SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN NEW IMMIGRANT SITUATIONS: GHANAIAN MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS

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INTRODUCTION

The need for leadership in the Church has always been seen as important. In the history of the Church emphases have often been placed on the quality of leaders and how they may be appointed. Several scholars have written about leadership from different angles.\(^1\) It is clear the central place of leadership in Christian communities; especially, in situations that present novel conditions. With challenging issues that keep rolling out as the community grows in numbers and sophistication, the need for leadership becomes even more crucial. This is the case with the migrant African Christian communities that have come up in Europe in the past few decades. So many studies\(^2\) have been done on these communities; however, virtually none of them focuses on the critical issue of leadership. Yet, the circumstances of these Churches, which compel most of their members to draw on spiritual resources to address their peculiar challenges requires that the theological concept of ‘spiritual leadership’ among them is explored for a better understanding of these African Churches in Europe.

Most of the studies of this African religious phenomenon in Europe have focused on the Charismatic or Neo-Pentecostal groups. However, there are also newly emerged mainline Protestant Christian communities that are connected to ‘Mission-established’ Churches in Africa. These Churches, in their original European Missionary exported form, were no Pentecostal in doctrine and liturgy, but in their African variety they have become considerably ‘Pentecostalized’.\(^3\) These include mainline Protestant denominations such as the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and The Methodist Church Ghana. The important issue here is that the


newly established mainline Protestant churches in Europe connected to the said denominational Churches in Ghana have received very little attention. The few works on them are quite recent; the most recent one is Moses Biney’s *From Africa to America: Religion and Adaptation among Ghanaian Immigrants in New York*. It is important, therefore, to give some attention to these churches. We focus on them and the significant role of leadership among them.

Among the large numbers of Ghanaian immigrants to Germany and the Netherlands in search of a better life are many Christians belonging to these mainline Protestant denominations. A good number of these, while in Ghana, were members of mainline Protestant churches like the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and The Methodist Church Ghana (MCG). Many looked for a spiritual home in their host European societies, but unfortunately they were disappointed. Of the few Ghanaian mainline Christians who had made contacts and were worshipping with the European traditional churches, their physical presence did not show any numerical increase until separate services were organized for them.

Within the past decade and a half the traditional mainstream Protestant churches in Germany and the Netherlands have witnessed a significant development of Ghanaian-initiated mainline Protestant churches. The formation of the said Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches (hereafter GMPCs) in Germany and the Netherlands came as a relatively late development as compared to that of Ghanaian-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatic churches (hereafter GPCCs). These GMPCs have been formed separately alongside their corresponding indigenous historical European mainstream Protestant Churches (hereafter EMPCs). Incidentally these are churches whose mother churches in Ghana were founded and originally led by missionaries of the said EMPCs and for that reason are believed to share with them some common elements in terms of doctrine, liturgy and history.

This study examines the motivational factors that influence the formation of such minority immigrant churches and the importance of the religious dimension in the lives of these immigrant Ghanaian Christians and what it means for them in the context of their new environment. Gerrie ter Haar writing on African Christians in Europe over a decade and a half ago argued that with specific reference to the situation in the Netherlands, African Christians generally identified themselves first and foremost as Christians and only secondary as Africans or *African* Christians. She explains that ‘in their own view, their adherence to

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Christianity constitutes the most important element of their social identity. The implication of this statement is that the formation of the so-called African “ethnic congregations” alongside the mainstream European churches does not primarily constitute a perpetuation of ethnic identity. Significantly, Gerrie ter Haar’s argument was based on elaborate research done on the African-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatic churches (PCCs) at a time that the GMPCs had not yet emerged on the African immigrant religious scene. The foregoing argument and conclusion reached by Gerrie ter Haar could pass for the Ghanaian-initiated PCCs which do not necessarily share any common doctrinal, liturgical and historical association with the said EMPCs. However, the situation may be seen differently with the newly emerged GMPCs which have been established separately alongside their corresponding EMPCs irrespective of their afore-mentioned connections.

In view of their unique historic relationship with the EMPCs there is a growing tendency among non-Africans to interpret the religious expression of these Ghanaian mainline Christians in the formation of their ‘minority congregations’ alongside their corresponding EMPCs as primarily a general tendency on their part towards the preservation and perpetuation of the immigrants’ ethnic identity. This study does not share this general assumption.

On the basis of a systematic, ethnographical study conducted as a participant observer for several years, I seek to demonstrate that the central concern of both the initiators and others who become members of these GMPCs is to improve their spiritual and communal lives. These two important goals take precedence over preservation of ethnicity. This study seeks to illustrate that the immigrant situation of the GMPCs constantly challenges them to function more or less like a church in the “mission setting”. In other words, the ministries of these GMPCs are basically aimed at providing a community within which the spirituality of the membership is enhanced and their welfare catered for.

I argue that the importance which the GMPCs attach to the promotion of harmonious community life in their congregations is informed by the unique significance of communal life to Ghanaians and Africans in general. This inherent strong traditional communal factor of Ghanaians enables these churches to provide group solidarity by which they could assist each other in terms of their basic social needs particularly, in times of marriage, birth, birthday.

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6 I have been more than a participant observer. I was resident pastor of the Ghanaian Hamburg Eben-Ezer Methodist congregation between 1995-2000 and then Holland Wesley Methodist congregations since 2000.
celebrations, illness, bereavements and other crises. The Ghanaian churches create a sense of belonging and acceptance which many immigrants, detached from their families and homeland, usually lack in the foreign land, especially in a culture seen as more individualistic than communal.

**Problem Statement**

Migrant Ghanaian Christians in Europe share the same religious worldviews with their folks in their homeland. However, their immigrant situation poses to them a rather unique ministry challenges. The problems and needs of Ghanaian immigrants range widely from spiritual to socio-psychological. In the first place, there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. Moreover, the immigrant situation of these Ghanaian Christians creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. Besides all these there is the sense of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, addictive habits and other moral weaknesses, apparent failures, disappointments and numerous difficulties in one’s life. In Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a mission setting like the GMPCs established outside the homeland, the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it stand the test of time cannot be overemphasized. It is worthy of note that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring which enables it to address the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the church to its own people and the community at large.

In view of the afore-mentioned issues and needs of their membership, the GMPCs are constantly faced with numerous ministry challenges which include the following:

1. **Challenges related to contextualized formal worship**

Ghanaian mainline Christians believe that formal worship which is a vital component of spirituality becomes more meaningful when it is conducted in one’s own religious-cultural setting which includes the use of one’s own mother tongue or a reasonably familiar second language. In view of this it is expected that to ensure ministry relevance of these churches to their members due consideration should be given to both their styles of worship and language limitations in any attempt to organize formal worship for them in their host European societies.
2. Ministry challenges related to traditional African worldviews

The GMPCs are mindful of the fact that their members like all other Ghanaians have needs which arise from their African/Ghanaian traditional worldviews or religious sensibilities as African Christians. Related to this traditional worldview is the heightened belief in the existence of spiritual forces that could interfere in the affairs of humans either for good or evil. For most Ghanaian Christians the belief in the actual presence and instrumentality of spiritual forces enhances their strong belief in the power and active manifestation of the Holy Spirit in their Christian lives or in the daily practice of their Christian faith. In view of this for most Ghanaians irrespective of their Christian denominational background there is always the felt need to seek fellowship and spiritual support in a Christian community where needs related to their African worldviews could be meaningfully addressed.

In the light of the afore-mentioned, it is obvious that in working among Ghanaian Christians in Western European societies, ecclesial practices like worship and prayer, Christian discipleship, pastoral care and counseling should be the kind that takes seriously their traditional African worldviews. This study therefore seeks to demonstrate that these ecclesial practices are likely to make a strong impression on them especially when they are seen to tackle their existential needs like the provision of divine healing and deliverance, economic and material security as well as spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces. In this regard, I share the view of Asamoah-Gyadu that existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being.\(^7\) It is noteworthy that in places where these practices have been effectively employed, the members’ faith has been rekindled, and their lives have been touched and renewed through the transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit. There is no gainsaying the fact that, in their quest for authentic spirituality, it is their immigrant situation coupled with the tendency to hold firmly, sometimes unconsciously to their African traditional worldviews, beliefs and values that mostly motivate these Ghanaian Christians to become members of the so-called “ethnic congregations”.

3. Ministry challenges related to spirituality and communality

In their effort to improve the spiritual and communal lives of their members, these GMPCs constantly face the challenge of how to keep a helpful balance between the two in order to ensure both the relevance of their ministry to their members as well as the future survival of their churches. It is noteworthy that since the formation of the GMPCs, Ghanaian Christians who have been taking their membership in these churches present at least two distinct shades of spiritual perception.

In the first place, there are members who in view of their previous church affiliation or membership in Ghana view their situation here as a mere renewal of membership without seriously considering the spiritual and moral implications of their membership. Some of such members presumably show too much interest in the social aspects of the communal life of the church in terms of the provision of the basic social needs and the social celebrations thereof at the expense of the true essence of spirituality. For this reason in their passionate quest for satisfaction in social celebrations some of these Ghanaian Christians do not appear to be seriously resolved to put a hold on any acts of self-indulgence or moral lapses considered inimical to the maintenance of a truly Christian witness to the community.

On the other hand, there is a new crop of Ghanaian mainline Christians who passionately seek to uphold their traditional evangelical heritage. For this reason, they do not appear to conform to any form of compromised Christianity as regarding issues related to the core beliefs of their evangelical faith and practice. Since they strongly believe in experiential transformative conversion, they aspire to maintain moral uprightness which in their view goes a long way to promote the spiritual life of the church. For these members, especially those among them who have mainline Christianity background, their motivation to come back to their mother church stemmed from their understanding that their deep religious quest for authentic spirituality will be satisfied. In reality, they assign inspirational prayer ministry and edifying preaching and teaching as part of the basic reasons for choosing to join these churches. For this reason, if their expectations are not reasonably met they are made to feel disappointed in the spiritual leadership and in the church at large and eventually leave the church unceremoniously. Moreover, when in their view proper discipline is not enforced to check any form of moral lapses which surface time after time, be it within the church leadership or among the membership, they feel equally disappointed. In the light of the discussions above, this study seeks to demonstrate that as much as there are ministry prospects, there are equally unique ministry challenges for these GMPCs. One of the main
ministry challenges these churches face has to do with how to keep a helpful balance between commitment to both spirituality and communality so as to ensure the ministry relevance of these churches to their members and for that matter their future survival.

Obviously the spiritual challenges on the mission grounds as illustrated above have unique implications for the spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in these immigrant situations. The situations demand the spiritual and moral resolve of the said spiritual leaders to maintain the kind of evangelical and ethical standards which conform to their official church doctrine and regulations if they hope to achieve significant ministry fruitfulness and for that matter ensure the future survival of their churches. While doing this it is also expected of these spiritual leaders to ensure the promotion of a harmonious community within which the communal welfare of the members is catered for so as to ensure the relevance of their ministry to their members.

Research Questions

This study seeks to illustrate that in view of the existential and contextual needs of Ghanaian immigrants as discussed above, it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs should be the type that is committed to do all that it takes to ensure the ministry relevance of these churches to the present and future generations of Ghanaian immigrant Christians.

The central question that guides this research therefore is: What type of spiritual leadership does the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands need to ensure their ministry relevance to the present and future generations of Ghanaian immigrant Christians?

In seeking to respond to this question, the following sub-questions are explored:

i) What are the main characteristics of the newly emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in Germany and the Netherlands?

ii) What are the main problems that these churches and their membership are confronted with in their host European societies?

iii) How could a new type of spiritual leadership provided by the said churches deal with these problems so as to ensure their ministry relevance to the present and future generations of their membership and consequently ensure the future survival of these churches?
Sketching the Models

As an aid to clarify reality, three standard ingredients of effective leadership in the African migrant congregations, which together constitute an appropriate set of indices for both evaluating and predicting the impact of leadership on the GMPCs in the immigrant setting are proposed. These standard ingredients are as follows:

§ **Personal spirituality,**
§ **The ability to effectively guide ecclesial practices; and**
§ **The ability to empower lay-leaders and members of the congregation for mission and church growth.**

*Personal spirituality*

The first ingredient characterized as *personal spirituality* constitutes a vital component of effective spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership in the church setting and within the community of believers in Christ as discussed in this study takes place in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the fact that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and His people. This underscores the central place of *personal spirituality* for spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in this context because it is required of them to lead in consonance with the dictates of the bible or in accordance with biblical principles. This becomes necessary for good reasons. First, spiritual leadership entails God using such leaders to influence others in order to draw them to Himself for their spiritual edification, and empowerment for Christian service. This is the divine calling of the spiritual leader and for that reasons he or she must stay connected to God and maintain an intimate relationship with Jesus and a willingness to exemplify because spiritual leadership is not just pointing out great truths and exhorting others to live by them. The personal spirituality of the spiritual leader therefore involves a life of intimate fellowship with the Lord through prayer and worship. It means humbly seeking divine wisdom, knowledge and guidance for personal life and ministry. It entails a yearning desire to grow more and more unto the likeness of Christ in full submission to His will so that the Christ-character will be formed in the leader – the inner character that comes from daily self-discipline. Second, as spiritual leaders of the community of believers in Christ, irrespective of whatever leadership training they are exposed to, their
congregations expect that their leaders would reflect in character and speech the teachings of the Bible.

This model which reflects the character of the spiritual leadership and defines what it means to be a spiritual leader is the focus of discussions in chapter 5 of this study.

*The ability to effectively guide ecclesial practices*

The second ingredient may be characterized as the ability to effectively guide ecclesial practices. In their search for a spiritual home in their host societies, immigrant Ghanaian Christians looks for at least three basic things namely:

i) The kind of Christianity that would address itself to needs perceived as tied to their traditional African worldviews while demonstrating the graces that would satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. The understanding here is that in view of their inherent religious sensibilities the kind of Christianity that would make the desired impression on them is the kind that takes a serious view of their existential needs in the context of spirituality. The existential needs in the context of Ghanaian Christianity include the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and then physical security which is understood to be economic and social well-being.

ii) A contextualized formal worship setting perceived to be more suited to their needs as African Christians.

iii) A spiritual home where they could enjoy Christian love and care, a sense of belonging and acceptance and of course a place where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. This is in consequence of the fact that their immigrant situation creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want of warmth, care, friendship and affection.

In view of the existential and situational needs of Ghanaian immigrants as mentioned above, it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs should be appreciably dynamic in addressing these needs in the context of spirituality. In this regard, it is incumbent on spiritual leaders to ensure that the relevant ecclesial practices are effectively employed so as to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their
spiritual and communal lives. They should pursue the relevant ecclesial practices like formal worship, Christian discipleship, pastoral care and counselling, loving and caring relationships (koinonia), and holiness ethics from a missionary perspective.

We are of the view that if such an approach to mission is neglected by the GMPCs; the said ecclesial practices will definitely lose their motivational power to influence the spiritual lives of their membership. We presume that the ecclesial practices mentioned above are likely to make a strong impression on the members especially when they are seen to address their basic existential needs as mentioned above in the context of spirituality.

This second model which deals basically with the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations largely constitute the discussions of chapter six of this study.

The ability to empower lay-leaders and general membership for mission and church growth.

The ability to enable lay-leaders and general membership to fulfil the mission of the Church and contribute to church growth is the third model under consideration in this study. In view of their contextual and immigrant situations the primary aims and objectives of the initiators of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches were more or less “chaplaincy” oriented. In other words, the formation of these churches involved the contacting and in-gathering of immigrant Ghanaian Christians especially those who shared the same denominational background back home in Ghana and providing a place for moments of worship, congregational life and pastoral care. This also meant that right from the outset the target group for their missionary thrust was primarily the first generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. The assumption is that beyond the so called “chaplaincy” stage, as they consolidate their gains from the in-gathering and the nurturing of their established members they would be motivated to look beyond their initial target group for missions.

In order to ensure the relevance of the GMPCs to the larger community we presume that the entire membership of the GMPCs would be motivated to demonstrate a meaningful commitment in reaching out to new people in their host European societies besides their initial target group. They should seek to provide the non-churched with a meaningful life changing experience in the Christian faith and bring such new people into the church for Christian nurture. This will ensure significant church growth and mission expansion for the future survival of the GMPCs beyond the present first generation congregants.
In conjunction with this is another significant ministry challenge for the future survival of the GMPCs which we presume will need a serious attention. This has got to do with the place and role accorded by these GMPCs to their youth and young adults in their teens or twenties who constitute their future congregants. These are children of the first generation Ghanaian congregants who were either born and raised in the host European societies or born in Ghana but brought to join their parents at early childhood or at youthful stage. All these need to be actively involved in church to develop their potential for ministry. What is needed here then is competent spiritual leadership which will be committed to encourage, train, equip, support and mentor such potential future leaders among these young adults to become all that God wants them to become in Christian life and ministry. We anticipate that they would be committed to helping their second generation congregants to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry, train and mobilize them for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. We presume that these youth and young adults who constitute the future congregants of the GMPCs have a stake in the mission expansion and church growth that will ensure the future survival of the GMPCs.

This third model which is termed “empowering” leadership bespeaks of the spiritual leadership’s commitment to the important task of helping Christians develop greater degrees of empowerment in their areas of giftedness which according to God’s plan already belongs to them. This model is discussed in the later parts of chapters six and seven.

Significance/Relevance of the Study

First, we consider that while academic research on the migrant African Christian communities in Europe is underway, it has centred mostly on the African-initiated Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. The religious experiences and activities of the recently emerged GMPCs in Western Europe mainland however, have so far remained little studied and their histories have not been documented. As a result, many scholars conceive of African minority churches established in European societies solely in terms of the African-initiated Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. What is needed to balance the picture is an in-depth study of the said traditional Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches and their relevance to their members and community at large.

Second, it is noteworthy that whereas there is relatively ample literature on migrant African Christian Churches in European societies, academic research has focused mostly on the spiritual and community life of these Churches without providing adequate insight into the
leadership factor. Again, what is needed to balance the picture in this instance is an in-depth study of the type of spiritual leadership that ensures ministry relevance in such new immigrant situations.

Essentially, the issues raised here above happen to be the main objectives of this research. In the light of the foregoing it is significant therefore that George Lings and Stuart Murray in 2003 made the following observation on church planting projects:

‘In the 1990s church planting often failed because of inadequate leadership’.8

Their suggestion was that ‘a crucial denominational contribution to church planting is to provide training and ongoing support’ for church planting pioneers.9

The Church of England in a document on an enabling framework for a missionary church, produced in 2004, stated:

‘No one practical factor has greater influence than the quality of leadership.’10

In 2008, Stefan Paas (VU University Amsterdam) referred to this report and to this study in his article on leadership in church planting. He referred also to sixteen studies in the volume, to which he contributed this article, which all made similar conclusions. In his article, Paas relied on social science research on the question: what is leadership? This research concluded that there is hardly a generally accepted definition. However, a general view seems to be that leadership is always functioning in a context with the expectations and the culture of the group led, with the policy of the organization, with contacts in society, etc.11 It is noteworthy that this study on ‘Spiritual Leadership in New Immigrant Situations’ shares the aforementioned views.

Academically and socially, this study promises to contribute to the on-going global discussion on migration by providing leads to a clearer understanding the role religion plays.

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9 Lings & Murray, Church Planting, 19-20.
11 Stefan Paas, ‘Leiderschap bij een kerkplanting’ in: G. Noort, S. Paas, H. de Roest en S. Stoppels (eds.), Als een kerk opnieuw begint: Handboek voor missionaire gemeenschapsvorming, Zoetermeer 2008, 284-288. Because the studies in this book are in Dutch, I only refer to this chapter which has been provisionally translated for me. Paas especially refers to Gayle C. Avery, Understanding Leadership: Paradigms and Cases, London 2004. She distinguishes (pp. 18-66) different and overlapping paradigms of leadership: classical, transactional, visionary, and organic. We will not discuss these typologies here.
in this type of migration. It seeks to throw more light on the role of religious minorities in the process of spiritual renewal of the lives of their membership, which definitely has a bearing on their social lives, for the betterment of the community life of their host European societies.

Furthermore, the ministry prospects of the GMPCs in providing a community within which the spirituality and communal welfare of their members are enhanced underscores the importance of a contextualized holistic approach to missions. Casely B. Essamuah cites Dana L. Roberts as making a similar observation. ‘African mission initiatives in mainline-initiated churches can provide a framework within which issues of popular spirituality, theology and culture, women’s role, the role of mission education in building African societies, and power struggles in the churches can be raised.’\(^\text{12}\) In a similar vein Omenyo writes: ‘Essentially, authentic theology is one that responds to the existential needs of a people within a specific historical and cultural context.’\(^\text{13}\) In the light of the foregoing, this dissertation presented as a mission theology has relevance for theology as well as missiology in the following ways:

1. It opens up new vistas to mission and ministry for both the migrant and indigenous Churches and enhances the context for intercultural theology in the era of globalization.
2. It will inform the mission policy of both the mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana and their partner Churches in Europe who may be already involved or seek future partnership in missions among immigrant Ghanaian/African Christians in Europe or elsewhere. It will inform them particularly as to the type of spiritual leadership that is needed in such new immigrant situations.

**Defining “Spiritual Leadership”**

At this point I will briefly introduce the theological concept of “spiritual leadership” which is the critical issue at stake in this study. Later in chapters 5 and 6, we will have a detailed discussion of the definition of spiritual leadership as well as an overview of relevant issues on spiritual leadership pertaining to leadership in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches which are the focus of this study.


\(^{13}\) Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 303.
Several scholars have written about leadership from different angles of which we will have a brief overview in chapter 5; this study however, focuses on spiritual leadership which is based on biblical principles of godly leadership in the church. While it is true that there is ample research already done on the concept of spiritual leadership, what makes this study unique is that it focuses not just on Christian leadership in the church, but more particularly on the dynamics of spiritual leadership in new immigrant situations, specifically of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in their host European societies.

For our present study, our discussion on leadership basically centers on the perspectives of religion, and in particular, Christianity. The environment for the practice of leadership in this instance is the church setting, and for that matter our discussion is placed in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the theological presupposition that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people. While spiritual leadership involves many of the same principles as general leadership, it has certain distinctive qualities that must be understood and practiced if spiritual leaders are to be successful. The uniqueness of the distinctive features of spiritual leadership and their implications for the spiritual leader underscores the central place of personal spirituality in spiritual leadership.

The approach to our discussion of spiritual leadership is from two angles. The first which reflects the character of the spiritual leadership and defines what it means to be a spiritual leader is the focus of discussions in chapter 5 of this study. The second approach which deals basically with the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations largely constitute the discussions of chapter six of this study.

Other Definitions

Four other concepts merit definitions: Mainline Protestant Churches; The use of the Terms “Immigrant Churches” and “Migrant Churches”; Ministry Relevance and Ministry Fruitfulness.

Mainline Protestant Churches

Various scholars writing on Ghanaian Christianity have used “mainline churches” synonymously with “historic churches” or “mainstream” to refer to the older and generally larger churches instituted as the result of European missionary endeavours in the 19th century.
Platvoet, writing on the mainline churches in the late 1970s observes that ‘these churches still stand strongly in the Western tradition of their parent churches having made no accommodation to African traditional culture.’

Even though the observation made at the time Platvoet wrote is indisputable, the situation is now changing. These mainline Churches, in opening up for spiritual renewal, are gradually making room for significant innovations in their Western traditional legacy, adopting features characteristic of the Pentecostal and African Independent Churches. Churches referred to as “mainline” include the following (with dates of beginnings of missions attached): the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (1828), the Methodist Church Ghana (1835), the Evangelical Presbyterian (1847), the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1898) and the Anglican Church (1904) which are all direct descendants of the Reformation. The others are the Roman Catholic Church (1880) and the Seventh Day Adventist Church-SDA (1898).

In the light of the foregoing, the use of the name or term mainline Protestant Churches in this study refers to the following ‘Mission-established’ Churches in Ghana which are all direct descendants of the Reformation: The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, The Methodist Church Ghana, The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and The Anglican Church.

The Use of the Terms “Immigrant churches” and “Migrant churches”

The question of terminology often arises in a discourse about the terms used to refer to communities formed under the condition of migration. Dorottya Nagy argues that while the names “diaspora churches”, “ethnic churches”, and “new mission churches” cannot be generic terms, the problem with the names “immigrant churches” and “migrant churches” is more hidden. Nagy is of the view that both names “immigrant churches” and “migrant churches” suggest that the subjects of immigration and migration respectively are churches and for that matter suggests a new term: “migrants’ churches”. Nagy argues that the term “migrants’ churches” is neutral in the sense that it coincides with the concept of ‘migration’ and includes

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16 The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church originated from America as a predominantly Black American Methodist Church focused on mission to Afro Americans and other Africans.
all types and sorts of people who are actively engaged in migration processes. The plural form
of the noun ‘migrant’ refers to the nature of community formation, which is never a singular
endeavour and the plural of the ‘church’ points to the diversity which is present in the
community formation of migrants. She further explains that the possessive structure
‘migrants’ churches’ expresses the reality of belonging, and corrects the terms ‘migrant
churches’ and ‘immigrant churches’, which once again, might be understood in the way that
there are the churches, which migrate and/or immigrate and not the people who form the
church.¹⁸ When the essence of belonging is settled with the general concept of ‘migrants’
churches’ then the distinguishable models in which the churches operate can be easily
identified. Nagy outlines at least four of such models which include the following:

• Mixed communities of migrants and non-migrants which become visible when
migrants arriving into a given society decide to join, in most cases due to their
denominational backgrounds and preferences, pre-existent non-migrant churches. In
these cases it could be that the migrants may not be able to speak or understand the
language of the church, the denominational bounding becomes a major identity and
the migration-theology encounter takes place. This was the case of the Ghanaian
Methodist congregations in Germany

• In the international community’s model which is a more typical model for migrants’
churches, a commonly-spoken language like English or French is usually the main
attraction of this model.

• Migrants, who become members of the pre-existent homogeneous ethnic church in the
case of the third model, choose both for their mother tongue and certain spirituality.
The role of shared language, historical heritage and a shared understanding of tradition
are hallmarks of this model.

• The new homogeneous ethnic model is in consequence of mass-migration, in which
case the migrants themselves take the initiative to form a new community which may
begin as a house fellowship before developing into a fully-fledged church.¹⁹

It is noteworthy that the denominational identity as mentioned above became the major factor
that attracted the eventual founding members of the pioneer Methodist and Presbyterian
congregations in Germany and the Netherlands to their corresponding indigenous Protestant
Churches as described in chapter 3 of this study. It was after this stage that the issue of

¹⁸ Dorottya Nagy, Migration and Theology, 69-70.
¹⁹ Dorottya Nagy, Migration and Theology, 70.
language in particular and other factors as was the case of the Ghanaian Methodists in Germany in particular necessitated the formation of the Ghanaian congregations within the administrative set-up of the German United Methodist Church Conference. It is worthy of note that all the Ghanaian Methodist congregations in Germany are given equal status with their German speaking congregations and not considered merely as migrants’ churches or immigrant churches. However, at their congregational level the immigration aspect plays an important role in terms of social composition of the congregation, as well as in language, culture and style of worship.

In spite of Nagy’s sound logical conclusion about the problem with the terms “immigrant churches” and “migrant churches”, because this study focuses mostly on the immigrant situations of these Ghanaian denominational churches in their host European societies, we make use of the term “immigrant churches” for the sake of convenience. In doing so, we can then consider the term “immigrant churches” as defined by Mechteld Jansen and Hijme Stoffeels: ‘Immigrant churches are churches in which the immigration aspect plays an important role- in the social composition of the congregation, as well as in language, culture, and religious rituals, practices, and beliefs.”20

Ministry Relevance

The concept of ministry relevance in the context of the GMPCs largely centres on the immigrant Ghanaian Christians’ perspectives of the church’s ministry of caring that impact on their lives. It relates to the membership’s general impression of their church leadership’s effectiveness in addressing needs perceived as tied to their traditional African worldviews while demonstrating the graces that would satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality.

We postulate that in view of their inherent religious sensibilities the kind of Christianity that would make the desired impression on these Ghanaian Christians in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual and communal lives is the kind that takes a serious view of their basic existential and situational needs in the context of spirituality. These needs in the context of Ghanaian Christianity include the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and physical security understood to be economic and social well-being. In Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a

mission setting like the GMPCs established outside the homeland, the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it capable of meeting the spiritual and communal needs of their members cannot be overemphasized. It is therefore the case that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring which enables it to address the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the ministry of the church to its own people and the community at large.

Fruitful Ministry

The concept of fruitful ministry or ministry fruitfulness could be defined or interpreted in different ways from different perspectives but we limit ourselves to our working definition as pertains to the unique context we are investigating – spiritual leadership in the new immigrant situations of the GMPCs. In this context, fruitful ministry could mean the end result of the church’s ministry of caring and “empowering” leadership that impact on the lives of the membership which in this case may be two-fold: Transformed or changed lives and empowerment for ministry. It is noteworthy that in the first place, our study focuses on spiritual leadership which is based on biblical principles of godly leadership in the church. Secondly, our biblical understanding of spiritual leadership is that the Spirit often uses people to influence others in order to draw them to God for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service. In view of this we also understand that spiritual leaders take responsibility and initiative to inspire and mobilize their followers so that together, they can achieve their God-given goals which are not merely physical but spiritual.

In the light of the foregoing we presume that fruitful ministry takes place when spiritual leaders understand the will of God and make every effort to move their followers from following their own agendas to pursuing God’s purposes which entails adjusting their lives to God’s will. It is when followers are helped to assume responsibility for their walk with God and begin to behave in a desired manner in accordance with the dictates of the Bible while reflecting in character and speech the teachings of the Bible. They then begin to experience a life of intimate fellowship with the Lord through prayer and worship. The Spirit then inspires in them a yearning desire to grow more and more unto the likeness of Christ in full submission to His will so that the Christ-character will be formed in them – the inner character that comes from daily self-discipline.
Secondly, we may assume that fruitful ministry is in consequence of “empowering” leadership – when spiritual leaders consider it as one of their most important task to help Christians develop greater degrees of empowerment for service in their areas of giftedness. In other words, fruitful ministry takes place when the spiritual leadership get committed to multiplying themselves through intensive spiritual training of all categories of the membership by equipping, supporting, motivating, mentoring and enabling them to become all that God wants them to be. When that happens believers who are thus equipped, empowered and encouraged to serve in their areas of giftedness are likely to function more effectively to advance the work of the ministry of the church.

The end result of all this is the positive impact that it makes on the congregation. The congregation is fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment.

The Choice of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in Germany and the Netherlands

In the last two decades of the previous century, one of the significant phenomena in the religious scene of Western Europe mainland was the emergence of African minority churches, a good number of which happened to be Ghanaian-initiated. Of particular significance about this phenomenon was the fact that most of these churches belonged to the Pentecostal, Charismatic and African Independent Church type. However, within the past decade and a half or more, there has been a new development of the rise of Ghanaian-initiated mainline Protestant churches in the religious scene of Western European countries like Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and others. This study focuses on the congregations of two Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches (GMPCs) namely the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and the Methodist Church Ghana (MCG) established in Germany and the Netherlands and the significant role of leadership among them. These GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands belong to their homeland parent Churches namely, the PCG and MCG which are two of the mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana.21

The justification for the choice of these two European countries and these two particular Churches as representative Churches of the GMPCs lies in the following realities on the

21The Christian Council of Ghana currently has 28 member churches and affiliated organizations which include the following among others: The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, The Methodist Church Ghana, The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, The Seventh Day Adventist Church, The Baptist Church, and the Anglican Church etc.
socio-religious scene: First, Germany and the Netherlands happen to be two of the leading Western Europe mainland countries which have absorbed an unprecedented influx of Ghanaian immigrants within the past two decades or more. Second, the PCG and the MCG happen to be two of the pioneer mainline Protestant Churches and the most widely expanded of the GMPCs that have been established in the Western European mainland.22

**Research Methodology**

In studying minority churches like the ones established by immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians and the role religion plays in their lives, a multi-dimensional approach is very advantageous. The study has therefore used three methods of research namely, historical method, ethnographic method and the method of systematic theology.

The historical method is used in the description and analysis of mission and Church history in Ghana. It is also employed in tracing the formation and initial developments of the GMPCs that have emerged in Germany and the Netherlands.

The ethnographic method is employed to set the research in context in the description of religio-cultural issues related to the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. The ethnographic method used in this research proved useful in the following two ways: First, it allowed me as a participant-observer to understand issues from the perspective of these Ghanaian mainline Christians so that I could paint a vivid picture of the religio-cultural ministry approach pursued by their spiritual leaders as informed by their immigrant situation. Second, it permitted the inclusion of their religious experiences and testimonies as informed by their traditional African worldviews and as related to their immigrant situations.

The systematic method is used in the evaluation of the historical chapters which include the religious setting of Ghana which is crucial for a good understanding of the religious experiences of the Ghanaian immigrant Christians in Europe. This method also served as a useful tool in the discussion and evaluation of the leadership qualities of the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs as well as the leadership’s approach to ministry in these immigrant situations.

22 It is noteworthy that most of the other mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana have either not as yet established a branch in Western European mainland or have just a handful congregations established.
Structure of the Study

The dissertation is organized into seven chapters.

Chapter 1 provides crucial background information necessary for a clear understanding of the religious encounter of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians in Germany and the Netherlands. It begins with an overview of the demographic, political, socio-economic and religious developments of Ghana, including a section devoted to the religious setting of Ghana. The final section of the chapter is devoted to a general overview of Ghanaian migration as related to the political and socio-economic developments in Ghana.

Chapter 2 which is treated under two main divisions for emphasis and convenience focuses on the History of mainline Churches in Ghana. In the first division under the sub-heading: Mission history of mainline Churches in Ghana, an attempt is made to trace the history of Christianity in Ghana so as to give the reader an insight into how Christianity emerged on the Ghanaian religious scene and how indigenous Ghanaians responded to it. For the second division referred to as Church history of mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana, we have limited our discussions to two of the mainline Protestant churches in Ghana namely, the PCG and the MCG whose overseas churches in Germany and in the Netherlands are the focus of this study. The study of the historical developments of the mainline churches in the homeland is necessary for an appreciation of the missionary activities of the GMPCs in their host European societies. Since all these GMPCs derive their ethos from their mother-churches in Ghana and therefore bring to Europe specific Christian ideas and practices as they have evolved in the context of their homeland, paying some attention to the homeland churches in this study is very necessary.

Chapter 3 which mostly evolved from the field work as indicated in appendix 2 examines the phenomenon of the Emergence of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches in Germany and the Netherlands. The chapter begins with a brief discussion on the rise of Ghanaian-initiated African congregations in Germany and the Netherlands. An attempt is made to trace the history of the formation of the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations in both countries looking at both the spiritual and structural developments in all the emerged congregations. Further attempt is made to examine relationships and efforts towards processes of cooperation and integration between these Ghanaian immigrant churches and their corresponding traditional Churches in Europe whose missionaries introduced and nurtured Christianity in
Ghana. We then proceed to discuss briefly the different models presented by the emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches. The final part of this chapter is devoted to a brief discussion on the factors which led to the formation of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Germany and the Netherlands. In tracing the history of formation of the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations it is worth mentioning that we have limited ourselves to a few pioneer established congregations as representative of the said GMPCs.

Chapter 4 attempts to identify the **challenges for ministry** that confront the GMPCs; challenges which are seen to evolve mostly from the spiritual sensibilities of the Ghanaian mainline Christians and their **new immigrant situations**. The chapter seeks to illustrate that in view of the existential and contextual needs of these Ghanaian immigrants a new type of spiritual leadership is essentially required in such immigrant situations. It should be the type which is spiritually and functionally vibrant and thus committed to do all that it takes to ensure the ministry relevance of these churches to their members and by so doing ensure the future survival of these churches.

Chapter 5 seeks to demonstrate that in view of the particular nature of ministry among immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians it is anticipated that those who assume leadership in such immigrant situations must be seen to exemplify vitality in personal spirituality. Essentially, we anticipate that the ministry fruitfulness envisioned for the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in such immigrant situations is likely to be in proportion to their personal spiritual vitality. In this chapter therefore, we attempt to explore what it takes to ensure vitality in **personal spirituality** for the **spiritual leadership** provided in such immigrant situations. In other words, we explore the kind of spiritual and moral qualities required of the spiritual leadership in such immigrant situations, which are likely to influence ministry fruitfulness and for that reason ensure the future survival of the GMPCs.

Chapter 6 makes an attempt to demonstrate that in view of the contextual needs of the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs should be functionally vibrant. They should be essentially committed to the promotion of a harmonious community within which spirituality of the membership is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for. In our attempt to explore this idea, we discuss ways in which the following ecclesial practices could be effectively employed by the spiritual leadership so as to make a strong impression on the membership in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual lives: Worship and prayer, Christian discipleship, Pastoral
care and counseling, loving and caring relationships (koinonia), Holiness ethics and Empowering leadership for Mission and Church Growth. It is anticipated that the extent of dynamism demonstrated by the spiritual leadership in this direction will ensure their ministry fruitfulness and for that matter the ministry relevance of the GMPCs to a vibrant community.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion – offers a summary and an appraisal of the key issues and challenges that emerge in the course of the study and their implications for the spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in such new immigrant situations. In other words, we evaluate the significant role played by the spiritual leadership of these churches in the process of spiritual renewal of the lives of their members. We discuss what it takes to ensure both the future survival of these churches and a meaningful ministry relevance of the said spiritual leadership not only to their members but to the larger community as well. We devote the concluding remarks to the evaluation of the academic and social relevance of the study presented as a mission theology and the implications for the mission policy of the mainline Protestant Church bodies in Ghana and their partner Churches in Europe.

Sources of the Study

This study makes good use of both primary and secondary sources as well as general literature.

Primary sources

These include persons who were either directly or indirectly involved with the formation of the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands. Interviews of the said persons were conducted and necessary questionnaires administered to individuals and churches concerned. The researcher used participant observation in studying the general issues related to the religious encounters of these Ghanaian mainline Christians. The advantage here is that as a participant observer for several years, especially in the Methodist churches in Germany and the Netherlands, the researcher has gained personal knowledge and practical experience of the situation on the grounds. This proved helpful in describing and analyzing the ethos, mission

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23 See Appendices for notes on the interview schedule and questionnaire. Written notes of interviews conducted for founding pastors and lay leaders as well as their personal reflections which have been cited in the bibliography are documented and are available with the researcher.
and the organizational structures of these churches. Other primary sources include documented history of some of the churches, church reports, and church newsletters.

Secondary sources

Published works on this new phenomenon of African mainline Protestant Christianity in Europe is quite limited. However, a good number of published sources on African Christians in Europe such as Gerrie ter Haar’s book, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe* (1998) which focuses mostly on Pentecostal/Charismatic and African Independent Church type have been studied. They offer a general insight into the phenomenon. Other secondary sources which includes Omenyo’s published PhD thesis, under the title, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* which throws light on some common aspects of this phenomenon have accordingly been used in this study. Another relevant secondary source which was consulted is Moses Biney’s recent published PhD dissertation *From Africa to America: Religion and Adaptation among Ghanaian Immigrants in New York.*

General literature

General literature concerning Christianity in Ghana, the works of theologians and other publications on the fields of missiology and ecclesiology have been consulted and duly listed in the bibliography.
CHAPTER I

DEMOGRAPHIC, POLITICO-SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR EFFECT ON MIGRATION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to give background information in order to set the study in its context. It begins with an overview of the demographic and politico-socio-economic developments of Ghana. Later in this chapter, we shall make a brief review of Ghanaian emigration as related to the politico-socio-economic developments of Ghana. This is quite significant because most Ghanaian-initiated churches in continental Europe owe their existence to Ghanaian migration to Europe. One major section of this chapter is devoted to the religious setting of Ghana. We shall attempt an overview of the Ghanaian religious communities, beginning with the Traditional Religion(s), followed by Islam, Christianity and the New Religious Movements. Relatively more space will be devoted to the study of African Traditional Religion, because it is crucial for a good understanding of the religious encounter of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians in Europe.

1.2 Demographic Developments

Before March 1957, Ghana was called the Gold Coast. The new name Ghana was adopted on 6th March 1957 when the country attained independence from British colonial rule. In this study, Ghana is used synonymously with Gold Coast to refer to the same country.

Ghana, a country with a total population of 24,658,823 (2010 National census) persons\(^{24}\) and inhabiting an area of 238,537 square kilometres, is located on West Africa’s Gulf of Guinea of the North Atlantic Ocean only a few degrees north of the Equator. It has a coastline of 539 kilometres, and shares a common boundary with the Republic of Togo on the East, Ivory Coast on the West and Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) on the North. The heaviest concentration of people is in the southern regions, where about three fifth of the total population lives, an area less than a quarter of the country’s land area. It is also estimated that

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\(^{24}\) Source: Ghana Statistical Service. Figure released after the 2010 population census conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service. This figure shows an increase of 30.4 per cent from 18,912,079 in 2000.
about 68% of the total population live in rural communities with an average population of less than 5,000 people.\textsuperscript{25} High rate of population growth has been one of the country’s major problems (3.4% in the period 1980-1992 and current average of 2.4), hence various governments over the years have sought to address themselves to this problem by promoting campaigns for family planning and population control.

Ghana also faces the problem of ever increasing influx of large numbers of people, mostly the youth from rural to the urban centres and particularly to the major cities like Accra and Kumasi, in search for jobs. In view of this, various governments have sought to improve the living standards of the rural areas through increasing economic development. They have also pursued economic reforms aimed at improving the living standards of the people in the country in which unemployment and stagnant economy have created major social and political problems for many.

Ghana is a poly-ethnic country with at least seventy-five different languages and dialects each of which is more or less associated with a distinct ethnic group; the largest groups being Akan, Mole Dagbani, Ewe and the Ga-Adangme which in 2000, were estimated at 49.1%, 16.5%, 12.7% and 8.0% respectively of the population.\textsuperscript{26} In view of its multi-lingual setting, the use of English as an official national language and also as the main language for instruction in schools has been one major factor that has unified the country. However, there is a marked distinction between the Southern and Northern populations. For a long period of time, the influence of modern European life and the Christian religion made a far greater impact on the Southern people than the Northern population. This may be attributed to factors, which include the following: in the first place, due to the remoteness of the Northern population from the Coast where the above-mentioned influence has its greatest impact, their traditional mode of life and religion have not undergone much change in relative terms.

Secondly, there were initial hindrances to missionary activities in the Northern Territory. Some of the British colonial administrators particularly Chief Commissioner Armitage had erroneously concluded that the Northern Territory was more or less strongly under Muslim influence, and for that reason, did not readily permit Christian missionary interference. It is said that the British colonial government for some time had the notion to encourage Islam in


\textsuperscript{26} Omenyo, \textit{Pentecost outside Pentecostalism}, 24.
the North as “a religion eminently suited to the native”. This erroneous notion was unfortunately carried over long after independence by some civilian administrators and even some Christian churches. This obviously slowed down intensive missionary activities among the Northern population until recent years.

Recent surveys have proved that a greater majority of Northern peoples were for a long time not Muslims but belonged to a variety of traditional religions. They belong to tribes several of which had for a long time persistently resisted Islam.

1.3 Politico-Socio-Economic Developments

The Coastal and other Southern Territories of the Gold Coast formally came under British crown colony in 1874, after the Danish and the Dutch had withdrawn in 1850 and 1872 respectively. The Asante Territory in the hinterland was also declared part of the British Gold Coast Crown Colony in 1902 after the powerful Asante Kingdom had suffered major defeats by the British in two separate wars in 1874 and 1900. The Northern Territories also became a British protectorate in 1902. Later, after World War II, the British mandated territory of the former German colony of Togoland sharing a common border with Ghana became integrated into the then British Gold Coast to complete the delineated British Gold Coast colony. After World War II, a series of political protests and campaigns were organized in an attempt to obtain independence for the Gold Coast from British colonial rule. This led to the formation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) under the leadership of Dr. J.B. Danquah in 1947. Two years later, Kwame Nkrumah, a leading member of the UGCC broke away and formed a more radical movement named the Convention People’s Party (CPP), with the slogan “self-government now”. The CPP under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah eventually won an election held in 1951. Nkrumah became the first Prime Minister of an indigenous government, which worked closely with the colonial administration until the country attained independence on 6th March, 1957.

Ghana’s economy was considered to be one of the strongest in Africa around the time of independence in 1957. The economy had traditionally been based on agriculture notably

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cocoa production, mining, fishing and timber industry. Ghana, for many years enjoyed a steady and tremendous growth in the cocoa industry as the world’s leading producer of cocoa. The country thus experienced a major economic prosperity and accelerated expansion in infrastructure.\textsuperscript{30}

After leading Ghana to attain independence in 1957 and the nation becoming a republic on 1\textsuperscript{st} July, 1960, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah as the first President of the Republic of Ghana sought to accelerate expansion in all sectors by introducing in January 1964 a Seven-Year Development Plan with the following aim:

‘To Establish in Ghana a strong and progressive society in which no one will have any anxiety about the basic means of life, about work, food and shelter, where poverty and illiteracy no longer exist and disease is brought under control; and where our educational facilities provide all the children of Ghana with the best possible opportunities for the development of their potentialities.’\textsuperscript{31}

The education act which was promulgated by the Nkrumah’s (Convention Peoples’ Party) CPP government under this Development Plan made education compulsory for all children of school –going age. This mass education policy, however was not matched by the development of the labour market and thus gave rise to high unemployment among school-leavers in later years. Since the Nkrumah government borrowed substantial sums of money to finance the numerous projects under the said Development Plan such as building of schools, universities, roads, hospitals and the Akosombo Dam, the country later began to suffer economic difficulties which was also partly attributed to alleged corruption within the CPP government. This led to a military \textit{coup d’etat} on February 24, 1966, which overthrew the CPP government and replaced it with a new regime, namely the National Liberation Council (NLC). The NLC military regime, which inherited external debts to the tune of US $ 1 billion eventually, restored civilian rule through a general election, which brought the Progress Party (PP) led by Dr. K.A. Busia into power in August 1969. The prevailing economic constraints at the time compelled the Busia’s government to adopt austere measures and economic reforms to improve the economy. Before the economic measures adopted by Busia’s


government could possibly yield any fruits his government was toppled in another coup d’etat by the military led by Colonel (later General) I. K. Acheampong in January 13, 1972, who replaced the civilian government with different phases of military government between 1972 and 1979.

The economy deteriorated and worsened through mismanagement and widespread corruption under this military regime with inflation running at over 100 per cent per annum, coupled with a fall in the world price of cocoa and collapse of the mining industry. This eventually led to another military uprising in June 4, 1979 led by Ft.Lt. Jerry John Rawlings aimed at clearing the system of corruption to restore sanity for socio-economic development. Rawling’s military government handed over to civilian government in less than four months but again seized power in December 31, 1981 and established a military government which remained in power until 1992 when the country then had the opportunity to witness another democratic election. The intense persecutions that accompanied both the Rawlings ‘House cleaning Revolution’ in 1979 and the subsequent military regime between 1981 and 1992 intimidated some citizens who were in the opposition both military personnel and civilians to seek political asylum outside the country, notably in Europe. Flight Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings formally retired from the military, formed a political party, the National Democratic Council (NDC), contested both the 1992 and the 1996 general elections and won the elections on two consecutive times and assumed office as civilian President between 1992 and 2000.

At the very beginning of Rawling’s military regime in the early 1980s the economy was considered ‘severely flawed’ with inflation running as high as 142% and per capita income drastically reduced by one-third, compared with 1966. The economic crises at this very period was worsened by a severe drought which hit the country around 1983 coupled with extensive bush-fires that destroyed cocoa plantations and corn fields resulting in widespread hunger and starvation. What compounded the already worsening economic situation was the instant repatriation of about 1.2 million Ghanaian immigrant workers from Nigerian in this crises period as a result of political differences between the two countries. This brought untold hardships to the nation as a whole.

It was at this very period that the Rawlings’ military regime introduced the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) after submitting to the conditionality of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which among other things got the currency (the Cedi) devalued 33-fold and 28,000 civil servants laid-off. This retrenchment policy of the IMF implemented by the government at a time that the country was overwhelmed by the Nigerian
returnees heightened the already high state of unemployment among school leavers and university graduates.

Even though the economy showed some signs of growth according to expert analysis and inflation dropped considerably, this was not felt in the pockets of the ordinary people. The average consumer found prices of goods too high and more than they could afford, and civil servants including university graduates, professional teachers and many other professionals were struggling to finance the basic upkeep of their families. It was these economic considerations which eventually became an important factor in the decision to migrate as inequalities of wealth prevailed in the country. Eventually people of all categories, professionals and non-professionals, qualified people, including university graduates, teachers and many others were stimulated by prospects of employment opportunities, good income and high expectations of better living conditions to migrate to a place like Europe to seek a living there even if it meant a temporary stay.

After serving the statutory two 4-year terms, President Rawlings handed over the Presidential mantle to Mr. J.A. Kuffour of the opposition National Patriotic Party (NPP), in January 2001. President Kuffour of the NPP after serving the statutory two 4-year terms handed over to Prof. J. E. Atta Mills of the National Democratic Council (NDC) in 2008. When the NPP government assumed office, it considered Ghana’s debt burden so overwhelming that President Kuffour necessarily had to apply to the IMF and the World Bank that Ghana be permitted to take advantage of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. President Kuffour’s NPP government with the slogan: “operation zero tolerance” resolved right from the very beginning to stamp out corruption and create a congenial socio political environment for development. Even though the economy seems to have made some modest gains as at now and some sectors like health have seen some improvements, many still complain that it is not felt in their pockets. The market is flooded with goods, yet the prices are not within the means of the average consumer. Education in particular remains expensive, as well as housing. Meanwhile the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. Under these present circumstances it is quite obvious that unless there is a major intervention, in terms of considerable economic recovery, one cannot foresee a complete halt to the craving of the able-bodied young Ghanaians to emigrate to Europe and the United States to seek economic salvation.
1.4 The Religious Scene in Ghana

Ghanaians are intensely religious with 88.18% and 93% claiming to adhere to one sort of religion or the other in the 1970 and 2000 population census, respectively.\(^{32}\) There are three main religions that attract significant numbers of adherents, namely, Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions. There are clear indications that these three religions do not exist in isolation, but influence each other considerably.\(^{33}\) The table below gives the changing patterns of religious affiliation over a period of forty years.

