there was a need for extra resources whether for travels or family needs. This enabled them to give full attention to the ministry without having to take on secular jobs which at the beginning Rev. Ben considered and

would have also held them back in achieving their goals on the mission fields.

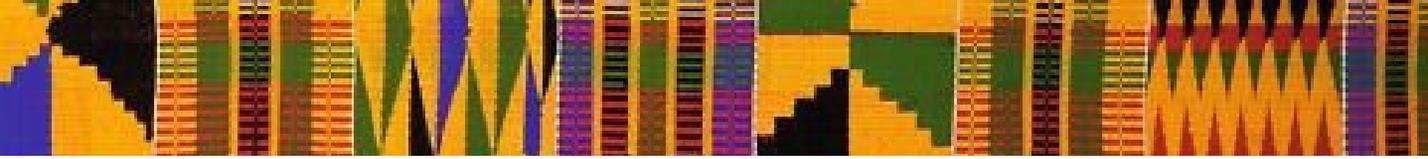
### **CURRENT STATE OF MISSION LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY.**

Ben and Marion have worked hard to build partnerships around the world especially in the UK and US. Individuals have been touched by God to stand with them in the ministry as partners, some helping to raise funds. Some of their friends came together in 2019 to register the King's Village Ghana as a Charity in the UK and some other friends are working to register it in the US to promote support in raising funds. Their ministry and missionary work have cut across churches and denominations which is very rare in Ghana and they believe that needs to happen more and more in Ghana to support local missionaries.

Ben and Marion feel that the Church in Ghana is doing well and growing, but there are many challenges especially in cross-cultural missions with hardly any cross-denominational acceptance of indigenous missionaries or support. They have seen some challenges in the understanding of Missions both in Ghana and globally. They have also experienced the practical life of missionaries and long-term implications looking at how difficult it is to for individuals called into missions to commit to long term missions while fulfilling the responsibilities and the many implications for support and long-term life issues such as marriage, children's education, etc. They believe that the church in Ghana needs to include the training of long-term missionaries in the Bible School as it is done for Pastors and support them on the mission field not only within denominations but also cross-cultural missionary work that cuts across denominational boundaries.

### **LAST WORDS FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION**

Ben and Marion believe that missions in the church stand on three main pillars. First, those who pray, second those who are called to go, and third those who are called to support. Any church that raises the young people on these 3 pillars is bound to experience revival in missions. Everything concerning missions should start with prayer and through the prayer, they will experience the true call of God for their



lives either to go or to support missions in the church. Churches need to promote mission's prayer, to help young people develop a deep understanding of the Mission of Christ on earth, and to know that the Church is much bigger than the local church. We need to go back to the book of Acts to see how the Holy Spirit empowered many for missions across cultures to the "ends of the earth" and even in our days.

Encouraging the youth to pray for unreached people groups especially in the northern regions, and many villages that are without churches, and also beyond the borders of Ghana will help the youth to serve well in the church - not only looking at what is happening within but more importantly seeing God's big picture towards the nations and serving to claim the nations as their inheritance in Christ (Psalm 2:8).

## SAMUEL APELIGEBBA

Lawrence Lerewanu

“Apeligebe was from the very beginning of his ministry a pioneering missionary who became an apostle to many nations and ethnicities. For the greater part of his ministry he worked amongst a dozen or more tribes/ethnicities and languages very different to his native Frafra. In my time in Ghana, I cannot identify another Ghanaian who has worked amongst and planted churches in so many different languages. He was the type of missionary that Northern Ghana had lacked for years. Apeligebe spent more than 30 of his 42 years of ministry in cross cultural missions before returning to his traditional homeland to plant 31 Frafra churches before retirement in 2017”. These are the words of Ross Campbell of New Zealand who served as the founding Director of the Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC).



Rev. Samuel Apeligebe was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1950 in Zuarungu -Daboore near Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region. As first born of his father, he was earmarked to take over the family idols and therefore denied the chance of formal education. At the age of 14, he ‘stole a ride’ to Kumasi on a cargo truck, where he lived on the streets, doing whatever menial job that came his way for a living. He eventually ended up as a houseboy to a Missionary, Greg Francis, WEC Field Leader at the time.

Here, Samuel heard the gospel of salvation from an adopted orphan in the missionary’s house and became convinced and persuaded to switch allegiance from traditional worship to place his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Samuel met other WEC Missionaries, Ross Campbell and Derek Cartwright who turned out to be God’s instruments to shape his destiny. While diligently serving as houseboy, Samuel had a dream, which upon reflection and consultation with mature Christians, pointed to him being a shepherd – a shepherd to God’s sheep. Through the instrumentality of Ross Campbell and Derek Cartwright who became spiritual fathers and mentors to

him, Samuel learned the rudiments of reading and writing, acquiring enough proficiency to enroll in the WEC Bible School in Kpandai in the Northern Region. Upon completion of his course of study, Samuel’s first assignment was to the community of Zongo-Macheri, near Kete Krachi in the Volta Region. Thus began the cross-cultural missionary journey of Samuel Apeligebe.

At this point in his journey through life, Samuel Apeligebe, was led to meet and marry Miriam, a faithful partner, without whose all-round support in prayer, physical and psychological realm Samuel’s life might have been a different story. Ministering in the virtually ‘cashless’ society of the period, with no assurance of monthly income from the churches planted in the communities, Samuel and Miriam depended on barter trade for the essentials of life. While Samuel would ride a bicycle during the day along the arduous bush paths to far off communities overseeing the churches planted, Miriam would carry loads of yams, cassava and other staple foodstuff to far-off Bator communities along the Volta Lake to engage in barter trade for fish to feed the family.