**Table 1** \(^{34}\)

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>42.81%</td>
<td>52.65%</td>
<td>60.11%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional / other religion / no religion</td>
<td>45.14%</td>
<td>33.44%</td>
<td>24.75%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>12.05%</td>
<td>13.91%</td>
<td>15.14%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The foregoing statistical summary indicates a relative decline of both traditional adherents and people who claim to have no religion. Majority of them have become either Christians or Muslim whose relative percentage have accordingly increased over the same period. We shall now attempt an overview of the Ghanaian religious community, beginning with the Traditional Religion(s), followed by Islam, Christianity and the New Religious Movements.

1.4.1 Traditional Religion(s)

Ghana is a poly-ethnic country with varied religious practices, and so one cannot necessarily group them under one traditional religious system and speak of one unified Ghanaian Traditional Religion as it pertains in Christianity or Islam, as this could amount to over-

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\(^{32}\) Source: Ghana’s 1970 and 2000 population census conducted by Ghana Statistical Service.


generalization. However since there is a great comparative homogeneity in Ghanaian society, most of the traditional religious beliefs have constituent elements which are similar and have the same dimensions of spirituality.\(^{35}\) In view of the foregoing, we shall consider the religious belief and worldview of the Akan\(^{36}\) peoples who form the largest ethnic group in modern Ghana for a case study illustrative of Ghana’s traditional religions. Using the Akan traditional religious belief and worldview as a model of the complex traditional religious system of Ghana for this study is even more appropriate considering the fact that the Ghanaian migrant communities in Germany and the Netherlands, which are the focus of this study, are predominantly Akans. Religion with the Akan as it pertains in other tribes in Ghana is seen to be closely interwoven with all their habits, customs and modes of thought.\(^{37}\) There is hardly a formal traditional function, which is not preceded by some form of prayer. In the words of Kwame Bediako:

> ‘The Akan spirit world, on which human existence is believed to depend, consists primarily of God, the Supreme Spirit Being (Onyame), Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Subordinate to God, with delegated authority from God, are the “gods”, (abosom), sometimes referred to as children of God (Nyame mma) and the ancestors or “spirit fathers” (Nsamanfo).’\(^{38}\)

Omenyo has observed that

> ‘evidence for the claim that the Akan have a religious worldview lies in the belief that the spiritual is immanent and impinges directly on the living. In other words, there is a strong belief that people are surrounded by hosts of spirit-beings - some good, some evil, which are able to influence the lives of the living for good or for ill.’\(^{39}\)

The foregoing traditional belief inherent in the religious worldview of Ghanaian would be considered as one of the main reasons why the belief system of most Ghanaian Christians, including those living in Europe, as we shall later discuss in subsequent chapters is of an evangelical or charismatic type and therefore look for a kind of Christianity and spiritual

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\(^{36}\) The Akan people who form the largest tribal group in modern Ghana comprise the Asantes located in the Ashanti Region, part of Brong Ahafo and Western Regions, the Fantes located in part of Central and Western Regions, and the Akuapems located in a part of Eastern Region of Ghana.


leadership capable of addressing needs related to the said worldview. As observed by Kwame Bediako, the Akan spirit world on which human existence is believed to depend consists of the three aforementioned spiritual entities, which we shall now proceed to discuss.

The concept of God in Akan belief

The Akan traditional worldview conceives of God as the Supreme Spirit Being (Onyankopon), Creator (ɔboadeɛ)40 and Sustainer of the universe whose origin is unknown. God is thought to be both immanent and transcendent. The understanding of His immanence points to His involvement in life in His providential love, and He is known principally in terms of what He is believed to do for humankind. Scholars have shown a special interest in the tribal ideas about God and early missionaries were delighted to discover that the Ghanaians believed in one Supreme God only and that all the other so-called “gods” (abosom) are strictly speaking not “gods” but only tutelary spirits, or guardian angels.41 The evidence of Akan symbols, everyday sayings, attributes and proverbs like the following convinced some of the early missionaries that God is more than a mere idea for the African.42 God is Almighty: He is called Tweaduampon (He on whom men lean and do not fall). God’s existence is self-evident even to a child: obi nkyere abɔfra Onyame. (Nobody needs to point out God to a child). God is Omnipresent: Wo pe aka asem akyere Nyankopon a, ka kyere mframa. (If you want to tell God something, tell it to the wind). God’s creation is good: ɔsansa se, Ade a Onyame ayɛ nyinaa ye (The hawk says: “Everything created by God is good”). The hawk is high in the sky and has sharp eyes: he ought to know. God is a God of order: Onyankopon mpe asemɔmite nti na skye din maako-maako. (God does not like disorder; therefore He has given a name to everything.). We cannot change God’s will. Onyame nkrabea nni kwatibea (There is no escape from God’s destiny for us). But God is also gracious: Onyame na ɔwɔ ɔbasin fufuo ma no. (God pounds the fufu for the man with one arm, that is to say, God helps the helpless.)

It has generally been understood that God is not formally worshipped directly in the Akan traditional religion, the major reason being that He is considered to be transcendent and that

40 Twi letters like “ɔ” in ɔboadeɛ and ɔsansa is pronounced as the o in English words like drop, hop, plot, etc. and the “ɛ” in Twi word ɔboadeɛ and asemɔmite is also pronounced as the e English words like bet, get, set, etc. See Online dictionary for the Twi language of the Akan people of Ghana in West Africa at: www.twi.bb/index.php
41 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 3.
42 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 3.
there are intermediaries, which are able to provide for the immediate needs of mankind. However, in times of crises, the help of the Supreme God is instantly invoked. Moreover, in the past some Akans, particularly Ashantis had small shrines in the form of a pot in the fork of a certain tree known as *Nyame duα* (God’s tree), which was dedicated to the Supreme God.

It is significant that Christian critics have often accepted as positive the Akan or Ghanaian traditional belief in a Supreme Spirit Being, Creator and Sustainer of the universe; however they have rejected all other aspect of the traditional religious practices as pagan and evil. Many African scholars on the other hand have argued against the use of depreciatory language of the traditional religion or labelling it with derogatory terms, such as superstition, fetishism, juju, paganism and heathenism. As much as the traditional religious beliefs of Ghanaians should not be regarded as an ignorant and irrational belief in supernatural agency, a deep rooted and unfounded general belief, or a practice proceeding from superstitious belief or fear, the Christian theologian can of course claim the form of the traditional religious practices wrong. This assertion stems from the obvious fact that the traditional religion does not take cognisance of the Judeo-Christian idea of the worship of the Supreme God who abhors all images and the formal worship of lesser gods or deities believed to be intermediaries with delegated authority from God, as we shall discuss below.

*Deities and their functionaries in the Akan worldview*

The Akan traditional religions and Ghanaian traditional religions in general believe in divinities, deities or lesser gods (*abosom*) sometimes referred to as *Nyame mma* (children of God). They are regarded as spokesmen of God and thus derive power from God, the Supreme Being. There are multitudes of “gods” who have specific functions to fulfil and these functions in the final analysis may be said to personify the activities of God in the world. These divinities which are believed to exercise their powers on behalf of God and serve as spiritual functionaries in a cosmic theocratic government, are regarded as more approachable, and appealed to in their own right. Evil deeds are attributed to the “gods” instead of the Supreme Being. Although these deities deal directly with human beings, the Supreme Being is the head and at rituals, the Supreme Being is mentioned first. The deities often have hierarchy and are rated according to rank and function and the scope of society

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they serve. They may therefore be grouped as follows depending on their importance to the society:

i. Tribal or ethnic deities
ii. Traditional, town or locality deities
iii. Clan, Household or family deities
iv. Personalized deities.

The ethnic or tribal deities are divinities acknowledged by a specific ethnic group as serving their interest as a community, eg. the ‘Akonnedi’ shrine of the Akuapem in Eastern Region of Ghana. Town deities are for the particular locality and household deities are worshipped by families. Personalized deities are divinities, which originate in certain localities and have certain cults around them and these cults depend on personal power rather than ethnic associations, and membership of these cults is by individual choice, e.g. ‘Tigari’cult. Generally, the deities are perceived to exercise various forms of powers and to provide solutions to many social and personal problems by offering protection, health, wealth and fecundity to mankind. Some of them are believed to be capable of averting personal and social mishaps or misfortunes and to expose evildoers such as witches and punish them.

There is a strong belief in witchcraft among the Akan and personal misfortunes are mostly attributed to mischievous activities of witches particularly those belonging to one’s own family or clan. Quite often, lack of prosperity and persistent misfortunes in households or families give rise to frustration, fear and hatred which drive individuals or whole families to seek protection in anti-witchcraft shrines, where in most cases, the witches are exposed, punished and eventually make self-confessions regarding their spiritual misdeeds. The first of the said anti-witchcraft shrines claiming to give unity to the villages and to give protection against evil persons and witches was Aberewa, established before World War I, followed by “Kwasi Badu’s medicine” and then Hwe me so. All these shrines and their cults were suppressed before the war by the British colonial government, but after the war the attitude of the government changed as a result of anthropological studies of the traditional religion of the people by Captain Rattray and Dr. Field. Their research prompted the government to exercise caution in suppressing such traditional practices. When new shrines known as Brakune,

46 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 27.
47 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 319.
Senyakupo, and Nana Tongo were introduced from Northern Ghana, the government watched them so that no direct witch-hunting could occur, but otherwise allowed them to function. This brought the church in a very difficult position as we shall later discuss in the next chapter. The most popular of such anti-witchcraft cults was the “Tigare” cult, which developed in World War II culminating in 1948, and causing serious headaches to the churches, since often more than half of the congregations followed the new cult.48

The popularity of a deity depends largely on its reputed ability to provide for the material and spiritual needs of either individuals or the community at large. Such deities of good repute attract devotees from far and near. However if they fail to meet specific needs of the said devotees after a while, they are abandoned.49 The deities are objects of worship and cults are founded around them. Prayers and sacrifices are offered to them and theoretically it is believed that all these ultimately reach the Supreme Being. In all cases, there are ritual specialists attached to the cults namely abosomfo who ‘own’ the deities and also the priest and priestesses known as akomfo who act as mediums for the deities. They can be possessed by the deities and perform functions such as divination on their behalf for devotees.50

Ancestral spirits in Akan worldview

The Akan peoples and the other Ghanaian tribes believe in a life after death, and in a communion with those gone beyond; they recognize all this to be under the power of God.51 Those who have gone beyond and considered to belong to the spiritual realm are put in different categories and the most important category as far as the religious and moral life of the Akans are concerned is made up of the ancestors or “spirit-fathers” (Nananom Nsamanfo). In the view of Kwame Bediako,

‘Ancestors are essentially clan or lineage ancestors. So they have to do with the community or society in which their progeny relate to one another and not with a system of religion as such, which might be categorised as “the Akan religion”. In this way the “religious” functions and duties which relate to ancestors become binding on all members of the particular group who share common ancestors.’ 52

48 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 319.
50 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 27.
51 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 5.
52 Bediako, Jesus in African Culture, 11-12.
In the Akan traditional religious system, ancestors of the ruling clan of the tribe are normally conceived as the national ancestors of the whole tribe; an example is the Oyoko tribe of Kumasi, the traditional seat of the Asante tribe. However, it is not every progenitor or dead person who becomes an ancestor. For a dead person to qualify to be an ancestor, the person must have lived an exemplary life upholding all the moral norms of the society, had children or raised children of others out of kindness, died a natural death at a good, ripe age, must have been accorded a proper burial and funeral rites in order to get him up properly settled in the other world. The ancestors having retired from the world assumes spiritual lives and as such believed to be very powerful. They are therefore considered to have the potentiality of giving help to their progeny on earth. They are believed to become spiritual superintendents of family life and tribal affairs and for that matter, fertility and fecundity can be part of the blessings of ancestors to their families. They also serve as guardians and custodians of moral and natural laws and of the taboos of the society, things they instituted themselves and have observed their lifetime. Since they provide the sanctions for the moral life of the community they exercise the powers to punish, exonerate or reward the living as the case may be. The ancestors are also believed to have knowledge of future events and they may use this knowledge to help their descendants who consult them for such purposes through divination.

Contact with the ancestors is an essential part of the cult. There are various means of contacting them; some of them irregular, whilst others are regular and formal. Irregular contacts take the form of consultation through divination, by a barren woman for instance seeking ancestral assistance regarding her particular situation. On such occasions, contact is linked through libation and sacrifices. Others maintain regular contact by first pouring some of every liquor or water they drink as offering to the ancestors. At yearly celebrations such as traditional festivals and Christmas, there is a family gathering of the various clans at the traditional family houses to remember the dead. Then, drinks and food are offered to the ancestors. The Akan’s have festivals such as Adae and Odwira which pertain mainly to the ancestral cult, and during which the ancestors are remembered and venerated. During such festivals, food, drinks and animals are offered to the ancestors.

*The Akan tradition as a vital preparation for the Gospel of Christ*

Many scholars such as Debrunner, Mbiti, and Bediako have maintained that the conception of a communion of the living and the dead in the religious belief and worldview of the Akan

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peoples and other Ghanaian ethnic groups is as important in the preparation for Christ as is the belief in the Supreme God, the Creator. Bediako is in full agreement with Walls on the point that Christianity has spread most rapidly in societies with primal religious systems akin to the African Traditional Religions such as the Akan Traditional Religion. Bediako argues that since the primal religions have been the most fertile soil for the Gospel, they underlie therefore the faith of the vast majority of Christians of all ages and all nations. Mbiti has also repeatedly argued that Africa’s “old” religions, which of course include the Akan Traditional Religion, have been a crucial factor in the rapid spread of Christianity among African peoples, and still considered to be a vital preparation for the Gospel. The plausibility of the foregoing argument lies in the fact that the religious belief of Africans ‘operate within a worldview which distinguishes but does not separate the visible from the invisible or the material from the immaterial sphere of life. It presupposes frequent and continuing interaction between the different spheres.’

This is obviously in contrast to the rational Western views about the nature of the world. Religion for the Akan or the African, serves as a mediating factor between the visible and invisible worlds by means of which his existential needs could be served.

Apart from God, the “gods” and the ancestors, Akans perceive the universe as an arena of other supernatural or spiritual being, which could either be benevolent or malicious depending on whether they influence the course of human life in a beneficial way or in an inimical way. These supernatural beings include sasabonsam, believed to be a terrifying forest giant monster, hostile to human beings; mmoatia, also believed to be a dwarf-like forest spirit being with backward feet and whose activities could likewise be inimical to mankind. However, the occultists are believed to derive from these supernatural beings potent charms such as asuman which may take the form of amulets, talismans and juju which are meant either to protect their users by warding off evil or may be used to harm others.

Of all the evil forces, the one that is alive most to the traditional Akan is witchcraft (bayie), which is considered as the most devastating form of evil. The act of witchcraft rests on the belief that certain persons known as witches can cause injury to others even to the point of death by virtue of an inherent evil psychic power. It is generally believed that witchcraft is hereditary; however it could also be transferred to unknowing recipients in the form of gifts or could be consciously acquired. The activities of female witches’ abayifo and

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54 Bediako, Jesus in African culture, 7.
55 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 28.
male wizards’ *abayibonsam* are generally considered by the Akan society to be antisocial and destructive. For instance it is believed that they are able to make people sick, barren or impotent, liable to misfortune, prevent people from getting rich, cause people to be alcoholics, and above all kill people by feeding on them spiritually in the course of their nocturnal activities. On the question as to whether witchcraft is real, most of the early missionaries simply dismissed it as superstition. However, Margaret Field after four years of in-depth research in Ghana concludes that witches are people mentally afflicted with the obsession that they have the power to harm others by thinking harm of them. If the witches lay hands on the soul, *okra*, (which is thought to be the immaterial divine element from God that is believed to go back to God when one dies), and cut it up, the person becomes mortally sick, and if not restored, it leads to his eventual demise.\(^{56}\) There are various ways in which supposed witches or wizards are apprehended; it could be through dreams, trance or divination. Often the victim or his family may make a direct accusation and then the accused may be subjected to trial by ordeal. Sometimes witch-hunts are organized by societies, and some secret cults and shrines. At times the alleged witches themselves confess to the crime and are punished. Punishments meted out to alleged witches in some Ghanaian traditional communities include, banishment from her hometown, physical beatings, purge with concoctions, shaves and baths. At times they confess on deathbed in which case they are not accorded proper funeral.

Various explanations offered for the incidence of witchcraft include the following: that it involves the ignorance of medicine and education, simply a projection of kinship stresses and a theory of causation meant to explain misfortune. With such explanations, most scholars especially European scholars tend to believe that with Western education, with knowledge of science and medicine, with advent of pure religion built on love such as Christianity witchcraft – beliefs will naturally fade away from Africa. It has however been shown in a more recent study that despite the fact that Christianity has come to Africa for quite a few centuries as at now, there is quite a strong belief among Christians with regard to witchcraft.\(^{57}\) The churches recognize it and the African Independent Churches (AIC) and Pentecostal churches counteract it with the belief that the power of Christ will drive out these forces. This pattern is presently growing within the former-mission or historical churches in Ghana. Most

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of the AIC practice exorcisms to bring deliverance and cure to self-confessed witches who in the course of the ‘deliverance’ session sometimes make confessions of their witchcraft activities that create tension and instability in some families. In the more matured independent churches however, whatever confessions made are not made public. In some cases exorcism is administered without necessarily demanding confession of witchcraft activities. In most instances, in the more matured independent churches self-confessed witches who become truly converted are well nurtured in the Christian faith and eventually become evangelists or members of the church’s evangelism and deliverance team, sharing their personal testimonies at evangelistic crusades.

It is in view of the foregoing that the present author agrees with scholars like Bediako that the religious belief and worldview of the Akan peoples as well as of other Ghanaian tribes hold a vital preparation for the Gospel of Christ. 58 The Akan religious system is ‘focused on need and since it is very accommodating, adaptable and highly dynamic, it tends to accept most spiritual powers no matter their sources, provided it can bring practical solution to problems here and now. If a god appeals to them they ‘buy’ it in addition to what they already have or even abandon an older and a less potent one for a more potent one.’ 59

Bediako highlights two major points which are seen as quite essential in the presentation of the Gospel to the Akan or African traditional context so that the traditional believer could see the Gospel relevant to his traditional worldview and for that matter capable of addressing his existential needs.

In the first place, Jesus must be seen above all else as the Christus Victor (Christ supreme over every spiritual rule and authority), cf. Colossians 1:15-23, 2:13-23. The Akan or the African traditional believer is keenly conscious of forces and powers at work in the world, which threaten the interests of life and harmony. The Gospel becomes more relevant and makes the desired impact on the traditional believer if Jesus is presented as victorious over evil forces and so answers to the need for a powerful protector against these inimical forces and powers. 60

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58 Bediako, *Jesus in African culture*, 6-7.
60 Bediako, *Jesus in African culture*, 8.
The second important point is that salvation in Akan religious belief does not include the Christian idea of being freed from original sin. In the words of Kwame Bediako, “Salvation” in the traditional African world involves a certain view of the realm of spirit-power and its effects upon the physical and spiritual dimensions of human existence, which therefore calls for “a Saviour” who proves himself capable of saving them from terrors and fears which they experience in their traditional worldview. He further explains that this shows how important it is to relate Christian understanding and experience to the realm of the ancestors who are perceived in the Akan society to hold authority as ministers of the Supreme Being and who on His behalf provide the sanctions for the good life. If this is not done, many Akan and other African Christian will continue to be men and women “living at two levels”, half-African and half-European but never belonging properly to either.

Bediako suggests that our reflection about Christ in the Akan religious belief system must speak to the questions posed by such a worldview, ‘since accepting him as “our Saviour” always involves making him at home in our spiritual universe and in terms of our religious needs and longings. So an understanding of Christ in relation to spirit-power in the Akan or African context is not necessarily less accurate than any other perception of Jesus. On the question as to whether such an understanding faithfully reflects biblical revelation and is rooted in true Christian experience, Bediako further explains that ‘biblical teaching clearly shows that Jesus is who he is (i.e. Saviour) because of what he has done and can do (i.e. save), and also that he was able to do what he did on the cross because of who he is (God the Son), cf. Colossians 2:15; 1:13 ff., 43.

One major implication of the foregoing is that, who Jesus is in the African spiritual universe must not be separated from what he does and can do in that world, and for that reason, the way Jesus relates to the importance and functions of the ‘spirit fathers’ or ancestors is crucial and poses a potential for conflict in achieving a real encounter. In presenting the Gospel to the Akan society, Bediako suggests that one must keep her traditional piety well in view and start from the universality of Jesus Christ as the Greatest Ancestor who is not a stranger to our heritage so that we can eventually arrive at an

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62 Bediako, Jesus in African culture, 10-12.
63 Bediako, Jesus in African culture, 9-10.
64 Bediako, Jesus in African culture, 10-13.
understanding of Christ that deals with the perceived reality of the ancestors as it is discussed below.

In the first place, ancestors do not originate, from the transcendent realm, but Jesus does; they are considered worthy of honour for having lived among us and having brought benefits to us, yet Jesus has done infinitely more. He being in the exact likeness of God’s Eternal Being took our flesh and blood, became like us, shared our humanity and underwent death for us to set us free from the power of sin, the dominion of the powers of darkness or evil forces and the fear of death (Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-14; 2:13-15). The natural ancestors unlike Jesus had no barriers to cross to live among us and share our experience but Jesus by his incarnation, has proved to be far more identified with our humanity than the mere ethnic ancestral identity. Moreover, Jesus in taking on our human nature did not lose his divine nature and so belongs eternally to the spiritual realm as Son of the Supreme God, the Father and therefore as God-man, he is in a far better position to ensure an infinitely more effective ministry to humankind than can ever be said of merely human ancestral spirits (Hebrew 4:14-16; 7:24).

Another important factor is that, unlike Jesus who through his resurrection from death maintains possession of indestructible life, the ancestral spirits have not demonstrated any power over death the final enemy, so as to be presumed capable of securing the same for their progeny.

Finally, we come to consider the Akan religious system, which maintains sacrifices on regular basis as a means of ensuring a harmonious relationship among the living and more particularly between the human community and the realm of divine and mystical power, which controls and bestows life with vitality. According to Hebrews (chs. 9 and 10) the various sacrifices which are basically sacrificial rites for proprietary, expiatory and reconciliatory purposes, even if they were to reach God, are not capable of dealing with the basic problem of human sin and wrongdoing that they seek to purge and atone for, to bring the human community in right standing with the divine in the spiritual realm. For this reason, ‘Jesus Christ, himself divine and sinless, yet taking on human nature in order to willingly lay down his life for all humanity fulfils perfectly the end that all sacrifices, seek to achieve.’

65 Bediako, Jesus in African Culture, 38-41.

In the light of the foregoing, the present writer fully agrees with Kwame Bediako that the potency of the cult of ancestors in the Akan traditional religion is not the potency of ancestors
themselves, but rather the potency of the cult of myth. 66 This assertion however, does not underrate the functional value of the cult in terms of ensuring social harmony by strengthening the ties which knit together all sections and generations of the community, the present with the past and with those yet to be born. When Christ is presented to a typical Akan traditional society in such a way that deals with the perceived reality of the ancestors, one cannot underestimate the potential for conflict if a real encounter is to be achieved. Old allegiances have to give way to new allegiances. Then Jesus who is the mediator of a new and better covenant between God and humanity brings the redeemed believer into the experience of a new identity with himself and the community of the living God, comprising the joyful company of the faithful of all generations and races. Our identity with this new community is quite unique because even though every race or tribe may hear the Gospel in their own mother tongues and worship in their own cultural setting, they have claim to one universal and Greatest Ancestor, Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God.

1.4.2 Islam

Islam came to West Africa long before the Christian missionaries set foot on the Gold Coast (Ghana) in the 15th Century. The main channels through which Islam eventually spread into Ghana were through trade and the migration of Muslims. 67 The Hausa traders from Nigeria who were after gold and the Wangara traders originally from Ivory Coast who traded in cola were the first to bring the presence of Islam into Ghana through their dressing, their association and sometimes their magico-religious services which attracted the people. 68 For instance, as it has been observed elsewhere in this chapter, since the Akan religion is focused on need and thus tends to accept most spiritual powers which could bring practical solution to problems irrespective of their sources, some of the Asantes and their royals naturally came under the influence of the Muslim spiritualists. Omenyo cites Patrick Ryan who observes in his study of ‘Islam in Ghana: its major influences and the situation today’ the excessive

66 Bediako, Jesus in African Culture, 40.
influence of the Wangara Muslims on the fifth Asante-King, Osei Kwame which eventually led to his deposition in 1798 by the Asante Kingmakers spearheaded by the queen-mother, Konadu Yaadom. He continues that twenty-two years later, the British envoy to Kumasi Dupius was told that Konadu Yaadom and her allies among the kingmakers resented Osei Kwame’s ‘attachment to the Moslems’, and also ‘his inclination to establish the Koranic law for the civil code.’ 69

The Asantes and some of their royals were attracted to Islam mostly by the amulets produced by Muslim spiritualists which were made of small leather pouches that contain verses from the Qur’an. The amulets are believed to protect the user or to harm others. The Akan rulers, particularly Asante kings have since then been used to wearing special smock (batakari) with several amulets attached to them on a special occasion like coronation ceremony. They are also worn during war, and believed to have magical powers that protect the user from the effect of bullets and other harm. Another contributing factor for the influence of Wangara Muslims on the Asante politics and its culture to some extent was that Islam seemed to appear tolerant, or it spread by ‘contamination’; in other words it spread slowly. Its tolerance was shown in the sense of its “belief”. For instance they strengthened the traditional belief in their presentation of Allah because they used the traditional names or appellations of God. Some of the Islamic taboos introduced were very close to traditional taboos. However, wherever they grouped they tried to eliminate taboos offensive to Islam by substitution. For instance, it is believed that the Islamic community did try to substitute ram for human sacrifice in Ashanti in the 19th century. Since Islam was gradually established through the trading enterprises of the Hausa and Wangara Muslims, it eventually became the religion of the towns where trade flourished. The Muslim traders who settled down in the so-called Zongos 70 where other Northern Ghana and West African immigrants 71 had settled gradually brought the said immigrant communities under Islamic influence.

For a long time the Muslim community in Ghana was influenced mostly by the Sunni branch of the Islamic Faith until 1921 when the Ahmadiyya Movement 72 was first introduced.

69 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 32.
70 Zongo is Hausa for ‘encampment’ at the periphery of cities and towns. In Ghana, the term is used to refer to the residentially segregated quarters where migrant Muslims settle.
71 The West African immigrants included the Hausa traders and butchers from Nigeria, the Wangara traders from Ivory Coast, the Zabarimas from Niger, the Kotokolis form middle Togo, and the Moshis from Upper Volta (Burkina Faso).
72 The Ahmadiyya Movement which is the only Islamic sect which has a Western influence was founded by a man called Ghuläm Ahmād (1835-1908), himself a Muslim and originating from India.
in the Central Region of Ghana. By the 19th century, the Muslim traders had found their way to Fante coastland in Ghana. However it remained an alien group of Muslims until towards the end of the century that the indigenous people were partly islamised. The introduction of Islam among the Fantes themselves actually began in 1885 with the conversion of Ben Sam into the Islamic Faith. 73 He was a baptized Methodist by Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman at Anomabu, educated in their mission school and even believed to have become a lay preacher of the church. As a trader by profession, it is probable that he might have had personal contacts with Muslims who were then in control of South bound trade. His conversion to Islam followed a vision which he claimed was instrumental in directing him to the Islamic faith. He was eventually converted to Islam by a Muslim trader by name Mallam Abubakar bin Siddique. He later introduced his friend Addo Agiri to Abubakar and he was also converted and took the name Mahdi Appah. These two friends eventually became instrumental in proselyting the Fante for Islam.

Due to their Christian background, they did so with much zeal, travelling from place to place, converting people and establishing small Muslim communities all over the Fanteland. Some of their proselyting activities were polemics against Christians. For instance they asserted that Islam was the oldest of the religions, older than Christianity, and thus the best; Islamic prayers were more effective than that of Christians; the blessings of Allah reside with Muslims, hence they prosper and their crops grow; Christians were condemned as cheats, because they collected tithes. Moreover, they presented Islam as the Blackman’s religion, which made Muslims superior to the Europeans before the throne of Allah than others. It is believed that, this was one of the main reasons why Islam spread fast in Ghana and other parts of West Africa.

Despite his polemics against Christians, Ben Sam appreciated Western education, and thus founded one of the earliest English-Arabic schools in West Africa in 1896. He later established more schools and managed to fight for government assistance in running the schools. This eventually brought a lot of conflict between him and the alien Muslims in the

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area. However, he later insisted that education for Muslims should always involve the use of Arabic language and based on the Qur’an. After the death of Ben Sam in 1909 Mahdi Appah became the leader of the Fante Muslims. Since he had taken the side of the alien Muslim and did not share the vision of Ben Sam regarding the promotion of Western style of education, he virtually neglected the schools and left them to run down. But then things changed in 1920, as a result of a dream a member of the Movement had which was interpreted at their general meeting to mean that the Fante Muslim should have white missionaries. This began their intensive search for white missionaries, which eventually led them writing to the Ahmadiyyah headquarters in India requesting for white missionaries. The headquarters in India assured them that if the Fante Muslims themselves could pay the fare, then a missionary could be sent from London.

This was done and it accordingly led to the arrival of Abdur Rahman Nayyar in Saltpond in the Central Region of Ghana in 1921 to preach to the Fante Muslims. He stayed only for a month and then proceeded to Nigeria, but before he left, he had established the Movement founded by Ben Sam as Ahmädis (Ahmadiyya Movement). After Rahman had left, other missionaries continued to come from Pakistan until 1974 when a Ghanaian from Gomoa Brofoyedur by name Abdul Wahab Adam became the first Ghanaian leader of the group. Generally it can be said of the Ahmadiyya Movement that it has given its leaders a sense of belonging to the modern state which the orthodox Muslims lack because they lacked Western skills.

This is attributed to the fact that the Ahmädis apart from giving religious education establish schools to educate their members and others so that they could fit into the educational system. In contemporary Ghana, the Ahmadiyya Movement are considered to wield great influence through their social services. They own and run their own schools for the primary to senior secondary school level as well as a Teacher Training college. They also run hospitals and clinics in the rural areas, as well as agricultural developments. Besides, they have youth wing and women association which also have their own projects. They meet regionally and nationally and every year there is a national congress of the Movement at Saltpond where they have their missionary Training school for West Africa. Due to the great emphasis they place on training, religious education and learning in general, they are highly polemical against Christians.
1.4.3 Christianity

Christianity which was established through the successful missionary enterprises in the 19th century has since flourished, with the result that today Ghana is generally considered to be a largely Christian country. At a glance over table 1 above, it is quite evident that Christianity has increased significantly over the last four decades from 42.82% (1960) to 69% (2000). There is a clear indication that Christianity has influenced considerably the religious traditions and those who claim to have no religion, making significant gains particularly over the Traditional Religion. All over Ghana, various churches exist in exuberant profusion. Christianity which was for many years largely influenced by the former mission churches, such as the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians (all of which have their direct roots in the Reformation), together with the Roman Catholics are no longer considered to be among the fastest growing churches and no longer ascribed an exclusive dominant role in Ghanaian Christianity.

Kwame Bediako has pointed out that, due to the proliferation of new churches for the past few decades, Christianity in Ghana today, is shaped by its current renewal as a non-Western religion. Since there is enormous variety of churches in Ghana today, a fair categorisation of the said churches will be helpful for our study here. Omenyo, in his extensive work on the development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana, has given an elaborate categorisation of the Christian churches in Ghana, using historical and theological categories as his indices. Since his categorisation appears to be an update of the situation and gives us a fair view of Christianity in Ghana, we shall consider it for our study here in the following chronological order:

1. Mainline/Historic churches
2. African Independent churches
3. Classical Pentecostal churches
4. Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic churches
5. Neo-Evangelical/Mission-related churches

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74 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 170-171.
75 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 168.
77 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 34.
The 2000 population census conducted by the Ghana Statistical service released the following figures that give a fair idea of Christianity in Ghana in terms of adherents of the major groups of churches. The Pentecostal/charismatic as indicated in Table 2 include the classical Pentecostal churches and the Neo-Pentecostals. The group indicated ‘other Christian’ include the African Independent Churches and the Neo-Evangelical and Mission-Related Churches.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Percentage of Adherents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostal/ Charismatic</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mainline/Historic churches

Various scholars writing on Ghanaian Christianity have used “mainline churches” synonymously with “historic churches” or “mainstream” to refer to the older and generally larger churches instituted as the result of European missionary endeavours in the 19th century. Platvoet, writing on the mainline churches in the late 1970s observes that ‘these churches still stand strongly in the Western tradition of their parent churches having made no accommodation to African traditional culture.’

Even though the observation made at the time he wrote is indisputable, the situation is now changing. These mainline churches, in opening up for spiritual renewal, are gradually making room for significant innovations in their Western traditional legacy, adopting features characteristic of the Pentecostal and African Independent Churches. Churches referred to as

78 Source: “Table 2: selected social characteristics of population by religion”, preliminary figures from the 2000 population census conducted by Ghana statistical service.
79 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 36.
“mainline” include the following (with dates of beginnings of missions attached); the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (1828), the Methodist Church Ghana (1835), the Evangelical Presbyterian (1847), the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1898) 81 and the Anglican Church (1904) which are all direct descendants of the Reformation. The others are the Roman Catholic Church (1880) and the Seventh Day Adventist Church-SDA (1898). Together, these churches and a few others included in this category, claim 33.9% of Ghana’s population, according to the ‘2000 Population census’ conducted by Ghana statistical service. The Catholic Church, the largest single denomination in Ghana claim 15.3% of the population. All the mainline Protestant churches with the exception of the SDA church are members of the Christian council of Ghana, which was formed in 1929 as a fellowship of churches. The Council which has a current membership of 14 churches and two affiliated organisations is linked to the World Council of Churches (WCC) and continentally to the All African Council of Churches (AACC). For a long time, the above-mentioned mainline churches presented the only type of Christianity known in Ghana until in about 1914 when new ‘Christian Movements’ appeared on the scene which resulted in the formation of new churches known as the African Independent churches. They were to be followed by the Pentecostal churches which emerged for the first time in the 1930s.

Ter Haar has in the past decade expressed her reservation with the exclusive usage of the term “mainline” for the former mission churches mentioned above. Her reservation stems from the fact that

‘although other churches may also have impressive missionary records and an even larger membership such as the Church of Pentecost, and could therefore make a reasonable claim to be included in the category of mainline churches, yet this is normally not the case’.

She further explains that

‘the reason for this is rooted in the history of European expansion, as prevailing Western views of African Christianity ascribe a dominant role to the work of European missions in various parts of Africa’. 82

In view of the foregoing obser-vation, some contemporary scholars are considering the use of “mission instituted churches” as probably a more appropriate term to classify and distinguish

81 The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church originated from America as a predominantly Black American Methodist Church focused on mission to Afro Americans and other Africans.
82 Ter Haar, Halfway to Paradise, 168.
the former mission churches from the others. The use of this term however may equally pose some problems since Pentecostal churches such as the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Church and even the Church of Pentecost may as well claim to be “mission instituted churches” and therefore qualify to be classified as such. In the light of the foregoing, this study will for the sake of convenience stick to the conventional academic usage of the term “mainline churches” to refer to the mission instituted churches mostly of the 19th century which still more or less stand in the Western tradition of their parent churches other than their African traditional culture. With the exception of the SDA Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, we shall discuss the mission history of the afore-mentioned mainline churches in chapter two.

The African Independent Churches (AICs)

The AICs had their origins in the evangelistic campaign of Prophet Williams Wadè Harris who appeared in the South West of Ghana around 1914. Although Harris had a very successful ministry in Ghana, he did not establish any church but rather directed his converts to join any of the established Mission Churches of their choice. Even though the Roman Catholic and the Methodist churches made a big harvest of converts in this great awakening, some of the converts refused to join any of the established Churches and formed their own Churches soon after the prophet Harris had left the shores of Ghana. In all, he spent just about three months for his evangelistic campaign in Ghana. The first Churches to emerge included the Twelve Apostles Church (1914) and the African Faith Tabernacle (1916). The Twelve Apostles Church was founded by John Nackaba, a converted traditional priest. In 1920, a Methodist teacher and catechist of Gomoa Dunkwa by name Joseph William Egyankwa Appiah felt himself called to be a prophet after experiencing what he described as revelations and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and he began to heal by prayer. It got to a point that the Methodist authorities could not countenance his claims and practices and therefore dismissed him from their service. He then moved ahead to establish his own Church, which he called Musama Disco Christi Church said to have been revealed from heaven, and meaning “Church of the Army of the Cross of Christ”. The new settlement of his church, he called Mozano, “in the language of the angels”, meaning “God’s own town”. He took the new name

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83 The life and ministry of William Wadè Harris is discussed in chapter two of this study.
Jemisemiham Jehu-Appiah also claiming to have received from heaven. They are
Other major African Independent churches which emerged include the Saviour Church (Memeneda
Gyidifo), the Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim and Seraphim society, the church of the Lord
(Aladura), and the Apostle’s Revelation Society. In Ghana the AICs are referred to as Sunsum
sare (Akan) meaning ‘Holy Spirit Churches’. The late professor C.G. Bäeta, who did a
comprehensive study of these churches refers to them as ‘Spiritual Churches’, meant to
describe their various activities and style of worship which signify an invocation of the Holy
Spirit and signs of the descent of the Spirit upon the worshippers. These churches are
purely indigenous churches founded by Africans for mainly Africans and without any
Western links or support. Presently, there are over four hundred different denominations of
the AICs led by prophets and prophetesses and they constitute themselves under a loose
umbrella organisation called the Supreme Council for Ghana Pentecostal churches. Common
features which distinguish the AICs from the mainline churches include the following:

- They show intense religious emotions during religious services, prophesying, speaking
  in tongues, falling into trances, in relating dreams and visions.
- They lay emphasis on healing and exorcism and some even provide herbs, anointing
  oil, ritual bathing, drinking of blessed water and other physical elements are applied
  on patients.
- They claim to provide spiritual security and safeguards against “demons” and
  “witches” and all forms of spiritual forces.
- They help to fight social evils like drunkenness.
- They lead in the indigenisation process. For instance the MDCC have taken over some
  appellations belonging to the pattern of Akan chieftaincy such as “Omanhene”,
  “Nifahene” etc. (paramount chief, right-wing chief) as alternative appellations for
  church functionaries. Polygamy is not a problem to them. The MDCC for instance
  practices “controlled polygamy”, but has set itself firmly against any form of divorce.

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87 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 74.
It has generally been observed that the proliferation of Spiritual churches breaks and weakens Christian front and tend to create new communities separate from societies. Some AICs have been blamed for their activities which bring division and confusions in families and communities. On the other hand some of the mainline churches have been equally blamed for their intransigent attitude which compelled some of those persons to break away to form their own churches. It is generally perceived that most of the initiators of the AICs were motivated by financial gains. It has however been observed that some had a genuine quest for spiritual fulfilment but due to the inability of the established traditional or mainline churches to meet such needs related to their African worldview, they eventually had to quit. The AICs are seen to commit themselves to seeking to satisfy the African’s deep religious and spiritual quest even though some of their methods or approaches to spiritual issues leave much to be desired. This is mostly attributed to lack of adequate theological training for their spiritual leaders addressed as prophets and prophetesses and who in most cases build cults around their own persons.

Classical Pentecostal churches

The Classical Pentecostal churches which trace their remote root of classical Pentecostalism to the Azuza street experience in 1906 include the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost and the Christ Apostolic Church. These were all founding members of the Ghana Evangelical Fellowship constituted in 1971, but has since changed its name to the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) which currently has one hundred and thirty-nine member denominations. The Assemblies of God was the first Pentecostal mission to work in Ghana, having entered Ghana across the Northern frontier from Burkina Faso in 1931. In 1937 a group of Faith Tabernacle correspondents of former Anum people at Asamankase in the Eastern Region of Ghana requested the Apostolic Church of Bradford, England to send a missionary. The church responded by sending Pastor and Mrs. James McKeown who eventually served three churches namely, the Christ Apostolic church, the Apostolic church, and the Church of Pentecost which separated in 1953 from the Apostolic church. Among the tenets of faith of the Apostolic Church generally shared by the Pentecostal churches and which appear distinct to some extent from those held by the mainline Protestant churches are the following:

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1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit for believers, with signs following.
2. The manifestations of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the church, which is the Body of Christ.
3. The sacraments of baptism by immersion, and of the Lord’s Supper.
4. Church government by apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, elders and deacons.
5. The obligatory nature of tithes and offerings.  

The theology of the Pentecostals in Ghana accommodates certain African traditional beliefs, such as those concerning witchcraft and evil spirits, which they see as manifestations of evil to be counteracted and overpowered by the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostals are characterized by their high awareness of spiritual forces and dangers and the consequent need to acquire spiritual power for their protection. Pentecostalism, in all its diversity happens to be the most dynamic religious trend in present day Ghana and the earliest to establish branches in Europe, among immigrants.  

**Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic churches**

Besides the classical Pentecostal churches, there is a new generation of Pentecostal denominations referred to as Neo-Pentecostal or charismatic churches. This brand of Pentecostals is considered to be the newest and fastest growing stream of Christianity in Ghana today. Omenyo has observed that the early brands of the Neo-Pentecostal movement were initially non-denominational Christian fellowship groups focusing mainly on Bible study and directing its energy to the schools and universities and thus reaching out to the elite. They were on the periphery of Christianity in Ghana in the 1980s, but since when they became distinct independent denominational churches with their leaders assuming clerical titles, they have been moving gradually to the centre. The major Neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana today include the Christian Action Faith Ministries, International Central Gospel Church, Word Miracle church, Lighthouse Chapel, Christian Family Centre, Victory Bible Church, Fountain of Life Mission and Grace Outreach Church. These churches and many others in this category are affiliated to the National Association for Charismatic and Christian churches.

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92 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 172.
93 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 38.
Some of them are linked to churches abroad. Besides committing themselves to church expansion in Ghana, most of these churches are at the same time directing their energy to overseas countries particularly in Europe and North America where they are moving fast to establish branches. Classical Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal/charismatic churches claim over 24% of Ghana’s population.\(^\text{95}\)

**Neo-Evangelical/Mission-related churches**

In 1940 the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade (WEC) Mission began a second wave of Western missionary involvement in Ghana.\(^\text{96}\) Other overseas missions which followed included the Sudan Interior Mission, currently renamed Good News churches of the Society of International Ministries (SIM), Churches of Christ Mission, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Korean Christian Church of Ghana, New Day Mission, Church of God of Prophecy and the New Apostolic Church. Work amongst Northern people groups and deprived peasant communities in the North became the major focus of most of these missions. They eventually gave rise to a network of National churches that tend to have a conservative evangelical flavour emphasising evangelism, church growth and church planting.\(^\text{97}\)

### 1.4.4 New Religious Movements

Besides the three main religions mentioned-above, there are also other religious groups and New Religious movements that operate in Ghana. Elom Dovlo in his study on ‘The Church in Africa and Religious Pluralism’ classifies them in five main categories as follows:\(^\text{98}\)

1. New African Traditional Movement which borrows selected elements from Christianity, but remains essentially traditional. A typical example is the Afrikania Mission founded in 1982 by Osofo Okomfo Damuah, a former Roman Catholic Priest.
2. Oriental New Religious Movement such as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), the Hindu Monastery, Transcendental Meditation and other

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\(^{94}\) Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 38.

\(^{95}\) Source: Selected social characteristics of population by religion, preliminary figures from the 2000 population census conducted by Ghana statistical service.


\(^{97}\) Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 38.

esoteric and New Age movements such as Eckankar and others which mostly attract the elite of the country.

3. New Religious Movements from the African Diaspora such as the Rastafarian Movement which generally propagate Pan-Africanism.

4. Islamic New Religious Movements particularly the Nation of Islam and the Ahl-ul Sunna which also have their presence in the country are known to generate intra-Islamic tensions and quarrels occasionally.

5. Other religious groups which either consider themselves Christian or operate alongside the Christian churches are classified as Christian sects or New Religious Movements. They include The church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), Jehovah’s Witnesses both of which have a good following; the AMORC, a Rosicrucian Society with its headquarters in California; the Cherubim and Seraphim Prayer Group, the Sacred Order of Silent Brotherhood and the United Order of Oddfellows.

1.5 Ghanaians and Migration

African-initiated churches in Europe, particularly continental Europe owe their existence to African migration to Europe which compared to other immigration trends is relatively new and started on a large-scale only in the 1980s. In the past two decades, there have been significant African minority groups in most countries of the European Union (EU) particularly in Italy, Germany, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Belgium. Statistics (Eurostat) estimate that in 1994, the total Sub-Saharan African migrant population in the fifteen EU Countries was 850,000. This figure however, is relatively small compared to immigrants from other regions of the world particularly other European countries. The immigrant African population in the Netherlands as presented in Table 3 below, constitutes in some ways a microcosm of developments taking place in other EU countries.

99 Ter Haar, Halfway to Paradise, 110.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continents</th>
<th>Migrant population in the Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>323,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>431,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>562,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>1,117,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>13,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,448,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

African labour migrants from North Africa to Europe however are a phenomenon which started since the late 1950s. The most remarkable development of the African emigration to Europe in recent times concerns the migration of West Africans notably Ghanaians, Senegalese and Nigerians, which constitute the bulk of the African emigrants to Europe.

The large-scale migrations of Africans from the West Africa Sub-Region is generally attributed to the worsening conditions of the economy of these countries in recent years coupled with unstable political situations in the said countries. Besides the West African migrants, migration from East and Central Africa has been in the increase due to political instability, as well as outbreak of war as was the case of Ethiopia and Somalia. To put it in a nutshell, economic and political crises in Africa in the last three decades which in most cases have resulted in worsening poverty, increased human rights violations and absence of peace and security have been major contributing factors to the large-scale migration of able-bodied Africans to places like Western Europe where they looked forward to enjoying better living conditions. Ter Haar in her study of African Christians in Europe has observed that,

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102 Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Netherlands, 2004 and 2010.
‘Ghana is a good example of how economic and political conditions can combine in a way as to become a powerful stimulus for those in the prime of life to leave the country to seek better conditions elsewhere.’\textsuperscript{105}

Official estimate considers Ghanaians to constitute the largest migrant minority group from Sub-Saharan Africa in Europe, with 80,000 Ghanaians officially registered in the EU in 1993.\textsuperscript{106} The table below which presents the Ghanaian immigrant population in the Netherlands in relation to that of a few other African countries similarly constitutes a microcosm of developments taking place in other EU countries.

Table 4\textsuperscript{107}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Migrant population in the Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>219,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical figures for largest African immigrant communities over a period of fifteen years as shown in the table above, considers Ghanaians to constitute the largest migrant minority group from Sub-Saharan Africa in the Netherlands. Ghanaian migrant population comes next after only the Moroccans and the war-torn Somalians in the whole of Africa. Officially registered Ghanaian migrant population in Netherlands in 2003 was 18,000. Of this figure indicated for 2003, 12,000 were considered to be first generation migrants with the remaining 6,000 regarded as second generation migrants. It is also shown that 8,300 out of the 2003

\textsuperscript{105} Ter Haar, \textit{Halfway to Paradise}, 124-125.
\textsuperscript{107} Source: Statistical yearbook of the Netherlands, 2004.
migrant population are between the ages of 30-49, with only 800 out of the figure being 50 years or above. 108 This is a clear indication that it is mostly the able-bodied Ghanaians who are mostly stimulated by changing conditions at home to emigrate from Ghana to the Western societies.

It is worthy of note that Ghana has a long tradition of migration and for that reason many Ghanaians are known to have built up a personal history of migration from childhood to adulthood, notably within its own borders. Besides this internal migration some adult Ghanaians are known to have migrated in the course of their lives to seek for greener pastures in neighboring countries like Ivory Coast, Liberia and Nigeria where they could assure themselves of better job opportunities in some years past. As a matter of fact before heading towards Europe, some Ghanaian immigrants had first tried to secure better living conditions elsewhere in the African continent. It is also on record that as far back as the late 1950s some Ghanaians had migrated to Europe notably United Kingdom for further studies, in search of work and better living conditions and also for protection from political unrest or persecution. Until the Immigration Act of 1971, United Kingdom was easily accessible to Commonwealth citizens like Ghanaians to obtain permanent residence. However, the rapid rate of Ghanaian emigration to Europe for the past two decades is an unprecedented phenomenon. Omenyo in his work on ‘A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana’, has observed that there is hardly a family in Ashanti and Brong Ahafo, for instance, where there is no member who has been supported to migrate abroad, as ‘economic refugee’ who in turn is expected to support the family back at home. Young people save and borrow large sums of money to secure relevant documents to travel abroad. 109

Research in many places has shown that most of the Ghanaian migrants did not originally plan to stay permanently in Europe. The fundamental aim of Ghanaian migrants most of whom see themselves as breadwinners for the family is to acquire the basic necessities of life, to earn money to support the family back at home, and to secure a roof over a family’s head. The Ghanaian housing industry of recent years is believed to be largely dependent on overseas remittances. 110 Similarly, some Ghanaian labor migrants endeavor to make some savings, which eventually enable them to own a small business which provide job for a few who may otherwise remain jobless in a country where job opportunities are woefully inadequate for even the highly qualified professionals.

109 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 22.
110 Ter Haar, Halfway to Paradise, 134.
The unprecedented large scale Ghanaian migration into Europe has its own implications for religion in general and Christianity in particular. It has deepened the religious quest and kindled the faith of many a potential and aspiring emigrant to prayerfully rely on God for the realization of his or her ambition. People with such pressing needs frequent Pentecostal/charismatic prayer retreats and even mainline church vigils with urgent prayer request for the acquisition of visa to travel to Europe or the United States.\textsuperscript{111} This may account for the significant observation that many of the recent Ghanaian immigrants in Europe are fervent Christians, whose arrival has led to the founding or patronizing of both Pentecostal and mainline Churches all over Europe.

When socio-economic and political developments in the country in the 1980s had stimulated large-scale Ghanaian emigration to Europe, they were increasingly drawn to places with which they have little prior political historical connection,\textsuperscript{112} such as Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, France and Italy. Britain which had been a former colonial power and which was previously easily accessible to Commonwealth citizens like Ghanaians had since the establishment of the immigration Act of 1971 made it increasingly difficult for commonwealth citizens to obtain permanent residence, hence many Ghanaian emigrants had to turn to continental Europe. By early 1980s, Hamburg in Germany was becoming a main attraction to Ghanaian emigrants to Europe. By the early 1980s, Germany immigration policies were a bit relaxed so that Ghanaian migrants with three months visa to Germany could easily get work there for that period without having to submit special documents. This led to a rapid rate of Ghanaian emigration to Germany with a spin-off effect over the years on neighbouring countries, such as Belgium, France, Italy and Netherlands in particular which together with Germany is the focus of this study as related to the newly emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches in the said countries.\textsuperscript{113}

\section*{1.6 Conclusion}

This chapter is an attempt to give an overview of the demographic and the politico-socio-economic developments in Ghana as they affect Ghanaian migration. It has been clearly

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{111} Omenyo, \textit{Pentecost outside Pentecostalism}, 23.
\textsuperscript{112} Ter Haar, \textit{Halfway to Paradise}, i.
\end{flushleft}
established in this chapter that large-scale Ghanaian migration to Europe in recent years has been stimulated by changing conditions at home over the years. In the first place, the decline of the Ghanaian economy for a long period of time resulted in deteriorating economic conditions which led to increasing political instability, which caused people to immigrate to Western countries. It was also observed that the mass education policy first introduced by the government of the first Republic was not matched by the development of the labor market. This eventually gave rise to high unemployment among many qualified people which also became an important factor in the decision to migrate to seek economic salvation in Europe and the United States.

It has also been established that Ghanaians in general are intensely religious and for that reason, religion is seen to be closely interwoven with all their habits, customs and modes of thought. We have seen that the Akan traditional religious system which is illustrative of Ghana’s traditional religious systems is focused on need and for that reason it is very adaptable and accommodating to other religious systems that make inroads into the Ghanaian culture, provided it can bring practical solution to problems here and now. This is the more reason why the Ghanaian society is generally tolerant of religions like Islam, Christianity and other new religious movements. The religious worldview of the Ghanaian holds the belief that the spiritual is immanent and impinges directly on the living. For that reason, salvation in the traditional African world involves a certain view of the realm of spirit-power and its effects upon the physical and spiritual dimensions of human existence. This therefore calls for “a Saviour” who proves himself capable of saving them from the terrors and fears which they experience in their traditional worldview. This is considered as an important factor that makes the Ghanaian religious belief and worldview hold a vital preparation for the Gospel of Christ.

The background information as presented here in this chapter is crucial for a good understanding of the religious encounter of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians in Europe as we shall discuss in chapter three and subsequent chapters. Even though Ghanaian churches established in Europe have developed a life of their own, the flow of people and ideas from Ghana to Europe continue to be of great significance. In the next chapter we shall trace the development of the mainline Churches in Ghana over the years, particularly the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Methodist Church Ghana. These Churches are the mother-Churches of the two mainline Protestant Churches which have emerged recently in Germany and the Netherlands and which are the focus of this study.
CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF MAINLINE CHURCHES IN GHANA

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter an attempt is made to trace the history of Christianity in Ghana so as to give the reader an insight into how Christianity emerged on the Ghanaian religious scene and how indigenous Ghanaians responded to it. For the sake of emphasis and convenience, the subject matter of this chapter is treated under two main divisions namely ‘mission history’ and ‘church history’. ‘Mission history’ which is the focus of the first part of the chapter, covers the activities of Western missionaries in concert with their indigenous partners and agents between the 15th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Similarly, the second part of the chapter which focuses on ‘church history’ of the mainline churches covers the period when the indigenous Christians largely took up leadership of the various churches with their European counterparts (in most cases) serving under them as partners in mission or fraternal workers. Research in ‘mission history’ in this chapter has been limited to just a cross-section of the mainline churches in Ghana. Similarly research into ‘church history’ in the second part, of the chapter has been limited to two mainline Protestant churches in Ghana, namely the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches whose overseas congregations in Germany and the Netherlands are the focus of this study.

2.2 Mission History of Mainline Churches in Ghana

The activities of Western missionaries in Ghana were in two phases. The first phase began with the arrival of the earliest Portuguese traders who were accompanied by Franciscan and Augustinian friars who served as chaplains in the latter part of the 15th century. The earliest evangelistic effort made by these Roman Catholic chaplains as well as others following immediately after them to make converts of the indigenous people did not make any significant impact and consequently did not yield any abiding fruits. The second stream of

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114 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 42.
115 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 42.
enduring missionary work which produced the current mainline churches in Ghana which is under study in this work started in the 19th century.

2.2.1 Early Roman Catholic Missionary Endeavours

The first missionary attempt to introduce Christianity to Ghana was made in the 15th century by Roman Catholic Priests who accompanied the earliest Portuguese explorers and traders as chaplains. The Portuguese explorers were initially inspired and sponsored by Prince Henry the Navigator who among other things aimed at the following:

1. To open up trade relations with people in gold on the West Coast of Africa.
2. To evangelize Africa and thereby undermine the spread and influence of Islam.

The Portuguese traders landed at Shama, a coastal town on the Gold Coast in 1471 and immediately began trading with the people exchanging ammunition for gold. The trade was very profitable and therefore the Portuguese decided to build a Castle to protect their trade. On January 20, 1482, a group sent by King George II of Portugal and led by Don Diego de Azambuja landed at Elmina in the Gold Coast. They erected an altar at the foot of a tree and celebrated the first Holy Mass and

‘prayed for the conversion of the natives from idolatry and the perpetual prosperity of the church, which they intended to erect upon the spot.’

A Castle was built and named Saint George the Patron Saint of Portugal. A church was built in the Castle to take care of the religious needs of the Portuguese traders. Chaplains who were

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117 Kpobi, ‘African Chaplains in Seventeenth Century West Africa’, 143-145. Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), the son of the Portuguese king John I, was a Commander of the Portugal Crusaders Order of Knights of Christ who played an important role in the capture of North African Coastal town called Ceuta in 1415. He was accordingly made the Governor of Ceuta and from there determined to check the Muslim advance down the Coast of Africa.
118 The trade in ammunitions eventually increased tribal wars in the Gold Coast.
119 The Elmina Castle was built in 1482. The building of the castle was ordered by King George II of Portugal as his Christian duty to defend the Portuguese traders in the Gold Coast.
sent to serve the spiritual needs of these traders made efforts to make converts among the indigenous people. Their perception of the local people was

‘idolatrous people who needed to be introduced to the Christian Faith.’  

The first Baptisms in Ghana took place in 1503 following the opening of a trading station at Efutu. It is recorded that in 1503, the Paramount Chief of Efutu was converted and many of his people were baptized. However this mass conversion seemed to be short-lived. It was ten years later, in 1513, that a Portuguese called Caldeira wrote from Elmina to the King of Portugal that the King (Paramount Chief) of Efutu wished to be a Christian and that all his land should become Christian as well. The method the Portuguese adopted to win Kings was that they presented them with gifts. Another effort the chaplains made to win converts was the establishment of schools to provide the children with a mixture of Christian and Western education. This had an added benefit of using trained local people to assist them in their trade.  

The slave trade business also sprang up and slaves were brought from Congo and Benin and sold to the people at Elmina for gold. With the arrival of more missionaries in Elmina between 1572 and 1573 a more serious missionary work began at Elmina and other towns along the coast. In 1632 a new Governor brought to Elmina, statues of Saint Mary, Saint Francis, and Saint Anthony. It is reported that a man with a mental problem was miraculously healed at the statue of Saint Anthony and so the statue was so much revered at Elmina. It is said that between 1631 and 1632 there were about four hundred Christians among the indigenous people in Elmina and two hundred Catholics in Axim, another mission station along the coast.

In 1598 the Dutch entered the trade followed by the Spanish and the French. The Dutch built forts at Komenda and Kormantsi, both towns along the coast. In 1637, the French started a mission station at Assini but that was not successful after four of the six missionaries died. Meanwhile the Dutch trading ships were preoccupied with military struggles against their Portuguese rivals to control the trades along the West Coast. In 1637 the Elmina Castle was surrendered by the Portuguese to the Dutch and in 1642 they were again dislodged by the Dutch from their next station in Axim. When the Portuguese left in 1642, Catholicism left

123 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 169.
with them. Even though the Portuguese paid attention to missionary work between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, nothing permanent had resulted from its activities by the middle of eighteenth century. What remained of the Catholic Church was a pagan shrine at Elmina said to contain a statue of Saint Anthony.  

The failure of the Portuguese Catholic mission could be attributed to a number of factors which include the following:

1. The Portuguese got more interested in trading than in missionary work.
2. Mass conversion was superficial; the natives were more interested in the white man’s gifts and did not understand the issues involved in baptism.
3. There was a language problem. They relied more on interpreters and misinterpretation resulted.
4. Most of the Portuguese were not properly trained as missionaries and therefore they could not meet the challenges posed by African spiritual sensibility.

### 2.2.2 Moravian United Brethren Mission

The expulsion of the Portuguese traders from the Gold Coast cleared the way for the establishment of Protestant missions. Protestant traders who took over from the Portuguese encouraged missionaries from Northern Europe including Denmark, Holland and Britain to work among the local population. The officers and chaplains of the European Castles and Forts along the coast also pioneered the sponsorship of individual West African converts who were sent for further training in Europe so that they could return to work amongst their own people.

It is on record that in 1722, Rev. Elias Svane the Protestant chaplain at the Danish Castle at Osu, Accra, was encouraged by King Frederick IV of Denmark to start a school at the Castle. The King also asked the chaplain to bring two mulato children on his return to be trained. In 1726, two mulato children namely Christian Jacob Protten and Frederick Pederson Svane were taken to Denmark. On arrival, the two were baptized, King Frederick acting as their godfather. After nine years stay in Denmark, F.P, Svane returned to the Gold Coast as a freelance evangelist. Even though he did not lose the use of the mother tongue, he found it difficult to explain his Christian Faith in his first language and for that reason he was not

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125 Debrunner, *A History of Christianity*, 33
126 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 169.
127 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 169
successful in evangelizing his native people. He finally had to content himself with staying in
the Castle as a catechist, but eventually ended up as a frustrated man when he faced acute
financial constraints. 128

In 1735, Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf met with Christian Jacob Protten in Copenhagen,
recruited him to join the Moravian Brethren and eventually sponsored him as missionary to
work amongst his own people in the Gold Coast. When Protten arrived, he endeavored to start
a school for the mulato children in Elmina. He also persevered to reach out to his own people
with the Gospel but was not successful mainly because many of the native people were hostile
to the new religion. He suffered a serious fever and was recalled home by Count Zinzendorf.
He returned to the Gold Coast in 1756 to serve as a catechist at the Christianborg Castle, Osu.
He went back to Europe in 1761 where he endeavored to translate bits of the Bible into two
native languages (Twi and Ga). He also prepared some short Rudimentary grammar in Twi
and Ga (the first ever Ghanaian idiom printed), which he wanted to use for the school children
on his return and also leave copies for future missionaries sent by the Moravian Brethren. In
1764, he was sent back with the support of the Moravian Brethren, but unfortunately he lost
most of his materials in the surf when the boat he was using capsized in the process of
arriving. From 1764 until his death in 1769, he continued to work as catechist. 129

2.2.3  Netherlands Reformed Mission

The first missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church to start work in Ghana was Rev. Dr.
Jacobus Eliezer Johannes Capitein. He was an ex-slave boy taken from the Gold Coast to
Holland in 1726, by Jacobus van Gogh, the officer in charge of Shama Fort. He started
schooling in The Hague studying Dutch, German and Latin and showed keen interest in

Zinzendorf (1700-1760) was a nobleman of Saxony and a Pietist educated in Halle University. He
permitted a persecuted group from Bohemia to use part of this land as refuge. This group descended
from people who were sympathetic to John Huss’ Christian beliefs. They had established their church
in the Province of Moravia. In 1727, Count Zinzendorf organized these people who lived a strict and
devoted life under the name ‘United Brethren’ and eventually became their spiritual leader. These
Moravian Brethren became the first Protestant Group to send missionaries all around the world. See
‘Moravian Missions’ in: A.S. Moreau (ed.), Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions, Grand Rapids:
Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions, 1044-1045.
Theology. He later proceeded to the Leiden University where he earned a doctorate degree. He became very popular and distinguished himself among his colleagues as a philosopher and preached inspiring sermons which were printed for sale. The Dutch Reformed Church ordained him in 1742 as the first African to be ordained by a Protestant church. After his ordination, he decided to come immediately to Africa and arrived the same year at Elmina to begin work in the Gold Coast at the age of 25.

For the first five years, he was one of the foremost leaders in the spread of education. He succeeded in establishing a school in Elmina for the mulatto children. He also opened one for African children. News of his school spread throughout the country and it is believed that King Opoku Ware I of the powerful Ashanti Kingdom sent some children to receive tuition under him. As an African who had a specific charge among others to evangelize Africans, he had a deep burden to win African converts and for that reason he started a project of translating into Fanti (a local language) the Twelve Articles of the Apostles’ Creed, which was published in 1744. Capitein however became frustrated when he began to face a lot of problems like opposition, lack of qualified assistants and financial constraints which eventually led to his resignation in 1744. He died in 1747 at the age of 30. The early missionary endeavours of the Moravian United Brethren and that of the Netherlands Reformed Mission were apparently unsuccessful; however their significance lies in the fact that the African boys who were trained as a result of their mission in the Gold Coast prepared the ground for the work of the nineteenth century missionaries.

2.2.4 The Church of England’s Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG)

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) was founded in London, England in 1701 as an autonomous Anglican missionary society. The two-fold intention for its formation was to bolster Anglican Christianity among emigrants settled in the diversifying religious landscape of British colonies in North America and the Caribbean, and to secure “the conversion of heathens and infidels” in these colonies.

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Some fifty years later, in 1751, the presence of the SPG was established in the Gold Coast by the assumption of duty of Rev. Thomas Thompson (1708-1773) as the pioneer English chaplain and missionary to Ghana. In 1745, Rev. Thompson left a promising position as Fellow and Dean of Christ’s College Cambridge, to become missionary under the SPG to New Jersey in America. As Thompson worked among the English settlers in New Jersey he came in contact with Afro-American slaves and this inspired him to take the Gospel to Africans. In 1751 when the need arose to send missionaries to West Africa, Thompson offered himself to come to Cape Coast as a chaplain to the Castle and a missionary of the SPG. He arrived in Cape Coast in 1752 as the first Anglican missionary to any part of Africa and worked in the Gold Coast until 1756 when he returned to England on health grounds.

During his brief time in Africa, he engaged in evangelism and teaching. C.N. Omenyo citing Adrian Hastings and J.D.K. Ekem observes that Thompson could not make much impact among the indigenous people for the two major reasons: that he was first and foremost a heavily loaded chaplain rather than a missionary and besides that he had to run a school for children at the Castle. Secondly, his approach to the local people was faulty for the fact that he misinterpreted their traditional religious system and spirituality. Thompson is quoted in his report as saying,

‘...the folly of their idolatrous and superstitious rites…I could not find by what handle I might take them…spiritual matters made no impression on them.’

Thompson in his evangelistic approach decided not to insist much at first upon points of Christian doctrine but to strike at their false worship and to endeavour to convince them of their absurd notions…the lie cannot fully be disproved till the truth is told. Thompson felt that the surest way to effective evangelism was for him to speak Fanti, which he managed to speak to some extent after a very long struggle. It is believed that Thompson’s greatest contribution to evangelism in Ghana was his commitment towards systematic training of African assistants. He baptized a number of African converts especially children. Three of the African converts, boys under the age of twelve were sent to England to be educated for the

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136 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 76-77.
137 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 77.
purpose of returning to the Gold Coast as workers among their own people. Two of the three died but the third, Philip Quaque survived.

**Philip Quaque**

Philip Quaque (1741-1816) was born to a wealthy African slave trader known as Birempong Cudjo. He was the only one who survived among the three African boys recommended in 1754 to be educated and trained in England. In England he did well in his studies and was later ordained in 1765 as the first African and first non-European since the Reformation to receive Holy Orders in the Church of England. He returned to the Gold Coast under the SPG in February 1766 as a missionary, schoolmaster, and catechist to the Negroes on the Gold Coast, as well as chaplain to English merchants at Cape Coast. Quaque founded a school in Cape Coast and later in other coastal towns like Anomabu, Winneba, Sekondi and Dixcove and thus began the work he will diligently perform till his death some fifty years later.

‘Unfortunately, despite his ordination, he experienced continual opposition to his labours. He sought to perform his priestly duties among the European colonialist, but their debauchery and ridicule made his work difficult to carry out and not surprisingly, also discouraged African response to his efforts.’

The other negative factor that affected his work was that he had lost his first language while in England, and since he could not communicate to his own people in his mother tongue, he had to use an interpreter. Over the fifty years of missionary work, he managed to baptize not quite more than two hundred people and was not successful in getting his own father converted. Despite the relative paucity of results, Quaque’s pioneering of African leadership and pastoral responsibility stands as one of early landmarks in missionary work in Africa.

The abiding legacy he left behind was the firm foundation he laid in formal education in the Gold Coast that was later built on. Some of his pupils later were to be agents of the

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140 Moreau, ‘Quaque Philip’, 804.
planting of and nurturing of Methodism as well as advocates of self-government in the Gold Coast.\textsuperscript{142}

2.2.5 Basel Evangelical Mission Society

The second phase of missionary work in Ghana begun with the arrival of missionaries of the Basel Evangelical Mission Society (BM). The BM was established in 1815 out of a desire to provide training for German-speaking missionaries going abroad. It had its roots in early German pietism and revival movements. From its very beginning, the BM operated as a non-denominational ecumenical missionary society drawing support from churches of Lutheran, Reformed, and Free Church traditions in Germany and German speaking parts of Switzerland and Austria.\textsuperscript{143} The BM initially committed itself to training and preparing persons from different denominational backgrounds to serve with various Protestant missionary societies in various parts of the world, but some years later, it began sending missionaries to its own designated mission fields. The missionaries were committed to their pietistic ethos which emphasized ‘personal conversion’ to Christ; a strong Christian fellowship; centrality of the Bible; a keen sense of prayer and a deep commitment to mission and evangelism.\textsuperscript{144} Most of the missionaries were raised up in traditional Central European villages and were mainly farmers and artisans and were more inclined towards Christian village community life and therefore it is not surprising that they took this vision with them to the mission field.\textsuperscript{145} The arrival of the first Basel missionaries at the Gold Coast was in response to a request made by Major de Richelieu, the Danish Governor who envisaged the ‘evangelization’ and ‘civilization’ of the indigenous population of the Danish Government’s Protectorate that extended from Christiansburg, Accra, to Keta along the Coast to the interior parts of the Gold Coast.\textsuperscript{146}

The first batch of four missionaries arrived at Christiansburg on December 18, 1828, but the entire group unfortunately fell sick and died within four years. In 1832, a new set of three

\textsuperscript{142} P. Jenkins, ‘The Anglican Church in Ghana, 1905-1924 (1)’, \textit{Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana}, XV, 23.


\textsuperscript{145} Jenkins, \textit{A Short History of the Basel Mission}, 11.

\textsuperscript{146} N.T. Clerk, \textit{A Short Centenary Sketch: The Settlement of West Indian immigrants on the Gold Coast under the auspices of the erstwhile Basel Evangelical Missionary Society.1843-1943}, Basel: Basel Mission, no date 7.
missionaries arrived, out of which two died leaving behind Andreas Riis (1804-1854)\textsuperscript{147} When Riis became dissatisfied with serving the European community coupled with unhealthy conditions at the coast, he moved about fifty kilometers north of Accra into the Akropong-Akwapim hills where he established a station in 1835.\textsuperscript{148} On November 3, 1837, three more missionaries arrived to join Riis but unfortunately all the three missionaries died within a few years, leaving once again Riis alone behind. Even though Riis, the only survivor amongst the Basel missionaries, worked with all earnestness, by 1840 his effort had not been rewarded with a single convert. In view of this the BM Directors contemplated abandoning the Gold Coast Mission and asking Riis to return home. Upon the insistence of Riis, the Mission Directors decided to continue with the Mission and for that reason sent him to the West Indies to recruit Afro-Caribbean colonists. He chose twenty- four former slaves known for their religious devotion and technical skills as farmers and craftsmen, and returned with them to Akropong in 1843.\textsuperscript{149} Their arrival marked the beginning of a major breakthrough of the BM work on the Gold Coast. In this second missionary attempt they concentrated more on the youth since the adult population was not quite open to the Gospel. This strategy proved quite effective and by 1848 (five years after the second major attempt), forty native people had been converted at both Akropong and Christiansborg, and at least three hundred children received regular Bible teachings as well as academic training. From 1848 onwards, the BM began to experience considerable growth, spreading from Akropong the nerve center and expanding to the length and breadth of the country. By 1914 when the World War I broke out the total Christian population of the Basel Mission were 6,782 in 41 established congregations.\textsuperscript{150}

From 1914 onwards, the work of the missionaries was restricted by the British colonial authorities who were suspicious of them for the fact that around 70\% of them were of German background even though the BM itself maintained a neutral stand on the war. The Basel missionaries were eventually expelled from the Gold Coast on 16\textsuperscript{th} December, 1917 after

\textsuperscript{147} Andreas Riis (1804-1854) was born in Denmark; by trade he was a glassmaker. He studied at the Basel Mission’s Seminary before being posted as a Chaplain to the Danish Christiansborg enclave in the Gold Coast.


\textsuperscript{149} Van der Heyden & Pierard, ‘Riss Andreas’, 835.

\textsuperscript{150} Carl C. Reindorf, \textit{The History of the Gold Coast and Asante 1550-1800}, Basel, 1951 (2\textsuperscript{nd} edition), 220.
nearly ninety years of active missionary work in the country. The BM experienced growth in the following major areas besides its numerical growth and geographical expansion: In the first place, they concentrated much on literary development. Schools were opened at all mission stations ranging from kindergarten, primary and middle schools to the Theological seminary at Akropong. The seminary was to train teachers and catechists for four or five years to take care of the young congregations. The fifth year was concentrated on basic theological subjects including biblical Greek. This is a clear indication that the Basel missionaries were keeping to their vision of training indigenous leaders to take over the future work from them.

The Basel Mission considered it an obligation to bring the Gospel to the natives in their own language. They believed that religious worship becomes more meaningful in one’s own cultural setting, and therefore the Africans were to hear the Gospel preached, taught and read in their own language. To achieve this objective, two missionaries namely Johannes Gottlieb Christaller (1827-1895) and Johanness Zimmerman (1825-1876) were sent to the Gold Coast to study Twi and Ga, two of the main Ghanaian languages and to develop grammar for them. Christaller endeavoured to translate the Bible into Twi by 1871, as well as a brilliant work on a comprehensive Twi dictionary and grammar, and an Encyclopaedia of Akan life by 1879. Zimmerman also endeavoured to translate the Bible into Ga, and worked on a translation of Luther’s Catechism as well as Ga grammar. Christaller’s vernacular work contributed immensely in raising the Twi language to a literary level.

Another area that the Basel Mission committed itself to was that of social services and trade. The mission established a Trading Company which came to be known as Union Trading Company (UTC) which apart from providing logistical support for the missionaries, served as an example of honest Christian business and a legitimate and viable alternative to the Slave Trade. The Basel Missionaries embarked on industrial training and trained young people in trades like carpentry, blacksmithing, masonry, bookbinding, pottery and basketry. They introduced variety of crops and expanded the cocoa industry. The BM also provided other social services such as hospitals and clinics, sinking of wells, and construction of roads. The contribution of the Basel Mission towards the development of the Gold Coast and it’s

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151 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 56.
Christianity was quite immense, particularly in terms of the development of the vernacular into a literary level and thus provided the basis of all later works in the native language. This was one positive way of looking at the mission’s commitment towards inculturation of Christianity.

The missionaries had great difficulty in addressing the spiritual sensibilities of the communities that they were committed to evangelize. They had a lot of problems with traditional beliefs and practices and with the worldview that these beliefs and practices imply. It was in view of this that the Christian converts were physically uprooted from among their families and resettled in Christian quarters (Salem) to avoid being contaminated by traditional religious practices. This approach however resulted in apparent conflicts and state of confusion not knowing which is which. African traditional beliefs and practices were frowned upon by the missionaries as mere superstition. However, among church members there was a heightened belief in the existence of potent spiritual forces that could interfere in the affairs of humans either for good or evil. They did not only believe but they also feared evil powers which included witchcraft. Meanwhile the existence of witchcraft was officially denied by the church, despite the fact that the inherent fear of such evil powers continued to haunt church members to the extent that they were sometimes secretly attracted to the neo-traditional cults or anti-witchcraft shrines. The European missionaries actually had great difficulty in coming to terms with the traditional beliefs and the worldview of the Africans among when they worked. In view of this, they could hardly communicate at the wavelength of the people through their worldview.

2.2.6 Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS)

The beginning of Methodism in Ghana is attributed to both an earnest local initiative by Africans and remarkable European missionary endeavours. It all started when some of the products of Philip Quaque’s (1741-1816) Castle school in their quest for deeper knowledge of the Word of God as the rule of life banded themselves together in what came to be known as ‘the Bible Band’ or ‘The Meeting’ at places like Cape Coast, Dixcove, Anomabu and Dominasi, all towns along the Coast. It so happened that the Cape Coast branch of ‘the Bible Band’ came into contact with Captain Potter, an English sailor who was a Wesleyan Methodist and made an appeal through him for copies of the Bible and possibly a missionary

from Britain to teach and guide them in their Christian faith. Impressed about their zeal, Potter made a strong case with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS)\textsuperscript{156} in London, and to strengthen his point he cited ‘the evil of the slave trade and the need to compensate Africa’.\textsuperscript{157}

The WMMS responded promptly by sending the Bibles requested for and in addition to that the missionary Rev. Joseph Dunwell who arrived at Cape Coast on 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1835. Dunwell was filled with joy when he saw the eagerness of the members of ‘the Meeting’. He preached his first sermon to the group at the house of their leader on Sunday 4\textsuperscript{th} January. Four days later, a class of 12 members was formed. An outstanding character among them was Joseph Smith, who had been the schoolmaster, of the Castle school in Cape Coast since 1829. New applicants for membership came from a cross section of the community, educated and illiterate alike. Dunwell drew them in and as membership grew in numbers, he divided the class meeting into two and issued to 50 of them the first Methodist membership cards (class-tickets), ever given in Ghana, on 26\textsuperscript{th} March, 1835. The Christian practice of fellowship and prayerfulness of the members included singing, seeking, reading, and interpreting God’s Holy Word. Dunwell’s instruction and inspiring sermons, meditation and witness, organizational ability for conducting class-meetings and appealing extempore prayers helped to give birth to the Methodist Church in Ghana.

Dunwell took the opportunity during the Easter weekend of 1835 to introduce another aspect of contemporary Methodist practice, ‘The Love Feast.’ Many of the congregation of 80 had come from different parts of the Coast, from Christian Fellowship groups. They had been separated by long distance and had been waiting for a long time for someone to bring them together, particularly for religious instructions.

Unfortunately, Dunwell was taken ill and passed away on 24\textsuperscript{th} June 1835, just about six months after his arrival. That very morning just before he died, he sent for Joseph Smith and asked him to “watch over the flock, and strengthen them in the Lord.”\textsuperscript{158} Following the death of Dunwell, the WMMS sent for his replacement two missionary couples namely, Rev. & Mrs. George Wrigley and Rev. & Mrs Peter Harrop in 1836 and 1837 respectively. Again, very unfortunately most of them did not live to see the first anniversary of their arrival in Ghana due to sickness that eventually led to their death.

\textsuperscript{156} The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) was founded in England in 1813 with the aim of coordinating missionary work abroad.
\textsuperscript{157} Sanneh, \textit{West African Christianity}, 114.
\textsuperscript{158} Bartels, \textit{The Roots of Ghana Methodism}, 19.
Rev. George Wrigley, who arrived on 15th September 1836, had a special concern for the young members and though there was a flourishing school for boys in the Castle, he sought to establish a second under church supervision. Moreover, Wrigley applied himself unspARINGLY to the learning of Fanti (a local language) and translated the Conference Catechism, the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and portions of the New Testament into that language. He was able to read the Ten Commandments and to preach in Fanti after eight months stay. 159

Following the death of Rev. and Mrs. Peter Harrop, the third missionary couple and successor to Rev. George Wrigley, the WMMS took a wise decision to send a missionary with African blood who would be able to cope with prevailing hazards such as the climate and tropical diseases. In view of this Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman (1806-1890), the son of a black African father and a white English mother born in England two years after the slave trade had been abolished was sent to the Gold Coast. He was accompanied by his wife and arrived at Cape Coast on 3rd January, 1838. 160 Freeman’s African roots gave him an interest in African missions. Six weeks after their arrival, Mrs. Freeman suffered severe pains in the stomach and died on 20th February. In spite of this loss, coupled with ill health from which he recovered shortly Freeman did not go back to England as the WMMS had proposed. Within six months of his arrival, Freeman encouraged and inspired the people of Cape Coast to complete the building of their chapel, the first of its kind which was dedicated on 10th June 1838. He organized his first missionary meeting or evangelistic crusade which led to the founding of the Methodist Church in Accra on 1st November 1838. He vigorously pursued education and leadership development, which contributed, immensely to the grooming of African leadership for the Church. Right from the beginning, young men who received training and intensive instructions at the Mission House were sent out on Sundays to teach in Sunday schools for children and adults. Besides their normal Sunday appointments, some of these lay teachers and preachers took concrete initiatives of starting worship services at places that the missionaries had not entered yet.

Having consolidated gains made in terms of Methodist congregations established in towns along the Coast, Freeman embarked on a missionary journey to Kumasi in the hinterland, the seat of kingship of the great Asante kingdom, and arrived on 1st April 1839. 161 Once in

159 Agbeti, West African Church History, 55-56.
Kumasi Freeman sought audience with the Asantehene.\textsuperscript{162} He capitalized on an already cordial relationship established by one James Hayford with the Asante king. Hayford was a keen Fanti Methodist (from the Coast) serving the British Administration in Kumasi. It is believed that Hayford had taken the initiative to organize Methodist services for Fantis and others in Kumasi and also at the Asantehene’s palace. Freeman capitalized on the already established friendly relationship with the Asantehene’s Palace and the groundwork done by Hayford as bases to establish a Methodist station in Kumasi in the Asante Kingdom between 1841 and 1842.\textsuperscript{163} With the expansion of the Evangelistic work, more missionaries were needed and so upon the request made by Freeman, three missionaries namely Rev. Josiah, Rev. Robert Brooking and Mrs. Mycook were sent over to assist him, arriving on 13\textsuperscript{th} January, 1840. This additional missionary support enabled Freeman to travel with William de Graft\textsuperscript{164} to England in 1840 to raise funds, introduce the African evangelist (William de Graft) and to attract more missionaries to the Gold Coast. Methodism continued to spread across the length and breadth of the Gold Coast and by 1918 the Methodist Church had 261 congregations (societies) a total membership of 78,252, 12 European missionaries, 42 African ministers and 665 African Catechist and teachers. The Methodist Church continued to enjoy significant growth to become the largest Mission Church on the Gold Coast by 1930 with a record membership of 99,207.\textsuperscript{165} Agbeti points out that

‘the main reason for the rapid expansion of Methodist work during the missionary stage was that right from the very beginning the European missionaries made good use of the indigenous converts as evangelists. It was this band of faithful African helpers who kept the work alive even when the European staff was not adequate.’\textsuperscript{166}

As already has been pointed out, although some of the missionaries like Wrigley took the initiative to learn the Fanti language and developed vernacular literature, much was not achieved in this area by successive missionaries. Most of them did not put in much effort to learn the language in the areas they worked and thus had to speak through interpreters.

\textsuperscript{162} Asantehene is the local title for the King of the Asante kingdom.
\textsuperscript{164} William de Graft was one of the African young men and assistant to Freeman who followed Freeman extensively in his missionary travels which took him beyond Ghana to Dahomey, now Republic of Benin and Nigeria etc. where he assisted in establishing Methodist congregations.
\textsuperscript{165} Omenyo, \textit{Pentecost outside Pentecostalism}, 58.
\textsuperscript{166} Agbeti, \textit{West African Church History}, 57.
Freeman for instance never learned the language however he established good relationships and made friends with powerful Africans who said,

‘He was a peace maker among Africans and between England and African kingdoms.’

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The Educational endeavours of the WMMS were quite remarkable opening schools at all missionary stations ranging from primary and middle schools to Training Colleges and Vocational Institutions. The Mfantsipim (Boys) School and Wesley Girls High School founded in 1876 and 1884 respectively happen to be the first secondary schools established in Ghana and are among the leading schools in Ghana that have produced the cream of the country’s manpower who were also at the forefront in the country’s struggle for Independence.168

2.2.7 Second Missionary attempt by the Roman Catholics

This second missionary attempt forms part of the second major stream of missionary work in Ghana. Unlike the previous one, this second attempt began with all earnestness upon the arrival of two priests of the Society of African Missions (SMA), namely Fathers Euguste Moreau and Augustus Murat at Elmina in Ghana on May 18, 1880. These SMA missionaries were to be guided in their work by a document established to give clear guidance for the Christianization of ‘mission fields’ by Catholic missionaries. One significant principle of the guidelines has been stated by Bishop J. Osei-Bonsu:

‘…the Evangelisers were to study religious and social context to which they were sent to preach and teach; and that they were to avoid imposing on the people their own cultures and ideologies. Be that as it may, Propaganda Fide was to ensure that while the doctrines and practices of the Church were to be introduced to the peoples without any adulteration, the cultural sensitivities of the people were to be respected. The principle was that whatever in the peoples way of life was found suitable for the promotion of the Gospel was to be accepted….’ 169

167 Neumann, ‘Freeman Thomas Birch (1806-1890)’, 372.
The issue of inculturation is obviously addressed in these guidelines which sought to overcome the shortcomings of the earlier missionary attempts by highlighting the need for sensitivity for the culture and spirituality of the people to be evangelised. The SMA missionaries made a modest attempt at inculturation by learning Fanti, which enabled Father Burget to produce the first Catechism in Fante by 1892. This was followed by a new set of Catechism produced by the missionaries in 1908. The missionaries as part of their missionary endeavours were committed to setting up schools and the training of their pupils in agriculture. These missionaries were joined in 1883 by the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles Society who also aimed at promoting the education of girls alongside the SMA. 170

The Roman Catholic missionaries advanced from Elmina (their first mission station) to open mission stations right from the Coast to the hinterlands and eventually to Northern Ghana by 1906. The Roman Catholic Church expanded considerably over the years and after forty years of restart of missionary work, Bishop Ignace Hummel, the SMA third Vicar Apostolic of the Gold Coast (Ghana), gave an impressive report on the growth of the Church as follows: 35,000 baptized, 25,000 catechumens, 10 parishes, 364 out stations, 301 chapels, 22 Priests, 13 sisters and 85 schools with 4,734 boys and girls on roll. 171 This was when the Gold Coast recorded a population of 2.3 million.

In spite of the modest initial attempts at inculturation by the SMA missionaries and the remarkable achievements of the Church over the years, some contemporary scholars within the Roman Catholic Church have their doubts about the achievements of the Catholic missionaries in terms of inculturation and meeting the challenges posed by African spiritual sensibility. Omenyo quotes the following observation made by J. Osei-Bonsu in a working document of the First National Catholic Pastoral Congress, in Cape Coast in 1997:

‘It is remarkable that the teaching of the Church’s doctrines was until recently, done through the use of such questions and answer Catechisms. Since many things were to be studied by heart, little opportunity was given for assessing the relevance of the many good elements in the people’s religious and social traditions. For many years the Church’s liturgy was overwhelming regulated by rubrics that were universally relevant. Missionaries observed these meticulously as they had been taught in the devotional life and practice of their home churches. The Fathers at Elmina


170 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 46.

administered the Sacraments as they had been taught in Europe. The first generation of Catholics along the Coast could sing the *Tu es Petrus* at pontifical ceremonies in adulterated Latin. They may not have understood much of what they sung, but at least they were assured that they were doing something authentically Catholic. A commentator states an opinion on the issue of the liturgy thus: “Somehow the Catholic liturgy with its ‘mysterium tremendum et fascinosum,’ its tremendous and fascinating mystery and its often colourful expression, seemed to appeal to the people.”172

Another critical observation with regard to the said inculturation and missionary approach as quoted by Omenyo is made by C.G. Palmer-Buckle, the Catholic Bishop of Koforidua (Eastern Ghana):

‘Another point of criticism of the Roman Catholic Mission experience is the fact that Latin was used as the language of worship and not the vernacular as was the practice of the Basel and Methodist missions. She was rather late in translating the faith and worship into the local languages. Closely linked to this is also the fact that unlike the Basel and Methodist missions, she did not admit indigenous men early enough into the fold of her clergy. Even the use of local catechists was not found necessary because she could rely on missionaries and funds from Europe for the work. This latter factor also did not encourage the local churches to become conscious of the need for self-sufficiency in terms of personnel and resources.’173

In spite of the above-mentioned shortcomings, the Roman Catholic missionaries seem to have laid a firm foundation for the Church in Ghana, which is presently the largest single denomination in the country and continues to make major impact on Ghana’s development.

2.2.8 Second Missionary Attempt by the SPG

After the demise of Philip Quaque in 1816 the missionary work of the SPG lapsed for some years until the SPG took it up again to revive the abandoned missionary work with the posting

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of Bishop Hamlyn to the Gold Coast in 1904. When Bishop Hamlyn arrived, he discovered that the colonial chaplaincy congregation at Cape Coast was still functioning as well as two other congregations in the coastal towns of Axim and Sekondi. Besides these there were four other congregations which had developed without any direct missionary involvement. The Church actually enjoyed such a spontaneous growth and expansion at the time that Bishop Hamlyn could not find adequate trained missionaries for its oversight. As a solution to this problem, Bishop Hamlyn committed himself in 1910 to the setting up of the SPG Grammar school now Adisadel College, to serve as a nursing ground for the future school teachers, catechists and African clergy.  

Swatson  

The horizontal expansion of the Anglican Church around the early twentieth century was largely due to indigenous initiatives. One indigenous figure who stands out prominently in this direction is John Swatson (c.1855 – c.1925). Swatson, who was serving as a Methodist teacher – catechist felt the call of God upon his life when he met Prophet William Wadé Harris. He left the service of the Methodist Church and travelled through the Western Provinces of Ghana as an evangelist, arrayed like Harris. Harris is believed to have impressed upon Swatson to work with the “Church of England,” even though both of them seemed not to be aware of the presence of a “Church of England” mission in Ghana at the time. From the beginning of 1915, John Swatson embarked upon an evangelistic tour and powerfully evangelised and baptized a good number of converts from remote heathen villages in the Western provinces of Ghana, performing the same wonders as prophet Wadé Harris. He exercised the gifts of healing and exorcism and just like Harris, he challenged people everywhere to abandon fetishism and to believe in God. Many people were accordingly motivated to surrender their fetishes and amulets for burning on their conversion. A good number of his converts joined themselves to some mission churches like the Methodist and the Roman Catholic churches. However, since Swatson had told many of his converts to join the Church of England, they constituted themselves into independent congregations calling

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175 The life and ministry of William Wadé Harris is discussed below in this chapter.  
themselves “Church of England” or “Christ Church.” Swatson came into contact with two Anglican Church workers in Sefwi and was eventually introduced to Archdeacon Morrison in Kumasi who also took spiritual oversight of the Western Province. Swatson then asked the SPG to take over his congregations and at the same time gave to Morrison a list of 1,077 names of converts he had baptized around Sefwi in 1915 – 1916. The Anglicans committed themselves to follow up the work of Swatson and licensed him as a preacher in the diocese, with a dispensation to baptize and whilst having full freedom for the exercise of his great gifts, he is pledged to conform to all proper authority.

When Swatson became a church worker of the Anglican Church he continued with his evangelistic activities, evangelising the remote areas where the SPG missionaries could not reach and make converts. He also made a humble contribution towards the indigenisation of Christianity in the areas he served. In the first place, he ensured the translation of part of the Anglican Prayer Book and hymns into the local language, which enabled him to conduct purely vernacular services. This was a major breakthrough for the Anglican Church at the time when there was the felt need to develop an Anglican liturgy for people who could not participate meaningfully in the English Prayer book services because of illiteracy.

Another aspect of Swatson’s indigenisation initiatives had to do with traditional practices. Whilst he condemned traditional religion, he also allowed some cultural practices like dancing and drumming and other traditional rites which could not per se endanger the Christian faith and practice. These indigenisation initiatives made worship more meaningful to the people and eventually attracted even a lot of Methodists and Presbyterians to the Anglican Church because they felt more at home there.

Unfortunately the indigenisation initiative embarked upon by Swatson which obviously could have lent the Anglican Church a springboard for church expansion was lost at the instance of Bishop O’Rorke, the successor to Bishop Hamlyn. He insisted on a high Anglican liturgical mass characterized by high clericalism with elaborate rites and ceremonies which had no room for any significant contextualisation. Another dynamic characteristic of Swatson’s evangelistic campaign was his charismatic style of ministry which made

181 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 70.
Christianity more relevant to the people in the Sefwi area of the western province. He actually exercised the gifts of healing and exorcism. Hence, while condemning unchristian traditional religious practices and pressing people to bring their ‘fetishes and amulets for burning on their conversion,’ he demonstrated the power to overcome spiritual forces that threatened the survival of the African.  

2.2.9 Conclusion

The foregoing is a summary of the mission history of mainline Christianity in Ghana covering mainly the period of the early missionaries who worked in Ghana. We have looked at the activities of Western missionaries in concert with their indigenous partners and agents. These missionary activities were traced to two main streams, the second of which was seen as an enduring mission that produced the current mainline churches in Ghana. We have attempted to show the much dedicated and challenging missionary endeavours of the Western missionaries and the significant role of indigenous Christians who collaborated with the Western missionaries to make it possible for the development of Christianity in Ghana. Space was also devoted to highlight the immense contribution of the various missionary societies that worked in Ghana in terms of social action, classroom education and the development of the vernacular which was raised to a literary level, and thus provided the basis of all later works in the native language.

While tracing the history of development of Christianity in Ghana, the discussion has also touched on the great difficulty that the European missionaries had in addressing the spiritual sensibility of the African community they evangelised. Their shortcoming could be attributed to a number of factors which include the following:

European missionaries had great difficulty in coming into terms with the traditional religious belief and worldview of the African. For instance, among church members there was a heightened belief in the existence of potent spiritual forces that could interfere in the affairs of humans either for good or evil. However, this belief was frowned upon as mere superstition by the missionaries. Even though the church officially denied the existence of witchcraft, the inherent fear of such evil powers continued to haunt church members, compelling a good number of them to seek protection in anti-witchcraft shrines. This practice of consulting the neo-traditional cults either for protection or healing was obviously condemned by the mission.

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chuck. Moreover, cultural practices such as puberty rites, customary rites of marriage, naming ceremony, funerals, festivals, music and drumming were also considered not to be in conformity with Christian faith and practice. They were seen to be contaminated with traditional religious practices which endangered the Christian faith.

The missionaries obviously did not know how they should handle such issues, because they were not well informed about the African religious belief and their worldview and besides, they were not trained to deal with such issues. If they had taken the pains to study them thoroughly, they would have found a better approach in handling them. This does not mean that every element of African belief system and cultural practices should be baptized and absorbed into the Christian faith and practice. Actually, the church must not allow herself to be absorbed by any culture, since not all cultural expressions are in conformity with the Gospel. The church retains the indispensable duty of testing and evaluating cultural expressions in the light of her understanding of revealed truth. The African situation however demanded new forms of Christian faith and practice which lay great stress on healing and deliverance and for that reason demonstrated the power to overcome spiritual forces that threatened the survival of the African. This was quite evident in the evangelistic campaign of Swatson, the African evangelist and a few others we shall discuss below in this chapter.

2.3 History of Mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana

In this section, we shall discuss aspects of African initiative in Christianity in Ghana, as related to some developments in mission-founded churches. This section which focuses on ‘church history’ of mainline Protestant churches in Ghana covers the period beginning from the early 20th century when it became necessary for the Western missionaries to transfer leadership roles to Africans. The mainline Protestant churches such as the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches eventually became entirely independent and thoroughly African with the indigenous Christians largely taking up leadership of the various churches with their European missionaries becoming simply partners in mission or fraternal workers active in churches, which were ruled and administered increasingly by African leaders, pastors, chairmen, moderators and bishops. Research into ‘church history’ in this chapter has been limited to just two mainline Protestant churches in Ghana, namely the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Methodist Church Ghana to which the emerged Presbyterian and Methodist

churches in Germany and Netherlands which are the focus of this project own their connection.

2.3.1 Towards the Independence of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

‘There were two events in the early 20th century which decisively influenced the history of Christianity in Ghana and eventually provided a stimulus towards the independence of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches in Ghana. Twofold events had the greatest impact on the Presbyterian Church in Ghana: World War I and the deportation of the Basel and Bremen missionaries.’

When World War I broke out in August 1914 between Germany and the allied nations spearheaded by Britain and France, the disabilities the war imposed on the world had a far reaching impact on the Church all over the world including the British Gold Coast (Ghana) and its border countries like Ivory Coast and Togoland. The far-reaching impact of the war crises on the German Bremen mission among the Ewes in Togoland was that it became divided into two; the Ewe Presbyterian Church of Togoland and the Ewe Presbyterian Church in the Gold Coast.

At the very beginning of the War the Basel Mission enjoyed the full confidence of the higher government officials on the Coast for the good work they were doing and for that reason the Basel missionaries working in Togo and the Gold Coast were shielded from any possible slander or molestation. The generosity policy towards the Basel Mission missionaries was however short-lived. Towards the end of 1914 through 1915, the Gold Coast government placed increasing restrictions on the movement and activities of the Basel missionaries. As the war dragged on, it became British imperial policy to exclude from British colonies once and for all, all German influence whether in trade or in mission. The home Board of the Basel

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188 Agbeti; *West African Church History*, 155-158. After the defeat of the Germans, Togoland formerly a German colony was partitioned between the French and the British by the terms of the Paris conference in 1919. The British mandated territory sharing a common border with Ghana became integrated into the British Gold Coast together with the Bremen Mission located in that part of Eweland, which became known as the Ewe Presbyterian church in the Gold Coast.
189 Agbeti, *West African Church History*, 155-156.
Mission ¹⁹⁰ was informed in June 1916 that all connection with Germany had to be severed should the Mission want to continue its work in British colonies. Only native-born Swiss, not in sympathy with Germany were to be permitted to carry out mission work. The Basel Mission home board decided not to accede to this demand, on the grounds that such an action would defeat the international character of the Basel Missionary Society. The British Foreign Office then declared, that

‘His Majesty’s Government have arrived at the conclusion that the Basel Mission as at present constituted, is so German in sympathy that it cannot be allowed to operate longer in a British dependency.’¹⁹¹

In view of the foregoing by December 16, 1917 all German Basel missionaries had been deported from the Gold Coast, leaving behind only eight non-German missionaries who were mostly native Swiss. The German Bremen Mission in former German Togoland suffered similar fate of expulsion of its German missionaries.

Before the remaining Basel missionaries, mostly Swiss were finally ordered to leave the British Gold Coast by 2nd February 1918, ¹⁹² the United Free Church of Scotland under the influence of Dr. Oldham, ¹⁹³ had decided to come to the rescue of the Basel Mission in Ghana. The Foreign Mission Committee of the United Free Church of Scotland finally directed Rev. Dr. & Mrs. A.W. Wilkie to move from its Calabar mission in Nigeria to assume supervisory work of the Basel Mission in Ghana. Upon their arrival on 21st February, 1918 only the Swiss Mr. G. Zürcher the general supervisor of the Basel Mission and the general accountant of the Basel Mission were still in Accra and had time for a short interview with Dr. Wilkie before their final departure from the Gold Coast.¹⁹⁴ When Dr. Wilkie assumed duty in the Gold Coast under the auspices of the Scottish Mission, his immediate task was to introduce the

¹⁹⁰ The Basel Mission was a German Swiss foundation. Although legally, the seat of the Mission was on Swiss soil the German partner was considered stronger and had a German director during the onset of the war.
¹⁹³ Dr. J.H. Oldham, a Scottish, was the secretary of the very first international missionary conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910. This conference included delegates from almost all Anglo-Saxon and Continental Protestant missionary societies-Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, Interdenominational Societies, Quakers and others. This Edinburgh conference provided the initial impetus for the ecumenical movement, which culminated in the World Council of Churches.
¹⁹⁴ Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 288.
Presbyterian system of church government, which is still practiced by the Presbyterian Churches in Ghana today.

Under the Basel and Bremen Missions, the missionaries on the field had to send reports to the home mission boards for discussions, and decisions were taken for the missionaries on the field to implement. But the Scottish Mission in Ghana led by Dr. Wilkie had a vision for autonomous and authoritative regular Synods.\(^ {195}\) In view of this, Dr. Wilkie called together the full synod of the former Basel Mission, constituted it as the supreme court of the Church and instituted the offices of a moderator, a synod clerk, and as a business committee of synod, a synod committee was formed.