Samuel's passion was always on getting the Good news of salvation to communities everywhere and was always ready for the next assignment to unreached people. Wherever he went, the first assignment he set for himself was to learn the language, the culture, the traditions and way of life of the people group.

Thus, during the 42 years of his service in the Lord's vineyard, Rev Samuel Apeligeba was able to engage in cross-cultural missions, planting churches and ministering to 9 people groups, having acquired the ability to communicate the gospel very fluently in the Konkomba and Basaare languages; partially fluently in Chumburu and Nawuri languages; partially fluently in Loso and Kabre languages in communities across the Ghana-Togo border; very fluently in Dabgani and Nanung and excellent in his mother tongue, Gurune. He was also very fluent in Twi. In his final station before his retirement, Rev Apeligeba had managed to oversee the growth of the Evangelical Church of Ghana (ECG) from 5 to 29 churches – a testimony to his passion of seeing people come to Christ.

Samuel believed in the power of partnership in the work of missions. This is evident in the Christ honoring fellowships he joined hands with in fulfilling his mandate. The endearing influence of his spiritual fathers and mentors, Ross & Avrille Campbell and Derek Cartwright have always been at the frontlets of his eyes; WEC/ECG's willingness to release him to areas he felt the Lord calling him as his next assignment was very dear to his heart; the right hand of fellowship of International Needs through the instrumentality of Rt. Rev. Walter Pimpong enabled Samuel to have critical needs met in his ministry was endearing to his heart. Rev Samuel Apeligeba's ministry could not have been what it ended up being, but for the irreplaceable presence of his dearest Miriam, made evident in the children God blessed them.

Samuel's biography, "The Making of a Disciple" was launched at the ECG Church at Maamobi, Accra in May 2019. His book was written out of a concern for today's emerging leaders. He identifies many issues that deserve our attention. But there is one thing he doesn't make explicit in his own words which was



Ross Campbell makes this final observation: "I am sad to see Apeligeba leave us when he had so much we could have learnt from him. Remember, he was a non-literate from a traditional back ground.

a key to his effectiveness in ministry. He writes as pastor to those who would be pastors; a disciple to those who would be disciples but he was more than a disciple or a pastor or church leader.

Ross Campbell makes this final observation: "I am sad to see Apeligeba leave us when he had so much we could have learnt from him. Remember, he was a non-literate from a traditional back ground. We tend to see illiteracy and lack of a formal education

as a disqualification from ministry. But from Apeligeba's case I see it can be a blessing in so far as it opens up and sharpens one's powers of observation and ability to quickly learn and effectively communicate in different languages. Even when exposed to formal education later in life these unique abilities remained and reflect in much practical wisdom etc. This was certainly true of Apeligeba.

Samuel Apeligeba went home to be with the Lord on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at the age of 70. Just like the Apostle Paul, Rev Apeligeba can also truly say, "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing*". (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

**Editors note:** After 42 years of fruitful missions work, the Leadership of GEMA has decided to honour the legacy and memory of this true gallant soldier of the Cross with a posthumous "Lifetime of Service Award".



# AFRICA CHRISTIAN MISSION

## THE FOUR PILLARS OF AFRICA CHRISTIAN MISSION (ACM)



### 1. MISSIONARY OUTREACH

**MISSIONS -SOUL WINNING.** The Africa Christian Mission (ACM) is rooted in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost".

This is achieved through cross-cultural missionary work, involving the training of workers for the emerging mission fields of the world using evangelism tools of Christ Centered Education, Medical Missions and Cross-Cultural Evangelism.

Indigenous Church planting, meeting the Spiritual and pertinent needs of the indigenes through the introduction of effective methods of farming and training in vocational skills to enable the people to be self-sustaining is maintained.

**VISION AND MISSION:** The Vision seeks to reach every man's world with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and His mighty life transforming power. Consequently, ACM crosses cultural, national, international and denominational lines in its propagation of the Christian faith and related activities.

### 2. MISSIONARY PREPARATION

**EVANGELISM** -As a cross-cultural mission training and mission sending ministry, ACM places a high premium on quality missionary preparation. Many missionaries have gone forth after preparation at our Ghana Evangelical Missionary Institute (GEMI). It is the premier missionary Training Institute in Ghana, opening its doors for training Missionaries in 1990.

### 3. CHURCH PLANTING

The need to reach unreached people groups cannot be overemphasized. ACM missionaries have already planted churches in the Central, Greater Accra and Volta (Volta-North) Regions. Destiny International Churches have been increasing in number to a current number of Thirty Rural and City Worship Centers.

In the Central Region, Destiny Churches at Winneba,

Sankor and Nsuekyri, fishing Communities at and around Winneba, have ministered to many for years.

The Northern Volta continue to see ACM-Dsstiny International Churches reaching out to People Groups such as the Kokomba Tribe farming communities and beyond.

### 4. INSTITUTIONS FOR TRAINING

The ACM has educational institutions ranging from Day Care, Vocational School, Primary to Junior High School. Our online University-Destiny University ([www.destinyuniversity.org](http://www.destinyuniversity.org)) is focusing on Transformational Leadership. DU has three schools: 1. Leadership and Administration; 2. Computer Science (theory and software Engineering); 3. School of Intercultural Studies (Cross-Cultural Missions, Intercultural Leadership and Entrepreneurship).



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