The first offices of the moderator and synod clerk went to Rev. Peter Hall, a Pastor at Akropong and Rev. N.T. Clerk Pastor at Larteh respectively. Both were West Indians of the second generation. Before then the Basel missionaries had administered almost all the Church and school funds but under the guidance of Dr. Wilkie the finances of the Church were reorganized and the pastors on the field taught the keeping of church accounts and encouraged to submit regular reports and statistics annually. In effect Dr. Wilkie did a very great service to the Presbyterian Church by teaching the Church and her African leaders to manage their own affairs. He however remained at the Gold Coast for sometime and together with some few other missionaries continued to act as advisors and guides of the Africans until his final departure from the Gold Coast in 1931.\(^ {196}\)

When Dr. Wilkie assumed duty in the Gold Coast, he also had to take responsibility for that part of the Bremen Mission work, which had come under the Gold Coast after the war. The Bremen Mission having realized the need of the hour during the war, had put the Rev. Ernst Burki, a very hard working Swiss missionary at the head of their work among the Ewes in Trans-Volta and British occupied Togoland. When the German missionaries were deported during the war, he was allowed to stay on and as a man of great foresight he endeavored to organize the Bremen Mission into an independent African church by ordaining a sufficient number of additional African Pastors who eventually took up the leadership of the Church.\(^ {197}\)

When Dr Wilkie took responsibility for the Bremen Mission among the Ewes in addition to that of the Basel Mission, he as well introduced the same Presbyterian System of Church government and so by 1923, the Ewe Presbyterian Church (now Evangelical Presbyterian

\(^{195}\) Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 62.


Church) was ready for independence and thus became the first mainline church in Ghana to become autonomous.

When the Synod of the former Basel Mission and then Scottish Mission church met at Abetifi in 1926 the Synod gladly adopted the new name ‘Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast’ and thus became the second mainline Protestant Church to become autonomous after the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The Church had formerly become African led by Africans with the Basel and Scottish missionaries working as partners in mission within that independent African church.

When the autonomy of the Presbyterian Churches in the then Gold Coast became a reality in the early twentieth century, it was seen as divine Providence turning adverse situations resulting from crises of war (such as lack of adequate missionaries on the field at the time they were needed most) to new opportunities, opportunities destined to lead the churches in the Gold Coast from missionary control to that of autonomous African churches.

2.3.2. Towards the Independence of the Methodist Church Ghana

As mentioned earlier, there were two main events which influenced the history of Christianity in Ghana and provided a stimulus towards the independence of Ghanaian Christianity. The second of these two events which had a direct impact mostly on the Methodist Church was the activities of two African prophets namely William Wadé Harris and Sampson Oppong.

William Wadé Harris

William Wadé Harris (1860-1929) was a Kru man of the Grebo tribe born and raised in Liberia. Whilst serving a prison sentence for opposing the undemocratic rule of the Afro-Americans in Liberia, he experienced in his prison cell what might be termed as a powerful divine visitation in terms of baptism in the Spirit and recurrent visions; and he was accordingly charged and empowered to preach God’s Word. After his release from prison, Harris became an itinerant preacher in Ivory Coast. He wore a white gown and a turban, and carried a bamboo cross, a bible and a calabash for baptism. In his preaching, he powerfully impressed upon thousands of Africans to believe in God and the cross, to abandon fetishism, and surrender all cult objects of the old religion like amulets and charms, to be baptized and

wait for the missionaries for further instructions in the faith and to keep Sunday holy.\textsuperscript{200} Harris had an immense success among the various tribes in Ivory Coast where it is estimated that 100,000 were converted and baptized through his ministry. From Ivory Coast, he followed the coastline and appeared in the Nzema area of the Western region of Ghana where his preaching had similar great impact on the community. He demonstrated the charismatic gifts of spiritual healing, exorcism and miraculous deeds, which were perceived as unique and relevant to the needs of his African people because it addressed their worldview.\textsuperscript{201} Harris actually had a clear understanding of the spiritual universe of Africans and he as well had the capacity to penetrate it and thus made the Gospel very relevant to the deeply felt needs and aspirations of the African people. In all appearances he was a modest man who refused to enrich himself declaring that he was but the mat on which Christ wipes his feet. His ministry had such a great impact on the Nzima community that Casely-Hayford, an African scholar, leading politician and a Methodist after witnessing his evangelistic activities in Axim commented as follows: ‘This is not a revival; it is a Pentecost. Its orbit is world-wide (…..). Men, women and children are drawn as by irresistible power. And when he has done with them, they find their way to the churches of their own accord and remain there. It fills one with awe to hear some of these converts pray.’ \textsuperscript{202}

Similarly, Rev. Ernest Bruce a Methodist minister stationed at Axim, and who was in charge of the Methodist societies in Nzima area where Harris worked for about three months in 1914 reported of ‘a general awakening throughout the length and breadth of the Appolonia (Nzima) district.’ Rev. E. Bruce goes on further to describe the form the said awakening took:

‘Dumb idols, charms and other objects of superstitious veneration became an off-scouring of filth which their devotees carried away in heaps and bundles to be burnt or cast into the sea. Now people have rushed with feverish haste into the churches …. Everywhere, bamboo chapels and churches were built. Their thirst for the Word of God and for the songs of Zion is insatiable. They pounce upon travelers, timber clerks and any man of letters either to preach to them or teach them a Christian song…

\textsuperscript{201} Omenyo, \textit{Pentecost outside Pentecostalism}, 68-69.
\textsuperscript{202} Debrunner, \textit{History of Christianity in Ghana}, 271.
others come to the principal stations on the Sabbath, hear the preacher, and return to repeat what they have heard to their fellow villagers.  

The Rev. William Goudie of the Methodist Church who visited the area was impressed by the people being still so enthusiastic. The membership of the Church had almost trebled in the Nzima area, but the Methodist Church had not the personnel to cater for the fifty-two villages that had embraced Christianity under the impact of the Harris Evangelistic activities. It was reported in the 1916 Synod minutes of the Methodist Church that economic depression resulting from the war told heavily on the resources of the Axim circuit of the Methodist Church, and for that reason, there were not enough teachers for all the many stations.

In spite of these wartime crises, the Methodist Church endured the storm because it sustained its vision of training more indigenous people as ministers and lay workers who supported the few missionaries on the field. As mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, by 1918 as compared to the 12 European missionaries on the field, there were 42 African ministers and 665 African Catechist and teachers who were in leadership in preparation towards autonomy. Meanwhile the Gold Coast District Synod of the Methodist Church had since 1880 submitted proposals for Africanization to the Mission Committee in London but these were not heeded to. However when the Gold Coast Synod met in February 1913 at Cape Coast the following decisions were adopted among others, that

1. the superintendency of the Circuits was to be wholly under the charge of African ministers.
2. the European Chairman and his missionaries colleagues shall visit them and give advice and guidance where needed.

**Sampson Oppong**

Sampson Oppong (c.1884-1965) was the other African prophet whose ministry is believed to have made a significant breakthrough in the evangelistic task of the Church particularly Methodism among the Ashanti’s in Ghana. Oppong who was previously deeply involved in occultism got converted through a vision in which he was commanded to bury his magic apparatus, to proclaim God’s wrath on all “fetishism”. Oppong, unlike the Prophet Harris, was uneducated, but he also carried a wooden cross and a stone wrapped in a handkerchief.

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with the help of which he precisely read the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. When in the 1920’s the prophet Sampson Oppong emerged in Ashanti where there seemed to be insurmountable difficulties in the preaching of the Gospel, his evangelistic activities resulted in an unprecedented abandonment of traditional religion and mass conversions among the Ashanti’s to the extent that the church workers could hardly cope with the numbers. Though some missionaries especially those of the Basel Mission were suspicious of his extraordinary charisma and simply did not accept him, the Methodist readily accepted him and even Rev. Waterworth an African minister of the Methodist Church accompanied him on his tours of Ashanti.

It is believed that the Oppong movement was the turning point in the history of Christianity in Ashanti and according to the report of a Methodist missionary, as many as 110,000 were said to have been converted through the said movement. To the Methodists, the African initiative like the ministry of Prophets William Wadé Harris and Sampson Oppong was quite significant in providing a stimulus towards the independence of the Methodist Church Ghana and also contributed immensely to the rapid growth of the Church between 1914 and the 1920’s and by 1930, the Methodist Church had grown to become the largest church on the Gold Coast with a membership of about 99,207 members. The development of the first half of the 20th century provided many ‘signposts’ for the complete Africanization of the leadership of the Methodist Church in the then Gold Coast. The year 1948 saw a new era in a process of growth in local responsibility, when the Church exercised the right to nominate the chairman for the Gold Coast District at the Synod of 1948. The Rev. Gaddiel R. Acquaah was accordingly nominated at the following year’s Synod to become the first African chairman of the Gold Coast District.

Another important feature in the process of growth in local responsibility in this new era was that by September 1949 when Rev. Acquaah assumed chairmanship of the District, 47 Ghanaian men and 22 women sponsored by the Methodist Church had received training in the universities and training colleges of the United Kingdom. These church personnel were ready to serve on the various church committees and to head some of the church institutions, which hitherto were led mostly by the European missionaries.

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205 Debrunner, History of Christianity in Ghana, 272.
206 Debrunner, History of Christianity in Ghana, 310-311.
207 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 71-72.
208 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 58.
quest for autonomy resulted from a recommendation raised before the British Conference by an Inter-District Conference of the Methodist churches in West Africa which included Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Western and Eastern Nigeria Districts of the British Conference, which met from April 26 to May 6, 1954. The exact wording of the said recommendation is as follows:

‘We recommend to the Synods that the British Conference be asked to set up a Conference of the Methodist Church in West Africa, to include the present Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast (Ghana), Western Nigeria and Eastern Nigeria Districts of the British Conference.’

The District Synod of the Ghana Methodist Church followed up the said recommendation with its conception of autonomy, defended by its chairman Rev. G.T. Eddy in 1956 and which included the following among others:

‘Establishing the Methodist Church in Ghana as an autonomous Methodist Church which is a legal entity, with full control over its finance and property; but with such constitutional relationships with the Methodist Church in Britain as would maintain and strengthen the fraternal relations between the two Churches and leave the door open for the help and guidance of the mother church to continue to be available.’

In January 1958 when the Ghana Synod requested the Missionary Committee to make arrangements for the control of the finance and property of the Church to be vested in the Synod by 1960, and as a fully autonomous Church with its own Conference by 1961, approval was given by the British conference of July 1958. Much time was then devoted to the method by which this autonomous Church could be established on a sound polity.

Two deeds were accordingly devised, one of them a Foundation Deed to be signed by the members of the Foundation Conference designated by the British Conference and the Ghana Synod, and the second, a Deed of Church order to be signed by the President of the Ghana Conference. The Foundation was signed on Friday 28th July, 1961 and by this the Methodist Church Ghana was thereby constituted and recognized as an equal and autonomous community of Christian Believers in no way subordinate to the Methodist Church (ie. the British Conference), though joining with the Methodist Church in their common faith and heritage.

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211 Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, 293.
The Rev. F.C.F. Grant the last chairman of the Ghana Synod was inducted as the first President of the Ghana Conference by Rev. Dr. Maldwijn Edwards, the President of the British Conference. ‘The Deed of Church Order’ which embodied the chief provisions of the constitution of the Ghana Conference was adopted by the Conference by a standing vote and signed by the President, the Rev. F.C.F. Grant.\textsuperscript{212} The Methodist Church Ghana thus became the third mainline Protestant church in Ghana to become fully autonomous in 1961.

2.3.3 Developments in the Autonomous Mission Churches

When the former mission churches like the Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches became autonomous in the 1920s they invariably continued the policies, strategies and methods used by their founding mission bodies.

In the first instance, they continued to embark on evangelistic programmes for church extension inherited from the missionary era such as the ‘Asempatrew’ of the Presbyterian Church and the ‘Camp Meeting’ of the Methodist Church. They also continued with the recruitment of children through schools and through parents who registered their children in the church. This recruitment programme actually accounted for bulk of their membership.\textsuperscript{213}

In the second place just like the missionary era, they continued to be involved in a number of social services like building and running of schools, hospitals, agricultural projects and rehabilitation of the disabled. This continuity in the same format generally had its own merits and demerits regarding development of mainline churches in Ghana. The social services embarked upon by the church were much appreciated, however in most cases it was at the expense of church growth. The emphasis on church growth in terms of effective evangelism and discipleship was eventually minimized for the mere fact that it was the same full-time pastors of congregations who were overburdened with enormous educational and administrative work coupled with other social services between 1920 and 1950. Even many missionaries of the established churches at a point in time felt that this was a mixed blessing. What the church failed to do at the time was in finding separate personnel for social services besides full-time congregational pastors and evangelists who were occupied with evangelism.

\textsuperscript{212} Bartels, \textit{The Roots of Ghana Methodism}, 310-313. The 1999 Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana voted to adopt Episcopacy with immediate effect, adopting a Biblical pattern of Episcopacy or leadership of the Church by bishops. By going Episcopal, the official title of the President of Conference became the Presiding Bishop.

\textsuperscript{213} Omenyo, \textit{Pentecost outside Pentecostalism}, 64.
and discipleship. Pastor James Mackeown, who had been in Ghana since 1937 as the pioneer missionary of the Apostolic and Pentecostal Churches in Ghana, once remarked to H.W. Debrunner:

‘Your other missionaries and your African Pastors and collaborators labour and sweat with the schools, and then you leave the people on their own neglecting evangelism, and thus we can harvest where you have sown.’\(^{214}\)

Most responsible church leaders, of the former mission churches were also aware of this omission. The following statement of a Ghanaian young man is typical of the issue at stake:

‘I am Methodist by birth, Presbyterian by upbringing in school and Apostolic by conviction.’\(^{215}\)

Then there came a time that it was felt that the churches were losing their grip on the young people, since many of the boys and girls brought up in mission schools and confirmed were afterwards lost to the church. The churches in Ghana found themselves faced with situations similar to those obtaining in Europe, and it was quite obvious that expansion had all too often taken place at the cost of depth. The churches rose up to this challenge by seriously organizing youth work on a countrywide scale. African Pastors received additional training in Europe for full-time youth work. As a result of this many organizations that cater for the youth in the church emerged, like the Youth Fellowship, Boys and Girls Brigades, Church choirs, Singing Bands, and others like Girl Guides, Scout troops, Red Cross junior societies and Young Men’s Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.).\(^{216}\)

In the area of liturgy and church music, the mainline churches did not do much to Africanize their inherited traditions from the missionary era apart from translating the European church liturgy and hymns into the vernacular with the same European tunes. The Methodist however made one classic innovation which is the Fante Methodist lyric (Ebibindwom) an indigenised music, which penetrates the soul of an African and makes the Gospel fresh, alive and properly domesticated. Apart from the afore-mentioned indigenised Methodist lyric the bulk church music and liturgy remained the same just as inherited from the missionary era, until quite recently that the mainline churches have found the need to make room for innovations in view of the challenges posed by drift of some of their


membership, mainly youth and women to the Pentecostal churches which are more Africanized.

2.3.4 Facing the ‘Pagan’ Worldview

One area of the church’s life that continued to engage the attention of the autonomous African mainline churches had to do

‘with traditional beliefs and practices and with the worldview that these beliefs and practices imply.’

Over the years especially in the missionary era, the mainline mission churches were noted for their official insensitivity to African worldview and spirituality. African traditional beliefs and practices were frowned upon as mere superstition. However among church members there was a heightened belief in the existence of potent spiritual forces that could interfere in the affairs of humans either for good or evil. They did not only believe but they feared the evil powers which included witchcraft. The existence of witches was officially denied by the church and the power of Christ over all real or imagined powers proclaimed. However the inherent fear of the evil powers continued to haunt some church members who were frequently attracted (oftentimes secretly), to the neo-traditional cults or anti-witchcraft shrines which emerged in the 1940’s through the 1950’s and which were believed to protect members and secure their well-being. J.B. Kailing explains the situation as follows:

‘On the real level, it is more common for individuals to accept the outward forms of Christianity as an overlay, which leaves their traditional worldview relatively untouched. These are the people whose propensity for running to traditional doctors in times of crises elicits so much concern from the leaders of churches they attend Sunday to Sunday. For them, their orthodox church is important, but it does not offer a complete and coherent system upon which to build one’s life. Rather, it becomes a compartment which is utilized when beneficial and abandoned when the crises of life press in.’

The activities of the cults adversely affected the mainline churches raising grave concern to the extent that members found to have consulted such cults were excluded from the Church. The autonomous mission churches were coming to grips with the realities of this socio-spiritual crises inherent in practical Christianity vis à vis the African worldview and the related traditional beliefs and practices. Christians began to consider more seriously their African past and the worldview involved in that past. Efforts were made by a study group of the Methodist Church to discuss the question of Africanizing Christianity. The view, which gradually came to prevail in similar discussions, was:

‘Having accepted Christ as He is and His saving revelation, to express His way of Life, Thought and Worship, in terms that are living and full of meaning to African people, should be the outcome of the fellowship of the living church. It is Christ Himself who will inspire this and who will build His church.’

The ordinary African expected four things from religion: social fellowship; emotional experiences; healing and security against real or imagined evil forces. Of all these expectations, the demand for social fellowship was fairly satisfied by the congregational life of the big churches, however with regard to the other needs, the following observation made by Dr. K.A. Busia gives the true picture of the general African community life:

‘As one watches the daily lives and activities of the people, and takes account of the rites connected with marriage, birth, death, widowhood, harvests or installation to traditional offices, one learns that a great deal of the normal communal activities lie outside their Christian activities, and that for all their influence, the Christian churches are still alien institutions intruding upon, but not integrated with indigenous social institutions.’

As the bigger Traditional mainline Churches provided for the need of social fellowship, the new Pentecostal Churches satisfied to some extent the demand for emotional experience through services characterized by singing and clapping and mass extempore prayers.

However, in the question of healing, the traditional and the Pentecostal churches could only partially meet this demand. The traditional mainline churches endeavoured to meet this demand through medical services. For instance, on behalf of the autonomous Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Basel Mission had opened a proper mission hospital at Agogo in

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Ashanti Region in 1931. The Christian medical work in the 1930’s was, however, considered inadequate and the popular demand for religion to give healing was not fully satisfied by the established churches and missions. Many people therefore resorted to the traditional pagan healers and “herbalists” whose healing ritual mostly included elements keeping with the worldview of traditional religion, such as magic, but this was not acceptable to church policy. It was believed at that time that people who underwent medical treatment even had first to consult such traditional practitioners; however, Christians who had to do this were often ill at ease.

Even when the medical activity of the churches increased in the 1940’s through the 1950’s besides the medical services provided by the government, the religious elements in the healing of the hospitals was not sufficiently evident to the patients who expected rapid faith healing in accordance with ancient pagan notions.

This situation therefore demanded new forms of religion which lay great stress on healing and containing elements of Christian thought. When the traditional mainline churches were not seen to be providing this, the emotionalist and faith-healing African-churches, originating from the Harris movement of the 1914, became appealing at the time when the ‘Tigare’ cult and others were collapsing.

2.3.5 The Engagement with the Growing Influence of Islam

The activities of the Western missionaries as well as that of the autonomous churches which took over from them brought the life of the indigenous people of Southern Ghana more or less strongly under Christian influence, whilst the immigrants with a very few exceptions were left to paganism and to the growing influence of Islam. The immigrants were mostly peoples of Northern Ghana and other West-African tribal origin. Some of these immigrants who came to settle in the South were erroneously viewed by the majority of the indigenous people of the South as Muslim, though only the Hausa traders and butchers from Nigeria were all Muslims. Among the other immigrant tribes like the Wangaras from the Ivory Coast, the Zabarimmas from Niger, the Kotokolis from middle Togo and the Moshis from Northern Ghana and Upper

223 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 327.
225 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 345.
226 The Tigare’ cult is a pagan anti-witchcraft shrine which became very popular in the 1940s.
227 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, 335.
Volta (Burkina Faso), the great majority had come to Ghana as pagans, belonging to a great variety of pagan tribes most of which had persistently resisted Islam for centuries.  

When these immigrants moved to the South, those who lived as farm labourers in the bush tended to remain as pagans but those who settled in the so-called ‘Zongos’ or strangers’ quarters often came under Muslim influence. This resulted from the fact that in the Zongos the Hausas and other Muslims were the leaders and thus many of the pagan immigrants became Islamized in Southern Ghana under the very shadow of Christian churches and chapels. Debrunner explains that as Islam increasingly became the religion of the Zongos of the bigger trading centres, at least paganism was almost a disgrace for the inhabitants of the Zongo and many therefore, gave themselves the appearance of Muslim.  

As it has been mentioned in chapter one, the Muslim community in Ghana was for a long time influenced mostly by the more orthodox Sunni branch of the Islamic Faith until 1921 when the non-orthodox Ahmadiyyah Movement was also introduced. According to Patrick Ryan, Ghanaian Muslims have since independence in 1957, been systematically exposed to other forms of Islamic influence originating from the Middle-East, through the promotion of the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj) and also through funds received for Muslim schools and mosque building projects. Ryan’s study further reveals that the Ahmadiyya Muslim movement in Ghana has for some time now gained much influence through their social services which include schools, hospitals and clinics at rural areas; they still receive missionaries from outside and likewise send Ghanaians abroad as missionaries.  

For some time now, the growth of Islam and its attractiveness has become a great concern to many Christians. According to the 1989 Survey Report of the Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC; updated in 1993), the challenge of Islam was seen as Southern challenge as much as it was a Northern one. Sixty-two percent of all Muslims are to be found

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231 Kwame Bediako attributes the attraction and growth of Islam in Ghana to the fact that the people perceive it as a non-Western religion, and moreover Islam does not insist on a sudden break with the African past regarding some social practices such as polygamy. Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, 27.
232 Ghana Evangelism Committee, *National Church Survey: Facing the Unfinished Task of the Church in Ghana*, Accra: Assemblies of God literature centre, 1993, 99-106. The Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) is an indigenous, interdenominational, service agency. The committee came into existence in 1974 to introduce The New Life for All Movement into the churches of Ghana. Since its formation the Committee has developed a clear commitment to see the great commission fulfilled in Ghana and beyond, through the mobilization of the body of Christ.
in the South, where Northern people are being won to Islam together with Southerners. The Central Region along the coast, which has the fewest Northern and alien peoples, has more mosques than the two Upper Regions combined. According to the survey, out of the 353 Muslims interviewed within all the seven Administrative Districts of the Central Region, 33% claimed to be Muslims by birth, 11% stated that they were converted from a traditional religious background, and 56% stated that they had been members of a particular Christian church. When asked why they preferred Islam to Christianity the majority referred to sound teaching of Islam, false teachings of Christianity or disunity among Christians. According to the 1989 GEC survey, peoples of Northern and West African tribal origin living in the seven Southern regions of Ghana comprise 18% of the population of the said regions. This represents a vast, neglected mission field left to paganism and to the growing influence of Islam. Despite their numbers, Southern churches had failed to take note of this ‘hidden mission field’ and develop an effective strategy to reach them.

The survey outlined the following as contributing factors to the minimal impact of Southern churches on Northern communities in the South:

i. Ignorance of the extent and nature of the Northern challenge

ii. Assumption that all Northerners were Muslims

iii. Pre-occupation with their own people

iv. Insensitivity to the economic and social gap between North and South

v. Inappropriate and culturally insensitive methods of evangelism and church planting.

vi. Failing to recognize the ‘felt needs’ of Northern peoples in the South. (e.g. the need for education, vocational training, employment and accommodation).

vii. Failing to recognize that all Northern and alien peoples are not alike; that they belong to different and distinct language groups, that each tribal group has its own identity, community network and chief.

viii. Failing to give the different Northern groups the opportunity to hear the Gospel and worship in their mother tongue – a church of their own.

The survey report pointed out that the Southern churches’ assumption that Northern aliens who have migrated to the South would join Southern churches because they can speak some Akan (Southern language) or English has not happened in practice. The very few exceptions according to the survey can be said of Northerners with a higher education and socio-
economic status and a few Northerners who have found employment in Southern churches. The barriers of prejudice, language, culture, education and social class have been too high.  

Over the years there has been varied response of Christian churches and groups to Muslim missionary advance and influence in either the reached or unreached communities in both the South and the North. The Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians in Ghana for instance perceive Islam as a threat and therefore consider it as their duty to check its growth. Some of them sometimes in their open air ‘crusades’ and ‘mission’ go to the extreme by denouncing the Islamic teachings and practice, thus provoking Muslims. Similarly, there have been instances whereby Muslim fundamentalists have also been hostile to Christian groups (particularly Pentecostal / Charismatic groups). Such uncompromising attitudes of both Christian and Islamic fundamentalists have in a few instances led to religious clashes in some cities and towns resulting in casualties and vandalisation of churches and mosques.

At the national level, however, the picture is quite different since both Christian and Muslim leaders have committed themselves to religious dialogues, and have co-operated on a number of issues. Both the Christian Council of Ghana and the Catholic Bishops’ Conference have departments that promote good relations between Christians and people of other faiths, particularly Islam. In consonance with its vision of reaching out to the unreached and at the same time curbing Islamic influence, the GEC has since 1989 been working together with a number of denominations and missionary societies and has developed a model for effective outreach to Northern communities in the South. Patterned on this model, more than 60 Northern congregations have been established in urban centers in the Western, Greater Accra, Eastern and Ashanti Regions. The model involves establishing mono-ethnic or single language congregations. Crucial to its success however is recognition of the following realities:

i. The importance of ethnic identity. Migrants living in alien territory have a heightened sense of ethnic identity and respond readily to expressions of their culture. For example mother tongue literature, opportunities to speak their language and be with their own people.

ii. The existence of traditional tribal structures and institutions in gaining entry and acceptance in their communities.

iii. The spiritual and socio-economic realities of Northern communities. Most Northern communities in the South do not have mature Christian leaders nor the


234 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 33.
finances or facilities to establish churches of the more traditional kind. They need spiritual over-sight as well as a place of worship that will not be a financial burden or create undue dependence.

iv. The basic and felt needs of Northern migrants in the South. For example, the need to be literate in the more educated Southern society; the need of accommodation and the need of vocational skills and employment. 235

There are two versions of the mono-ethnic (single language) model. The first is sponsored by a church or missions based in the traditional homeland. The second is sponsored by an established local congregation in the South and becomes an associated congregation. 236 It is worthy of note that since 1989, the mono-ethnic model has been effectively used by some established Southern churches, which provide oversight and facilities for new Northern ethnic congregations. For example, between 1994 and 1999, eight churches were planted in four dioceses in the Methodist Church Ghana. A typical example is the Frafra (Northern tribe) society in the Kumasi Metropolis planted in 1990 with 5 members, which recorded a total membership of 300, 220 adults and 80 children by the year 2000. In that very year 2000, the same Kumasi Metropolis had a total of 5 mono-ethnic congregations established. 237 Both the Methodist Church Ghana and the Presbyterian Church, Ghana have put in place Northern Outreach Programs with appointed coordinators who facilitate such programs in their various churches. Since the implementation of this mono-ethnic model, it has been realized that the emergence of Northern and alien churches in the South is of tremendous strategic importance to the evangelization of traditional homelands. A sense of responsibility and missionary commitment to fellow tribes’ people in other Southern areas and in the homeland is being encouraged. 238

2.3.6 Spiritual Renewal in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana since Autonomy

When the Presbyterian Church of Ghana became autonomous in 1926, it carried along with her traditions inherited from its parent Basel and Scottish missions. This included a commitment to spiritual renewal, conversion of non-Christians and the expansion of the

237 The Methodist Church Ghana, 2000 Conference Agenda BOM, 68.
Kingdom of Christ among all people, all based on a firm belief in the centrality and the authority of the Bible.

There were set times for congregational weekly prayer meetings and dawn devotions. Moreover adult converts to the church, as well as those who underwent infant baptism, were taken through rigorous teaching of the church’s Catechism which included memorization of large portions of scripture all aimed at getting new members well-grounded in the Word of God before they were baptized and confirmed. The Church also sought to maintain strict spiritual and moral standards and ensured that members found involved in immoral conducts like polygamous marriages, alcoholism, and consultation of traditional priests for help were disciplined. 239

In spite of the Church’s commitment to maintain discipline, report from districts to Synod indicated rampant polygamy, and other sexual misconduct, drunkenness and influence of traditional religion over the membership of the Church that tended to attract them to traditional deities for consultation. 240 Meanwhile some members deserted the Church in reaction to what was considered as stringent regulations that bordered on legalism.

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana soon began to realize that the low spiritual and moral tone experienced in the Church was due to lack of spiritual renewal, and at the 1946 Synod, the Church became more awakened to the need for spiritual awakening. 241 Having realized this need, the Church made various efforts towards reviving the spiritual life of the Church, in terms of periodic consultations and appointing various committees to study how spiritual renewal could be promoted in the Church. For instance the committee appointed by the 1961 Synod identified inadequate and ineffective Bible teaching and study for both beginners and old members and therefore recommended a weekly Bible class meeting system where effective Bible teaching and discussion relevant to the needs of members could be followed.

Similarly, the 1963 consultation recommended among other things, effective Bible study in smaller groups to equip members for effective evangelism, and effective prayer meeting, which was observed to be deficient in the Church. Besides these, positive teaching on the Holy Spirit and His gifts for ministry, particularly healing, which some members who continued to leave the Church considered to be lacking in the ministry of the Church was also recommended. Omenyo has observed that in spite of the elaborate reports and

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recommendations made by various committees to salvage the situation, it seemed not much had been achieved by the 1960s and thereafter. Among other things, there was a continued drift of members to the African independent and Pentecostal churches, coupled with the unprecedented springing up of isolated prayer groups led by lay persons and in some cases self-acclaimed prophets and prophetesses within the Church. These prayer groups, which operated on the periphery of the Church, served as pointers to the fact that, at least the quest for spiritual renewal within the Church was not met. 242

The prayer groups, which emerged at various places within the Church, varied in form and practice. One category, which was more akin to the African Independent Churches (AIC’s) shared a number of common features with the AIC’s which included the use of aids such as oil for anointing, drinking and washing with ‘Holy Water’, the use of candles, a stress on fasting, the observance of taboos and absolute dependence on the founder for healing and other gifts.

Another category, which was directly influenced by Classical Pentecostalism, adopted features such as emphasis on Holy Spirit baptism with the accompanying gifts of speaking in tongues, prophecy, visions and healing. They forbid the use of prayer aids, did not depend solely on a founder, rather all members exercised their gifts for common good and engaged themselves in intense Bible-study and evangelism.

Initially the PCG had its own reservations about the form and practice of these prayer groups and therefore could not readily give them any official recognition. However, between 1962 – 1965 when Rev. T.A. Kumi became the warden of the Church’s Retreat and Training Centre at Abetifi-Kwaku his immense efforts towards the organization and training of the leadership of the various prayer groups as well as streamlining their activities resulted in the amalgamation of the said different spiritualities of the various groups to form the Bible-Study and Prayer Group (BSPG) which became officially recognized by the Church in 1966.

When the amalgamated BSPG presented the issue of recognition formally to the Synod of the Church in 1965 a committee with Rev. S.R. Ntiforo as convener was appointed to study and examine the practices of the Prayer and Bible study groups and to make recommendation to the next Synod. 243 The report submitted by the ‘Ntiforo Committee’ to the 1966 Synod highlighted the spiritual and pastoral vacuum in the life of the Church which the BSPG was seeking to fill, but at the same time pointed out the pitfalls of the group. The committee,

243 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 143. Cited Minutes of the Synod of the PCG, 1965: section 26b and 43b.
among other things made the following observations: First, that there was apparent deficiency of prayer in the Church mostly because pastors and church sessions were being saddled with administration and seemed not to show keen interest in spiritual matters. The report, which stressed the need for much commitment to prayer by the entire church in fulfillment of Christ’s mission, attributed the borrowing of methods of prayer from elsewhere partly to the lack of involvement and necessary guidance by the leadership of the Church. Omenyo has however observed that pastors’ seemingly passive attitude towards these prayer groups stemmed from their incompetence to handle such charismatic renewal groups since they were not trained to deal with such a development and were therefore simply overwhelmed. 244

Second, the committee after pointing out some of the pitfalls of the group, admitted the Church’s failure to meet the challenges posed by the context of the mission of the PCG at the present time, and then outlined the efforts made by the BSPG to meet some of the challenges for ministry at the time. These included teaching on the Holy Spirit, avenues for Prayer and Bible study, the place of divine healing, effective pastoral care and warmer Christian fellowship and a strong personal faith in Jesus Christ. The committee also acknowledged the benefits individuals derived from the activities of the group and its ultimate contribution to the spiritual growth of the entire church.

The committee in recommending the group for official recognition by Synod observed that the group is not seen as a movement external to the Church rather, as an integral part of the life of the Church playing a useful role in the Church. After lengthy deliberations on the practical implications of the report, the BSPG was formally recognized as one of the integral groups of the Church thus becoming the first mainline church in Ghana to formally recognize a charismatic movement within its framework. 245

Since 1966, the group has expanded significantly spreading to every part of the country with clearly defined organizational structures operating with all the four levels with which the PCG operates (local, district, Presbytery and Synod) and with adequate provision made for pastors to guide the group at all levels and also with the incumbent Moderator of the Synod at every point in time as the first patron.

The group, which recorded a membership of about 20,000 in 1999, has ensured the formation of specialized teams and committees, which offer special services with provision, made for members to exercise their various gifts, an arrangement which agrees with the Church’s polity based on the belief of the priesthood of all believers. The teams include the

244 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 143.
245 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 143-145.
crusaders which is the main outreach wing of the Group specializing in evangelism and Church planting; the deliverance teams which practice healing and deal with cases discerned to have demonic links; the counseling teams which deal with issues that call for counseling as well as pre-marital counseling. The various functions of the teams are perceived to be an attempt to fill a void in the Church, which is not met or fully addressed by the pastoral leadership.

One remarkable challenge thrown by the Synod committee to the BSPG was its 1986 decision to make the Group the main Evangelistic wing of the Church, a challenge which the Group wholeheartedly accepted. Since then the report of the Evangelism and Lay Training committee of the Church (ELTC) to the Synod committee has virtually been the report of the Evangelistic endeavours of the BSPG. C.N. Omenyo analyzed the BSPG factor as follows:

‘The PCG tried to programme and institutionalize renewal but it failed, whilst the BSPG has to some extent successfully been engaged in these same activities at the local and national level and has been able to sustain that for over thirty years. The fact is that renewal cannot be legislated or brought about through programs per se but through individuals who spontaneously find the need for it and are committed to it. This has implications for the way churches should perceive charismatic movements within their framework. The concern of the BSPG for the spiritual revitalization of the Church is not misplaced, for that concern resonates with the Church’s own unfulfilled quest. This convergence of the need for renewal proves that it is possible for a mainline church to produce a charismatic renewal if only it is open. This openness eventually demonstrated by the PCG is an honest attitude of a mainline Church in Africa that does not trivialize the existential needs of its members. This demonstrated need for renewal goes on further to prove that it is possible for a mainline Church to produce a charismatic renewal if only it is open, and the PCG by so doing is learning to ‘sympathize’ with or relate to the spiritual realities of the traditional worldview.’

2.3.7 Renewal and Church Growth in The Methodist Church Ghana since Autonomy

It is worthy of note that The Methodist Church Ghana has experienced a steady numerical growth over the last ten years. Particularly, the report on the statistical returns presented to the

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246 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 153.
2002 Biennial Conference showed significant membership growth of 38,706 between 2000 and 2002, with as many as 209 new congregations opened and 244 new preaching posts established during that same period. This significant growth over the last ten years resulted from intense efforts made by the Methodist Church Ghana to promote spiritual renewal within the entire church after years of stagnation or decline in membership. Over the years, especially during the 1970’s and 1980’s, the ‘Christian community’ in many circuits and societies of The Methodist Church Ghana, was either stagnant or declining. This era saw large numbers of Methodists, particularly the youth and women, leaving the Church, while others maintained a dual membership, retaining their membership in the Church, but associated with other Pentecostal or Charismatic churches, ministries or fellowships, to satisfy their spiritual hunger. It must however be recalled that Methodism in Ghana inherited a tradition characterized by zeal and enthusiasm with prayer occupying a central place. Many years back the Church had regularly sought to renew the spiritual life of individual members and the entire Church through regular fervent and inspiring prayer meetings, revival and healing services, ‘camp meetings’ and dawn evangelism.

In the 1970’s and 1980’s however, Methodists acknowledged that the Church had to some extent lost its original spiritual fervor and enthusiasm. The prayer meetings had not died out completely, but in most of the societies both the prayer meetings and the morning worship services were considered to have become dull, stereotyped and uninspiring and this state of affairs among others, led to a waning of spiritual vitality within the Church. 247

While some members remained somehow complacent with the apparent waning of spiritual vitality within the Church, many others who were more spiritually minded or charismatic inclined and who wanted to remain loyal and committed to the Methodist Church, were frantically yearning for general spiritual renewal in the Church. Some of these sincere Methodists, who having realized the central place that prayer, evangelism and spiritual vitality occupied in the life of the early Methodists, and the need for it to revitalize the spiritual life of the Church, at such a time, started prayer groups and healing services. These groups soon came to be described as “Prayer fellowships”. Some of them operated within the Methodist Church, while other operated independent of the Church. The prayer fellowships, which operated within the Kumasi District (Diocese) of the Methodist Church 248 were coordinated

247 Methodist Church Ghana, Agenda R. 1997 GPC, 32.
248 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 155-156. Omenyo cites J.H. Kudadjie, ‘The Relevance of the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Program’. This paper was presented at the Accra District-Methodist Church-Ghana Evangelism Consultation, Accra, 28th – 30th January, 1999, and was also
and eventually formed the nucleus of the Connexional Prayer Fellowships which held its first Connexional (National) Prayer Fellowship delegates conference from 29 August to 1 September 1991 at Freeman College, Kumasi. This Conference helped to streamline the operation of the emerging structure. One major significance of the Conference was the decision to initiate a process of attaining formal recognition within the Methodist Church. This necessitated a draft constitution of the proposed Connexional Prayer Fellowships under the name “The Methodist Prayer Fellowship” (MPF). 249 C.N. Omenyo sums up the aims and objectives of the MPF outlined in their draft constitution as follows:

‘Spiritual renewal, charismatic experiences and the manifestation of the charismata, and the readiness to serve the Lord and others faithfully with their gifts within the context of the Methodist Church.’250

The Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme (MPRP)

It is worthy of note that by 1991 when the MPF was seeking connexional recognition, only Kumasi District MPF enjoyed the official support of its leadership. It was therefore under the auspices of the Kumasi District and its leadership that the then President of conference Rt. Rev. Professor Kwesi Dickson, upon his visit of the MPF in 1991, directed the Division of Evangelism, Mission and Renewal of the Methodist Church Ghana to study the Prayer Fellowship phenomenon in the entire Church and make recommendations for the Church’s consideration.

The issue of the MPF was brought up at the 1993 Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana, deliberated upon, and an *ad hoc* committee with Rev. Prof. Joshua Kudadjie 251 as convener appointed to study the issue and submit recommendations. The *ad hoc* committee made an objective assessment of the state of renewal in the Methodist Church Ghana vis-à-vis the Prayer Fellowships. The committee, acknowledging in their findings the problem of stagnation in the Church, referred to the general consensus of the 1993 Annual Conference regarding stagnation, which calls for renewal. In admitting the areas of need for

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249 ‘Constitution of the Methodist Church Prayer Fellowship’ first draft, 1.

250 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 164.

251 He is an Ordained Minister of the Methodist Church Ghana and an Associate Professor of the Department of the Study of Religions (Ethics) University of Ghana, Legon.
the Church to give more attention to spiritual renewal, the committee’s report specifically made reference to Preaching and Evangelism, Teaching and Discipleship, Prayer and Worship and Healing and Counseling.\textsuperscript{252}

The committee acknowledged the role of the MPF’s in the Church in the sense that where the conventional prayer meeting had lost its vitality and could not meet the needs of members, the Prayer Fellowships were meeting such needs and making manifest the power of Jesus Christ, as evidenced in conversions, healings, prophecies and deliverances; and that in the societies (congregations) where they operated, there was a revival and growth in both the material and spiritual resources of the Church.\textsuperscript{253}

The committee however felt that the operations of the MPF, which was limited to a few, were not comprehensive enough to address all the area of laxity and luke-warmness and bring about renewal in the entire life of the Church. Moreover the committee was of the view that approving the proposed constitution of the MPF would mean encouraging an exclusive group within the Church and

‘create an organization that might turn out to be divisive and even a time bomb for breakaways’.\textsuperscript{254}

In the light of the foregoing the \textit{ad hoc} committee recommended a mass renewal movement (Methodist Prayer and Renewal Movement) that would fit within the structure of the Church and at the same time provide complete solution of the Church’s problem of stagnation in pursuance of the Church’s goal of ‘total renewal’.

The thirty-third Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana meeting in 1994 accordingly adopted a resolution that established the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme (MPRP) to operate under the Evangelism Mission and Renewal Division of the Board of Ministries (BOM). Subsequent to the foregoing, the 1995 Annual Conference made the following recommendations:

‘The importance of Prayer in the life of the Church cannot be over emphasized. The key to Church growth lies in the hands of committed ministers who mobilize their members to pray’.


\textsuperscript{253} J.N. Kudadjie. ‘The Relevance of the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme’, 57-58.
In response to Conference’s decision, a retreat was held for all the District Evangelism coordinators and other representatives from the Districts from December 2 –3, 1994, to discuss how best the programme could be organized in the Church and Conference decision implemented. Papers were presented on the various five tracks. Participants at the said retreat saw the need for a Connexional Prayer and Renewal Conference to familiarize delegates with the operations of the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme.

Having carefully studied the programme, they realized that it does encompass the total life of the Church. This means that the programme cannot be effectively carried out without the active participation of the ministers and leaders of the Church and indeed the various Boards and Committees of the Church. It was therefore recommended that there be established coordinating bodies at all the levels of the church i.e. connexional, district, circuit and society.

The following became the mandate of the committee:

1. To promote Prayer and Worship
2. To ensure Teaching and discipleship
3. To facilitate Healing and counseling
4. To encourage evangelism and preaching
5. To promote welfare and social action in the Church at its various levels

The fifth mandate which was related to the promotion of welfare and social action in the church at its various levels was in consonance with the church’s vision and emphasis on holistic ministry for the past two decades. This vision of the church was apparently in the right direction for the fact that what Atiemo labels as ‘Quasi-religious benevolent groups’ were attracting most church members. Their emphasis is on providing fellowship and social support but with esoteric features. Among these groups are Honesty and Hope societies and Christian Mboaye Kuw (Christian Benevolent Group). In September 13-17, 1995, the Methodist Church Ghana organized its first Connexional Prayer and Renewal Convention at Wesley Girls High School, Cape Coast under the theme, ‘Prayer and Renewal in the Methodist Church’. This was followed up in 1997 by another Prayer Convention focused on

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256 Abamfo Atiemo, Aliens at the gate of Sodom and other reflections. Accra: Presbel Printing Press, 1997, 31. Abamfo Atiemo is an ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. He is the immediate Head of the Department of the Study of Religions at the University of Ghana, Legon.
the theme ‘Deliverance and renewal through Christian life’, dealing with the issue of demons, and how to counsel clients and how to conduct deliverance.  

5 in 95 Evangelism Programme

In pursuance of the objectives of holistic renewal in the Church, the Methodist Church Ghana declared the year 1995, “A year of Evangelism”, in which the Church committed itself to achieve a modest growth of at least 5%. The programme initiated a few years earlier and dubbed “5 in 95” was formally launched at the 1995 Conference. Under this project, districts, circuits and societies were expected to intensify their outreach programmes. The expectations under this project were:

i. Every Church member will pray for and witness to five people in 1995.

ii. Each Methodist congregation will aim at increasing its membership by at least 5% by the end of 1995.

iii. Each Circuit should aim at starting at least 5 new preaching posts (Nursery congregations) in 1995.

iv. Each District should aim at starting work among 5 unreached people group in 1995.

Circuits and Societies were also encouraged to engage in social evangelism by identifying particular needs in their community and finding ways to meet them. Circuits were therefore expected to do a write up of the needs including ways of meeting those needs. A handbook on “5 in 95” was prepared and distributed by the Division. Reports read at the 1995 Conference indicated that many societies were studying it and making efforts to implement some of the ideas and suggestions provided in the handbook. The EMR Division planned to put in place various training programmes for both ministries and lay leaders to help equip them for the evangelism and missionary task.

When the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme (MPRP) was started in 1995, it was seen by the entire church as a mass renewal movement that fits within the structure of the Methodist Church. Moreover, it was believed to be a way of providing complete solution to the church’s problem of stagnation in pursuance of the church’s goal of total renewal. In view of the foregoing most ministers embraced it and committed themselves to the congregational training in evangelism. It is worthy of note that when the renewal programme took off at the

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257 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 166-167.
various levels of the church, the lay membership who seriously committed themselves to the programme were invariable the members of the erstwhile Prayer Fellowships. These members were accordingly mobilized for evangelism and church planting activities at the society, circuit and district (diocesan) levels.

The Evangelism, Mission and Renewal Division (E.M.R.) reported at the 2000 Conference that in pursuance of the fulfillment of the church’s task of church planting through the MPRP, consultation for diocesan coordinators was held at the Freeman Centre from November, 23-27, 1999. At the said consultation a ten-point strategy for Evangelism was developed which included the following five-year quotas for church planting:

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Church planting target for 5 years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cape Coast</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accra</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sekondi</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winneba</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koforidua</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>Sunyani</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarkwa</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Ghana</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akim Oda</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effiduase</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obuasi</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tema</td>
<td>26</td>
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</tbody>
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The EMR Division presented a very encouraging report of the Diocesan Evangelism and Church planting activities to the 2nd Biennial Conference meeting at Kumasi in August 2002. Among other things, the Division highlighted on the Church planting efforts of the various Dioceses, as shown in the table below:

259 *Methodist Church Ghana, Thirty-Ninth Annual/First Biennial Conference 2000 – Agenda – BOM 56.*
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Church planting target for 5 years</th>
<th>No. of Churches planted in 3 years (2002)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cape Coast</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accra</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sekondi</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winneba</td>
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<td>Koforidua</td>
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<td>Sunyani</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<td>Tarkwa</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Ghana</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Akim Oda</td>
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<td>Effiduase</td>
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<td>Obuasi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tema</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The foregoing remarkable evangelistic effort of the Methodist Church within this relatively short period is seen as the fruits of her honest attitude and openness to embrace spiritual renewal, which has accordingly blessed the church. The church has been revived and empowered to remain committed to the fulfilment of the Great Commission, which is the common mission of the church. Presently, the Methodist Church in Ghana is experiencing a steady numerical growth, and church expansion, coupled with much inspired worship services country-wide. Many societies in the cities and big towns are even running two separate forenoon worship services on Sundays, which are well attended.

It is also worthy of note that since the church opened up to embrace spiritual renewal, the church has been in a better position to address herself to the existential needs of her members such as the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces as well as material security. Member has been enabled to relate better to the spiritual realities of their traditional worldview, and for that reason the

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tendency of some members to drift to the African Independent and Pentecostal churches has apparently ceased.

2.3.8 The Methodist Church Ghana (MCG) – Relationship with Ghanaian Overseas Churches

Since 1985, Ghanaian Methodist congregations have been established in places like U.S.A., Canada, and Europe. A few years ago a joint Methodist Presbyterian congregation was also established in Israel. The formation of these overseas congregations of the Methodist Church resulted from local initiatives of Ghanaian emigrants who were mostly lay Methodists and in some cases with the assistance of Ghanaian Methodist ministers who were on further studies abroad.

After some time, the Methodist Church Ghana realized that most of these overseas churches which started without the direct involvement of Ghana Methodist Conference, do not have any memoranda of understanding with the Church at home, hence there seemed to be a loose relationship between the Ghana Methodist Conference and the said churches. In view of the foregoing the 1998 Annual Conference of the Methodist Church adopted a draft Covenant Agreement for the prayerful consideration of these overseas churches.

Under the said Covenant Agreement, the Methodist Church Ghana shall among other things relate to the said overseas churches as follows:

i. That a particular society (congregation) of the Methodist Church – Ghana can be organized only by the authority of the Conference of the Methodist Church-Ghana, and shall function under the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church-Ghana.

ii. That the Conference shall work closely with the society in securing pastoral / ministerial leadership, in plans for the service and witness of the particular society.

iii. The Methodist Church-Ghana shall coordinate the relationship of the society with another Methodist Conference abroad.

iv. The Ghana Conference shall counsel concerning by-laws for the society, conforming to the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist-Church, Ghana.

v. As with all societies, from time to time pastoral letters shall be sent briefing the society of the state of the work of God in the Conference, the Church’s aspirations, challenges, needs and opportunities.

vi. Each particular society may adopt bye-laws in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church – Ghana and the laws of the land in which it exists.

vii. The society shall maintain its uniqueness as part of the Methodist Church – Ghana in worship, sacraments and church polity.  

In pursuance of the Methodist Church Ghana’s objective of coordinating the relationship of its overseas churches in USA, Canada and Europe etc. with other Conference, the Ghana Methodist Conference formally sought partnership in this direction with the United Methodist Church (UMC) USA, with whom it already enjoyed working relationships through its Mission Board – the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).

The GBGM of the UMC’s response to the request of the Ghana Methodist Conference as presented by the Executive Secretary of the UMC, is outlined in the following statements of partnership:

• The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) welcomes and affirms the vision of the Methodist Church of Ghana to develop and strengthen Ghanaian Methodist congregations in the United States and Canada.

• The Board understands and affirms the desire to provide continuing nurture for those of the Methodist family from Ghana who want to preserve their language, culture and religious expressions in contexts very different from their country.

• It also understands and affirms the desire to keep cultural and religious traditions alive among those who are second and third generation Ghanaians.

• The Board invites the Methodist Church Ghana to prepare statement outlining its vision of mission and ministry for persons living in North America and Europe.

To this end the GBGM outlined five areas in which it deemed necessary to explore cooperation with the Methodist Church of Ghana in this direction; they included:

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i. Provision of financial support for Ghanaian ministers, appointed by the Methodist Conference to give pastoral leadership to Ghanaian congregations abroad.

ii. Facilitating meetings between Connexional Representatives of MCG and appropriate leaders of UMC.

iii. Exploring with Methodist Church Ghana and the congregations in North America and Europe, to provide continuing education for pastors and lay persons.

iv. Consideration of funding requests and other resources needed for developing strong congregation.

v. The GBGM facilitating meetings between the larger Methodist community as to how pastoral care and nurture can be made available to the significant numbers of persons from the African continent who are living in North America, Europe and other places.

The Methodist Church Ghana in outlining its vision of mission and ministry for its overseas Christian communities acknowledged the following:

i. That Global migration has led to the settlement of Methodists from other countries including Ghana into the social, cultural and worshipping life of local and independent congregations in USA, Canada and Europe

ii. That continuing links by such congregations with “natal homes” become possible because of cultural and religious understanding so far as worship and spirituality are concerned.

In the light of the foregoing, the MCG shares the vision of exploring ways in which the nature, practice and identity of Ghana Methodist congregations in USA, Canada and Europe will be shaped by globalizations and the experience of living in the Wesley dictum “The whole world is my parish”.

The above vision raises a number of questions like the following, the answers to which will require the working out of a partnership between the GBGM of the UMC and the MCG for support for ministers and the Ghanaian congregations in the USA, Canada and Europe:

i. To what extent do these expectations overwhelm other roles of the congregations, e.g., social and community involvement?

ii. How far are the ministers expected to become ‘cultural chaplains’?

iii. Should the affirmation of certain cultures exclude others?

iv. What role does / could the Church play among its members in mediating the transition as new cultures take root in USA, Canada and Europe?
v. What are the appropriate pastoral stances, for example, when revised expectations and roles of women or children within the family are involved?

vi. What projections could be made about the future of these congregations?

vii. Are second and third generations of the Ghanaian community likely to sustain their Methodist identity or are they more likely to join independent churches or move away from the Church altogether?

viii. How far have the presence, experience and gifts of such migrant congregations been affirmed and welcomed by the wider church. Have structures or styles been modified in any way to maximize the potential of such congregations?  

It is worthy of note that the missionary vision as outlined by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church and the Methodist Church Ghana in the above-mentioned statements of partnership is a common vision generally shared by the mainline Protestant churches for their overseas congregations. In view of this, such common vision in missions and ministry will guide the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, which have emerged in Germany and the Netherlands, which are the focus of this project, in the coming years.

2.4 Conclusion

In the second part of this chapter, we have looked at developments in the two autonomous mission churches, beginning from the early 20th century when it became necessary for the Western missionaries to transfer leadership roles to the indigenous people. We have attempted to show that one main problem that mainline Christianity in Ghana has grappled with over the years is with finding a better approach towards contextualization of the Gospel. Actually, true contextualization occurs when the Gospel penetrates the heart of the cultural experience and shows how Christ gives new meaning to authentic human values. In other words, the Gospel message becomes transforming power within the life of a community when it is expressed in the cultural forms in which the community understands itself.

The Methodist Church Ghana – Thirty – Ninth Annual / First Biennial Conference 2000 Representative Session Agenda, CPC 22, statements of partnership with the United Methodist Church.
However, it took the autonomous mission churches such as the Presbyterian and the Methodist Churches quite a long time before they could come to grips with the realities of the inherent socio-spiritual crises of their members relating to their African worldview. We have seen that the autonomous mission churches had great difficulty in addressing themselves to the existential needs of their members, which included the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces as well as material security. Moreover, they could not fully satisfy their deep religious and spiritual quest and the search for an authentic spirituality.

We have seen that the Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches eventually made attempts to promote spiritual renewal in order to meet the challenges they were facing. What made the churches sit up was the exodus of members, particularly the youth, to Pentecostal churches, as well as the rise of prayer Fellowships within them. It has been clearly shown that the openness demonstrated by the two churches is an honest attitude of mainline churches in Africa that do not trivialise the existential needs of their members such as the aforementioned.

It is worthy of note that since the Presbyterian and The Methodist Churches opened up to embrace spiritual renewal, the churches have been in a better position to address themselves to the existential needs of their members. They have been able to relate better to the spiritual realities of their African traditional worldview, and for that reason the tendency of the members to drift to the African Independent and Pentecostal Churches has apparently ceased. The churches have also begun to experience significant spiritual and numerical growth.
CHAPTER III

THE EMERGENCE OF GHANAIAN MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES
IN GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS

3.1 Introduction

In the past two decades of the previous century, one of the significant phenomena in continental Europe was the emergence of African community churches most of which were Ghanaian-initiated or Ghanaian-led. Of particular significance about this phenomenon was the fact that most of these churches that emerged belonged to the Pentecostal, Charismatic and African Independent Church type.

When Gerrie ter Haar did her study in the mid-1990s on African Christians particularly that related to the rapid development of Ghanaian-initiated African churches in continental Europe, she observed that many of the mainstream traditional Protestant churches in Ghana did not have branches in a country like the Netherlands. As a result of this, members who used to attend one of these former mission churches such as Presbyterian Church of Ghana or Methodist Church Ghana when they lived in Africa have been more or less obliged to join one of the newly emerged African-initiated churches such as the Pentecostal, Charismatic or African Independent Churches. She further observed that these Protestant former mission churches had not been successful in attracting the support of significant numbers of African Christians living in Europe. This she attributed to the particular structure of the said churches, which made their organization appear less adaptable than that of the African-initiated churches to the unique circumstances created by migration.264

Subsequent to the in-depth study done by Ter Haar in the mid-1990s among African Christians in continental Europe, the situation has changed. Since the late 1990s mainline Protestant Ghanaian-initiated churches such as Methodist and Presbyterian Churches have emerged in Germany and the Netherlands and have been attracting the support of significant numbers of African Christians, notably Ghanaians. These recently emerged mainline Protestant Ghanaian churches have their roots in the former Protestant mission Churches in

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Ghana which were founded and originally led by missionaries from the historic traditional mainstream Protestant Churches in Europe.

This chapter begins with a brief discussion on the rise of Ghanaian-initiated African congregations in Germany and the Netherlands as prelude to the study on the formation of the recently emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches. We shall then proceed to investigate the factors, which led to the formation of such churches, alongside both their corresponding European traditional Protestant Churches and the previously emerged Ghanaian-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in Europe.

3.2 The Rise of Ghanaian-Initiated African Churches in Germany and the Netherlands

In the past two decades of the previous century African community churches most of which were founded or led by Ghanaians emerged and spread in continental Europe. African-initiated churches founded by Nigerians and other Africans have existed in Britain for about four decades, but their development and growth have not been at such a rapid rate as that of continental Europe in the said period of time. Since large-scale Ghanaian migration to continental Europe in the 1980s was initially concentrated in Germany and other rich European countries such as the Netherlands, their big cities where the African immigrants had settled to find work eventually became the main locations for the development of Ghanaian-initiated churches. In the Netherlands, apart from the very few churches, notably the True Teachings of Christ’s Temple and the Resurrection Power and Living Bread Ministries which were founded in the 1980s a large number of the currently existing Ghanaian-led congregations were founded at the beginning of the 1990s. Most of these Ghanaian-initiated churches were started as House fellowships where people gathered for Bible study and prayer. Initially, most of these churches were centered in or around the big cities, notably Amsterdam. In 1997 as many as forty churches of varying sizes mostly initiated by Ghanaians were located in Bijlmermeer district of Amsterdam which has the largest concentration of the migrant community in Amsterdam.

Germany, which is noted to be one of the most important countries for African immigrants, has its largest concentration of Ghanaian-initiated churches in the port-city of

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Hamburg, which was said to have about 5,000 Ghanaians officially registered in 1995. At the same period, this major port-city also counted more than thirty African-initiated churches mostly founded by Ghanaians. 268

**The Situation in Germany – phases of development**

According to Roswith Gerloff, who was cited by Gerrie ter Haar as having been involved in pastoral work for many years among Africans in Germany, the history of African church formation in Germany may be divided into three phases. 269 The first phase involved mission churches for pastoral care to people from all over Africa founded by German traditional mainline churches in big cities notably Hamburg and Frankfurt where the first African Christians mostly from French-speaking countries had come to study. Pastors of these mission churches were eventually appointed and invited from Africa by the Evangelical Church in Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland: EKD) to assume their pastoral responsibilities. Until quite recently one of such churches in Hamburg was for several years under the pastoral care of a Ghanaian pastor who was trained by this German Church and accordingly appointed to assume pastoral oversight. The second phase of African-related churches was established by families of African-American service personnel who were among the American military forces deployed in Germany. The third phase of African Church formation in Germany is dated to the arrival of large numbers of African refugees and asylum seekers, notably from Ghana and Zaire since the early 1980s.

Just like the situation in the Netherlands, some of these refugees and asylum seekers in Germany were often held in special camps spread out over the country. The living conditions in some of these refugee camps turned out not to be really conducive to the social and psychological development of the asylum seekers. Reverend A.L. Kwansa, a senior minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana who was invited in 1986 by the partner churches in Baden-Württemberg, Germany to visit their region, to evaluate and offer guidance to Ghanaian asylum seekers living there found their situation quite disheartening. He observed that their inadequate, unhealthy and congested accommodation in that refugee confinement coupled with prolonged idling in narrow congested rooms for most part of the day had a marked effect on their morale. As a result, many of the migrants who had not as yet secured resident permit suffered depression and irritation and became demoralized. Some of them out

269 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 99-100.
of desperation took to heavy drinking and smoking while others yielded themselves to other social vices. 270

A similar report compiled some years later on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on the situation in the Netherlands speaks of a feeling of disappointment on the part of some asylum seekers which included Ghanaians who were also suffering from culture shock and were therefore searching for an identity and struggling to adapt to the position of an outsider. 271

In these circumstances as was the situation in Germany, Reverend Kwansah among other things encouraged them to introduce themselves to churches in the vicinity, to form choirs or singing bands, to join Bible-study and prayer groups or form any other association which would help them overcome their loneliness. 272

Many immigrants had decided that faced with the impossible choice of either staying in misery or returning to misery, the best perspective is to stay in Europe and turn their energies to improving their situation there. In view of this the spiritual guidance given by Reverend Kwansah 273 prevailed on them and that kind of inspiration eventually became one of the motivational factors for the rapid development of Ghanaian-initiated congregations in both Germany and the Netherlands.

The situation in the Netherlands – categories of African Churches

For analytical purposes, Gerrie ter Haar in her study of African Christians in the Netherlands divides the Ghanaian-initiated African Churches into four different categories. 274 This categorization also fits the situation in Germany. First, there are fully Independent Churches founded in the Netherlands and which have no immediate counterpart elsewhere but owes its existence entirely to the diaspora situation of its members in the Netherlands. A typical example is the True Teachings of Christ Temple in Amsterdam, which had other branches in Hamburg and London.

273 Ter Haar, Halfway to Paradise, 155.
The second category consists of Pentecostal or Charismatic Churches in Netherlands or Germany which considers themselves either affiliated to or linked to long-established and influential churches in Ghana or United States from which they draw inspiration and benefit from the ministry of visiting leaders from such Churches. On the other hand, they could also be churches like Church of Pentecost or the Resurrection Power and Living Bread Ministries, which were initiated by members who belonged to the mother churches back, home in Ghana and for that reason eventually, came to consider themselves as overseas branches of the said churches. The mother churches in Ghana could confirm pastors of such churches in Europe here.

The Roman Catholic communities – such as the All Saints Catholic Church are part of a worldwide organization, which fall under the third category. The situation in Amsterdam particularly provides room for separate worship services for both English and French speaking Catholics and possibly other languages as well. The Ghanaian community within the English speaking Catholics also maintains their special ministry within the wider community.

A typical example of the fourth category is the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) Church whose presence is witnessed in both Germany and the Netherlands. The SDA Church does not belong to the mainstream Christian tradition in the said countries. However, the Ghanaian SDA congregations got themselves established besides the previously existing churches in the Netherlands and Germany.

3.3 Socio-Religious Setting for the Formation of Ghanaian Mainline Protestant Churches in Germany and the Netherlands

Before the mid-1980s thousands of Ghanaian immigrants had begun settling all over Germany and the Netherlands, which are noted to be two of the most important European countries for African immigrants. A good number of them were already Christians and members of various churches in Ghana, or at least had Christian background through formal education in mission schools established by the former mission churches. These African Christians came to Europe looking for a spiritual home in these foreign lands. A few of these Ghanaian immigrants who were mainline Protestant Christians made contacts and were worshipping with some European mainstream traditional churches such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Netherlands Reformed Church, or the United Methodist Church. These are churches with which the mainline Protestant Christians share some elements of their backgrounds. Some
few others had also made contacts and were worshipping with some International Pentecostal churches.

To these Ghanaian immigrants, religion besides its valued spiritual significance becomes so important because it helps them in the process of cultural transition; it helps them to cope with the shift from one world to another. In other words, these migrant Christians draw on their religious resources for both religious and social purposes. For many of them, their religious beliefs equip them with the spiritual strength and social contacts necessary to survive. Therefore the few Ghanaian mainline Christians who initially made contacts with the traditional European churches were first and foremost searching for a spiritual home and the kind of Christianity that would address their spiritual and socio-economic needs as migrant African Christians in a strange land. The search for a spiritual home that will address the said needs eventually led to the formation of the Ghanaian-initiated mainline Protestant churches.

It took many years, but eventually Ghanaian Methodist and Presbyterian congregations were formed in Germany and the Netherlands as discussed below.

### 3.4 The Formation of Ghanaian Methodist Societies in Germany

#### 3.4.1 Introduction

The Methodists presently have four active societies in Germany, located in Hamburg, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf and Essen. The Hamburg Eben-Ezer Ghanaian Society which happens to be the largest and the first of its kind in both Germany and the Netherlands was officially recognized and integrated into the German United Methodist Church (Evangelisch-Methodische Kirche-EmK) by the North German Annual Conference (Norddeutschen Jährlichen Konferenz-NJK) meeting in Kassel in May, 1995. The Eben-Ezer Ghanaian Society in Hamburg-Eppendorf had its beginnings under the same roof in Hamburg-Eppendorf with the sister German Eben-Ezer Gemeinde (Society). The Ghanaian society

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275 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 11-12.

276 The (Methodist) Society is the Local organisation of the Methodist Church, meeting as one congregation for public worship, and organized into classes under the supervision of the Leaders’ Meeting. The Society consists of the junior members and full (adult) members, who are members of the Methodist Church.
which for nearly ten years participated jointly in the same Hamburg –Eppendorf Circuit with the sister German society has since 2002 been elevated to a Circuit status and moved to a more spacious Lutheran (Timo) Church premises in Hamburg-Horn. Hamburg has since November 1, 1994 become an official ministerial seat for a full-time Ghanaian resident minister. Düsseldorf became the second ministerial seat of this kind in June, 2000.

3.4.2 The Formation of the Ghanaian Methodist Society in Hamburg

Initial contacts between Ghanaian Methodists and the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche

Before the beginning of 1993, some Ghanaian Methodists residents in Hamburg had made contacts and were worshipping with the German United Methodist Church (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche: EmK) societies within Hamburg with varying degree of regularity. The first contacts known to have been made included that with the Reinhardt family in the Fuhlsbüttel Society, the Adu-Gyamfi family, Mrs. Letitia Turkson Sauermann, Mrs. Comfort Antwi-Bosiako and daughter Alexandra all in the Eben-Ezer Society at Hamburg Eppendorf. Mrs. Comfort Antwi-Bosiako was instrumental in contacting and introducing some Ghanaian Methodists like Mr. Lamec Ening and family to the Eben-Ezer German Society. The Adu-Gyamfi family and later sister Comfort Anwi-Boasiako are known to have baptized their first daughters in this EmK Eben-Ezer Society.

Because of the difficulty most of these Ghanaian Methodists had in following the services in German, the resident pastor Walter Berchter made attempts to offer a written summary of his sermons in English, but the desire grew to hold services for Ghanaians in the Akan Language, whilst remaining an integral part of the German United Methodist Church (EmK).

In 1991 some of these Ghanaian Methodists on different occasions made contacts with Rev. J.D.K Ekem, a Ghanaian Methodist minister who was then studying for his doctorate at the University of Hamburg and expressed their wish to have him lead them to start Ghanaian

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277 A circuit consists of one or more societies under the pastoral care of one or more ministers. It is a distinct authoritative unit within a District, in which usually several societies, conveniently situated for the purpose, are banded together for pastoral oversight, mutual support and Christian service.

278 Interview with founding members namely: Mr. Lamec Ening, Mrs. Comfort Antwi-Bosiako, Mrs. Margaret Adu-Gyamfi and Mrs. Letitia Turkson Sauermann in June 2000. The compiled notes of their reflections are document and available with the researcher.

worship services. These Ghanaian Methodists included Mrs. Janet Quagraine Blohm and Mr. Samuel Biney who were hoping to use the EmK premises in Hamburg-Hamm. Mrs. Comfort Antwi-Bosiako together with others like Mrs Letitia Turkson Sauermann also approached Rev. Ekem in July 1991 and asked him to consider leading such Ghanaian services in Eppendorf. Mrs. L. Turkson Sauermann had earlier met with Rev. Ekem at the April 1991 North German Annual Conference in Bremen and expressed similar wish. Since Rev. Ekem was just about to return to Ghana, no action was taken at that time on such requests. When Rev. Ekem returned in October 1991, he was again approached, this time by Mr. Lamec Ening who met him accompanied by his daughter Anke at an English Worship Service at Fuhlbüttel. The English Service had been started in mid-September 1991, and the Ening family had preferably moved from Eppendorf to the said English Service. Prior to his first contact with Rev. Ekem in Fuhlsbüttel, Mr. Lamec Ening had met with Rev. John Perry (British minister in charge of the English Service) and Rev. Sonja Waldmann-Bohn (Coordinator, UMC English Language Ministry) and expressed the felt need to start services in Akan and in Ghanaian tradition at Fuhlsbüttel for Ghanaian Methodists. Whilst at Fuhlsbüttel, Mr Lamec Ening was made a contact person for contacting and inviting Ghanaians to the said English Service. Once again Rev. Ekem could not take immediate action on the request to start a Ghanaian Worship Service since he was going to be away with his family for about seven more months in Bochum. He however promised to consider the possibility after his return and therefore encouraged Mr. Lamec Ening to make the necessary contacts and to consult with other Ghanaian Methodists known to him. Mr. Lamec Ening committed himself to organizing a good number of Ghanaian Methodists and others many of whom eventually became members of the emerged Ghanaian Society.

In the autumn of 1992, after Rev. Ekem had returned to Hamburg in July, Dr. Lodewigs the then EmK superintendent of Hamburg District was preaching at the English-speaking society in Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel. Mr. Lamec Ening, in the presence of Rev. Ekem, approached the Superintendent after the service with the request to begin holding Methodist Services in the Akan Language. Dr. Lodewigs suggested that the matter should be discussed at the meeting of the ministers of the Hamburg EmK on January 12th 1993. Two other known Ghanaian Methodists, namely Mr. Samuel Biney and Mr. Anthony Adu-Gyamfi were accordingly informed of the said invitation. In order to make a good presentation for this

280 Rev. Sonja Waldmann-Bohn an ordained minister of the United Methodist Church, U.S.A. was stationed in Germany as co-ordinator of the English language Ministries within the German EmK (Evangelisch Methodistische Kirche).
meeting, the following persons met in the Enings flat to prepare for the said meeting: Mr. & Mrs. Ening, Rev. Ekem, Mr. Samuel Kwesi Biney and Mr. Anthony Adu-Gyamfi. At the Ministers meeting, a favourable decision was taken after intense discussions and the presentation of a list of interested Ghanaian Methodists by Mr. Lamec Ening.  

After the meeting, the Bishop and Cabinet of the EmK were accordingly informed. At the said meeting however, the Superintendent and his ministers could not readily allocate an EmK premises for the said Ghanaian service since International congregations were using almost all the EmK premises for a second service on Sundays. It was therefore a good news that after the necessary consultations, pastor Walter Berchter agreed for the premises in Hamburg-Eppendorf to be used, and it was decided to hold a first service on 31st January, 1993. To plan for this maiden service and to compile a list of those who should be invited, a further meeting was held at the Biney’s flat, attended by Mr. Samuel Kwesi Biney, Rev. Ekem, Mr. Lamec Ening and Mrs. Margaret Adu-Gyamfi in lieu of her husband who had travelled.

First Service at Eben-Ezer and following Events

The first service was held at Eben-Ezer, Hamburg-Eppendorf, at 12 noon on January 31st 1993. The service was conducted in Akan by Rev. Ekem and attended by 14 adults and 9 children. These members eventually became the founding members of the Ghanaian Methodist Society in Hamburg, born on 31st January 1993. In his brief exhortation at the maiden service the German pastor Berchter of Eben-Ezer Society encouraged the emerging Ghanaian congregation to be well grounded in their faith in Christ and expressed the hope that they would stay together with the German Eben-Ezer society as one family. At the subsequent services many more Ghanaians attended and opted for full membership. In order to provide a temporary organizational structure until the group could be granted the status of a society, an

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282 Account written by Rev. Dr. Siegfried Lodewigs (Superintendent Minister of the Hamburg District) dated 29th June 1997.

283 The adults included the following: Rev. Walter Berchter, Rev. and Mrs. Ekem, Mr. and Mrs. Ening, Mr. and Mrs. Adu-Gyamfi, Mr. and Mrs. Djongo, Mr. Samuel Biney, Madam Felicia Akosah, Mrs. Janet Quaigraine Blohm, Dr. Frank Codjoe (Dr. Frank Codjoe, is a founding member of the Hamburg Ghanaian Society, and a PhD graduate in Political Science from the Hamburg University), and Dr. Manu (Dr. Manu, is a Ghanaian female practicing dentist in Hamburg). The children present were Bettina Biney, Derrick Biney, Belinda Biney, Anke Ening, Birgit Ening, Sandra Ening, Susanna Ekem, Victor Ekem and Edward Quaigraine Blohm.
interim executive committee was appointed. On Good Friday, the first joint service with the German congregation was held. Such joint services which were held became regular events, taking place approximately four times per year.

At the German Circuit Conference (Bezirkskonferenz) in April 1993, the new congregation formally applied to be recognized as a society within the circuit, but as there were legal questions to be settled, it was designated as a worship group (Dienstgruppe) within the Eppendorf Circuit for the time being. Leaders of the group became members of the Circuit Conference. Dr. Lodewigs, the Hamburg District Superintendent wrote to the secretary of Conference of the Methodist Church-Ghana, asking for recognition of the group. The Conference office in Ghana responded favourably encouraging the EmK to maintain this profound fellowship. During this time and up to his departure for Ghana in July 1994 after completion of his studies, Rev. Ekem was the spiritual and organisational leader of the group.

A request from the group supported by the EmK resulted in Rev. Ekem being sent back by the Methodist Church of Ghana to serve for one year as full time minister, to stabilize and strengthen the group in preparations for a successor and to help with the work on structural questions. Rev. Ekem returned to Hamburg in November 1994. Discussions were held between the Leaders’ Meeting, Rev. Helmut Renders, who had taken over from Rev. Walter Berchter as minister of the German congregation in Eppendorf, and Dr. Lodewigs regarding the future status of the Ghanaian congregation. There were also joint meetings of the leaders of the Ghanaian and German societies.

On the issue of the future status of the Ghanaian congregation, the Ghanaian minister, Rev. Dr. Ekem made the following observation:

‘Consultations with our Leaders Meeting and the congregation indicated clearly that an overwhelming majority was in favour of full integration into the German United Methodist Conference. Precisely, the congregation was to become a Ghanaian Methodist Society within the Hamburg Eppendorf Circuit of the German Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (EmK). This became necessary in order to protect the young growing congregation against commercialisation, personality cults and power struggles characterizing many African congregations in Europe that existed on their own without any form of supervision by a recognized or established ecclesiastical body. More importantly, this crucial step was aimed at cementing a relationship that was already in existence, namely the recognition of the Ghanaian congregation as a worship group within the German EmK in Hamburg-Eppendorf. Moreover, since a considerable number of the membership had come to identify Germany as their
permanent home and many others were not likely to return to Ghana in the near future, it became appropriate to place them under the discipline of the German Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche.’ 284

A draft statute (Satzung) was prepared, defining the status of the future Ghanaian Society within the Eppendorf Circuit. The Circuit Conference accepted the statute in April 1995 and the North German Conference meeting in Kassel in May 1995 officially recognized the Ghanaian Society. The congregation was thus fully integrated into the EmK as a Ghanaian Society Hamburg-Eppendorf Circuit (Ghanaische Gemeinde Bezirk Hamburg-Eppendorf). 285

Before Rev. Dr. Ekem returned to Ghana in mid-November 1995, the Methodist Church of Ghana responded to the request for a successor by sending the Rev. Isaac S. Amoah to Hamburg. Rev. Amoah was inducted in a joint service of the German and Ghanaian Societies held on 15th October 1995 by Professor Emeritus Rt. Rev. Kwesi A. Dickson (the President of the Ghana Methodist Conference who was then on an official visit) and Rev. Dr. Siegfried Lodewigs (Chairman and Superintendent, Hamburg District of the EmK.) Rev. Amoah who was joined by his family a few months later thus became the substantive minister in charge of the Ghanaian Society from 1st November 1995 to June 2000.

In December 1995 almost 3 years after the first service and eight months after the Ghanaian Society had been officially recognized by the German Conference as a full Society, the membership numbered 90 adults. By December 1999, seven years after the first service of the emerged society, the membership numbered 314 adults and nearly 100 children including those in their teens. The society has since developed to become a vibrant, and a considerably fast growing mission congregation. The Ghanaian Methodist Society in Hamburg, officially opened on January 31st 1993, therefore became the first Ghanaian mainline Protestant congregation in both Germany and the Netherlands. 286

3.4.3 Structural and Spiritual Developments in the Ghanaian Society

During the first three years of its formation, the Hamburg Ghanaian Society under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Ekem sought to develop this young congregation into a typical

286 Appraisal of the state of the Ghanaian United Methodist Mission Project in Germany to the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. USA. Compiled by the Ghanaian in Hamburg, dated April 2000. The report is available with the researcher.
Ghanaian Society, creating the necessary structures needed for its development. When Rev. Amoah took over from Rev. Ekem in November 1995, the congregation under his leadership set themselves a number of congregational goals aimed at maintaining a steady church growth and expansion and for that reason developed evangelistic strategies which included the following:

i. Intensive congregational teachings on spiritual growth and training in evangelism aimed at getting members well-grounded in their Christian faith so as to be enabled to share their faith with others, reaching out to the non-churched within the wider Ghanaian migrant community in Hamburg, inviting and introducing them to the Church.

ii. Organising lively and inspiring worship services which appealed to both church members and casual visitors.

iii. Intensive monthly Revival Meetings coupled with Prayer, healing and deliverance retreats.

iv. Pastoral counseling which served as a tool for evangelistic outreach. A good number of the non-churched persons who benefited from such counselling sessions eventually made decision for Christ and opted for church membership.

v. Establishing evangelistic contacts with known Ghanaian Methodists resident in identified German cities believed to have appreciable concentration of African migrants and believed to be potential places for evangelistic outreach and the development of new congregations.  

The situation in Hamburg-Eppendorf at that time was reported as follows by the German EmK church magazine ‘Wort und Weg’ in its January 26, 1997 issue:

‘Great joy in Hamburg-Eppendorf Circuit: Five new members joined the German Society and 31 joined the Ghanaian society…It may be recalled that two months ago, 75 Ghanaians were received into the United Methodist Church in Germany. In all, the Circuit received into its fold 111(one hundred and eleven) new members. Since the official opening of the Ghanaian Society one and half years ago the congregation has numbered to almost 200. The rapid growth is a challenge to those in Eppendorf. The

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Ghanaian pastor Isaac Amoah and the senior pastor Helmut Renders are heavily scheduled with church work. Some people ask themselves what happens when the Ebenezer chapel becomes too small to accommodate the entire congregation: a situation for which one should be grateful to God.  

It is worthy of note that, conference statistics for that particular year indicated that Hamburg-Eppendorf circuit achieved the highest rate of growth among all the circuits within the EmK in Germany as a result of the above-mentioned developments in the circuit. After serving for five years in Hamburg, Rev. Amoah handed over to Rev. Kwasi Owusu Acheaw who was inducted in June 2000 as the third Ghanaian minister to serve in Hamburg Ghanaian society. Developments in the Ghanaian society since 2000 are summarized as follows in a report filed for the 10th year anniversary of the Hamburg-Ghanaian society in October 2003.

‘The congregation has grown to the phenomenal number of 347 adults and 120 junior members. The phenomenal growth of the congregation occurred continuously within the first five years and by 1997 it had begun to outstrip the capacity of the Eben-Ezer Church. In the year 2002 having attained a Circuit status, the Ghanaian Church had to rent the relatively spacious Lutheran Church in Hamburg-Horn, called the Timo Church, where services now take place. But the new place has already started to become small and the search for a new and bigger accommodation is underway. The Hamburg Ghanaian Society has developed a new congregation in Stuttgart which was inaugurated on June 8, 2003.

The Hamburg Ghanaian Society with the assistance of the German United Methodist Church, (EmK) has also established an Assistance, Support and Counselling office to help Africans deal with their social problems and assist in their integration into the German society. The office is headed by Dr. Frank Kwaw Codjoe who holds the EmK office of the Commissioner in charge of the Affairs of Foreigners (Aüsländer beauftragte), This particular effort breaks new ground in the African Church landscape in Hamburg and Germany as a whole.’


As it has earlier been observed in this chapter, the structurally integrated Hamburg Ghanaian Society which happened to be the first of its kind among Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christian communities in Germany had a two-fold missionary vision namely:

i. Developing Evangelistic strategies aimed at maintaining a steady church growth in the new developing congregation.

ii. Establishing the necessary evangelistic contacts aimed at church expansion in terms of planting new churches in identified city neighbourhoods known to have appreciable Ghanaian or African migrant settlements.

It is worthy of note that the emergence of the developing Ghanaian Methodist Societies in Germany in the last few years happens to be the culmination of the foregoing missionary vision. The Düsseldorf Ghanaian Methodist congregation, the second Ghanaian Methodist Society after Hamburg to emerge in Germany in 1997 developed with the varied support of the Hamburg Ghanaian Society and its pastoral leadership. Between August 1997 and June 2000 the Hamburg Ghanaian minister, Rev. Amoah and a lay preacher Mr. Lamec Ening from Hamburg scheduled themselves to assist in developing the young Düsseldorf Society in terms of monthly weeklong visits used for spiritual nurture, pastoral counselling, congregational teaching and training in evangelism as well as leadership training.

Contacts with some Ghanaian Methodists were also established in places like Stuttgart, Hanover, Berlin and particularly Essen from where some few Ghanaians used to travel on Sundays to Düsseldorf to attend worship service. 290

3.4.4 The Formation of the Ghanaian Methodist Society in Düsseldorf

The Düsseldorf Ghanaian Society happens to be a congregation that emerged from a situation of encounter and cooperation which is now in full development. The developments turned out to be a two-fold process set in motion which was to eventually shape and strengthen the Ghanaian identity and community on one hand and on the other hand to enhance a process of cooperation and integration into the German EmK (United Methodist Church).

The seeds of the formal beginning of what was to become the Ghanaian Society of the German EmK in Düsseldorf were sown on the third Sunday of Advent, 1996. On that Sunday, at an Advent celebration, five male Ghanaians who had visited the German congregation several times were in attendance: Listowel Ayensu Mensah, Tasman Tweneboah, Joseph Bio, Andreas Manson, and Alexander Arhin. At that service, Rev. Linda Pliska, an American pastor of the United Methodist Church, was present together with her husband Michael.

During that service, the German pastor, Rainer Leo searched out hymns for Advent and Christmas that the combined group could sing in common. During that afternoon Listowel asked Rev. Pliska if she could possibly help to begin worship services in the English Language, so that international people could attend and carry out their faith. It was quite obvious at this point that just like the Hamburg situation most of the Ghanaians experienced difficulty in following the services in German and desperately needed to overcome this language barrier to carry out their faith in the Methodist tradition alongside their German EmK congregation.

On Sunday, December 25, 1996 fifteen people gathered for the first meeting of what was called ‘English Language Ministries’. The group, which included some native English speakers besides Rev. Pliska and husband, decided to worship in English Language at 12.30 pm on the third Sunday of every month. On other Sundays, those persons who desired to, could worship with the German-speaking congregation at 11.00 a.m., and then the Ghanaians would gather for Bible study in Akan (a Ghanaian language) led by two of the leading lay persons: Tasman Tweneboah and Listowel Ayensu Mensah. The Ministry was envisioned as one congregation together with the German-speaking people; on three Sundays accommodation was made for English scripture readings and multilingual songs. At the North German Annual conference in April, 1997 at Oldenburg, Rev. Linda Pliska was given an appointment to English Language Ministries in Düsseldorf by the German Bishop Dr. Walter Klaiter. Rev. Linda Pliska made the following observation at this stage of the development process:

‘The process began of finding funding and of defining who it is that we were really being called to be. On the one hand, the very exciting vision of a truly international community that worships in a multi-language atmosphere, intentionally seeking to reflect the variety of God’s creation, and a home for people who want to serve God in

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291 Founding Pastor Rev. Linda Pliska is an ordained Minister of the United Methodist Church, U.S.A. Somewhere in mid-1990s she took leave from her church to accompany her husband Michael an industrial scientist who was employed by an American firm and was based in Düsseldorf in Germany.
Christ; and on the other hand, a separate group of people who need the identity of
their own culture to feel at home and to ‘tank up’ on the faith needed to live in a
foreign land.’ 292

In early 1997, a coordinating committee called “Senfkom” was established. It composed of
few leaders from both the German-speaking congregation and the English Language
Ministries. Both pastors, Rainer Leo and Linda Pliska served on this committee. The function
of this committee which was begun with the organisational leadership of Rev. Sonja
Waldmann Bonn, (an American United Methodist missionary for English Language
Ministries in Germany), was to plan and coordinate development of the English language
Ministries, plan for joint activities and appropriate building usage together; the committee met
every other month. At this point the activities of the English Language Ministries included:

- Participation in regular weekly Gottesdienst (Divine Service) in German (Average
  attendance: 15 people weekly).
- Once a month, third Sunday English Language Worship (Average attendance: 22
  people weekly).
- Three times a month Bible Study taught in Akan by the Ghanaian lay leadership on
  Sunday afternoon.
- Musical quartet practice once a week.
- Sunday school (children service) which began in German and taught by four women
  from the German-speaking congregation. 293

One special activity that occurred in the first half of 1997 was a joint Pentecost celebration
attended by 52 members of both the German congregation and the English language
Ministries. Food was brought from all nationalities and the two communities shared an
evening of praise in the Ghanaian style. Rev. Linda Pliska made yet another observation at
this point:

‘As we began to form one congregation (Gemeinde), it was thought that this would
indeed be a good mission for the German congregation. But our community was
beginning to number half the joint congregation, and it appeared somewhat
threatening to some of the German members, as they began to wonder about their

292 Pliska, ‘History of the Ghanaian United Methodist Society-Düsseldorf’, Chapter 1: Founding and
Early years, Düsseldorf, May 29, 2001. The unpublished document with her personal reflections is
available with the researcher.
293 Pliska, op.cit.
future. Also the combination of two languages proved a bit stressful to some of the members. We began wondering if the hope of one congregation was really workable. Also at this time, some Ghanaians wanted to develop a complete translation and live as one congregation together with the German-speaking members; others wanted to be a separate congregation worshipping alongside the German speaking congregation.’

During the beginning of 1997 up through the summer, it became apparent that the worship group was growing in numbers and developing a heavy Ghanaian character. In August of 1997, Rev. Isaac Amoah, the Ghanaian pastor of the Hamburg Ghanaian Society was asked to come and organize a weekend revival programme entitled: ‘God’s plan for your life – would you like to know?’ The weekend meetings were well attended. On September 8, the Senfkom agenda related the need to change the worship service to include some of the Ghanaian character of worship; the desire to ask Hamburg if they would assist in leadership by sending their pastor or lay leaders to Düsseldorf at specific intervals. In December 1997, Leadership Council was elected and in accordance with the American United Methodist tradition, a lay leader, Listowel Ayesu Mensah was appointed as lay chairperson. The first decision of this council was to begin weekly worship services. The reasons were that most of the English Language speaking people did not understand the German, and for that reason were not active in leadership but only passive participants, and that it was thought that many more people would be drawn to the Church if they had weekly services.

In April of 1998, in a joint meeting in Munich of the international congregations in Germany the developing problems relating to the numerical growth of the Ghanaians in the Düsseldorf English Language ministries in comparison to those of other nationalities were fully discussed as well as problems of considering themselves one congregation with two parts. It was decided that the Ghanaian Society of Hamburg would provide leadership support to lead the congregation into the future as a Ghanaian society, through the sending once a month in 1998 of the Hamburg Ghanaian pastor or a lay preacher to assist in the development of the Ghanaian worship style and also to assist in pastoral care. Rev. Pliska however

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294 Pliska. op. cit. The idea of a separate congregation worshipping alongside the German Gemeinde (congregation) envisages the Hamburg model which makes room for two separate congregations of distinct worship style organized according to their respective tradition. However at the circuit level, the two congregations form one entity administratively guided by the German Church constitution.
remained the Pastor in-charge and also responsible for the organisational work in the society.

A draft statute defining the status of the future Ghanaian Society within the Bezirkskonferenz was accepted by the Düsseldorf circuit conference in October 1998 and later approved by the North German Annual conference which also gave official recognition to the Düsseldorf Ghanaian Society at the conference meeting in 1999. This gave the Ghanaian Society the freedom to move ahead to structure itself according to the Ghanaian Church Order at the congregational level and to come into a formal relationship with the German Society at the Circuit level (Bezirk) which is structured according to the German United Methodist (EmK) Book of Discipline.

Rev Pliska observed that the Bezirkskonferenz (circuit conference) report of March 24, 1999 cites the clear development of a Ghanaian style of organization and worship pattern. It also speaks of good fellowship amongst those attending, and a growth in the numbers and strength of belief. It shows a broadening of the programme and the leadership, and also an effort to gain a Ghanaian resident pastor as leading pastor of the congregation. Rev. Linda Pliska writes:

‘The Lord is always present and helps us in our work together and renews us along the way. The Ghanaian ministry is developing in such a way that it is clear to see that God supports it. I am always spiritually filled when I worship with these deep believing and praying Christians. I respect them fully and more so as I daily observe their difficult political and social situations and the difficult circumstances under which they live and work. It is really a special honour to serve as a pastor in this situation. Since I speak for the last time in the function of pastor for these people, I want to thank God first for the miracle that has occurred here; an answer to the prayers of many to found a church here that represents Ghanaian traditional worship style.’

On April 18, 1999, Rev. Pliska departed for a time, as she went to live with her husband in England. Rev. Amoah took on more responsibility for organization as well. Kofi Menka Boateng the head Steward took over leadership on a day-to-day basis keeping in touch with

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295 Rev. Pliska writes: ‘What happened then was a very good working relationship between Rev. Amoah and myself, in terms of sharing work and dividing according to established guidelines, the work of the congregation.’ Pliska, op.cit.

296 Pliska, op.cit.
Rev. Amoah in Hamburg. This inaugurated a period of great change, as more Ghanaians came forth to begin preaching, and also to serve in leadership. Kofi Wiredu who joined in September 1998, functioned more effectively as choirmaster and songs leader. Since Rev. Amoah was preparing to leave Germany in June 2000, the leaders stepped up leadership commitment until the arrival of Rev. Clarence Antwi-Boasiako, the first Ghanaian resident pastor and his wife Sandra at the end of June, 2000.  

Church Growth and Expansion

Since the arrival of Rev. Antwi-Boasiako, the Society under his leadership has sustained the vision of maintaining a steady church growth and expansion in terms of developing new congregations. The membership is currently numbered 140 adults and 57 junior members, of which 55% are originally Methodists from Ghana. The Düsseldorf Society has developed a new congregation in Essen (located 40 kilometres from Düsseldorf), which was inaugurated on Sunday 2nd December, 2001. The Düsseldorf Society together with its new Society in Essen was granted a circuit status by the North German Annual Conference meeting in Bielefeld in May 2003. This became the second circuit of its kind to be created in the German United Methodist Church (EmK) next after the Hamburg Ghanaian circuit. The new Circuit known as Rhein-Ruhr Ghana circuit plans to develop new congregations in surrounding cities like Dortmund, Bochum, Wuppertal, Duisburg, Mülhem Ruhr and particularly Köln from where ten members and their families travel every Sunday to worship in Düsseldorf. 

3.4.5 Developments in the Ghanaian Methodist Societies in Germany

Appraisal of the Integration Venture

The Ghanaian Methodist Societies in Germany are typical of the few African migrant congregations considered to be fully integrated into the traditional mainstream Protestant churches in Europe. The structural integration of the Ghanaian Methodist Societies into the United Methodist Church (EmK), Germany being a development initiated about eleven years ago, is generally appraised to be a move in the right direction with many positive advantages for both the Ghanaian and German communities. For instance the German EmK Bishop Dr. 

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297 Pliska, op.cit.
Walter Klaiber who has for the past eleven years overseen the structural integration of the Ghanaian Society in Hamburg into the United Methodist Church Germany, has always been highly appreciative of this co-operative venture. In his appraisal speech at the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Ghanaian Methodist Society in Hamburg in October, 2003, Bishop Dr. Walter Klaiber said among other things that, the Ghanaian Methodist society constitutes a source of blessing to many Ghanaian people in Hamburg, who have found in that congregation their ‘holy land’ and spiritual home as well as their support in Jesus Christ. He went on further to say that the Ghanaian society has been a greater spiritual blessing to the work of the German-speaking Methodists because it has infused dynamism into their work and has provided the impulsive drive of hope to spread throughout the whole body of the church.

The visiting Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church-Ghana The Most Reverend Dr. Robert Aboagye-Mensah reiterated the same sentiment in the sermon he delivered at the said anniversary service. He remarked that Christian missionary work is being returned to Europe with a whole new baggage of renewed spiritualism and devotion. He added that the new African mission is full of inspiration and rich in experience, which strengthens the Christian to be able to repel feeling of aversion towards cultures foreign to them.

In November 1998, Bishop Dr. Donald Ott a visiting United Methodist Bishop of West Michigan Conference, U.S.A. highly appraised the development of the said co-operative venture in Hamburg. In an article entitled ‘Grandmother Ott would be pleased – German Methodists have it right’, he recounted among other things the following good impression he had about the Ghanaian worship service he attended in Hamburg:

‘When I entered the sanctuary for the 12 noon service I faced a room filled with persons from Ghana in West Africa. The German District Superintendent leaned into my shoulder and said, “Meet the German Methodist Church.” It was wonderful. I should not have been surprised. The world is not what it was a half century ago. I like to think I am enlightened, knowledgeable and up to date. I admit, however, I was surprised. After I recovered I decided my grandmother Ott would be pleased also, shocked first, yes, then pleased. Dismayed first, yes, and then pleased.’

299 D. Ott, ‘Grandmother Ott would be pleased-German Methodists have it right’ in: Michigan Christian Advocate, 23 (November 16,1998), 11. Bishop Dr. Donald Ott, who has German roots, in the said article recounts his early years at about 5, when he used to sit with his grandmother in a front pew of a family Church in Milwaukee, U.S.A., called the Galena Street Methodist Episcopal Church which offered services in German and English every Sunday until the mid 1950s.
In words of appreciation for the German initiative, Bishop Ott had the following to say among other things:

‘I experienced leaders and people in the Hamburg area who have it right. They are invitationally oriented. They are creating new immigrant congregations in their present buildings. They are international thinkers by desire and need.’

3.4.6  Cooperative Efforts in the Integration Venture

For many years the Ghanaian societies and their respective sister German congregations have co-operated in joint-circuit projects and programmes which include periodic joint-services. The level of cordiality in relationships has generally been quite satisfactory even though there had been occasional misconceptions and misgivings from both sides which naturally stem from their distinct cultural perceptions. Inspite of the obvious cultural differences the integration venture has succeeded over the years because the two sister churches are always mindful of the fact that they have ventured to bring together two Christian communities of the same Christian tradition but of distinct cultural background reflected in their style of worship and their way of life in general.

The German Society on one hand is a more stable congregation with stabilized structures and many years of administrative experience whereas the Ghanaian Society on the other hand is a fast growing vibrant mission congregation which is still in the formulative stage in terms of administrative structures. In the light of the foregoing, every effort is made by both sides to continue to exercise the much needed maturity, and flexibility at all levels, maintaining mutual understanding, friendliness, patience and tolerance. They remain conscious of the fact that any co-operative venture in an inter-cultural setting such as this can only thrive on an atmosphere of mutual trust and openness for effective mutual learning experience at all levels.

The Hamburg Ghanaian Society church choir has for the past 10 years since its formation endeavoured to serve as both cultural ambassadors as well as an effective missionary instrument of the church in the ministration of African choral songs to the German community both within, and outside Hamburg. Their ministration has been a source of inspiration to the German community and their performance has been highly appreciated at all

300 D. Ott, ‘Grandmother Ott would be pleased’, 11.
places. This depicts the expressed sentiments mentioned elsewhere in this chapter and attributed to the visiting Ghanaian Presiding Bishop Dr. Robert Aboagye-Mensah on the fact that

‘Christian missionary work is being returned to Europe with a whole new baggage of renewed spiritualism and devotion, full of inspirations and rich in experience, which strengthens the Christians to repel feeling of aversion towards cultures foreign to them.’

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The choir has toured different places in Germany and ministered at various EmK Church functions and other German social functions like EmK missionary service in Oldenburg, EmK missionary service in Bremen, EmK district missionary service in Reutlingen, EmK district Annual Camp meeting in Berlin, EmK Annual Conference service in Oldenburg. They have also featured at outdoor missionary bazaar in Bezirk Eimsbüttel in Hamburg on two occasions. Other places they have featured include the following: Graduation ceremony of the Red Cross in Hamburg, The year of Relief 2000 Campaign at Othmarschen in Hamburg; Deutsch-Afrikanische Freundes Programma in Hamburg and Alsterdorfer Werkstatt Programma in Hamburg.

3.4.7 Contributing Factors to the Success of the Structural Integration

In my opinion as a participant-observer of the Hamburg Mission Project for several years, there are a number of factors which I believe to have contributed to the success of the said structural integration which include the following:

1. In the first place, the German EmK caught the right vision that enabled them to understand and affirm the desire to provide continuing support for those of the Methodist family from Ghana who want to preserve their language, culture and religious expressions in contexts very different from their country. In view of the foregoing, the integration was so structured as to give the Ghanaian Societies freedom to function and be guided at the Society level by the more familiar Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Ghana and to organize their church services according to their own tradition using the mother tongue, (Akan) and English languages. The Constitution and Book of Discipline (CBD) of the EmK Germany

301 Extract from sermon delivered by the visiting then Presiding Bishop of the Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana at the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the Ghanaian Methodist Society in Hamburg in October 2003. In custody of the researcher.
assumes validity for the Ghanaian Society in Hamburg and all other emerging Ghanaian Societies in Germany from the circuit level onwards. The Ghanaian minister or pastor who is solely responsible for his Society does his ministry in the circuit in mutual consultation and agreement with his German colleague of the German society and reports to the circuit conference. The immediate superior of the minister of the Ghanaian society is the Superintendent of the Hamburg district who also chairs the circuit conference.

2. Second, the German United Methodist Church (EmK) believed that the emerged Ghanaian Methodist Society due to its particular circumstances needed to be ministered to by a Ghanaian pastor whose background and training is appropriate for such a responsibility. In view of this the German EmK ensured that Ghanaian-ministers are appointed periodically by the Methodist Church Ghana and invited by the EmK. This arrangement ensured the smooth take over from Rev. Dr. J.D.K. Ekem by Rev. Isaac S. Amoah in October 1995 and subsequent take over in June 2000 from Rev. Amoah by Rev. Kwasi Owusu Acheaw and Rev. Clarence Antwi-Boasiako stationed in Hamburg and Düsseldorf respectively.

3. Third, right from its very beginnings, when it became necessary to station a Ghanaian pastor in Hamburg, the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) of the United Methodist Church (UMC), U.S.A. stepped in to provide substantial funding to supplement the resources of the German EmK needed for the general development of the new Ghanaian society. Such financial support ensured the stability and growth of this developing congregation.

4. The Ghanaian Societies operate their own Bank Accounts and contribute within their possibilities towards the Conference budget allocated for the development of the Ghanaian Society within the Circuit. For so many years the Ghanaian and German Societies in Hamburg Eppendorf and Düsseldorf co-operated and managed satisfactorily in the use of chapel and its facilities. They also enjoyed mutual understanding in the apportionment of utility costs and other financial commitments.

5. When the structural integration of the emerging Ghanaian Societies in Germany was being formulated, due consideration was given to the particular situation of the Ghanaian brethren. The nucleus of the Ghanaian Methodist congregation in
Hamburg for instance were Christians from the Methodist Church Ghana, for whom the society is a place where their identity and normal way of worship could be enhanced in a very special way. The Ghanaian Christians in Germany are living in the first and second generations and this implies for many a life between two worlds, which necessitates the maintenance of close ties with the Methodist Church Ghana as much as they considered integration into the EmK, Germany. In view of the foregoing the EmK right from the very beginning ensured that the Ghanaian Methodist Societies are granted the freedom to meet some necessary financial obligations to their home church, and to sponsor projects at home in Ghana by channelling such a sponsorship through the Conference Headquarters of the Methodist Church Ghana. In view of the aforementioned policy, the Hamburg Ghanaian Society endeavoured to mobilize its financial resources to make donations towards the following projects in Ghana:

i. Further Training of Ministers and Church personnel – DM 6.000 (1996)
ii. Wenchi Methodist Hospital Rehabilitation Projects – DM 15.000 (Feb. 1998)
iii. Wenchi Methodist Hospital Rehabilitation Projects – 40 (used) Hospital Bedsteads and 40 mattresses (July 1998)
iv. Ghana Methodist University College Project – DM 20.000 (1999 for the purchase of computers)
v. Individual purchase of shares in the Methodist Donewell Insurance – (2002) the interest accrued shall be used to support church projects in Ghana.

6. The young Düsseldorf Ghanaian Society also organized a special fundraising at its Annual Harvest and Thanksgiving in 1999. Besides meeting its commitments to the circuit which included the renovation work at the church premises, it also donated DM 6.000 out of the funds raised towards the Methodist University College project in Ghana.

302 Statistics of 2004 for the previous denominational background in Ghana for the membership of the Hamburg Ghanaian Methodist congregation as evolved from appendix 3 provided the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodists:</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics:</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterians:</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglicans:</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostals:</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously unchurched</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

303 Report/Appraisal of the ministry of the Ghanaian Methodist the Church in Germany, to the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana.- compiled by the Minister in-charge, 2000.
7. The integration policy discourages double membership in the interest of ecumenical co-operation for Ghanaian Christians who are fully registered with the German EmK. However since the arrangements put in place in the said policy ensures mutual understanding between the integrated Ghanaian societies in Germany and the parent-church in Ghana, the said societies enjoy the full support of the home-church in Ghana. For instance in accordance with the constitutional provisions of the Methodist Church-Ghana, members of the Ghanaian Society in Germany who contract customary marriages in Ghana are fully supported by their local churches at home in Ghana upon the presentation of a letter of introduction from the Ghanaian pastoral leadership in Germany. In the same way deceased members from Germany are given a fitting burial by their local churches back at home in Ghana upon receipt of the said letters of Introduction and recommendation. Members who visit Ghana periodically are also encouraged by the overseas churches to show up themselves and to fellowship at their local congregations at home and to make any personal contributions within their means to support the local churches in their individual hometowns.

3.5 The Formation of Ghanaian Methodist Societies in the Netherlands

3.5.1 Introduction

The Methodist Christian community in the Netherlands was inaugurated as Holland Mission Circuit of the Methodist Church Ghana (MCG) on Saturday 24th June, 2000 at Amsterdam by the Most Rev. Dr. Samuel Asante-Antwi, then Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana. The Holland Mission Circuit at that time comprised of two societies namely, Wesley Methodist Church-Amsterdam and Wesley Methodist Church-Den Haag. Since then, two additional societies have been developed in Rotterdam and Antwerp-Belgium. Amsterdam has since October 1, 2000 become an official ministerial seat for a full-time Ghanaian resident Minister who has pastoral charge over all the four congregations in the Netherlands and Belgium which together constitute the Holland Mission Circuit.

3.5.2 The Formation of the Wesley Methodist Society in Amsterdam

The Ghanaian Wesley Methodist Society in Amsterdam developed through the timely inspiration from Rev. Victor Watson, a British Methodist Minister who was then concluding
his one year ministerial assignment to the Emmanuel Methodist Church located in Amsterdam-West. Incidentally, this congregation owned a direct connection to The Leeward Islands District of the Caribbean Methodist Church.

Rev. Watson had previously served as a missionary to Ghana where he had been greatly inspired by Ghanaian Methodism which is characterized by joyful and exuberant worship expressed in dancing and singing. It was with the said Methodist congregation in Amsterdam –West known to be predominantly Caribbean and under the pastoral oversight of Rev. Watson that few Ghanaian Methodists had made contacts and were worshipping before mid-1997. In spite of these Ghanaian Methodists’ presence, Rev. Watson observed that familiar joyful exuberance which had characterized Ghanaian worship services as he was very familiar with was conspicuously absent here coupled with the relatively low membership of Ghanaian Methodists amongst this sole Methodist community in Amsterdam. This issue became the topic for discussion after Easter service in 1997 between Rev. Watson and brothers Samuel Amankwah and Nana Kwame Arhin who were both visiting the Church for the first time. These two brothers eventually became the leading initiators among the founding members of the Amsterdam Wesley Methodist Church.

Having caught the vision for the evangelisation of the Ghanaian community in Amsterdam through the inspirational and fruitful deliberations with Rev. Watson, these two brothers shared the vision with the few Ghanaians already worshipping with the said congregation. These few Ghanaian Methodists were thus motivated to reach out to the Ghanaian community, through telephone calls, word of mouth, and periodic local radio announcements inviting people and directing them to the worship place of the Emmanuel Methodist Church at the De Kinderstraat 54 in Amsterdam-West. Rev. Watson even offered to join them and once shared the Gospel message on the local radio station.

After some months of intensive contacts by these initiators, it was realized that the response to all their efforts was not encouraging, possibly attributed to factors which included lack of proximity of the place of worship to the residential area of the Ghanaian community. In Amsterdam about ninety percent of the Ghanaian community is resident in the Bijlmermeer area of Amsterdam South East where almost all the Ghanaian-initiated churches are also located.

When the initiators finally decided in the beginning of September 1997 to plant a Methodist Church in the catchment area of Bijlmermeer in Amsterdam South East they also

304 Interview with Mr. Samuel Amankwah and Nana Kwame Arhin, Amsterdam, May 2004. The interview notes are available with the researcher.
took into consideration the language and cultural needs of the Ghanaian community. 305 A local Ghanaian radio station brought the planned service to the attention of the wider public and on 21st September 1997 the first service was held at Kralenbeek 100s in the Bijlmermeer area of Amsterdam South East. The service was conducted by Brother Osei Kwaku an accredited Methodist local preacher (lay preacher) from Ghana and the attendance was 27 adults besides children. A few more local preachers joined the new congregation within three weeks and pledged their commitment to assist in developing this young congregation until it was in a position to receive a resident minister. Further radio announcements and personal contacts continued to draw to the Methodist services increasing number of Ghanaians mostly with Methodist and other mainline Protestant Christian backgrounds.

The significant growth at the initial stage was attributed to factors which included the close proximity of the place of worship to the residential area of the wider Ghanaian community and also to the wise decision of the initiators, to conduct the Methodist services in the more familiar spiritual and cultural setting of the Ghanaian Christians. Rev. Victor Watson who visited the congregation from England in the beginning of 2000, two and-a-half years after the Amsterdam Society had been established, made the following remarks in an article entitled ‘African Methodists go Dutch’ which appeared in the Methodist Recorder:

‘Hunger for Methodist traditions and a need to meet together, to continue deep-rooted cultural activities, led a small group of Ghanaians, and now settled in Holland, to plant two Methodist Societies. It is difficult for English people properly to appreciate how precious culture and language are to people away from their home roots. People whose mother tongue is not English readily understand how important it is to find a spiritual setting where dignity and self-worth brought from home are able to be expressed naturally….They (the Ghanaian Methodists) are held together by the mechanism of traditional John Wesley Methodism, i.e. Local lay leadership, class leaders, class tickets (membership cards), Order of morning prayer translated into their own local language etc. Interspersed with this is the joyful and exuberant worship expressed in dancing and singing. It is hard to explain – one needs to be there to experience the uplift of it all. They are our sisters and brothers from Ghana now living in Europe, standing tall with dignity and self-confidence and making a very

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305 Interview with lay-founding members, Amsterdam, May 2004. The interview notes are available with the researcher.
important contribution to the life of their adopted country. They are another example of one of the multitude of Methodist societies in present day Europe. 306

After the first three months of the formation of the Amsterdam Society then known as Wesley Methodist Church, Amsterdam, the young congregation decided at a Society meeting to own a connection to the Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana and to adopt the church order and organisational structure of the Methodist Church Ghana. The meeting also decided to maintain a close relationship with the sister Emmanuel Methodist Church, which also owns its connection to the Leeward Island District of the Conference of the Caribbean’s and the Americas. This close relationship enabled the developing Ghanaian Society to benefit from the pastoral assistance of Rev. Hodge (successor to Rev. Watson) who periodically took preaching appointment and administered the Holy Communion.

In 1998 while in London attending a British Methodist Church Conference the then Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana, The Most. Rev. Dr. Samuel Asante-Antwi met with a two member delegation from the Wesley Methodist Church who formally presented to him developments in the new Society and affirmed their connection to the Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana. 307

3.5.3 The Formation of the Wesley Methodist Society in The Hague

The Wesley Methodist Church-Amsterdam right from the beginning had a vision for Church expansion, a vision to plant churches for the African migrant communities in the Benelux. Barely a year after the formation of the Wesley Society in Amsterdam, the Society’s Evangelistic team launched an evangelistic outreach in The Hague in July 1998 and within two months a new church was planted which had its first formal service on September 20, 1998 with 20 members in attendance. The Amsterdam leadership continued to nurse the new congregation for some months laying emphasis on Bible study and prayer to get the members well-grounded in the faith. 308 A local lay leadership was appointed from amongst them to lead the young congregation as from February 14, 1999 with supervision and guidance from

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307 ‘Documented history of the formation of the Wesley Methodist Church Amsterdam’, Amsterdam 1998. The document is available with the researcher.
the leadership in Amsterdam. As the congregation began to grow a church choir was established as well as a Sunday school for the children.

3.5.4 Developments in the Ghanaian Methodist Societies in the Netherlands

When the Methodist Christian community in the Netherlands was officially inaugurated as Mission Circuit in June 2000, Rev. Isaac S. Amoah was appointed by the Ghana Methodist Conference as the Superintendent Minister of the Circuit to be resident in Amsterdam. When Rev. Amoah assumed pastoral oversight of the Mission Circuit, the young circuit under his leadership adopted the following set of goals among others for the spiritual and structural development of the circuit and also for church expansion:

- Congregational education on constitutional provisions of the Methodist Church relevant to their European context, so as to maintain order and sanity in the congregations.
- Leadership training for all persons in leadership position aimed at making them efficient for effective development of the congregations for rapid spiritual and numerical growth.
- Intensive congregational training in evangelism aimed at equipping and mobilizing the membership for effective evangelistic outreach that would serve as springboard for the successful planting of new churches in various communities within and outside the Netherlands.

The congregations endeavoured to achieve the afore-mentioned goals in subsequent years, and as a result of that there was significant church growth, and two more new congregations were developed in Rotterdam and Antwerp in Belgium. The Evangelistic team from Amsterdam launched an evangelistic outreach in Rotterdam and for a couple of months made personal contacts, distributed Gospel tracts, shared the Gospel message on local radio station and invited people for fellowship. A multi-national congregation was gradually developed in Rotterdam which initially had Togolese, Nigerian and Cameroonian membership besides Ghanaians. The Society which had her first formal worship service on February 25, 2001 with 11 members in attendance has since grown considerably.

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The Antwerp Society developed out of a small house fellowship of Ghanaian Methodists and mainline Protestant Christians led by Brother Daniel Kyere a staunch Ghanaian Methodist resident in Antwerp. Whilst the evangelistic team from Amsterdam was planning for an outreach to Belgium, this timely request from brother Kyere requesting for pastoral guidance and assistance to plant a church in Antwerp reached the Superintendent Minister and the Amsterdam leadership. An evangelistic team was accordingly dispatched to Antwerp on several weekends to assist in planting a church which was accordingly formally opened on October 6, 2002.

The Society which begun with 7 members has since grown considerably. It is also worthy of note that lay caretakers have been appointed for the three out-stations besides Amsterdam. The Circuit structure in the Methodist system also offers periodic joint-services and programs which tend to enhance the growth of the individual societies. Various integral society organisations established to take care of the needs of the membership include the Sunday school for ministry to children, the Women’s Fellowship for Women’s ministry and the Youth Fellowship for ministry to the youth. The youth group is actively reaching out to the Amsterdam community to evangelise the non-churched teenagers and young adults. In view of this, the Methodist societies plan to put in place worship services in English with Dutch translations to accommodate converts or believers of other nationalities who are being drawn into the Methodist church.

3.6 The Formation of Ghanaian Presbyterian Congregations in Germany

The Presbyterians have six congregations in Germany, located in Hamburg, Berlin, Bremen, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt and Stuttgart. The Hamburg congregation which happens to be the largest among the six was officially inaugurated on 28th May 2000 by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), Rt. Rev. Dr. Sam Prempeh. Hamburg has since September 1, 2002 become the ministerial seat for a full-time Ghanaian resident minister who has pastoral charge over all the six congregations in Germany.

3.6.1 The Formation of the PCG Congregation in Hamburg

The PCG congregation in Hamburg developed with the varied support of the Evangelisch-lutherische Philemongemeinde (Evangelical Lutheran Philemon Church) in terms of initial
pastoral assistance and provision of place of worship, but the issue of structural integration
did not come up for discussion and consideration.

3.6.2 Initial Contacts and Developments of the PCG Congregation in Hamburg

Before the beginning of 1997, some Ghanaian Presbyterians who were resident in Hamburg
had made contacts and were worshipping with various Evangelical traditional churches and
other Protestant churches which included Ghanaian-initiated African churches. Many others
as was usually the case remained non-churched.

Of particular significance among these Ghanaian Presbyterians was Ms. Esther Addo a
daughter of the late Presbyterian minister Rev. Samuel Seth Atiemo Addo of blessed memory.
Ms. Esther Addo had in previous years made contacts and together with her two children were
worshipping with the Hamburg English Protestant Church (originally founded as Anglican
English Navy Church). She later moved to the Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church where
she had her two children confirmed.310 Ms. Esther Addo has been a staunch Presbyterian
coming from a family strongly involved in the church. For that reason many Presbyterians in
Hamburg who felt the need to continue with their faith in a typical Ghanaian Presbyterian
worship style looked upon her as a potential initiator of a Ghanaian Presbyterian congregation
in Hamburg. Between 1994 and the beginning of 1997, Ms. Esther Addo who carried the
same vision as other Ghanaian Presbyterians took several initiatives to secure a place of
worship for the Ghanaian Presbyterians in Hamburg to start worship services. She together
with the few founding members who included her daughter Nana Oduraa Addo, Brother
Richard Twerefour and Sisters Eunice Laurence and Dora Quinoo made contacts with pastors
of Evangelical churches including Dr. Lemke, the head of the Lutheran Evangelical Church in
Hamburg. In 1996 she visited and made personal contact with the PCG Head-office in Accra
regarding the said vision and efforts made by the Presbyterians in Hamburg. She was
accordingly encouraged and provided with some useful church materials for the congregation
they intended to develop.311

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310 Interview with Ms. Esther Addo and other founding members - The confirmation of Ms. Addo’s
children in the Evangelical Lutheran church became necessary because the children who were
schooling with German as their first language preferred the confirmation lessons offered in German at
Lutheran church to that in English at the English Protestant church.

311 Interview with Ms Esther Addo and other founding members.
One Sunday morning in January 1997 after church service, Ms Addo had the opportunity to have a personal interaction with the two pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Philemon Church in Hamburg regarding her vision and intention to secure a place of worship for some Ghanaian Presbyterians. The two pastors namely Pastor Lohse and Pastor Weskott readily agreed and encouraged them to start the intended worship services in their church premises the following Sunday. Ms. Esther Addo, assisted by the four other initiators took the following two weeks to reach out to as many Ghanaian Presbyterians as they could to invite them to start a PCG worship service.

The first Service was accordingly held at the Philemon Evangelical Lutheran Church on January 26, 1997 attended by 16 adults including the five initiators. The Service was conducted by Ms. Esther Addo and the sermon delivered by brother Richard Twerefour. During the subsequent weeks and months the founding members engaged in intensive personal contacts and as was usually the case, the initial focus for outreach was on those with Presbyterian background. For the subsequent three months the developing PCG congregation was blessed with the visit of two staunch Ghanaian Christians with Presbyterian background who happened to be in Hamburg for an in-service training programme. These two brothers took them through intensive Bible teachings which got the new congregation considerably grounded in their faith, until some potential leaders emerged from the Presbyterian community in Hamburg to lead the congregation. The developing PCG Congregation, right from the very beginning took the necessary steps to organize itself according to the Presbyterian Church order, and elected an interim session (congregational leadership). They were blessed within the very first year by the presence of Rev. Akonnor, a PCG youth pastor from Ghana who happened to be in Germany on a Youth exchange programme. Rev. Akonnor’s presence and input helped to establish the correct format for the emerging PCG congregation and its leadership. From 1997 until September 2002, when the PCG congregation had her first resident Ghanaian pastor, the two German Pastors Weskott and Lohse assisted periodically in the administration of the Holy Communion, baptism and confirmation.

The PCG is fully registered with the Registration Council of the Hamburg City State as an independent Ghanaian Presbyterian Church which is under the jurisdiction of the parent PCG.

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313 Interview with Ms Esther Addo and other founding members
314 Brief History of the formation of PCG congregation in Hamburg
Church in Ghana. The integral congregational organisations in the church include Church choir, Singing band, Bible study and prayer group, Young people’s Guild, Women’s fellowship and Men’s fellowship. The membership which presently numbers 300 is made up of 185 people with Presbyterian background, 49 with Pentecostal and Charismatic background 21 belonged to other mainline Christian churches in Ghana, 10 belonged to the African-Independent Churches and 35 were previously non-churched.

3.6.3 The Formation of other PCG Congregations

Between 2001 and 2003, the Hamburg PCG assisted in the formation of two new congregations located in Berlin and Bremen. The Berlin PCG congregation which has a total membership of 62, held its first service on May 6, 2001. It has established a church choir and a Sunday school for children. The Bremen PCG Congregation which is categorized as a nursery congregation held its first Service on 23rd February 2003 and has a membership of 15. The Stuttgart PCG Congregation which happened to be the earliest to be established among the Presbyterian congregations developed out of a fellowship established in 1985. The fellowship was established to cater for the spiritual needs of mainline Christians in and around Stuttgart who did not feel inclined to seek membership in the Ghanaian-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. The Ghanaian Presbyterians eventually separated from the mainline Christian fellowship to establish a PCG congregation in 1994 which was officially inaugurated on May 21, 2000. The congregation has a close working relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Stuttgart area.

Two other congregations are located in Frankfurt and Dusseldorf with membership of 60 and 95 respectively. The Frankfurt congregation which was started in 1997 brings together the mainline Protestant Christians such as the Presbyterians, Methodists and others. The Dusseldorf congregation which was also started in 1997 has a membership of 95. All these congregations are under the pastoral care of the PCG Ghanaian pastor resident in Hamburg.

3.7 The Formation of Ghanaian Presbyterian Churches in the Netherlands

3.7.1 Introduction

The Presbyterians have two Ghanaian congregations in the Netherlands, which were officially jointly inaugurated on October 19, 2003 in Amsterdam by the Moderator of the Presbyterian
Church of Ghana (PCG), Rt. Rev. Dr. Sam Prempeh as overseas congregations of the PCG. The two congregations are located in Amsterdam and The Hague. The relatively small congregation in Den Haag which was recently started in February 2003 did not involve any process of cooperation with any traditional mainstream congregation in the Netherlands as was the case of the Amsterdam congregation which is fully discussed below.

### 3.7.2 Initial Contacts and Developments of the PCG Congregation in Amsterdam

The Amsterdam Presbyterian congregation which is believed to have had its beginnings in 2000 is typical of the congregations that emerged from a situation of encounter and cooperation as well as from the point of need of people. The UPCN (United Protestant Church in the Netherlands, proceeded by in Dutch *Samen op Weg Kerken*) congregation in Bijlmermeer located in Amsterdam South East initiated a mission project ‘being a Church with different cultures’ in March 2000. This project which was led by its pastor Rev. Jan van der Meulen was an attempt by the Church to open up to Christians with different cultural backgrounds such as Surinamese, Indonesians and Africans. This project was located in the *Drie Stromen* Church which is also the worship place of Rev. Cees van Veelen and his Gaasperdam NRC-RCN (Netherlands Reformed Church) community. Before the said mission project was initiated, some few Ghanaians had made contacts and were worshipping with the UPCN congregation in Bijlmermeer and the Gaasperdam NRC-RCN Church community, but because of the difficulty most of these Ghanaian had in following the services in Dutch, their presence in UPCN Church services failed to show a structural increase and their attendance at services was quite irregular. In view of the foregoing the two ministers in the two churches initiated a monthly English-language afternoon service in the *Drie Stromen* Church in Gaasperdam, where they took turns in conducting the services.

This English-language afternoon service continued for about a year and a half without any significant numerical growth besides the variable attendance of 5-20 persons. The situation reached a point where it became necessary to decide whether to stop or continue the initiative.\(^{315}\) It was at this crucial moment that the Ghanaian core members within this small group which included Mr. and Mrs. Boye, Ms. Doris Vidda, Ms. Loretta Mensah, Mr. Robert Agyei and Mr. Clement Tetteh decided to reach out to invite to their meetings those within the Ghanaian community known to have Ghanaian Presbyterian Church background. Some of

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the initiators ensured that the church services were brought to the attention of the wider public through a Ghanaian radio station. According to the said initiators, after several announcements on the local radio stations that a Ghanaian Presbyterian Church was being formed in Amsterdam, many people with PCG background started coming to the church services.\textsuperscript{316} The schedule was then changed to three Sunday afternoon services a month in the \textit{Drie Stromen} Church. One Sunday served for a specially adapted joint morning service with the RNC-RCN Gaasperdam Church community which was not so well attended as the afternoon English services which usually recorded an attendance of between 70-100 persons.

According to the initiators, it was that impression created among the Ghanaian Christians that a Ghanaian Presbyterian Church (PCG) was being formed which motivated the Presbyterians to come in their numbers to join the emerging church.\textsuperscript{317} It appears the primary aim for the formation of the newly emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Europe such as the PCG is chaplaincy oriented for immigrant mainline Christians and for that reason the initial focus for outreach of the initiators has usually been those of their own denominational background. This involves contacting and gathering such mainline Christians in the community and providing a place for moments of worship and congregational life and pastoral care.

When the English service in the \textit{Drie Stromen} Church started growing numerically it became obvious that majority of the people were Ghanaians and about 95\% of the membership were of PCG background, and therefore developments in the emerging church were organized to conform to the PCG church structure. For instance Bible Study and Prayer Group (BSPG), Church choir, Singing Band, Women’s Fellowship, Men’s Fellowship, Youth Group and Welfare Committee were all organized to fit into the PCG Church structure.\textsuperscript{318}

The two Dutch Ministers who were actively involved in the development of the congregation maintained pastoral contacts and affinity with the developing congregation, administering sacraments of Holy Communion, Baptism besides taking preaching appointments at Sunday divine services. It is worthy of note that another minister who was equally involved in the development of the emerged congregation was Reverend Nii Teiko Dagadu, a PCG minister and fraternal worker with the UPCN, whose presence and input

\textsuperscript{316} Brief History of the formation of PCG congregation in Amsterdam presented at the formal inauguration on 19\textsuperscript{th} October 2003.
\textsuperscript{317} Interview with Mr. Yaw Ampomah-Nketiah, church secretary, PCG Amsterdam, and other founding members (Bijlmer, 22\textsuperscript{nd} February, 2004).
\textsuperscript{318} Interview with Mr. Yaw Ampomah-Nketiah, church secretary, PCG, Amsterdam, and other founding members.
helped to establish the correct format for the emerging PCG leadership and church work. It is worth mentioning at this point that Rev. van der Meulen in his 2000 annual report wrote the following about the said mission project:

‘All in all policy is aimed at establishing a Ghanaian Presbyterian section of the UPCN congregations in Southeast Amsterdam.’

3.7.3 Relationships, Identity, Cooperation and Integration

With the rapid growth of the predominantly Ghanaian membership of the English service two processes were set in motion. On the one hand a process envisioned to be shaping and strengthening the Ghanaian identity and community and on the other hand a process of cooperation and integration. At the very initial stages, an interim committee was formed to see to the running of the developing congregation. Representatives of the committee were drawn from the church councils of the two Dutch congregations and from the developing Ghanaian group. The interim committee at the initial stages committed itself to discussions on how relationships among the three communities should be shaped and structured. As time went by, it became obvious that the Ghanaian Presbyterians had varied ideas about how relations with the two Dutch communities should be shaped and structured. The issue relating to the direction which the process could take began to engage the thoughts of all parties. People began to realize that there needed to be a clear view of the path followed otherwise a situation of ‘loss’ may arise. Not all Ghanaians knew exactly what was going on, what they had committed themselves to, and under what name and to what end they formed a community of faith together. Among the membership of the two Dutch congregations, on the other hand, no serious discussions about the developing relations had fully taken place even towards mid-2002.

As time went by, it became necessary to put in place a ‘structure committee’ besides the interim committee, also with representatives drawn from the communities and church Councils involved. This committee committed itself to investigating various ways of giving the relationship a more structural form. All along there was a general impression that a cross-section of the Ghanaian community saw the relationship as a stepping-stone to their own independence after which they could continue as the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church in the Netherlands. This should however not be so much of a surprise since right from the very

319 Pluim, ‘South-East Amsterdam’, 51.
320 Pluim, ‘South-East Amsterdam’, 53.
beginning the Presbyterian Christians who used to attend Church in a wide range of Christian communities but had to withdraw their membership from the said churches to join the emerging church had the impression and the understanding that the said church was to be a widely PCG congregation linked to the parent Church in Ghana, and it is widely believed that this understanding motivated them to come in their numbers.\footnote{Interview with Mr. Ampomah-Nketiah, PCG-Church Secretary and other founding members.}

On the one hand, the Ghanaian Christian communities in Gaasperdam were inclined to preserve their own identity and be acknowledged as Ghanaian Presbyterians so as to maintain their bond and relationship with the mother-church in Ghana. On the other hand, they felt the need to maintain some sort of relationship with the Dutch Christian community without being completely absorbed into a broader Dutch Community. This apparent dual position is understood in the sense that these Ghanaian Christians and their families are living in the first and second generations and for them this implies a life between two worlds.

In the first place some Ghanaians in Gaasperdam believed that a far reaching relationship or integration could be a sound option in the sense that it most certainly has to do with the future of the young Ghanaian people. Most of these young ones were born in Netherlands, schooled or are still schooling in Netherlands. They speak more Dutch than any other Ghanaian language, even in Sunday school in church. Since these young ones are future potential leaders of the Church in the Netherlands, every effort should be made to deepen their faith and commitment to Christ in a possibly multi-cultural Christian community which will eventually help them in their difficult task of finding their own identity at least within the two cultures (Ghanaian and Dutch).

In the second place since the adult community membership are first generation Ghanaian Christians who consider returning to Ghana one day when the children can manage themselves, they consider that the relationship with the mother-church in Ghana is of utmost importance to them, irrespective of the uncertainty regarding the direction the young people will go in the future. Doris Vidda, one of the founding members made the following observation:

‘we should let go of the future a little. We must think of the young people, but we cannot yet see what direction we will go in because we are dealing with different generations.’\footnote{Pluim, ‘South-East Amsterdam’, 53.}
By mid-2002, about 200 Ghanaian Christians were ‘temporally’ registered with the English service community in Gaasperdam, and were making substantial financial contributions in terms of Sunday collections to the two churches in their services.

While the process of integration envisaged an integration with a ‘registration within the Church Order’ which would also require full financial obligations to the UPCN, both sides were uncertain how the relationship with the parent-church in Ghana and its significance will take shape in the future in the process of church cooperation. Hence an important consideration for the Ghanaians is how registration could take place without losing the connection with the parent church. Most of the Ghanaian Presbyterians in Gaasperdam just like other Ghanaian mainline Christians formally consider themselves as members of PCG and for that reason seek to maintain close ties with at least their local PCG churches in their hometowns in Ghana. This maintenance of close ties involves periodic remittance of financial contributions to their local churches possibly through relatives in Ghana. This will in turn guarantee services rendered in return even in the absence of letters of introduction and recommendation from pastoral leadership of overseas churches.

Since these Ghanaian Presbyterians do not want to lose their connection with the mother Church, some suggested the idea of a ‘double membership’, but this was not considered on the grounds that it could have undesirable implications for the implementation of ‘supervision and discipline’.

The general impression at this stage was that much had been achieved in terms of developing cooperation between the three congregations of Bijlmermeer and Gaasperdam including the Ghanaian Presbyterians. However, in many respects regarding the search of the three communities for a balanced relationship with each other including the issue of the structural integration of the Ghanaian Presbyterian Community, the future still remained unclear. However, in the words of Rev. van der Meulen who was working the cooperation with the Ghanaian Christians into his project in Gassperdam:

‘You cannot force integration, and sometimes you must repress the impulse to run too fast. It is good to have ideals, but you must be able to set them aside as well.’

One clear observation made at this point was that the two Dutch communities in Bijlmermeer and Gaasperdam who provided services for the Ghanaian community in Gaasperdam, were developing cooperation between themselves as much as they were working towards integration with the Ghanaian Christian community in Gaasperdam.

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323 Pluim, ‘South-East Amsterdam’, 56.
It is worthy of note that at this stage of the relationship somewhere towards mid 2002 it was believed that the Ghanaians had given impetus to the cooperation between the Gaasperdam and Bijlmermeer Dutch communities, and that the barriers which had risen up between the two congregations in the past were coming down.

The NRC-RCN Church community made provision at the Drie Stromen Church auditorium for worship on Sundays whilst the Bijlmermeer UPCN congregation provided room for various activities every week in the Nieuwe Stad for the Gaasperdam Ghanaian Presbyterian community. The two Dutch communities bore the utility costs involved in this project supported by funds raised through Sunday church collections of the Ghanaian Presbyterian Christian community.

The Dutch ministers seemed to have ideas about possible model of relations among the three communities which could ensure that all partners have a completely equal position. Every group could be able to exist in her own way, and would be given room, physical and spiritual, for its own activities and religious forms of expression.

Moreover they envisaged what they considered as excellent opportunities whereby the Christian communities from Bijlmermeer and Gaasperdam and the Ghanaian Christians in Gaasperdam function as three independent groups while also displaying a certain degree of integration. In their words, this involves a search

‘to give a due place to the tension between one’s own identity and the experiencing of faith together,’ and it also means that

‘we must be prepared to share power and that the various groups within communities can co-determine joint policy’.324

It may be considered regrettable that the foregoing ideas did not materialize and that the process of cooperation towards eventual integration did not come to fruition before the Ghanaian Presbyterians took the initiative to ask to be officially inaugurated as Presbyterian Church of Ghana’s overseas congregation by the Moderator of the PCG on 19th October 2003.

3.7.4 Looking Ahead

The said initiative taken by the Ghanaian Presbyterians and the consequences thereof were not taken kindly by the two Dutch communities who were jointly in the process of cooperation with the Ghanaian Presbyterian community in Gaasperdam. The newly

324 Pluim, ‘South-East Amsterdam’, 56.
inaugurated Ghanaian Presbyterian congregation eventually moved away from the Drie Stromen Church auditorium to a new location when the Dutch ministers and their congregations made a move to continue with the project with the relatively small group of the Ghanaian Presbyterians who chose to stay behind together with possibly a few more Africans of other nationalities. The situation as it exists now is quite instructive for future developments. The Ghanaian Presbyterian are indeed appreciative of the much needed attention and energy invested by the two Dutch congregations and their ministers in the Gaasperdam mission project initiated in the year 2000.325

Obviously the process of cooperation and integration did not develop to fruition as desired however the vision of helping to develop a mission congregation in fulfillment of the common mission of the Church has at least been realized. The hope for the future now rests with both the Dutch congregations and the Ghanaian Presbyterians to seek to renew their relationships, revisit their vision and to ask themselves once again the central question: ‘What do we want to do together and what separately’ in our future relationships?.

Probably, what went amiss that all parties should be mindful of in any future process of cooperation is the need for clear direction right from the very beginning for such joint-venture which does not leave people in the dark for far too long to give room for speculation. As it has been observed elsewhere in this chapter, the structural integration of the Ghanaian Methodist societies into the German United Methodist Church for instance worked out successfully because a good number of sensitive issues were addressed right from the very beginning when the structure was being formulated. They included the following:

- The particular circumstances of Ghanaians ensured that the Ghanaian overseas congregations are ministered to by a Ghanaian pastor whose background and training is appropriate for such a responsibility.

- Irrespective of being fully registered within the Church order of the host Church, the integrated Ghanaian societies were given the freedom to maintain their identity as Ghanaian societies within the United Methodist Church, and to maintain as much close ties as possible on the congregational level with the parent-church in Ghana, and to meet some financial obligations to their home church, as the need determined.

These arrangements ensured a good relationship of the overseas congregations with their parent-church in Ghana and ultimately promoted the success of the process of cooperation.

325 Interview with Mr. Yaw Ampomah-Nketiah, church secretary PCG, Amsterdam.
and integration with the United Methodist Church in Germany. It is hoped that future co-
operational efforts by the United Protestant Church in the Netherlands and the Ghanaian
Presbyterians would be guided by such vision.

3.8 Different Models Presented by the Emerged Ghanaian Mainline Protestant
Churches in Germany and the Netherlands

There are four different models which emerge with the formation of the Ghanaian mainline
Protestant churches in both Germany and the Netherlands. They are identified as follows:

1. In the first place, we have the German EmK (United Methodist Church) model which
presents a process of cooperation and integration that has fully developed. The
integration was so structured as to give the Ghanaian societies freedom to maintain
their identity. They also have freedom to function and to be guided at the society or
congregational level by the more familiar constitution of the Methodist Church Ghana
and to organize their church services according to their own tradition using the mother
tongue. There were a number of contributing factors that helped to shape and structure
relations as related to the integration process. They include the following:

i. There was an indigenous Methodist presence in the host country who shared
the same Christian beliefs and tradition and who were seen to be invitationally
oriented or mission oriented to some extent. For that reason they were
motivated to create new migrant congregations in their buildings, and
moreover provided the much needed financial support for the mission work.

ii. The initiators of the structural integration committed themselves to prepare a
reasonable and acceptable statute defining the status of the future Ghanaian
society within the German EmK. This accordingly provided a reasonable clear
view of the path followed.

iii. Both the German and Ghanaian Methodist conferences jointly overseeing the
Ghanaian Methodist societies shared a common vision, and maintained mutual
understanding which enabled the Ghana conference to coordinate the
relationship of the Ghanaian overseas congregations with the German
conference.

2. In contrast with the Ghanaian Methodist societies in Germany which are fully
integrated into the German EmK, the Methodist societies in the Netherlands are not
linked to any overseas ecclesiastical body, but solely to the Ghana Methodist Conference to which they own their direct connection. This model emerges from the situation in which there is no indigenous Methodist presence in the host country. Besides they could not readily initiate a process of cooperation with other Protestant churches in the Netherlands with which they share a common faith. The only non-Ghanaian churches with which the Ghanaian Methodist societies are developing a meaningful cooperation are the Leeuward Island Methodist congregations in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Zoetermeer. These are also migrant churches which own their connection to the Leeuward Island district of the Conference of the Caribbean and the Americas.

3. The third model is that presented by the PCG (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) congregations in Germany particularly that of Hamburg and Düsseldorf. Even though the Hamburg congregation for instance developed with the varied support of the German Evangelical Lutheran Philemon Church in terms of initial pastoral assistance and provision of place of worship, the issue of structural integration did not come up for discussion and consideration. The kind support that the PCG congregations enjoyed through the process of cooperation with the Lutheran Church did not lead to any structural integration. The PCG congregations are presently not linked to any indigenous church in Germany but solely to the PCG synod in Ghana. Ironically, for quite a long time now there has been a continuous presence of Ghanaian PCG fraternal workers in Evangelical Lutheran churches in some parts of Germany. Moreover, some of these Lutheran churches which periodically receive PCG fraternal workers from Ghana have established partnership in missions with some presbyteries of the PCG synod in Ghana. As much as some of the Ghanaian PCG congregations in Germany are gradually developing a process of cooperation with some Evangelical Lutheran churches, they have not as yet come to the point of exploring structural integration.

4. The fourth model of Ghanaian migrant church relations is that presented by the PCG congregation in Amsterdam with the two Netherlands Reformed Churches in Bijlmermeer and Gaasperdam. It actually represents a meaningful process of cooperation towards eventual integration that did not come to fruition. The PCG congregation emerged from the specially adapted monthly morning service in the *Drie Stromen* church, for which the Netherlands Reformed church community was not yet entirely ready. However the choice to guarantee the continuity of Ghanaian community formation was informed by the idealistic view that something good could
come from it. The Dutch community shared the view that both the Ghanaian and Dutch communities belong to the same Christian tradition, and therefore the process of structural integration could eventually come to fruition. One of the main obstacles to the process of cooperation however was related to identity and integration. For many Ghanaian Christians, the tendency to preserve their own identity in a strange land is an important aspect in contacts with the established churches. In this case, they were more inclined to be identified as Ghanaian Presbyterians and not to be simply absorbed into a broader Dutch community; a situation which they felt has its own implications. The situation as it exists now is quite instructive for future developments. Meanwhile the majority of the Ghanaian Presbyterians have since their inauguration by the visiting moderator of the PCG constituted themselves as a PCG congregation which owns a direct connection to the parent PCG synod in Ghana.

3.9 Factors which Led to the Formation of Ghanaian Mainline Protestant Churches in Germany and the Netherlands

When Ghanaian believers such as mainline Protestant Christians began settling all over Germany and the Netherlands for the past two decades, most of them who were in search for a spiritual home, were not motivated to join their corresponding European traditional churches. Instead, they were more inclined to start new congregations in their host societies from where in the course of time links could be forged with similar faith communities both in the host country and their home country. The following are considered to be the main motivational factors which led them to start Ghanaian mainline Protestant congregations such as the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Germany and the Netherlands.

1. In the first place, Ghanaian believers such as mainline Protestant Christians have needs which arise from their African traditional belief and worldview. This worldview actually distinguishes but does not separate the visible from the invisible or the material from the immaterial sphere of life, presupposing frequent and continuing interaction between the different spheres. African believers in general, according to the in-depth study made by Gerrie ter Haar, hold their religious assumptions to be true because their plausibility is constantly proved to them in their own, personal lives. As believers, of course, they will not explain their views in terms of plausibility but in
terms of truth thus giving a theological answer to the question of religion. The Ghanaian Christians’ belief in the actual presence and instrumentality of spiritual forces, good or evil enhances their strong belief in the power and active manifestation of the Holy Spirit in their Christian faith and practice. In other words, Ghanaian Christians in general appreciate the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit in their individual lives and are usually quite open for the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit for personal edification and the exercise of the spiritual gifts in a holistic ministry to profit all. This would be one of the main reasons why the Christian belief of many Ghanaians in Europe is mostly of an evangelical or charismatic character. For that reason irrespective of their Christian tradition, whether mainline, Pentecostal or African Independent type, they look for a kind of charismatic church leadership capable of addressing needs related to their African worldview. This may be considered as one of the main reasons why initially only a handful of Ghanaian immigrant believers found their way into the European traditional churches of their host societies. Even to the few worshippers who happened to be accommodated in the said European traditional churches, there was always the felt need to seek spiritual nurture in a typical Ghanaian Protestant church where their spiritual and socio-economic needs relating to their worldview could be meaningfully addressed.

2. One of the main elements of Ghanaian church tradition is the strong belief in the importance of worship as a form of celebration, hence the Ghanaian believer’s keen interest in inspiring contextual worship. It is worthy of note that even the former mission churches in Ghana such as the Presbyterians and the Methodists who previously stood strongly in the Western tradition of their parent churches have in recent years undergone significant enculturation of worship. They are continually making room for innovations typical of the African Independent, Pentecostal and charismatic churches which right from their very beginnings adopted certain popular African traditional forms of worship such as drumming, handclapping, dancing. The migrant mainline Protestant Christians believed that this particular Ghanaian style of worship could only be realized in a typical Ghanaian Protestant congregation of their own.

3. Many Ghanaians believe that religious worship becomes more meaningful to them in their own cultural religious setting, which include the use of their own mother tongue.

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326 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 11-12.
This is particularly true in places such as Germany and the Netherlands where most
ghanaian immigrants who have English as their second language have problems with
full integration on account of language limitations. The desire to worship in the
mother tongue has often proved another reason for Ghanaian believers particularly the
mainline Protestant Christians to start a new congregation.

4. Another motivational factor for Ghanaian protestant Christians to start new
congregations is the issue of cultural identity. Members of the Ghanaian immigrant
community crave for a sense of belonging and acceptance as a marginalized
community. Ghanaian immigrants typical of Africans in general are usually conscious
of the social separation which is often common between native citizens and new
immigrants, particularly those of colour. This gives rise to the unwelcoming attitude
and unfriendly reception which African immigrants often meet in the social
community. Ghanaian culture in particular is characterized and noted for its
exceptional welcoming attitude and friendly reception which many immigrants or
casual foreign visitors to Ghana particularly whites have enjoyed over the years. In
view of this when Ghanaian immigrants find that this inherent kind gesture of theirs is
not satisfactorily reciprocated in their host countries, they are completely disheartened.
For that reason they have no alternative but to identify with their “own” people from
their original homeland. They are thus inclined to retain what is believed to be their
“own” identity, rather than to connect themselves with the majority in their new
homelands. Gerrie ter Haar in her study of African Christians in Europe has observed
that, ‘this appears to be the case even if in the immigrants own opinion, they share a
common faith, or at least a common religious tradition, as African Christians do when
they are living in Europe.327

5. The Ghanaian Christian communities create for their members a place to feel at home
in a strange land especially in these parts of Western Europe where immigration
policies gradually tend to make the countries become more hostile to foreigners,
particularly when they are people of colour like Africans. The Ghanaian churches
create a sense of belonging which many immigrants lack. The church leaders know
their congregation and their problems. Most of these immigrants have been detached
from their families in their homeland for years. In view of the particular situation in
which they normally find themselves, they tend to cling to the congregation as an

327 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 77-78.
extended family and to the pastor, not only as a counselor but also as a spiritual father they could count on for the much needed support at all times. The strong traditional social factor of Ghanaians enables them to provide group solidarity by which they could assist each other in time of need, illness, bereavement, marriages and birth.

6. Pastoral counseling proves to be one area of ministry which is very demanding in the particular situation in which Ghanaian immigrants find themselves. Members of the Ghanaian Christian communities are continually provided with the much needed spiritual guidance which bears some relation to doctrinal beliefs of the church. The evangelical tradition to which the mainline Protestant churches such as the Presbyterian and Methodist churches belong, maintains a regular teaching upon the dangers inherent in smoking and the use of intoxicating liquors, and therefore requires members to be of sober and temperate habits. Such spiritual and social guidance has a clear social value and can be considered as part of a survival strategy in modern societies like Germany and the Netherlands where drugs, alcohol abuse and petty crime are serious problems in many problematic immigrant communities like the Bijlmer district of Amsterdam. When it became necessary to form the Ghanaian mainline Protestant congregations such as the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, these congregations also took it upon themselves as a divine calling and mission to embark on congregational social edu-cation alongside their spiritual nurture. This was aimed at preventing both the older and the younger generation from falling victim to these types of social vices. The churches’ ministry with the youth helps to create a conducive religious atmosphere that enhances the spiritual and moral education of the youth. This goes a long way to promote their formal education within the school system.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted a relatively comprehensive historical survey of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Germany and the Netherlands. An attempt has been made to trace the history of formation of the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations in Germany and the Netherlands looking at both spiritual and structural developments in the emerged congregations, devoting space to the discussion of relationships with the traditional mainstream Protestant churches in Europe as well as processes of cooperation and integration.
It has been established that the emergence of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches such as the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations came as a relatively late development of the phenomenon of the emerged Ghanaian churches in continental Europe. However, since their emergence within the past decade and a half these Ghanaian mainline Protestant congregations have become vibrant, providing quite inspiring, lively and appealing services. Moreover, contrary to the observation made by Gerrie ter Haar nearly a decade ago in her research, these churches have since their formation experienced significant numerical growth, drawing into their fold not only those of their own denomination but Ghanaian Christians of all backgrounds as well as those who were previously non-churched. The foregoing observation is confirmed by the following statistics provided in 2004 by the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Hamburg regarding their membership and their previous denominational backgrounds from Ghana.

Table 7: 328

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<th>Previous denominational background</th>
<th>Absolute Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Previous denomination</th>
<th>Absolute Number</th>
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<td>Total membership</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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We have established that most Ghanaian Christians came to Europe looking for a spiritual home in this foreign land but unfortunately no significant numbers of these African Christians

328 Statistical survey conducted in the Presbyterian Church Ghana (PCG) congregation in Hamburg and the Ghanaian Methodist Society in Hamburg in February 2004. The documents are available with the researcher.
were attracted to the mainstream traditional Protestant churches in Europe. Of the few Ghanaian Christians who had made contacts and were worshipping with these European traditional churches, their presence in these churches failed to show any significant numerical increase until separate services were organised for them alongside the traditional European churches. We observed that the aforementioned situation is attributed to the following reasons among others:

- In the first place, there was a language barrier for most Ghanaians who found it difficult to follow a formal worship service conducted in a foreign language like German or Dutch which they are not very conversant with. There was also a strong passion for a contextualized style of worship conceived to be more suited to their needs as African Christians which they did not find in the European traditional mainstream churches.

- Second, the Ghanaian Christians were looking for a kind of Christianity that would address itself to needs related to their traditional African worldviews while demonstrating the graces to satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. This type of Christianity they did not find in the European traditional mainstream Protestant Churches.

- Third, these immigrant Ghanaian Christians were looking for a spiritual home where they could enjoy a sense of belonging and acceptance and where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. All these they could not find in the traditional mainstream Protestant Churches in their host European societies.

We have seen that immigrant Ghanaian Christians like all other African Christians draw on their religious resources to cope with the process of cultural transition and therefore in their search for a spiritual home in Europe they look for the kind of Christianity that could address their spiritual and socio-economic needs as immigrant Christians. Over the years they had looked up to the Ghanaian-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatics churches and other African independent churches to address such needs. However with the emergence of the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands, these Ghanaian Christians came to realize to their satisfaction that just as their mother churches in Ghana have done in recent years, these GMPCs in Europe and their spiritual leadership have equally opened up for spiritual renewal. They found out that these emerged Churches had already embraced evangelical and charismatic features like the following, which were once thought to be unique to the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches but which they believed, could be helpful in addressing their needs:
• Placing emphasis on new birth and encourage members to maintain a devotional life and a personal relationship with the Lord.

• Encouraging members to appreciate the Person and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

• Encouraging members to seek for the infilling of the Holy Spirit and to identify their gifts and exercise them to profit all.

• Teaching and Encouraging members to be actively involved in personal witnessing and to exercise their authority in the preaching, healing and deliverance ministry.

• Inculcating in members the habit of prayer, believing that God responds to the prayer of faith.

• Organizing marriage seminars retreats, revivals and such meetings as will uplift members.

• Seeking to demonstrate love in meeting spiritual and material needs of members.

A survey as indicated in appendix 3 conducted by the present author among a cross-section of the membership of the Amsterdam Wesley Methodist Church revealed that 75 out of the 124 respondents claimed previous Methodist Church membership from Ghana. Another 19 claimed membership of other mainline churches, whereas 25 had Pentecostal/Charismatic Church background. Of the 75 members with previous Methodist Church background, 40 had remained non-churched over an average period of 15 years before the formation of the Amsterdam Wesley Methodist Church, while the other 35 were fellowshipping with Pentecostal and Charismatic churches before joining the Wesley Methodist Church. These 35 members together with all the others who were previously of different denominational backgrounds assigned reasons such as the following for choosing to join the Wesley Methodist Church:

• Lively and appealing worship services
• Inspiring and edifying preaching and teaching
• The level of spirituality in the church makes one feel more at home
• The church is seen to be equally capable as the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in addressing needs related to their African worldview

To put it in a nutshell, when the migrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians and others came to realize that the newly emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches were equally capable as the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in addressing needs related to their African
worldview they readily lent their support. The foregoing may therefore account for the
significant growth of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Germany and the
Netherlands and their success in attracting the support of appreciable numbers of Ghanaian
Christians.

Having said all that we also need to point out that as much as there are ministry prospects
for the GMPCs in terms of growth, there are equally unique ministry challenges for them on
the mission grounds which have unique implications for the spiritual leadership who take the
mantle of leadership in these immigrant situations. This brings us to the discussion in our next
chapter which seeks to outline the ministry challenges confronting these churches which
certainly need to be meaningfully addressed to ensure fruitfulness in ministry and for that
matter the future survival of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches.
CHAPTER IV

NEW IMMIGRANT SITUATIONS AND CHALLENGES FOR MINISTRY

4.1 Introduction

We observed earlier in chapter 1.6 of this study that even though Ghanaian churches established in Europe appear to have developed a life of their own, the flow of people and ideas from Ghana to Europe continues to be significant. Essentially immigrants Ghanaian Christians in Europe naturally share the same traditional African worldviews with their folks in their homeland. It is for this reason that the background information presented in the first two chapters of this study is crucial for a good understanding of the religious experiences of immigrant Ghanaian Christians in Europe.

As we have already established in chapter one of this study, Ghanaians in general are intensely religious and for that reason, religion is seen to be interwoven with all their habits, customs and modes of thought. We have also seen that the Akan traditional religious system which is illustrative of Ghana’s other traditional religious systems is focused on need. For this reason, it is very adaptable and accommodating to other religious systems that make inroads into the Ghanaian culture, provided it can bring practical solution to problems here and now. The traditional African worldview of the Ghanaian holds the belief that the spiritual realm is immanent and impinges directly on the living. For that matter, salvation in the traditional African world involves a certain view of the realm of spirit power and its effects upon the physical and spiritual dimensions of human existence. This therefore calls for a ‘Saviour’ who proves himself capable of saving them from the terrors and fears of which they experience in their daily life situations. The traditional worldview of Ghanaians therefore, is considered as an important factor that makes the Ghanaian religious culture hold a vital preparation for the Gospel of Christ in a unique way. It is in the light of the aforementioned context that we can presumably understand the challenges that faced the former Western Mission churches in Ghana which eventually became the parent churches of the GMPCs established in European societies. We presume that the challenges identified in both the mission and church history of the mother churches in Ghana will help us have a working understanding of the mission
challenges of the GMPCs identified in their immigrant situations in their host European societies.

4.2 Challenges Discovered in the History of the Development of Parent Churches in Ghana

While tracing the history of development of Christianity in Ghana in chapter two, discussions have touched on the great difficulty that the European missionaries experienced in addressing the spiritual sensibility of the African communities they evangelized. We have observed that their shortcoming could be attributed to a number of factors which include the following:

In the first place, they had great difficulty in coming to terms with the traditional African worldviews of the Ghanaian Christians. For instance, among church members there was a heightened belief in the existence of potent spiritual forces that could interfere in the affairs of humans either for good or evil. However this belief was frowned upon as mere superstition by the missionaries. Even though the church officially denied the existence of spiritual forces like witchcraft, the inherent fear of such evil powers continued to haunt church members, compelling a good number of them to seek protection in anti-witchcraft shrines. This practice of consulting the neo-traditional cults either for protection or healing was obviously condemned by the mission churches. Moreover cultural practices such as puberty rites, customary rites of marriage, naming ceremony, funerals, festivals, music and drumming were also considered not to be in conformity with Christian faith and practice. They were seen to be contaminated with traditional religious practices which endangered the Christian faith.

In the second place, the missionaries did not know how to handle such issues because they were not well informed about the traditional African worldviews and moreover, they were not trained to deal with such issues. Obviously, the Ghanaian/African situation called for new forms of Christian faith and practice which lay great emphasis on healing and exorcism and for that matter demonstrated the power to overcome spiritual forces that threatened the survival of the African. Essentially, this was quite evident in the evangelistic campaign of the African/Ghanaian evangelists like Swatson mentioned in chapter 2.2.8 of this study. He was licensed as a preacher in the Western Province diocese of the Anglican Church (Church of England) around 1916 by Archdeacon Morrison stationed in Kumasi of the then Gold Coast (Ghana). Swatson actually exercised the gifts of healing and exorcism in his evangelistic campaigns. Hence, while condemning unchristian traditional religious practices and pressing the people to bring out their fetishes and amulets for burning upon conversion he
demonstrated the power to overcome spiritual forces that threatened the survival of the African.

Swatson also made a humble contribution towards the indigenization of Christianity in the communities that he served. In the first place, he ensured the translation of a part of the Anglican Prayer Book and hymns into the local language which enabled him to conduct purely vernacular services. This was a major breakthrough for the Anglican Church at the time when there was felt needs to develop an Anglican liturgy for people who could not participate meaningfully in the English Prayer book services because of illiteracy. One other aspect of his indigenization initiatives had to do with traditional practices. Whilst he condemned the fetish practices of the African traditional religion as unchristian, he also allowed some cultural practices like drumming and dancing as well as other traditional rites which could not per se endanger the Christian faith and practice. All these indigenization initiatives made worship more meaningful to the people and eventually attracted even a lot of Methodists and Presbyterians to the Anglican Church because they felt more at home there. Obviously the charismatic style of ministry as demonstrated by Swatson made Christianity more relevant to the Ghanaian communities he ministered to in his evangelistic campaigns.

Ironically the indigenisation initiative embarked upon by Swatson which obviously could have lent the Anglican Church a springboard for church expansion was lost at the instance of Bishop O'Rorke, the successor to Bishop Hamlyn who was then in-charge of the Gold Coast Mission. He insisted on a high Anglican liturgical mass characterized by high clericalism with elaborate rites and ceremonies which had no room for any significant contextualization.

In looking at the developments within the autonomous Mission churches in Ghana around mid-20th Century, we discovered in chapter two that one main problem that these churches continued to grapple with for a long time was finding a better approach towards the contextualization of the Gospel. Actually, it took the autonomous Mission churches like the PCG and the MCG quite a long time before they could come to grips with the realities of the inherent socio-spiritual crises of their members as related to their traditional African worldviews. Obviously they had great difficulty in addressing themselves to the existential needs of their members, which include the provision of divine healing and exorcism, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and physical security in terms of material and social wellbeing. Incidentally at a point in time these autonomous Mission churches began to experience a decline in membership due to an apparent waning of spiritual vitality.
within the said churches. There was mass exodus of members particularly the youth to Pentecostal and Charismatic churches while the women-folk sought for prayer support from mushroom prayer fellowships all over the places.

As we demonstrated in chapter 2 of this study, when the mainline Protestant churches in Ghana eventually opened up to embrace spiritual renewal within the past few decades, they placed themselves in a better position to address themselves to the above-mentioned existential needs of their members. Moreover, they were in a better position to satisfy to some extent the deep religious quest for authentic spirituality as expressed by some of their members. They sought for a deeper commitment to their evangelical faith which upholds the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of the Holy Scriptures. They also succeeded in introducing reforms in what was considered to be stereotyped traditional liturgical forms of worship. This brought more inspiration to the worship life of the churches. The Ghanaian Methodists for instance find in the said on-going spiritual renewal the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit to re-open old wells of the early Wesleyan Revival. Their kind of spiritual heritage was known to be characterized by zeal and enthusiastic faith sharing, inspirational worship services, fervent prayer meetings and holistic healing services.

4.3 Ministry Challenges Identified in New Immigrant Situations in Europe

As we have already illustrated in chapter 3 of this study, prior to the formation of the GMPCs, most of the mainline Protestant Christians who had come to live in Germany and the Netherlands did not feel attracted to the indigenous EMPCs. We have observed that the main reasons attributed to this situation include the following:

1. In the first place they were looking for the kind of Christianity that would address itself to needs related to their traditional African worldviews and their immigrant situations while demonstrating the graces to satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality.

2. There was also a strong passion for a contextualized style of worship conceived to be more suited to their needs as African Christians.

3. Finally, these immigrant Ghanaian Christians were looking for a spiritual home where they could enjoy a sense of belonging and acceptance and where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. All these they could not find in the traditional mainstream Protestant Churches in their host European societies.
4.3.1 Ministry Challenges Related to Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Counselling

We have demonstrated in chapter 3 that with the formation of the GMPCs a good number of Ghanaian migrants with mainline Protestant Christianity background but who were already absorbed in the PCCs eventually lent their support. For these Ghanaian Christians, their motivations to come back to their denominational roots stemmed from their understanding that these newly emerged GMPCs are equally endowed with the desired ministry graces that would satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. In a similar way the other non-churched Ghanaian immigrants who registered their membership were also inclined to believe that in seeking to address their spiritual needs these churches will in some way tackle their existential needs which are tied to their traditional African worldviews in a meaningful way.

The foregoing certainly raise the issue of the future survival of the GMPCs and the ministry relevance of their spiritual leadership as well as the whole ethos of mainline Christianity as regards the direction these churches take in pursuance of their ministry to these immigrant Ghanaian Christians. For some of these Ghanaian Christians their evangelical beliefs and the challenges posed by their immigrant situations motivate them to usually seek out for a blend of evangelical and charismatic Christianity. It is noteworthy that their motivation to come back does not stem from a mere craving for ethnic or denominational identity but the desire to practice their brand of authentic spirituality in their denominational roots. For these mainline Christians, needs related to their traditional African worldviews coupled with their immigrant situations constantly pose numerous challenges to them as they seek to adjust to the socio-cultural conditions of their host European societies.

As we have already established in this study Ghanaian immigrant Christians in Europe share the same traditional worldviews with their folks in their homeland. However, their immigrant situations pose far more unique ministry challenges to these GMPCs established in European societies. The problems and needs of Ghanaian immigrants range widely from the spiritual to the socio-psychological. In the first place, there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. Moreover, their immigrant situations create for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. Besides all these there is the sense of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, addictive habits and other moral weaknesses, apparent failures, disappointments and numerous difficulties in one’s life. In Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a
mission setting like the GMPCs which are established outside the homeland the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it capable in meeting the needs of their members cannot be overemphasized. It is worthy of note that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring as related to the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the church to its own people and the community at large. The existential import of ministry relevance of the Ghanaian mainline churches to the Ghanaian community, especially as it pertains to the spiritual leadership of these churches, stands out forcefully in its real life version as recounted in the following real life experience story by Abamfo Atiemo, a PCG Minister:

‘I had come out from the Seminary. I went to my home-town to preach in the local Presbyterian Church. In the morning of the following day, which was a Monday, I went round in my clerical attire to visit relatives and church members. I entered the house of one of the female Presbyters of the Church. After exchanging pleasantries, she called out to a grandson who was ill for me to pray for him. The boy, about six years old, came out of the room walking briskly and expectantly into the main yard where we were sitting. As soon as he saw me, he stopped and in a tone that suggested disappointment, said, “I thought it was a real priest who had come to pray for me: I did not know it was a Chapel Priest.” With that, he dashed back into the room. Almost all adults present laughed over the boy’s statement and behaviour. The grandma explained to me that the boy thought it was one of the ‘prophets’ of the Spiritual Churches in town who had come to pray for him. As I walked away from the house, the boy’s statement kept ringing in my mind: “I thought it was a ‘real priest’ … I didn’t know it was a ‘Chapel Priest’!”, “A real priest” and a “chapel priest.” And I was a “Chapel Priest.” As I pondered over it and its possible implications, I was not amused. For, I grew up in that community and knew that the six year old boy was only echoing the larger community’s perception of the pastors of the mainline churches.329

Atiemo explains that in Ghanaian Christianity, more especially before the recent spiritual renewal experienced within the last couple of decades by the mainline churches, there seemed to be a general perception among the folks within the communities that the pastors of the

mainline churches were “chapel” priests; that is, their importance and relevance ended in the chapel:

‘They preach, baptize, confirm, wed couples, bury the dead and, occasionally, grace social gatherings with their ‘ornamental presence.’ When it comes to real existential issues, when people think they need spiritual help, most Ghanaian church people turn to ‘real priests’ – prophets, healers, and leaders of the new churches, fellowships, prayer groups or even occult groups for help.’

Atiemo in his essay on ‘The Issue of Relevance and the Challenge of Christian New Religious Movements’ in Ghanaian Christianity has observed that the foregoing may account for the current uncontrollable proliferation of new Christian movements that the Christian Church in Ghana is experiencing. He points out that these new Christian Movements claim or appear to be providing answers to existential needs of Ghanaian religious people ranging from spiritual to socio – psychological, hence their phenomenal growth within and outside the mainline Churches in Ghana. But as to whether all of the said movements actually meet the said needs of the people or not is another matter.

The aforementioned challenges for the Ghanaian immigrant situations in Europe are relatively huge. The usual practice is that the spiritual leaders of Christian movements and other quasi-religious movements established in Ghana, frequent the European host societies where Ghanaian immigrants are known to be heavily concentrated to organize healing and deliverance campaigns. As much as some of these spiritual leaders may be genuine Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, others may have doubtful doctrinal and moral credibility. However, since most Ghanaian immigrants who patronize their programmers may be in desperate need in finding solution to their problems, they do not usually appear to make the difference and are eventually exploited by the fake ones among them. Besides the apparent exploitation, there are other challenges as well. In most instances, Ghanaian immigrants who surely include mainline Christians are usually fascinated by the healing and deliverance ministration and prophetic utterances of the said visiting Charismatic Church leaders and the so called widely acclaimed prophets.

Whereas the source of some of the said prophetic utterances is presumed to be genuine, thoroughly Christian and a clear sign of the new move of the Holy Spirit in the Church, others could be seen as mere counterfeits that seek to substitute human religious philosophy for the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whatever be the case, the visit of such presumed

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men of God attract some of the members of the GMPCs to their programmes and in most instances it affects both church attendance and financial contributions of the said members to their own churches. Moreover, in places where the spiritual leadership of a particular mainline church is presumed not to be making the desired impact on the membership, attendance at church programmes could be drastically affected. There are many instances whereby members who feel that the spiritual leadership of their church is not making the desired impact on their lives eventually leave their own church unceremoniously to join other churches of their preference.

4.3.2 Ministry Challenges Related to Spirituality and Communality

As we have discussed above, the immigrant situation of these Ghanaian immigrants creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. It is here that the inherent strong traditional communal factor of Ghanaians which enables these churches to provide group solidarity becomes very vital. In this regard, the Ghanaian churches’ aspiration to create a sense of belonging and acceptance which many immigrants detached from their families and homeland usually lack in the foreign land is deemed essential. However, in their effort to improve the spiritual and communal lives of their members these GMPCs constantly face the challenge of how to keep a helpful balance between the two in order to ensure both their future survival and ministry relevance to all their members.

In the first place there are members who presumably show too much interest in the social aspects of the communal life of the church in terms of the provision of the basic social needs and the social celebrations thereof at the expense of the true essence of spirituality. For this reason in their passionate quest for satisfaction in social celebrations some of these Ghanaian Christians do not appear to be seriously resolved to put a hold on certain acts of self-indulgence or moral lapses considered inimical to the maintenance of a truly Christian witness to the community. On the other hand, there is a new crop of Ghanaian mainline Christians who passionately seek to uphold their traditional evangelical heritage. For this reason, they do not appear to conform to any form of compromised Christianity as regarding issues related to the core beliefs of their evangelical faith and practice. Since they strongly believe in experiential transformative conversion, they aspire to maintain moral uprightness which in their view goes a long way to promote the spiritual life of the church. For these members, especially those among them who have mainline Christianity background, their
motivation to come back to their mother church stemmed from their understanding that their deep religious quest for authentic spirituality will be satisfied. In reality, they assign inspirational prayer ministration and edifying preaching and teaching as part of the basic reasons for choosing to join these churches. For this reason, if their expectations are not reasonably met they feel disappointed in the spiritual leadership and in the church at large and eventually leave the church unceremoniously. Moreover, when in their view proper discipline is not enforced to check any form of moral lapses which surface time after time, be it within the church leadership or among the membership, they feel equally disappointed.

In the light of the discussions above, this study seeks to demonstrate that as much as there are ministry prospects, there are equally unique ministry challenges for these GMPCs. One of the main ministry challenges these churches face therefore has got to do with how to keep a helpful balance between commitment to spirituality and communality so as to ensure both their future survival and ministry relevance to all their members. Obviously the spiritual challenges on the mission grounds as illustrated above have unique implications for the spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in these immigrant situations. The situations demand the spiritual and moral resolve of the said spiritual leaders to maintain the kind of evangelical and ethical standards which conform to their official church doctrine and regulations if they hope to achieve evangelistic fruitfulness so as to ensure the future survival of their churches. While doing this it is also expected of these spiritual leaders to ensure the promotion of a harmonious community within which the communal welfare of the members is catered for so as to ensure their ministry relevance to all their members.

4.3.3 Ministry Challenges Related to Mission Expansion and Church Growth

Considering the motivational factors which led to the formation of the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands as outlined in Chapter 3 of this study, one is inclined to assume that right from the outset the target group for the mission thrust of the initiators was primarily the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians especially those who belonged to their particular denomination. Actually the desire to worship in their religious-cultural setting, which provides the opportunity for the use of their own mother tongue, became one of the major motivational factors for the establishment of these churches. The need to worship in their mother tongue is understandable in the sense that besides the factors outlined in chapter 3.9 of this study the educational level of some of the first generation migrant Ghanaian Christians is
considered to be not appreciably adequate to enable them benefit meaningfully from the use of a less familiar foreign language in a formal worship setting. This also meant that the membership of these Ghanaian-initiated GMPCs would eventually become predominantly Ghanaian and own a connection to their respective parent churches in their home country and for that matter operate under the ecclesiastical structure and polity of the home church. To this immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians the opportunity to own a connection to their respective parent churches in Ghana was deemed necessary for several reasons which include the following:

i. These immigrant Ghanaian Christians belonging to the GMPCs are living in the first and second generations and this implies for many, a life between two worlds. For this reason even as they endeavoured to adjust to the socio-cultural life of their host European societies they necessarily had to maintain close ties with the mother church in the homeland who will periodically second missionary pastors to take pastoral charge over the said churches. This is in view of the fact that in consequence of their peculiar circumstances these newly emerged GMPCs need the pastoral oversight of a Ghanaian pastor whose background and training is appropriate for such a responsibility.

ii. Maintaining close ties with the mother church in Ghana somehow ensures the maintenance of their strong ties with their Christian family members at home some of whom will even want to maintain them as distant members of their local church. This eventually ensures the much needed official support of the home-church for overseas members who contract customary or traditional marriages in Ghana. Moreover maintaining such close ties ensures the provision of a fitting burial by the local church in Ghana for deceased members of the GMPCs whose mortal remains are sent home to Ghana for burial.

iii. Owning a connection to the mother church also enables overseas churches and their members to meet some necessary financial obligations to their home church and to sponsor projects back home by channelling such sponsorship through the Head Office of their particular parent church in Ghana.

While tracing the history of the formation of the GMPCs in chapter 3 we observed that of the few Ghanaian mainline Christians who had made contacts and were worshipping with the European mainstream Protestant churches their presence in the church services failed to show numerical increase until separate services were organized for them. For instance, according to
the initiators of the PCG congregation in Amsterdam it was that impression created among the Ghanaian Christian community that a PCG (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) congregational branch was being established in Amsterdam South East which motivated the Presbyterians to come in their numbers to join the emerging church. It appears that to the initiators of these GMPCs the primary aim for their missionary thrust in terms of the formation of these Ghanaian mainline Protestant congregations was chaplaincy oriented. This involved contacting and gathering such mainline Protestant Ghanaian Christians especially those who belonged to their particular denomination back home in Ghana and providing a place for moments of worship, congregational life and pastoral care. The important observation we are making here is that significant church growth particularly in terms of numerical growth takes place within the religio-cultural setting provided by these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches. These churches, we must acknowledge are performing a vital missionary function by their very presence. As Jehu Hanciles has observed there is a well-attested fact that the experience of migration tends to intensify religious consciousness, foster religious commitment, and increase the possibilities of religious conversion.331

However, it must also be said that migration can cause or contribute to erosion of faith and long term isolation can weaken religious allegiance.332 As we observed in chapter 3.10 of this study, by their very presence these newly established GMPCs provide worship opportunities for most Ghanaian Christians with mainline Protestant Christianity background or otherwise who before the establishment of these churches had remained non-churched for several years without any motivation to seek church membership.

In the light of the foregoing, we presume that these churches have been established with the worthy objective of serving a specific African migrant group with their own pattern, and their own rate of growth. However, some scholars of African mission history like Hanciles suggest that as much as churches in the African diaspora perform a strong missionary function and often represent a singular form of vital growth within their respective denominations, they nevertheless have their own limitations in terms of growth and church expansion.333 This is attributed to the fact that such churches appear to have the narrow objective of serving a specific African group. Moreover denominational identity, organizational restrictions, and limited autonomy may complicate efforts to evaluate their true missionary capacity. The

332 Hanciles, Beyond Christendom, 297.
333 Hanciles, Beyond Christendom, 327.
implication of all this for the GMPCs is that should their missionary thrust remain limited to just chaplaincy efforts which involves the ingathering of those immigrant Ghanaian Christians particularly those who shared the same denominational background then they may be turning a blind eye to a potential mission field beyond their target group.

The general impression here is that beyond the chaplaincy stage as they consolidate their gains from the ingathering and the nurturing of their established members they need to launch out a meaningful congregational mission outreach beyond their original target group. We presume that the future survival of these churches beyond the first generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians and for that reason for the second and subsequent generations will depend much on their wholehearted commitment to meaningful mission outreach in their host European societies. But such a missionary vision cannot materialize unless these churches have the right calibre of spiritual leaders that can help the membership develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry. They should be competent to inform, train and mobilize church workers for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. It should be the kind of spiritual leadership that equips support and mentor individuals to become all that God wants them to be as Christians in mission.

4.3.4 Ministry Challenges Related to the Place and Role of the Second Generation Congregants

The aforementioned discussion on ministry challenges in terms of mission expansion and church growth leads us to another significant ministry challenge for the future survival of the GMPCs which we presume will need a serious attention. This has got to do with the place and role accorded by these GMPCs to youth and young adults who constitute the second generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians. Incidentally these young Ghanaian Christians presumably constitute the future adult congregants of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches. The second generation congregants are made up of two groups- children of immigrant Ghanaian Christians born and raised in the host European societies and those born in Ghana but brought to join their parents either at early childhood or at youthful stage. Whatever be the case these young ones are raised in European schools and culture yet nurtured by first generation Ghanaian parents who speak their indigenous language at home with them and impress on them their Ghanaian religio-cultural values.

Under these circumstances major challenges emerge for both the adult and young members of these Ghanaian immigrant churches similar to what Moses Biney identifies in his
study of Ghanaian immigrants in New York. For the first generation adult members one of the major challenges facing them is how to keep their second generation children especially those in their teens and the young adults in the church. These adults believe that the spiritual and community life of the church will help their children to uphold the much needed moral and religious virtues which are indispensable for the attainment of a good life. In the words of Biney in reference to his studies in New York:

‘While the younger generation does not necessarily dispute the importance of these values, they believe that they have the right to determine for themselves how to attain them. They find their parents’ attempts to guide their lives too overbearing. Some also believe that their parents are not in touch with the realities of American life and that their counsel cannot be trusted on certain issues.’

To put it simply, such contrasting views between the first and second generation immigrant Ghanaians about the way the second generation should lead their lives oftentimes generate friction at home which results in some of these children taking a unilateral decision to leave home unceremoniously and even cease to attend church on Sundays.

It is however, noteworthy that some of these youth and young adults who fall out of the church community life or parental moral and spiritual guidance or influence somehow get into bad company and mess up their lives, their education and future. Obviously, for many of the youth and young adults of the second generation in Western societies this attempt at keeping a tenuous balance between adaptation to Western life (whatever that may be) and the maintenance of Ghanaian moral and religious values is stressful, confusing, and frustrating.

The question that arises in these challenging circumstances is: what role can these GMPCs play in support of these immigrants Ghanaian Christian families regarding their second generation children who go through such stressful and confusing adaptation problems? What innovations need to be made in the worship and community life of the church so as to keep the youth and young adults in the church? Ironically, this second generation Ghanaian young Christians constitute the future adult congregants of these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches and for that matter a crucial factor for the future survival of these churches beyond the first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians.

334 Biney, From Africa to America, 132-136.
335 Biney, From Africa to America, 135.
336 Biney, From Africa to America, 132.
4.3.5 Leadership Responsibility Challenges

In view of the existential and contextual needs of the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians, it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs must be seen to have taken a new dimension that will ensure both the ministry relevance of these churches to their members as well as their future survival. It is anticipated that it should be a new type of spiritual leadership which is spiritually and functionally vibrant and thus committed to do all that it takes to ensure the future survival of these churches. This kind of spiritual leadership should be meaningfully committed to the promotion of a harmonious community within which spirituality of the membership is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for. In view of this, the spiritual leadership should be appreciably dynamic to ensure that the relevant ecclesial practices are effectively employed so as to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual and communal lives.

Essentially, the spiritual leadership that is needed to ensure ministry fruitfulness in such immigrant situations should be the type which is meaningfully committed to developing the ecclesial practices like the following in meeting the needs of these immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians:

_Worship as the celebration of God’s Redeeming Presence_

Ghanaians like all other Africans are generally warm and enthusiastic in matters of religion and for that reason, they naturally tend to sing, dance, and dramatize their religious faith in every concrete way. For the Ghanaian/African Christians, the most notable way of expressing their spirituality is through worship, private or corporate. They understand worship as an expression of reverence for God and the celebration of His manifest Presence. To them, formal community worship becomes more meaningful when it is both expressive and participatory with adequate time allocated to the singing of more familiar local choruses with dancing in that expressive and celebrative mood. It is noteworthy that to these Ghanaian worshippers, any worship service which does not make room for that expressive and celebrative mood is considered to be “too cold”, in other words uninspiring. In that instance, if the spiritual leadership fails to demonstrate appropriate sensibility to the situation and rather becomes so repressive regarding this desired style of worship, some of the membership do not tend to take it lightly and for that matter, may choose to leave the church unceremoniously. Essentially, as
churches in the mission setting, these GMPCs rely heavily on the quality of the Sunday worship experience in achieving the following objectives:

First, worship observed primarily as the celebration of the manifest presence of God is also aimed at the spiritual edification of the membership. It is noteworthy that some worshippers do come to experience the manifest presence of God in a unique way at their worship services and are consequently brought into intimate loving relationship with God and with one another. In effect, the church worship services as practiced by the GMPCs enable worshippers to experience a personal encounter with God in whose Presence there is healing and life in all its fullness.

Second, formal worship experience also serves as an evangelistic outreach to non-Christians, seekers or casual visitors and for that reason these churches aim at making their worship services more inspiring, uplifting, satisfying and meaningful to participants. In most instances such worship services are structured in a way that would encourage all worshippers to fully participate so that they will find such services an inspiring experience which makes them feel like returning to the said worship services time and time again.

Effective Christian discipleship as means for transformation

The situation of the immigrant Ghanaian Christians who take their membership in the GMPCs calls for a renewed approach to the ecclesial practice of discipleship which takes a serious view of evangelization and catechesis such as the kind expounded by John Westerhoff 337 and explained in chapter 6.4 of this study. Whereas some of the said membership are fully committed to the Christian faith and practice others lack a significant conversional experience which ensures a meaningful commitment and an intimate relationship with God in Christ. The situation of the immigrant Ghanaian Christians as portrayed here calls for the kind of spiritual leadership which is dynamic enough to ensure that the ecclesial practice of Christian discipleship is effectively employed so as to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual lives. They should be seen to be consistently pursuing evangelistic discipleship by means of expository preaching and teaching aimed at enabling the membership experience transformative conversions which is evidenced in new life with new lifestyle.

Pastoral care and counselling as means for transformation

In view of the immigrant situation of the membership, pastoral care and counselling provided by the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs are perceived as indispensable ecclesial practices which essentially enhance church growth. However, these practices should be the kinds that take their African/Ghanaian religious worldview into consideration otherwise they would not make the desired impression on these Ghanaian Christians. In other words, these practices should be seen to be meaningfully addressing their existential needs like the provision of divine healing and deliverance, economic and material security, as well as spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces. Essentially, existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. It is noteworthy that when these practices are effectively employed, lives are touched and transformed and the faith of the membership in Christ is rekindled.

Ghanaian communality: The provision of communal welfare in the spirit of koinonia

Essentially, the traditional Ghanaian society emphasises a strong network of family relationships and communal cohesiveness. The situation of Ghanaian immigrants in places like Europe constantly challenges them to strive to promote the said inherent traditional communal cohesiveness for their common good. Most of these Ghanaian immigrants are economic refugees detached from families and homeland. Some are fully documented whereas others are not. For the undocumented in particular their immigrant situation makes them experience feelings of isolation and depression in their constant struggle to find shelter and to fend for themselves. It is here that the inherent strong traditional communal factor of Ghanaians which enables these churches to provide group solidarity becomes very crucial. However, this can only happen if the spiritual leadership provided by these churches are meaningfully committed to educating and motivating the church membership to provide within their means varied assistance to the needy among them. They could as well provide group solidarity for all their members in times of marriage, birth, birthday celebrations, illness, bereavements and other crises moments. It is an undeniable fact that once the leadership of these churches demonstrate genuine love and care for the basic needs of their members, they give them reason to trust them with their deepest spiritual needs. In most instances where trust building is enhanced through genuine loving and caring relationships in
the spirit of koinonia, significant spiritual renewal is the result. In other words, whenever the fellowship provided by the church proves to be the kind that welcomes and supports those who enter, there are usually positive results in terms of church growth.

Holiness ethics and church discipline as means for spiritual vitality and evangelistic fruitfulness

The GMPCs belong to homeland denominational churches which inherited rich evangelical traditions that had a firm belief in the centrality and the authority of the Bible and for that matter were committed to the maintenance of strict spiritual and moral Christian standards. It is noteworthy that the GMPCs have since their formation adopted the Constitution and Standing Orders of their mother churches in Ghana for their spiritual, moral and administrative guidance. The main challenge they face however is the effective enforcement or maintenance of church discipline, especially in terms of personal holiness among their members which basically enhances the credibility and effectiveness of their evangelistic witness among the Ghanaian immigrant community. The understanding here is that the situation on the mission grounds demands their spiritual and moral resolve to maintain the kind of evangelical ethical standards which conform to their official church doctrine and church regulations so as to ensure evangelistic fruitfulness.

Empowering leadership for mission and church growth

We presume that in order to ensure significant church growth and mission expansion for the future survival of the GMPCs beyond the present first generation congregants the spiritual leadership provided by these churches should be committed to consistent congregational education and training in mission and evangelism. In other words, the leadership should be committed to multiplying themselves through intensive spiritual training of other individual members by equipping, supporting, motivating, mentoring and enabling them to become all that God wants them to be. The membership should necessarily be inspired and encouraged to operate in their areas of giftedness and to live out their faith with power and contagious enthusiasm as they share their faith though personal loving relationships.

4.4 Conclusion

As we have demonstrated earlier in this study the aforementioned ecclesial practices are likely to make a strong impression on the membership especially when they are seen to tackle
their existential needs. These needs include the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces as well as physical security in terms of material and social well-being. As we have stated above in this chapter existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. It is noteworthy that in places where these practices have been effectively employed, the members’ faith has been rekindled, and their lives have been touched and renewed through the transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit.

The implication of the above observations is that, to ensure both the future survival and ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their own people in their host European societies, the Spiritual leadership provided by these churches must cease to be perceived as mere “chapel priests” as Atiemo terms it. In view of the existential and contextual needs of the migrant Ghanaian Christians as discussed above, it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs must be seen to have taken a new dimension which ensures their ministry relevance to their members.

Having identified the needs of the migrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians and the ministry challenges these needs pose for the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs, we shall proceed to discuss in chapters five and six what it takes for the spiritual leadership needed in such immigrant situations to be spiritually and functionally vibrant. We presume that the ministry fruitfulness anticipated by the GMPCs in such immigrant situations will be in proportion to the spiritual and functional vitality of their spiritual leaders.
CHAPTER V

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY

5.1 Introduction

In any meaningful discussion on leadership we should be mindful of the fact that different leadership models or styles exist in different work environments. There is no one right style of leadership for all situations but just different models that work for different types of people depending on the environment they are in. In essence, leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the unique challenges facing the particular organization.338

For our present study, our discussion on leadership basically centers on the perspectives of religion, and in particular, Christianity. The environment for the practice of leadership in this instance is the church setting which are the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Germany and the Netherlands, and for that matter our discussion is placed in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the theological presupposition that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people.339 While leadership in Christian church settings may make allusions to secular leadership styles or characteristics, it is in my view basically required of leaders who take the mantle of leadership in the Christian church to lead in consonance with the dictates of the bible or in accordance with biblical principles. The Christian leader serves primarily within the community of believers in Christ, aiming at fulfilling his calling or God-given task by collectively planning and achieving together with his followers their common God-given goals which are not merely physical but spiritual. It actually involves the earnest seeking of the will of God and His leading both for his personal spiritual life and for the ministry and then marshalling the people to pursue God’s plan. It is in view of the foregoing context as related to leadership in the church setting that this study

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identifies *spiritual leadership* as the most feasible and relevant leadership model for addressing leadership issues in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in European societies.

In this chapter we are basically looking at the theological meaning of *spiritual leadership* as a leadership model and what is entailed in personal spirituality of spiritual leaders and then investigating how all this impact on their membership to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. We demonstrate that while spiritual leadership involves many of the same principles as general leadership, it has certain distinctive qualities that must be understood and practiced if spiritual leaders are to be successful in inspiring and mobilizing their followers so that together, they can achieve their God-given goals. The uniqueness of the distinctive features of spiritual leadership and their implications for the spiritual leaders underscores the central place of personal spirituality in spiritual leadership. Here, the hypothesis is that personal spirituality which entails an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is itself ensured by an experiential knowledge of God. It is a constant earnestness in seeking the Lord and a life of intimate fellowship with the Lord through prayer and worship. It also involves a constant yearning desire to grow more and more unto the likeness of Christ in full submission to His will so that His character will be formed in the spiritual leaders concerned. It is then that the spiritual leaders can influence their followers and move them from following their own agendas to pursuing God’s purposes as they adjust their lives to God’s will. The factual truth about all this is that the power that the spiritual leader requires doing all this can never be generated by the self, but by a superior Spiritual power, because there is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader. This leads us to the Holy Spirit factor and His divine empowerment for the Christian believer; the empowering grace of the Spirit of God who often uses people to influence others in order to draw them to himself for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service.

In essence, this chapter addresses the issue of personal spirituality as related to the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs and this is treated as one of the key models which constitute the theoretical framework of this study. Later, in chapter six we will look at the

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impact of all these and the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leadership in the church environment in ensuring the collective achievement of their God-given goals.

5.2 Need and Importance of Leadership

John C. Maxwell 342 writing on the subject of leadership in the early 1990s has observed that the key to success in any endeavor is the ability to lead others successfully because everything rises and falls on leadership. He explains that the effectiveness of one’s vocation or work will never rise above his or her ability to lead and influence others. Essentially one cannot produce consistently on a level higher than his or her leadership and for that matter one’s leadership skills determine the level of his or her success as well as the success of those who work around him or her.343

In a similar vein, Bernard M. Bass with Ruth Bass 344 observed that leadership is often regarded as the single most critical factor in the success or failure of institutions. Among others, Bass refers to school leadership studies that argue that the principal’s leadership is the most important factor in determining a school’s climate and the student’s success and that the motivation of teachers depends considerably on their perception of the quality of their

342 John Calvin Maxwell is an American leadership communication expert, speaker, teacher, pastor and author who has written many books, primarily focusing on leadership. He is the founder of INJOY, Maximum Impact, The John Maxwell Team, ISS and EQUIP, an international leadership development organization working to help leaders. EQUIP is involved with leaders from more than 80 nations. Its mission is ‘to see effective Christian leaders fulfill the Great Commission in every nation’. Maxwell speaks annually to Fortune 500 companies, international government leaders, and organizations as diverse as the United States Military Academy at West Point and the National Football League. John C. Maxwell - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (accessed on August 18, 2015).


344 Until he passed away on October 11, 2007 Bernard B. Bass was distinguished professor emeritus in the School of Management at Binghamton University (State University of New York) and a member of the academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College in Florida. He was also founding director of the Center for Leadership Studies at Binghamton and founding editor of The Leadership Quarterly journal. In the seven decades after 1946, he published over 400 journal articles, book chapters, and technical reports; plus 21 books and another ten books that he edited. He was consultant involved in executive development for many of the Fortune 500 companies and delivered lectures and workshops in over 40 countries. His wife Ruth Bass was instrumental in in the completion of the Handbook of Leadership. Cited from Bernard M. Bass with Ruth Bass, Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research and Managerial Applications, Fourth Edition, New York: The Free Press, 2008, vii.
relationships with their superiors. Bass refers to another research study that found that among the 50 Methodist Ministers they studied, some were more effective leaders than others. They explained that the effectiveness of these ministers was evidenced by the differential impact that their ministries had on church attendance, membership, property values, and contributions to church. Bass explains that in the business and industrial sector, leaders’ effectiveness among other things is measured objectively by their organizational units’ profit, profit margin, sales increase, market, return on investment and unit productivity et cetera.

The important point we are making here is that the afore-mentioned research findings underscore the need and importance of leadership in realizing group objectives and goals, be it religious, political or the social sector. On top of all this, is the importance of effective leadership which may be considered as a critical factor to organizational success. In the few instances cited above about the effects of leadership, it could be concluded that leadership effectiveness may be related to the style by which the person leads, the vision pursued by the leader, the quality of leader and subordinates relationships and how leaders motivate and influence people around them based on their personalities, gifts or abilities. If the foregoing conclusion is true then, it may be convenient at this point to consider those features as characteristics of leadership depending on the perspective from which leadership is viewed.

What meaning do we then bring to the concepts of “leader” and “leadership” in the light of the foregoing? Before considering these concepts, our presumption is that leadership is a complex subject which can be characterized in different ways depending on where we place the focus. Sometimes the focus is on leadership styles while at other times the focus is on the characteristics of a leader, and on top of that the level they serve in the case of an organization which then requires a leader to use a different approach at each level. Whatever be the case the important thing is for leaders to understand the different types of leadership and what they need to do to be an effective leader at their specific work environment. All this necessitates

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a meaningful understanding of the concept of “leader” and “leadership” which is the issue for discussion in the next section.

5.3 The Concepts of “Leader” and “Leadership” – Definition

As we stated in the main introduction, this study focuses basically on spiritual leadership which is based on biblical principles of godly leadership in the Church. However, since the study makes allusion to other forms of leadership, our discussion of “spiritual leadership” must first be set within the context of what is meant by the terms “leader and leadership.”

John Maxwell considers “leadership” to be such an intriguing subject in the sense that there is not an overall agreement of how the concepts of “leader” and “leadership” should be defined. There seems to be numerous definitions and descriptions of the subject for the fact that different leadership discourses emphasize different aspects. According to John Maxwell, ‘leadership is influence.’ John Maxwell however quotes James C. Georges as saying:

‘What is leadership? Remove for a moment the moral issues behind it, and there is only one definition: Leadership is the ability to obtain followers. Hitler was a leader and so was Jim Jones. Jesus of Nazareth, Martin Luther King, Jr., Winston Churchill, and John F. Kennedy all were leaders. While their value systems and management abilities were very different, each had followers. Once you define leadership as the ability to get followers, you then work backward from that point of reference to figure out how to lead.’

The important point here then is not just whether you influence someone but equally important is the kind of an influencer you are likely to become; and on top of that how you will grow in your leadership skills.

Bernard Bass in the summary of his discourse on the definition of leadership admits that there could be an unending search for one and only proper and true definition of leadership. On the other hand the choice of any appropriate definition will depend on the methodological and substantive aspects of leadership in which one is interested. Definitions of leadership are about one-way effects due to the leader as a person. In other words, the leader has the

350 Maxwell, Developing The Leader Within You, 1.
combination of personality traits, gifts and abilities necessary to induce others to accomplish a task, and that is influence. Leaders are therefore instruments of goal achievement and agents of change who provide guidance to subordinates in an attempt to realize the purposes of such a group. One significant hallmark of a leader is that emotional connection between the leader and the led; the leader provides an example to be imitated by followers and the aspiration of the leader then becomes the followers’ own aspiration.  

With this understanding of who a leader is, we can then infer that leadership is the process by which an agent induces or influences a subordinate to behave in a desired manner. Leadership in the broadest sense according to Bass implies the presence of a particular influence relationship between two or more persons. The concept of influence recognizes the fact that individuals differ in the extent to which their behaviors affect the activities of a group. It implies a reciprocal relationship between the leader and the followers, but one that is not necessarily characterized by domination, control or induction of compliance by the leader. Effective leadership therefore is successful influence by the leader which results in the attainment of goals by the influenced followers. Since leaders serve as models for their followers the definition of influence also recognizes that by their own example, leaders can influence other members of their group.

If we understand a leader as a person who has a program and is moving toward an objective with his group in a definite manner, then leadership can be referred to as the principal dynamic force that motivates and coordinates the organization in the accomplishment of its objectives. In other words, leadership is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it toward goals. According to Bass, leadership should depend on the purposes to be served:

‘Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a personality attribute, as the art of inducing compliance, as an exercise of influence, as a particular kind of activity, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument in the attainment of goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, and as the initiation of structure.’

With this understanding of who a “leader” is and what “leadership” means, as discussed above we may conclude with the thoughts of Louis W. Fry that leadership is about motivating people to change, and it is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations. Leadership actually entails motivating followers by creating a vision of a longterm challenging, desirable, compelling, and different future. He goes further to explain that when this vision is combined with a sense of mission which spells out who we are and what we do, it helps to establish the organization’s culture with its fundamental ethical system and core values. Essentially, it is the act of establishing a culture with values that influences others to strongly desire, mobilize and struggle for a shared vision that defines the essence of motivating through leadership.

As we have mentioned earlier in this section, our discussion of the concepts of leadership point to certain typical features which characterize effective leadership. These include the style by which that person leads, the vision pursued by the leader, the quality of leader and subordinates relationships and how leaders motivate and influence people around them based on their personalities, gifts or abilities. What needs to be underlined here is that whatever vision is pursued by the leader should be a shared vision with his followers so as to ensure the reality of a struggle for shared aspirations.

So far our discussion on general leadership have identified the aforementioned features as typical characteristics of leadership, but what bearing do these have on spiritual leadership which is the focus of this study? In my view these elements are crucial for understanding the true nature of spiritual leadership as practiced in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in European societies. My understanding of effective leadership of any religious organization like the GMPCs in such new immigrant situations is that an appropriate and relevant leadership model or style will be required. Other


requirements may include a sense of common mission, sense of commitment to leadership responsibility and functions, motivational leadership by example, appropriate exercise of authority, power and influence in relationships.

Having said all this, the crucial point here then is which leadership style(s) would be most appropriate for the immigrant situations of the said GMPCs established in European societies? This will be a matter of investigation as we consider literatures in relation to some selected leadership styles.

5.4 Styles of Leadership

Different leadership styles exist in work environments. There is no one right style of leadership for all situations but just different styles that work for different types of people depending on the environment they are in. Advantages and disadvantages exist within each leadership style and so leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the particular challenges facing the organization. It is noteworthy that the present author is aware of the fact that there are many styles of leadership which have been identified by scholars over the years which include the following among many others:

- Autocratic Leadership style
- Cross-cultural leadership
- Situational leadership
- Strategic leadership
- Team leadership
- Facilitative leadership
- Influence leadership style
- Participative leadership style
- Servant leadership style
- Transformational leadership style
- Charismatic/inspirational leadership
- Visionary leadership style
- Transactional leadership style

However, for our present study we would want to look at three major ones and investigate how relevant or applicable they are to our present study. The three selected leadership styles are the charismatic/Inspirational leadership, transformational leadership and the servant leadership. The choice of these two are based on the author’s preliminary observations of the practice of the art of leadership pertaining in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in European societies.

5.4.1 Charismatic / Inspirational Leadership

Charismatic leadership study is indebted to the German sociologist, Max Weber (1864-1920) who introduced the formerly religious concept of *charisma* to the study of leadership and organizations. Weber’s concept of charisma was an adaptation of the theological concept, which involves endowment with the gift of divine grace.\(^{358}\) Weber defined the characteristics that have specific charismatic effects on followers which include the following: Having a strong desire to influence others, being a role model for the beliefs and values that leaders want their followers to adopt, articulating ideological goals with moral overtones; arousing task-relevant motivation by tapping followers’ needs for esteem, power, and/or affiliation and linking the identity of followers to the collective identity of the organization.\(^{359}\)

L. W. Fry outlines the effects that are direct results of charismatic leadership which include follower trust in the leader’s ideology, similarity between followers’ beliefs and the leader’s beliefs, unquestioning acceptance of the leader, expression of warmth toward the leader, follower obedience, identification with the leader, emotional involvement with the leaders’ goals, and heightened goals for followers and follower confidence in goal achievement.\(^{360}\)

Charismatic leadership as a religious concept adopted by Weber was explained by divine inspiration. However, Turner, a critic of Weber, argues that the secularization of charisma by Weber failed to explain the secular power of charismatics on the followers’ expectations and internalization of changes in attitudes and behavior. The ambiguity in Weber’s concept of charisma was his equating the theological concept of charisma explained by divine inspiration with his (Weber’s) charisma understood as a gift of extraordinariness as a person, now bestowed by colleagues and subordinates instead of by God.\(^{361}\) The implication of the foregoing is that charismatic leadership in a sociological understanding may be different from the religious interpretation of the concept.

Bass points out that inspirational leadership is viewed as an alternative concept similar to charismatic leadership. Charismatic leadership and inspirational leadership are essentially, closely connected however; there could be differences in certain aspects of their functioning. The difference is marked by the way followers accept and comply with the leader’s


\(^{359}\) Fry, “Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership, 700-701.

\(^{360}\) Fry, “Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership, 701.

initiatives. Unlike the charismatic leadership, there are no dynamics for followers’ identification with the leader per se, but rather to his goals and purposes. Followers believe that they share a social philosophy with the inspirational leader. They perceive the inspiring leader to be knowledgeable, enlightened, and sensitive to the problems at hand, and from these perceptions, their confidence in the leader grows. In essence the followers’ trust in the inspiring leader arises from the meaning the leader gives to their needs and actions. Inspirational leaders actually build their followers’ expectations by envisioning describable futures and articulating how to attain them. In other words, they help followers feel more powerful by setting forth desirable goals and providing the means to achieve them.\textsuperscript{362}

With regard to the behavior of inspirational leaders, Bass points out that in order to maintain his inspirational impact on his followers, the inspirational leader needs to

‘set challenging objectives; align followers with a sense of mission; use symbols and images cleverly to get ideas across; mold followers’ expectations; provide meaning for proposed actions; point out reasons why followers will succeed; remain calm in crises; appeal to feelings; call for meaningful action; emphasize beating the competition and cooperating with collaborators; envision an attractive, attainable future; and articulate how to achieve the future.’\textsuperscript{363}

Our understanding of the issue here is that charismatic leaders wield their legitimate authority and influence on followers through their giftedness in terms of inspirational motivations, intellectual stimulation and vibrancy. Followers see their charismatic leaders as endowed with charisma to fulfill their situational needs and for that matter they become their model. On the other hand, the followers of the inspirational leader feel that they are empowered as a result of the leader’s exhortations, pointing out desirable goals and showing how to achieve them and thus giving meaning to their needs and actions. Even though their confidence in the leader grows from these perceptions that do not necessarily make the powerful leader their model as it is the case with the charismatic leader. Bass points out that those followers impute God-given powers to their charismatic leaders to the extent that they feel incapable of criticizing them. On the other hand followers may regard inspirational leaders as symbols of belief and shared problems; they wouldn’t have much problem criticizing them as with the case of those they regard as charismatic leaders.\textsuperscript{364}

5.4.2 Transformational Leadership

Bernard and Ruth Bass assert that there is considerable accumulated evidence of the greater effectiveness of transformational leadership of all kinds of leaders, which may include political leaders, public officials, religious leaders, educators, military officers, and business managers.\(^{365}\) Transformational leadership style depends on high levels of communication from management to meet well intended clear goals. Leaders create an environment where followers, team members or employees are empowered to achieve higher standards of performance. They address followers’ sense of self-worth and engage them closely without using power, but rather moral leadership, based on dignity and respect of others. Transformational leaders place emphasis on morals and values and gets followers to transcend their own self-interests for the sake of the team or organization.\(^{366}\) Transforming leaders have integrity; they are authentic, empathetic and humble. They have emotional intelligence and can use many intellectually stimulating ways to motivate their followers to do more than the followers originally intended and thought possible. Intellectual stimulation, charismatic leadership and inspirational leadership are major components of transformational leadership which work together to generate positive outcomes in the groups and organizations led.\(^{367}\) Charismatic leadership actually resembles transformational leadership for the fact that they demonstrate empathy, inspire, motivate, and empower followers, project self-assurance, dramatize the mission, and affirm collective efficacy.\(^{368}\) The difference however, lies in their intent; while transformational leaders are bent on transforming their teams and organizations, leaders who rely on charisma often focus more on themselves rather than change that should happen in their followers, groups and organizations.\(^{369}\)

5.4.3 Servant Leadership

Paul Wong and Dean Davey\(^{370}\) have observed that servant leadership (SL) is not new, because it was taught and practiced by Jesus more than 2000 years ago, but it is new and revolutionary

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\(^{370}\) Paul T.P. Wong received his PhD. in Psychology from the University of Toronto. He has held professorial positions at various universities. As the Founding Director of the Graduate Program in
in today’s competitive consumer society. While this leadership style has been around for thousands of years, it was the American Robert K. Greenleaf who coined the term and pioneered the “servant leadership” approach (1977) and was later developed by his followers (e.g., Spears, 1994; Spears & Lawrence, 2004).  

Greenleaf actually coined the phrase “servant leader” in his essay The Servant as Leader first published in 1970. In that essay Greenleaf said:

‘The servant-leader is servant first… It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first; perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions (…). The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.’

The practices of Greenleaf’s servant leadership (SL) approach begin with the servant–leader’s motivational desire, first and foremost to serve. This forms the bedrock of the servant leadership philosophy and practices. It is after such a desire to serve that the desire to lead follows. The practices of SL are expressed in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. The difference that manifests itself between SL and traditional leadership is that

Counselling Psychology at Trinity Western University (TWU), he has established an accredited and widely recognized graduate program. More recently, he has served as the Division Chair of Psychology and Business Administration at Tyndale University College. He is a Fellow of both American Psychological Association and Canadian Psychological Association. Apart from his academic pursuit, he is also devoted to serving people as a Registered Clinical Psychologist and as an ordained pastor in Ontario. http://www.drpaulwong.com/biography/ (accessed on September 15, 2015).

Dean Davey has been pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Coquitlam, Canada for the past 12 years. He has been teaching Abiding Life conference since 1998 and uses Abiding Life principles in his teaching, leadership and counseling. The Abiding Life ministries Canada (ALC) office specifically exists to assist in the promotion and distribution of the Abiding Life books, audio resources, and conferences to assist believers on their journey of abiding in Christ. http://www.abidinglife.com/resources/ALMILifeLines (accessed on September 15, 2015).


‘while traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the “top of the pyramid” SL is different. The servant-leader shares power puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible.’

The advantages of SL according to Wong and Davey are that: it is a flexible leadership approach which could benefit even the charismatic intuitive leader as well as the down-to-earth methodological type of leader. It aims at curbing the widespread evil of abuse of power and prevents and reduces all kinds of problems directly related to command-and-control leadership. There is accumulating evidence that SL is good for business. Studies with thousands of employees have demonstrated that when the practices of SL are implemented through leadership training in a business, performance has improved by 15-20% and work group productivity by 20-50%. This means an increase in profitability.

Wong and Davey also mention that SL has its own critics who argue that: It is too idealistic and naïve in the sense that in an individualistic consumer culture, many people will take advantage of the servant-leaders’ kindness as weakness and that people who practice SL can find themselves left behind by others, particularly in competitive situations. It is too unrealistic and impractical since it would not work in many situations such as military operations or prison systems. One striking criticism is that SL is too closely tied to Christian spirituality, because it is impossible for people to model after Christ’s humility without being redeemed and transformed by the Holy Spirit.

In the light of the discussion above, the question then arises; Could SL be a realistic and practicable leadership style in the church environment? Wong and Davey have observed that as much as the concept of servant-leader has gained increasing acceptance in leadership and organizational literature in the last two decades, within the Christian community SL has always been the most influential leadership model. Numerous publications on Christian leadership focus on SL. In the words of Wong and Davey

‘the reason is self-evident. Jesus Christ practiced servant leadership, even though He possessed the highest authority. He took on the nature of a servant in order to redeem us and minister to us (Phil.2:6-8). Jesus also explicitly taught his disciples the imperative of being a servant leader: ‘Jesus called them together and said, you know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many’ (Mark 10:42-45, NIV).

Richard J. Krejcir is understood to be making a similar observation when he points out that real successful leadership is rooted in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, as “He took a towel” (John 13: 2-5). Krejcir explains that SL is exercising real, godly leadership, as Christ did when He used a towel, and influencing, equipping, and empowering people to accomplish God's purpose and plan. SL is serving others unselfishly while influencing and empowering them to grow in a Christ-directed, purposeful direction. Jesus was efficient with people, had goals in sight, but was also relational over being task-driven. This kind of "servant leadership" according to Krejcir, produces a church filled with real purpose and motivation as people are called, appreciated, loved, encouraged, discipled, involved by mentoring and discipleship before they are deployed in ministry. This is “Christ life” before “ministry life.” Thus, the leadership of Christ is producing a church of spiritual maturity and involvement so that the people are inspired to be devolved, modelling the way, to get others to follow, and empowering them to grow spiritually and in ministry.

Richard Joseph Krejcir is an American evangelical Christian author, speaker, researcher and pastor. He earned his PhD. in Practical Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary. He served as a researcher at the Charles E. Fuller Institute 1989-2004. He does long term post-graduate level research on church trends and exegetical research at The Francis Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership. Krejcir has been teaching Inductive Bible Study principles at camps, conferences and churches all over the world since 1978. Richard Krejcir from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (accessed on September 15, 2015).

378 ‘The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.’

5.4.4 Identifying the most Relevant Leadership Model

In the previous sections we have discussed literatures related to general leadership, in particular, as well as definitions and concepts of leadership and come to the understanding that in any meaningful discussion on leadership we should be mindful of the fact that different leadership styles exist in different work environments. There is no one right style of leadership for all situations but just different styles that work for different types of people depending on the environment they are in. In view of the foregoing we observed that leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the unique challenges facing the organization.

Besides the issues of definitions and concepts of leadership, our previous discussions also covered three selected leadership styles, namely charismatic/inspirational leadership, transformational leadership and servant leadership which may or may not necessarily relate to the issue of religion. Essentially, for our present studies our discussion on leadership basically centers on the perspectives of religion, and in particular, Christianity. The context for the practice of leadership in this instance is the church environment, and for that matter our discussion is placed in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the fact that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people. While leadership in Christian church context may make allusions to secular leadership styles or leadership characteristics, it is basically required of leaders who take the mantle of leadership in the Christian church to lead in consonance with the dictates of the bible or in accordance with biblical principles. The context for leadership in Christian church is primarily within the community of believers in Christ among whom the Christian leader serves, aiming at fulfilling his or her calling or her God-given task by collectively planning and achieving with the Christian community their common God-given goals which are not merely physical but spiritual.

Going back to the three leadership styles discussed earlier, namely charismatic/inspirational leadership, transformational leadership and servant leadership; we can identify a good number of leadership characteristics and practices which may be useful for leadership in the Christian community or church setting. However, it is also factually correct that as much as there is a close resemblance between leadership in the church environment and other types of leadership, none of the said leadership styles per se fully satisfies requirements demanded for leadership in the Christian church setting. In the first place, none of the leadership styles
discussed above addresses the critical issue of the personality of the leader as related to personal spirituality. In my view, we need to understand theologically that leadership in the church is a divine calling, and what makes a true leader in the Christian church is first and foremost the leader’s connectedness or spiritual relationship with God. This becomes necessary because a true leader of the Christian community requires superior spiritual power to influence those he or she leads in order to draw them to God for their personal edification and empowerment for Christian service. However, this power can never be generated by the self as may be assumed for the transformational leader. Moreover, in the church setting of the community of Christian believers the congregation expects their leader to personally reflect in character and speech the teachings of the Bible. This is irrespective of whatever leadership training the leader is exposed to, his or her gift of extraordinariness as a person or the intellectual stimulation and vibrancy that the leader exhibits as bespeaks of the charismatic/inspirational leader.\footnote{Oladapo Ajani, \textit{Leadership Roles in Transnationalisation of Nigerian Pentecostal Churches}, 47.}

When it comes to SL which is recommended by Wong and Davey as the most influential leadership model within the Christian community, Wong and Davey themselves point out that SL is deceptively simple, yet it is probably the most profound and difficult type of leadership. They explain that the difficulty in practice lies in the fact that it is not based on a set of skills but rather, requires a fundamental change of attitude and some kind of inner transformation. On top of that, critics of this model consider it too closely tied to Christian spirituality, because it is impossible for people to model after Christ’s humility without being redeemed and transformed by the Holy Spirit.\footnote{Wong & Davey, \textit{Best Practices in Servant Leadership}, 3-4, 7.} The implication of the foregoing is that for the practice of SL to be a feasible leadership model that achieves realistic goals in a religious environment, especially the Christian community, it calls for a superior power of transformation which is never generated by the self. This is the missing element which is not explicitly incorporated in the SL leadership model and other styles of leadership when it comes to addressing the critical issue of leadership in the church. This is essentially what this present study seeks to do; finding the most feasible leadership model for addressing leadership issues in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in European societies.

Our discussions above on leadership issues underscore the central place of personal spirituality as pertains to leadership which relates largely to God and to His people in the

\footnote{Oladapo Ajani, \textit{Leadership Roles in Transnationalisation of Nigerian Pentecostal Churches}, 47.}
\footnote{Wong & Davey, \textit{Best Practices in Servant Leadership}, 3-4, 7.}
church setting and within the community of believers in Christ. It is in the light of the foregoing that we consider spiritual leadership to be the most appropriate, effective, more inclusive and realistic leadership model for our present study of leadership pertaining to the new immigrant situations of the GMPCs established in European societies. What then is spiritual leadership as it relates to our present context?

In the next sections of this chapter, we will look at the meaning of spiritual leadership as a leadership model and what it entails for the personal spirituality of spiritual leaders and investigate how this impacts on their members to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. After looking at the character of spiritual leadership and what it means to be a spiritual leader in this chapter, we will later in chapter six look at the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leadership in ensuring the collective achievement of their God-given goals together with their followers.

5.5. Spiritual Leadership: Its Uniqueness

In beginning the discussion on spiritual leadership in the church setting, and within the community of believers in Christ as we have already emphasized, it is important to note that such leadership takes place in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the fact that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people. This underscores the central place of personal spirituality for any person who takes the mantle of leadership in this context because it is required of him or her to lead in consonance with the dictates of the bible or in accordance with biblical principles.

From our discussions on leadership in the previous sections we understood leadership to mean a process by which an agent induces or influences subordinates to behave in a desired manner, resulting in the attainment of desired goals by the influenced followers. Since leaders serve as models for their followers the definition of influence also recognizes that by their own example, leaders can motivate people to change. Leadership is also seen as the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations. It actually entails motivating followers by creating a challenging, desirable and compelling vision which when combined with a sense of mission which spells out who we are and what we do, it helps to establish the organization’s culture with its fundamental ethical system and core values. Essentially, it is the act of establishing a culture with values that influences others to strongly desire, mobilize and struggle for a shared vision that defines the essence of motivating through leadership.
While spiritual leadership involves many of the same principles as general leadership, as discussed above, it has certain distinctive qualities that must be understood and practiced if spiritual leaders are to be successful in inspiring and mobilizing their followers so that together, they can achieve their God-given goals. In the first place, since spiritual leadership relates largely with God and His people, it also implies theologically that it is a divine calling and not a mere profession or occupation in the secular sense of the word. For that matter, the spiritual leader maintains a strong awareness of his calling and stays connected to God. Staying connected to God also entails an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, and a willingness to exemplify because spiritual leadership is not just pointing out great truths and exhorting others to live by them. Ulf Ekman has observed that spiritual leadership entails both a personal knowledge of Who God is and a personal experience of Him. It does not mean that the leader will know everything about Him, but he or she knows enough to show the way with confidence and assurance.382 J. Oswald Sanders383 points out that, a spiritual leader should have been where he is leading his group so as to be able to motivate them to follow him there. At the end of the day we can lead others only as far along the road as we ourselves have travelled because pointing the way is not enough and

‘if we are not walking, then no one can be following, and we are not leading anyone.’384

Secondly, spiritual leadership means taking responsibility and initiative, and it is inspiring and mobilizing their followers so that together, they can achieve their God-given goals which are not merely physical but spiritual. Essentially, the spiritual leader’s task is to move people from where they are to where God wants them to be, and that is influence. Once spiritual

382 Ulf Ekman, *The Spiritual Leader*, Uppsala: Ulf Ekman Ministries Sweden, 2006, 10-12. Ulf Ekman studied Theology at Uppsala University, Sweden and ordained in the Swedish Lutheran Church after which he worked as the chaplain of Uppsala University for several years. He is founder and Director of Word of Life Church and Word of Life University, Sweden. Since March 2014 he has converted to Roman Catholicism.

383 Dr. John Oswald Sanders (October 17, 1902 – October 24, 1992) was a general director of Overseas Missionary Fellowship (then known as China Inland Mission) in the 1950s and 1960s. He was instrumental in beginning many new missions’ projects throughout East Asia. He was a prolific writer who authored more than forty books on the Christian life many of which are translated into many other languages. He became an elder statesman and worldwide conference speaker from his retirement until his death. He was awarded the Order of the British Empire for Christian service and theological writing, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Oswald_Sanders (accessed on September 16, 2015).

leaders understand God’s will, they make every effort to move their followers from following their own agendas to pursuing God’s purposes which entails adjusting their lives to God’s will. This underscores the central place of personal spirituality in a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people in a community of believers in Christ. The implication of all this is that spiritual leadership requires superior spiritual power, which can never be generated by the self, because there is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader. Spiritual leaders therefore work within a paradox, because God calls them to do something that, in fact, only God can do. In reality, spiritual leaders cannot produce spiritual change in people; only the Holy Spirit does. Yet the Spirit often uses people to influence others in order to draw them to God for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service. Spiritual leadership transcends the power of personality and other natural gifts. The personality of the spiritual leader influences others because it is penetrated, saturated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. As the spiritual leader depends on the Holy Spirit and gives control of his life to the Spirit, the Spirit’s power flows through him to others, all because spiritual goals can be achieved only by spiritual people who use spiritual methods.

Furthermore, spiritual leaders seek God’s agenda. They seek God’s will and His leading both for their personal lives and their ministry or church, and then marshal their people to pursue God’s plan. In a gist true spiritual leadership is moving people on to God’s agenda. Spiritual leadership can actually influence all people, not just God’s people or those who belong to the community of Christian believers. As much as spiritual leaders will generally move God’s people to achieve God’s purposes, God can use them to exert significant Godly influence upon unbelievers as well.

Another important feature of spiritual leadership is their acute sense of accountability and responsibility. Christian leaders are accountable to God for the souls of their followers [Hebrews 13: 17]. Thus if they engage in conduct that is unbecoming of a leader, they cannot blame their followers when they do the same. Spiritual leaders are therefore called to

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387 Indeed character is the utmost of importance for anyone in or desiring to be in church leadership: Excerpts from Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, located at: www.buildingchurchleaders.com/articles.
389 ‘Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you’ [Hebrews 13: 17].
be accountable, and not to make excuses for their behavior. Instead they assume responsibility
to guide their followers through an exemplary Christian lifestyle. At the end of the day
spiritual leaders need to be more than aware that a careless lifestyle can diminish their
credibility just as a worldly lifestyle can discredit the Christian witness to others. 390

5.6 Personal Spirituality: The Inner Life and Character of the Spiritual Leader

In my view, true and effective spiritual leadership begins from the inside. If the outward life is
to be successful, there needs to be a strong inner life because what is on the outside is
completely dependent on what is on the inside. All outward success is the result of a strong
inner life because without the inner life, the outward life becomes superficial and eventually
dries out. In the same way, the inner man is also dependent on the outward life, for without
the outward life, the inner life will become self-centered, stagnant and unproductive. The
inner life and the outward life therefore are interdependent. 391 It is important to clarify at this
point that Jesus exemplified this in a unique way. He was an example not only in outward acts
and good deeds but inner purity, dependency and intimate relationship with the Father. Jesus
had a relationship of obedience, submission and trust and close fellowship with the Father and
for that reason He was full of assurance, experienced His Presence and peace and was willing
to not live for Himself but to do the Father’s will all through His life and ministry on earth.
Jesus was indeed great example in His inner life and relationship with the Father for the first
disciples He trained for ministry and leadership roles and so is He to every person who takes
the mantle of spiritual leadership in the community of believers in Christ.

The inner life involves seeking the Lord in all earnestness in a life of intimate fellowship
and ever growing deeper communion with Him through prayer and worship and meditation
on His word for personal edification. It means humbly seeking divine wisdom, knowledge
and guidance for personal life and ministry. It is a yearning desire to grow more and more
unto the likeness of Christ in full submission to His will so that the Christ-character will be
formed in His servant – the inner character that comes from daily self-discipline. Indeed
character is the utmost of importance for anyone in or desiring to be in church leadership.
Character is not just something we put into our lives, but it is what comes naturally out of our
lives in both our guarded and unguarded moments. In reality, ‘character is who we are to God

16, 2012).
391 Ekman, The Spiritual Leader, 99-100.
Himself and those around us. That is the responsibility of our choice, a determination we make ourselves, a stand in stress that we continue to uphold." I presume that every potential spiritual leader will come to understand that in church leadership we have a choice to act in evil or goodness; to act with our sinful motives or with what God calls us to, which is far better than we can see in the moment. In most instances, who we are will determine what we do, and the result will be character. On the other hand our growth in Him will make us who we are, which will be the character we present to God and others. Character comes from our faith-walk with the Lord in pursuit of godly living, when we consciously exercise our faith with trust and obedience in whatever situation we find ourselves; and it is not looking at the situation but rather God. The crux of the matter is God desires and deserves our whole-hearted loyalty, allegiance, trust, obedience, and devotion if we can be effective tools in His hands as spiritual leaders.

The good news however, is that character is fueled by the power of the Holy Spirit empowering us so that we can model the character of Christ. It is in view of this that spiritual leadership requires Spirit-filled people. To be filled with the Spirit in the words of Oswald Sanders means:

‘Simply that the Christian voluntarily surrenders life and will to the Spirit. Through faith, the believer’s personality is permeated, mastered, and controlled by the Spirit. When the spiritual leader gets filled by the Spirit, the leader’s mind, emotions, will, and physical strength all become available for the Spirit to guide and use. Under the Spirit’s control, natural gifts of leadership are lifted to their highest power, sanctified for holy purpose.’

Oswald Sanders quotes Montgomery as saying that

‘the degree of influence depends on the personality, the incandescence of which the leader is capable, the flame which burns within, the magnetism which will draw the hearts of others toward him.’

394 Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, 80.
Sanders points out however, that spiritual leadership transcend the power of personality and all other natural gifts. He explains that the personality of the spiritual leader influences others not by its own capability but because it is penetrated, saturated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Through the work of the now un-grieved and unhindered Spirit, all the fruits of the Spirit start to grow in the leader’s life. His witness is more winsome, service more steady, and testimony more powerful. Essentially, all real Christian service is but the expression of Spirit power through believers yielded to Him (John 7: 37-39). In my view other qualities of leadership are important but, theologically, to be spirit-filled is indispensable because a true spiritual leader influences others spiritually only because the Spirit presumably works in and through him to a greater degree than in those he leads. We are well informed by the book of Acts that the early Christian movement was significantly influenced by the first apostles and Christian leaders because these leaders were Spirit-filled. Jesus actually commanded the would-be leaders of the church to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. All the 120 disciples in the upper room were filled with the Holy Spirit [Acts 2: 1-4] and from there they walked closely with the Lord, maintained a deeper communion with Him and became effective instruments in His hands to fulfil their God-given mission for God. These early leaders of the church were sensitive to the leading of the Spirit, all because they had surrendered their own wills to the Spirit’s control. The important point here is that spiritual goals can be achieved only by spiritual people who use spiritual methods- the Spirit’s leading and empowering grace.

5.7 Spiritual Leadership in Context: Perspectives of the GMPCs

We have established from our discussions above that as much as ‘spiritual leadership’ shares with ‘General leadership’ the basic principles of ‘Leadership’ as being of influence - having the ability to obtain followers, ‘spiritual leadership’ itself entails a lot more. It behooves spiritual leaders to exemplify vitality in personal spirituality through an intimate relationship with Jesus and the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit so that they might bring about change in the lives of their followers and their communities. Essentially, ‘spiritual leadership’ for this

396 Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, 80.
397 ‘When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them’ [Acts 2: 1-4].
context is the type that draws the grace of spiritual giftedness of leadership through an intimate relationship with Jesus and the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit so that one might be enabled to maintain an exemplary personal Christian lifestyle that will impact on the membership to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community.

In this regard, the moral issues behind ‘Spiritual leadership’ obviously cannot be removed since spiritual leaders are public figures expected by the masses to lead exemplary lives and for that reason they are examined all the more closely. For one to be an effective spiritual leader we presume that one’s character will be as equally important as his accomplishments if not far more important than it. In Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for churches in the mission setting like the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands, the role of the Spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it stand the test of times cannot be over-emphasized. Moreover, in Ghanaian evangelical Christianity both in the homeland and outside the Spiritual leadership’s influence and authority stem primarily from their moral credibility and integrity. People would maintain their respect for their spiritual leaders and follow them so long as they consider them trustworthy. However, when they have good reasons to doubt their moral integrity or have any cause to suspect any act of moral misconduct on their part such spiritual leaders are disregarded and they eventually lose followers. It is noteworthy that in most instances suspected moral misconduct involving the Spiritual leadership of the church is not merely glossed over but it becomes the subject of fast-spreading rumors or the reason for mass drift of the membership to other churches. This is especially true of Ghanaian-initiated immigrants churches outside the homeland whose membership are considered to be more of the floating type rather than permanent.

Having made this observation the question that arises then is who actually constitute the spiritual leadership in the context of the GMPCs?

5.8 Spiritual Leadership in the GMPCs: Its Constitution and Prerequisite

The question we are raising here is who constitute the “spiritual leadership” in the context of the GMPCs? Does the kind of “spiritual leadership” referred to in this context consist exclusively of the clergy or ordained pastors (ministers) or does it include appointees from the laity? If it is inclusive then, are the essential requirements in terms of personal spirituality demanded of the “Spiritual leadership” also binding on the said appointees from the laity?

In the first place, Protestant mainline Churches like the Methodist Church holds the doctrine of priesthood of all believers, and consequently believes that no priesthood exits
which belongs exclusively to a particular order or class of persons. Hence one of the traditional distinctive features of the Methodist Church Ghana is ‘the importance of lay leadership in preaching, pastoral care, and the administration of the local congregation.’

‘The Church Constitution’ stipulates that:

‘Any literate Full Member who appears to have a call to preach and gifts as a preacher shall be encouraged to seek the office of a Local Preacher (lay). It is a part of the pastoral duty of Ministers, Catechists, Deacons and Leaders to look out for potential Local Preachers. The office may be held by men or women (of the laity).’

In a similar vein the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana stipulates among other things that:

‘In accordance with the model of the Apostolic Practice and the Reformed Tradition, the Congregation shall elect Presbyters (out of the laity) to represent it and to be joined with the Agents (Ministers or pastors) in the government and discipline of the Church. The elected Presbyters shall be experienced members in good standing within the Church. A Presbyter shall assist the Agent in the discharge of his/her duties…take active part in the conduct of Church Services…visit the homes of Church members with a view to strengthening them in their Christian life, especially the homes of new converts, visit the sick and read to them the word of God, and comfort them.’

H. Eddie Fox and George E. Morris of the World Methodist Evangelism Institute have pointed out that in the New Testament Church we find many important words which depict Christian responsibility such as the Greek words laos which means laity or people and kleros which ordinarily means clergy. The word laos refers not to a passive-recipient part of a congregation but to all Christians. Both the clergy and the laity are called to ministry, and are ordained by God for service. The only difference is that the clergy are those called by God

399 A CATECHISM for the use of the people called METHODISTS, Peterborough: Methodist Publishing House, 36.
400 The CONSTITUTION and STANDING ORDERS of The Methodist Church Ghana, 96.
401 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA CONSTITUTION, Accra: Presbyterian Press, 82-84.
402 Dr. H. Eddie Fox is the World Director of Evangelism for the World Methodist Council and the Executive Director of the World Methodist Evangelism Institute located at Emory University, Atlanta, USA. George E. Morris is the Dan and Lil Hankey Senior Professor of the World Methodist Evangelism Institute. Prior to his present ministry, he was the Arthur J. Moore Professor of Evangelism, Emory University.
out of the laity and invested by the Church with authority to perform certain distinct functions. However, Eddie Fox and George Morris explain that in the biblical tradition, ordained persons were never thought of as ontologically distinct from other members. As much as the ordained persons have special function or share in Christ’s ministry in terms of the exercise of their charges of word, sacrament, and order, other members of the laity were not primarily distinct in essence, nature or reality but in function. Eddie Fox and George Morris further explain that the one word that brings the two words laos and kleros together is the word ministry. In the New Testament the word ministry is used to denote the responsibility of the whole people of God and not just that of one select, fully ordained group. The ministry of Christ was given to the congregation as stated in Ephesians 4: 11-13.

However, the clergy are those called of God to serve the laity, that is teach them and train them for their life, their work, and especially for their witness and ministry. When the Church is gathered, the task of the ordained person relates to the function of word, sacrament and order. But when the Church scatters into the community and the world there is no difference in function, responsibility, or accountability for ministry.

With regard to the level of personal spirituality demanded of the clergy (ordained pastors) and the leadership appointees of the laity (deacons) there seems to be no marked difference between the two as implied in the following admonition of the Apostle Paul on Church leadership to the early Apostolic Churches in 1Timothy 3: 1-13.

403 “So Christ himself gave the Apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” [Ephesians 4: 11-13].


405 ‘Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap. In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.’ [1Timothy 3:1-13]. We cannot go into the debate on the meaning and place of diaconate and deacons in immigrant communities like f.e.
The implication of the foregoing is that the New Testament understanding of Church leadership or spiritual leadership is not exclusive to the clergy (ordained pastors). The pastoral oversight of the Christian Church as John Stott infers from the Acts of the Apostles is plural oversight which comprises both the clergy and the appointed lay leaders. They preached the Gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. ‘We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,’ they said. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust [Acts 14: 21-23]. According to John Stott, the New Testament idea of “pastoral team” which we term as spiritual leadership in this context comprises full-time and part-time pastors, salaried and voluntary, ordained and lay, young and old, men and women.

If our understanding of spiritual leadership in this context comprises both ordained (clergy) and lay leaders, then invariably the spiritual and moral qualities as well as leadership responsibility commitments required of those who take the mantle of leadership in the GMPCs apply to both the clergy and lay as can be inferred from Titus 1: 5-9.

Now that we have established who constitute the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs, we shall now devote our discussions in the next sections to the following threefold holistic approach to spiritual leadership which in my view will ensure ministry fruitfulness in such immigrant situations.

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406 John Stott, an ordained Priest of the Church of England (Anglican) served for many years as Rector of All souls Church in London where he carried out an effective urban pastoral ministry. An outstanding leader among evangelicals, he was known worldwide as a preacher, evangelist and communicator of scripture. He passed away in July 27, 2011.


408 'The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, and not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good and who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it’ [Titus 1: 5-9].
5.9 Personal Spirituality - A Threefold Holistic Approach.

John Stott posits a threefold holistic approach to spiritual leadership by expounding the Apostle Paul’s exhortation to Timothy near the end of his first letter [1 Timothy 6: 11-12]. Stott explains that in the foregoing exhortation, the Apostle Paul develops a threefold appeal to Timothy regarding his spiritual leadership namely, ethical, doctrinal and experiential. But before then, he addresses Timothy in the following words: ‘But you, man of God.’ By these words, the Apostle impresses upon him that what distinguishes spiritual leaders like him from others is the fact that they derive their values and their standards from God Himself. For that reason, as a spiritual leader he was called to be different from the prevailing culture around him. He was not to drift with the stream, or bend before the pressures of public opinion, like a reed shaken by the wind. Instead, he must stand firmly (as we must) like a rock in a mountain stream.

Stott points out that there are two valuable lessons to be learnt from Paul’s threefold appeal to Timothy. In the first place one needs to understand that in this appeal there are absolute goals of extreme relevance to our day and worthy of the spiritual leader’s unabashed commitment regardless of the unfriendly postmodern mood to all universal absolutes. In the second place, it is a balanced appeal that incorporates within itself ethics, doctrine and experience for balanced Christians and for that reason gives the spiritual leader no room to polarize.

In my view, this threefold leadership appeal as discussed below are deemed as intrinsic leadership qualities, which if meaningfully pursued by the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs are likely to ensure ministry relevance and ministry fruitfulness for the future survival of these churches.

5.9.1 Ethical Level

In the first place, as a matter of some urgency, the Apostle Paul appeals to Timothy to ensure an ethically-sound spiritual leadership. As Stott explains, the appeal ‘flee from all this’ [1 Tim

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409 ‘But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.’
410 Stott, The Living Church, 144-145.
411 Stott, The Living Church, 149-150.
6:11] which in this context refers to covetousness and all the evils associated with it certainly includes ‘the evil desires of the youth’ [2 Tim 2:22] such as immorality, selfish ambition, indiscipline and impetuosity. In the normal circumstances people tend to run after whatever attracts them; be it pleasure, success, fame wealth and power.

Paul on the other hand, seems to be saying, how about running after goodness in its many and varied forms such as righteousness and godliness, faith and love, endurance and gentleness? In the words of Stott,

‘there is no passivity in the attainment of holiness. We do not just sit there and do nothing, letting God do it all.’\textsuperscript{412} Stott further points out that

‘the evangelical faith reaches beyond belief to behavior; it brings with it a multifaceted challenge to live accordingly.’\textsuperscript{413}

It is for this reason that the Apostle Paul appeals to the Christian community in Philippi to live appropriately in conformity with the ‘faith of the Gospel’.

‘Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ…’ [Phil.1: 27-30].

As Paul approaches death and feels torn between life and death, his principal concern is not what will happen to him but what will happen to the Gospel. In other words, it is not for himself and his personal survival but for the survival and spread of the Gospel. Stott has observed that it is in the light of this concern that the Apostle Paul issues to the Philippians and for that reason to the Christian Church of our time and its leadership a stirring five-fold summons which revolves around evangelical integrity, stability, unity, truth and endurance. However, this can only happen if first and foremost the spiritual leadership is resolved and committed to do all that it takes to ensure stability and unity of the church community. This leads us to the following discussions:

\textit{Evangelical integrity}

In the first place, there is a call for evangelical integrity because the concept of living a life that is ‘worthy’ expresses not merit but for the correspondence. For this reason the conduct of the Church and its spiritual leaders is to be in keeping with their calling. It is therefore incumbent upon the Church leadership and the members as a whole to ensure that there is no

\textsuperscript{412} Stott, \textit{The Living Church}, 145-146.
dichotomy between what they profess and what they practice, but rather a fundamental consistency. If the Church and its leadership can influence the world for Christ, then they should not be found wanting in terms of Christian integrity. If the communities will continually seek the advice of the Church and its leadership, invite to the discussion table when family issues, morality, economics or other social issues of concern arise; it would require that the talk and walk of the Church and its leadership be in sync.

Oswald Sanders is understood to be making a similar observation when he refers to the Apostle Paul as an exemplary leader of great personal integrity and sincerity who spoke of his failures and successes with such openness that few leaders are prepared to copy [2 Corinthians 2:17; 5:11]. He explains that these two qualities – integrity and sincerity of leadership were part of God’s law for the Israelites and that God wants His people to show a transparent character, open and innocent of guile [Deuteronomy 18:13]. Since spiritual leaders are public figures and that they are examined all the time closely it behooves them to ‘be sincere in promise, faithful in discharge of duty, upright in finances, loyal in service, and honest in speech.’

Stott corroborates the foregoing observation by Oswald Sanders by pointing out that inconsistent Christian conduct on the part of spiritual leaders gives people cause to ‘malign the word of God’ and so hinders evangelism. On the other hand, ‘consistent Christian conduct will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive and so will promote evangelism’ [Ti 2: 5; 10].

In other words, bad behavior discredits the Gospel, while good behavior adorns and so commends it.

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414 Stott, Evangelical Truth, 113.
415 ‘Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God’ [2 Corinthians 2: 17]. ‘Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience’ [2 Corinthians 5:11].
416 ‘You must be blameless before the LORD your God’ [Deuteronomy 18:13].
417 Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, 63-64.
418 ‘To be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God’ [Ti 2: 5]. ‘And not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive’ [Ti 2: 10].
419 Stott, Evangelical Truth, 113.
Power, accountability and morals

As we have earlier established in the main introduction of this study, with the formation of the GMPCs, a good number of immigrant Ghanaian Christians lent their support. Of particular interest were those already absorbed into the Ghanaian-Initiated PCCs and who had either traditional mainline Christianity background or Pentecostal/Charismatic background. It is noteworthy that one unique motivational factor that drew a good number of the said Ghanaian Christians into the GMPCs in preference to the PCCs is the perceived leadership stability and accountability enjoyed by the GMPCs. As time went by many Ghanaian immigrant Christians were believed to have been dissatisfied with the leadership style of some of the Ghanaian-Initiated PCCs particularly the fully-independent ones termed as ‘one-man churches’. These are churches founded in Europe and are not responsible to any higher Church body in Ghana or elsewhere. The major complaints leveled against some of these churches stem from want of desired moral uprightness in their type of church leadership in terms of mishandle of power, lack of desired financial accountability and in some instances loose morals as discussed below. All such alleged short-comings on the part of the spiritual leadership in most instances contribute to serious church conflicts and eventual church splits in some instances.

i) Handling of power in church leadership

The structure and organisation of most of the fully-independent PCCs differ from that of the traditional mainline churches or even the PCCs which belong to a well-recognized Church body in the home country. In the case of the said fully-independent churches, in most instances it is the charismatic leader who provides the basis of church structure and organization according to his taste ‘due to the importance attached to personal vocation.’ 420 It is worthy of note that the leadership of most of these fully-independent churches are not responsible to any Church body of higher authority. Moreover, they have not established any system of checks that holds the spiritual leadership accountable for their actions. In the light of the foregoing, the problem actually begins when the leader’s fleshly nature starts taking over. At that instance if such tendencies are not checked, they flourish and eventually lead to leadership crisis, church conflicts and to church splits, all of which do not augur well for the growth and future survival of these churches.

In the light of the foregoing, I presume the leadership - both clergy and lay of the GMPCs stand a chance to do better comparatively, in view of their constitutionally laid down church structure. In the first place, contrary to the leadership structure pertaining in the PCCs, most of the GMPCs own a direct connection to their mother-Churches in Ghana to which the pastoral leadership are responsible. The few others like the Methodist Churches in Germany are directly responsible to their corresponding indigenous European Church bodies to which their mother-Church in Ghana has coordinated their relationship.

In the second place, all the GMPCs have adopted the Church constitution of their mother-Churches in Ghana for administrative guidance, organizational work, and for putting in place the necessary structures needed for developing their churches. In view of their unique church structure which provides the necessary guidance for their work, it is presumed that the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs- both clergy and lay should be well informed and well guided to meet their kind of leadership challenges.

What the leadership must understand is that whatever power, authority and influence which have been bestowed upon them should be subject to the Lord’s guidance so that it will all result in tremendous blessing for God’s people. In view of this, they must eschew any form of domineering tendencies and power struggle which in some instances surface within the Ghanaian-Initiated churches. Those within the leadership - clergy or lay who ambitiously position themselves for personal gain or to serve their own personal interests should understand that they do not serve a divine interest and for that reason they run the risk of losing divine favour. In view of this, all those in leadership positions must be wary of mishandling power so as to avoid unnecessary tensions and conflicts which impede church growth.

The Church body to which the said leadership is responsible must prayerfully accompany them while they seek divine wisdom to address and resolve amicably any tensions and conflicts that might surface. In a nutshell, the pastoral leadership of the GMPCs must endeavor to maintain a sense of divine call to a spiritual leadership that wants to serve and protect the flock and promote their spiritual well-being. Since power corrupts if it is mishandled, but when properly handled ensures development, protection and promotion of social and spiritual life, I am of the view that the GMPCs stand a chance for their future survival if their spiritual leaders will learn to handle power appropriately as suggested above.
ii) Conflicts

An almost constant feature of GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands is the rise of conflicts between various segments of the congregations at certain stages of their development. Such conflicts have occurred in the Hamburg Eben-Ezer Methodist Society as well as the PCG Congregation in Amsterdam. The causes and nature of these conflicts have not been the same. In the case of PCG congregation in Amsterdam, the church was split between two interests: members who wanted their congregation to remain, administratively, under the Dutch Reformed Church and those who wanted to wear the identity tag as members of the PCG as well as worship in the mother-tongue and incorporate African cultural elements of spirituality.

In the case of the Eben-Ezer Society in 1997, for example, the conflict occurred for three reasons, as far as I can see. First, the lay-leaders did not share in the same vision for the Church. Some of the leaders did not seem to understand the vision behind new developments that had taken place since the new minister begun to build the capacity of many more members who were contributing to the mission and growth of the church in significant ways. They were divided over this. Secondly, there were some leaders who, apparently, were not happy that members they considered ‘new’ were gaining more visibility than some of the older members; then, third because there was no harmony among the leaders, some became suspicious as they felt threatened, fearing that they might lose the influence they wield in the church. One steward, who fell into the last category, started calling meetings unofficially, with the aim of fomenting trouble. But when his attempts to win support from the congregation failed, he left the church unceremoniously. Later, efforts by the Hamburg District superintendent minister of the United Methodist Church, Karsten Mohr to get him reconciled to the congregation also failed. Eventually, he and a small group of sympathizers established a fellowship. The question that has remained unanswered about this incident as one continues to reflect on it, is whether, in those circumstances, there was a better way in which the issue could have been handled?

iii) Financial accountability in church leadership

In addition to what we have demonstrated above, the issue of church finances is another area that the church leadership needs careful handling or proper accountability to ensure the future survival of the GMPCs. Church finances have always been a very sensitive area in the life and ministry of the Ghanaian-Initiated churches outside the homeland. Neglect of proper financial
accountability by the leadership could easily trigger off church tensions and conflicts and if such an issue is not properly addressed or contained could lead to break-aways.

In my view, all the people of God including the leadership are mere stewards of God’s property entrusted to them. They do not own but only administer and for that reason everyone will have to account for what has been entrusted to him. It is in view of this that spiritual leaders must not become greedy or corrupt. They must be wary of the serious ditch of greed and an extravagant lifestyle that constantly consumes luxuries. This is a real danger, and to fall into it is a great tragedy for the church leadership and its Christian witness to the community.

It is noteworthy that for the GMPCs under review in this study, financial regulations in the church are well stipulated in the Constitution of their churches. Funds that are raised in the church including offerings taken at Sunday worship services are immediately deposited in the church Bank account and announced to the congregation on the subsequent Sunday. Moreover, either quarterly or twice a year an audited financial statement is read at a congregational meeting to update the membership on the financial state of the church. I am of the view that if the leadership of the GMPCs - both clergy and lay will work within the confines of their churches’ Constitution, adhering strictly to the constitutional provisions on finance, one major hurdle to ensuring ethical stability in the church will be cleared.

iii) Spiritual leaders and moral uprightness

John Stott has observed that our Evangelical forbears went in hot pursuit of what they called “Scriptural” or “practical” holiness. They took with great seriousness the frequently repeated command of God to His covenant people “be ye holy, because I am holy’’.

Aboagye- Mensah a former Presiding Bishop of the MCG lends credence to the foregoing by affirming that John Wesley even till his death mentioned that what gave rise to Methodism was the concern for holy living and that Methodism was raised by God to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land.’ 421 The Constitution and Standing Orders of the MCG corroborates the above facts as follows:

‘The Methodist Church Ghana claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church which is the Body of Christ. It rejoices in the inheritance of the Apostolic Faith and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic creeds and of the Protestant Reformation. It ever remembers that in the Providence of God, Methodism

421 Aboagye Mensah, John Wesley and the Methodists, 57.
was raised up to spread Scriptural Holiness through the land by the proclamation of the Evangelical Faith and declares its un faltering resolve to be true to its divinely appointed mission.’ 422

In the light of the foregoing, Stott wonders

‘why some evangelical people - both clergy and lay seem to acquiesce in moral standards, that are indistinguishable from those of the world. Similarly others have allowed the quest for holiness to be displaced by the search for social justice or religious experience’.

He explains that even though these things are important, yet

‘not at the expense of the hunger and thirst for righteousness’.423

Stott observes that besides doctrine,

‘stability in ethics is in short supply today within the church among God’s people – both clergy and lay.’ 424

As we have observed earlier in this chapter, in Ghanaian evangelical Christianity particularly for churches in the mission setting like the GMPCs, the role of the pastoral leadership is of utmost importance. The spiritual leader’s influence and spiritual authority stem primarily from the moral credibility and integrity. People would maintain their respect for their spiritual leaders and follow them so long as they consider them trustworthy. However, when they have good reasons to doubt their moral integrity or there is general presumption of misconduct in morals, the spiritual leaders are disregarded and they eventually lose followers. It is noteworthy that in most instances suspected moral misconduct involving the spiritual leadership of the church is not merely glossed over but rumored extensively within and without. In such circumstances if the issue is not seriously addressed by the church leadership, it eventually leads to church splits or mass drift of the membership to other churches. This is especially true of Ghanaian-initiated churches outside the homeland whose membership are considered to be more of the floating type than permanent. It is in the light of the aforementioned observations that a call for moral integrity and ethical stability on the part of the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs cannot be trivialized. As John Malison has pointed out,

423 Stott, Evangelical Truth, 114.
424 Stott, Evangelical Truth, 114.
‘for one to wear the mantle of leadership humbly, and to lose oneself in service to others, one’s character will be far more important than one’s accomplishments’.

He explains that the New Testament model of effective leadership
‘is of a person who lives the truth - others believe and follow.’

The key issue here therefore, according to Malison is
‘credibility and integrity; the “Good News” must always be incarnate. The lives of Christian leaders are the Gospel of their followers.’

I presume that if the GMPCs which are under review in this study seriously want to ensure their future survival and ministry relevance to their own people, then they must not lose sight of the fact that much depends on the moral conduct of their spiritual leadership. If their pastoral leaders are found to be credible and not found wanting in moral integrity then they will have the moral courage to enforce church discipline and to motivate the membership to seek revival in spirituality so as to ensure moral sanctity in their Christian communities. As we have demonstrated in this study, the fact remains that holy living is a hallmark of the believer’s Christian witness. In other words, the authenticity of the spiritual and moral character of the Christian community particularly its spiritual leadership is very vital in relation to mission. In this regard, we strongly recommend that the GMPCs must do everything within their capabilities to ensure ethical stability and moral integrity in the lives of their spiritual leadership because they stand to gain much from their efforts in this direction.

5.9.2 Doctrinal Level

In terms of doctrine, Stott explains that the spiritual leader is exhorted to turn away from error and defend, proclaim and teach the revealed truth known as the Apostolic Faith, doctrine or tradition bequeathed to us and safeguarded by the Church in every generation. The Apostolic doctrines are what Jesus directly commanded or otherwise were revealed through the Holy Spirit by the risen Lord and are as well rooted in scriptures. They are focused on who Jesus was and what he had done.

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426 Stott, The Living Church, 146.
Atiemo has observed that the erosion of fundamental traditional biblical certainties as aforementioned has led to the situation where many people have set-off on an adventurous search for a new ‘centre’.\(^{427}\) He explains that this does not only manifest itself in the form of people leaving the church to seek new spiritual experiences elsewhere, but it also manifests in strange beliefs and practices seeping into the Church.\(^{428}\) In this regard I share the view of Atiemo, that for the Church and its leaders to be able to exert any influence, they must be genuinely convinced

‘that the Faith of the fathers still holds any hope of salvation for the world.’\(^{429}\)

In view of the foregoing, I am of the opinion that it is incumbent upon the Church and its spiritual leaders to uphold the fundamental beliefs in Christ as a present ‘Personal Reality’ as the New Testament presents him. Anything contrary to this may not ensure their ministry relevance to their people and achieve the desired spiritual benefits. What we are pointing out here is that spiritual leaders must not be seen as substituting human religious philosophy in the name of modernity for the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ which through the ages has transformed many and given hope and power to millions. An uncritical acceptance and application of the wisdom and ways of the world betrays the very essence of the Christ factor, and

‘exposes the Church as an institution out of touch with itself and the aspirations of its people.’\(^{430}\)

When that happens, its members in their quest for alternative religious experiences may eventually resort to bizarre alternatives. The foregoing view is not suggesting that the church must seclude itself from the world, for after all the church, though alien in the world is in constant interaction with the world. In reality, as Atiemo points out, if the Church does not affect the world, the world will affect the Church. For this reason, since there are signs that God Himself is moving, the Church must move forward with Him to influence the world for Christ so as not to be left behind by a world that is moving with incredible speed.\(^{431}\)

What then should be the best approach if the Church and its leaders would hope to exert any influence on this postmodern world? Atiemo suggests that it must heed John Stott’s

\(^{427}\) Atiemo, *Aliens at the Gate of Sodom*, 20.

\(^{428}\) Atiemo, *Aliens at the Gate of Sodom*, 20.

\(^{429}\) Atiemo, *Aliens at the Gate of Sodom*, 26.

\(^{430}\) Atiemo, *Aliens at the Gate of Sodom*, 21.

\(^{431}\) Atiemo, *Aliens at the Gate of Sodom*, 21.
advice to ‘double listen.’

It must listen to the Lord, and also what the modern world is saying so as to be in a better position to apply the appropriate prescription from God to the problems of our age. In doing so, the Church must however listen to God more intensely and reverently than it listens to the world. In other words, while the Church listens to God, resolved and determined to understand and obey Him, it listens to the world critically but sympathetically in order to minister the grace of God to it.

As we have already demonstrated above, for a good number of Ghanaian Christians who joined the GMPCs, their motivation to come back to their denominational roots stemmed from their understanding that their deep religious quest for authentic spirituality will be satisfied. In reality, most of these mainline Christians assign inspirational, edifying and sound evangelical preaching and teaching as one of their main reasons for their choosing to join these churches, rather than a mere craving for denominational identity. It is noteworthy that within the recently established GMPCs in Europe there is a new crop of Ghanaian Christians who do not feel comfortable with what they see as ‘adulterated Christianity’. In other words, they reject Christian lifestyles which they perceive as compromising the evangelical faith and practice.

Therefore, for Ghanaian mainline Christians the spiritual leader must not only be a shepherd providing care and healing for the community but must also be seen as a prophet convinced of God’s Word and providing spiritual direction and guidance. They often desire to hear God speak to them directly through their spiritual leader in his preaching and the exposition of the inspired Word of God from the Scriptures. If their spiritual leader is perceived to handle the Word of God as if he does not believe in what he preaches and teaches, he will not be taken seriously. They will want spirit-filled spiritual leadership that manifests the grace to teach and preach the word with power and conviction of the truthfulness and authority of the Bible as the only written Word of God without error in all it affirms. They want to see that the doctrines of the ‘Evangelical Faith’ based upon the divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures which Protestant mainline Christians have held from the beginning still holds and are taught meaningfully. As Atiemo points out, if the spiritual leadership refuses to talk about the Holy Spirit or rather talk about Him as if He has been withdrawn from His position of active ministry amongst God’s people, then the spiritual

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432 Atiemo, Aliens at the Gate of Sodom, 26.
leadership is not likely to make any meaningful impact on this new crop of Ghanaian mainline Christians.\textsuperscript{434}

To put it in a nutshell, the spiritual leadership which is believed to ensure ministry relevance and the future survival of these GMPCs must be the kind which continually exemplifies and lays emphasis on spiritual vitality through evangelical preaching and teaching. The pastoral leadership must be teaching and encouraging members to appreciate the Person and ministry of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They must be seen to be teaching about the new birth that results in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the empowering grace of the Spirit that ensures a transforming Christian witnessing lifestyle.

5.9.3 Experiential Level

John Stott explains that the Apostle Paul’s exhortation to Timothy to
\[ \text{‘...take hold of the eternal life to which you were called...’ [Tm 6: 12],} \]
which is here considered as an experiential appeal depicts an enthusiastic personal relationship with God and knowledge of Him as a Father. This is implied in Jesus’ statement
\[ \text{‘now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent [John 17:3].} \]

John Stott posits that
\[ \text{‘it is in this personal relationship with God that eternal life is to be found.’} \textsuperscript{435} \]

In his book \textit{Basic Christianity}, Stott outlines the basic privileges of a Christian believer. He points out that the
\[ \text{‘unique privilege of the person who has been born anew into the family of God is that he is related to God.’} \textsuperscript{436} \]

Through personal faith in Christ, who bore our sins and our condemnation, we are ‘justified’, that is brought into acceptance with God the Father and pronounced righteous upon receiving Jesus Christ into our lives. By union with Christ, we are permitted to share something of Jesus’ own intimate relation to the Father.

Stott quotes Cyprian (Bishop of Carthage in the middle of the third century) as follows, in his expression of the privileges of the Christian believer as mandated by the Lord:

\textsuperscript{434} Atiemo, \textit{Aliens at the Gate of Sodom}, 20.
\textsuperscript{435} Stott, \textit{The living Church}, 147.
‘How great is the Lord’s indulgence! How great are his condescension and plenteousness of goodness towards us, seeing that he has wished us to pray in the sight of God in such a way as to call God Father, and to call ourselves sons of God, even as Christ is the Son of God – a name which none of us would dare to venture on in prayer, unless he himself had allowed us thus to pray.’

Stott explains further that the Christian believer’s relationship to God as a child to His Father is not only intimate, but also sure and secure. Even though so many people seem to do no more than hope for the best, it is possible to know for certain. Stott has observed that

‘now in the twenty-first century, people are floundering in the swamps of relativism and uncertainty’

to the extent that both the Church and its preachers conceive their task as sharing their doubts instead of their faith. Stott posits that the parading of personal doubt actually belongs to the very essence of postmodernism. However, as Stott puts it, for the person who has truly been born into the family of God the certainty of his personal relationship with God is his unique Christian privilege. This relationship is first of all, considered to be an intimate relationship in the sense that the Christian believer through his union with Jesus Christ by faith is “justified,” that is brought into acceptance with God and pronounced righteous. Second, the Christian believer’s relationship to God is not only intimate but sure. It is possible to know for certain, irrespective of the fact that so many people seem to do no more than hope for the best. The Christian believer’s assured relationship with God is in the first place, God’s revealed will for the believer in His promised word in Scripture [1John 5: 11-13]. In addition to this the Christian believer has the inner witness of the Spirit in experience who registers a deepening conviction in the heart bringing the assurance of God’s love for the believer which prompts him to cry “Father” as he seeks God’s face in prayer [Romans 8: 14-16]. Furthermore, the same Spirit who bears witness to the believer’s sonship in Scripture

437 Stott, Basic Christianity, 166.  
438 Stott, Basic Christianity, 166-171.  
439 Stott, The Living Church, 101.  
440 ‘And this is the testimony that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever, does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life’ [1John 5: 11-13].  
441 ‘For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your
and experience within completes his testimony in the character of the believer. The indwelling Presence of the Spirit begins to work a change from within which manifests in the believer's manner of life or lifestyle [2Corinthians 5: 17]. Finally, the believer's intimate and assured relationship with God is a secure relationship in the sense that it is a permanent relationship. God’s children are eternally safe, never to be separated from His love and never to cease to be His children.

In the light of the foregoing, in my view, it is not presumptuous for the spiritual leader to make any claims about personal faith and an experiential knowledge of God. Even though he will not know enough about God, he will surely know enough to show the way with confidence and assurance. It is really vital that a spiritual leader knows what he is talking about, because his ability to motivate lies in his credibility. This is exactly what is implied in 1 John 1: 1-2.

In a similar vein, J.I. Packer an evangelical theologian in the Anglican and Reformed traditions, among other things, explains that knowing God is a matter of personal involvement in mind, will, and feeling; otherwise it would not be a fully personal relationship. As it pertains in human relationships, to get to know another person, one has to commit himself to the other person’s company and interests, and be ready to identify oneself with his concerns. Without this, one’s relationship with the friend can only be superficial and flavourless. As they open their hearts to each other by what they say and do, each tastes the quality of the other, for sorrow or for joy. Since they have identified themselves with, and so are personally and emotionally involved in each other’s concerns, they feel for each other, as well as thinking of each other. Packer expresses the view that this is an essential aspect of the knowledge which friends have of each other; the same of which applies to the Christian’s knowledge of God:

adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children’ [Romans 8: 14-16].

442 ‘Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!’ [2Corinthians 5: 17].

443 Stott, Basic Christianity, 165-171. Compare: ‘For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord’ [Romans 8: 38-39].

444 ‘That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched - this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us’ [1Joh. 1: 1-2].

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‘Knowing God is an emotional relationship as well as intellectual and volitional one, and could not indeed be a deep relation between persons were it not so.’

In the view of Packer, the believer is, and must be, emotionally involved in the victories and vicissitudes of God’s cause in the world. He explains:

‘For that reason, the believer rejoices when his God is honored and vindicated, and feels the acutest distress when he sees God flouted. Equally, the Christian feels shame and grief when convicted of having failed his Lord; and from time to time knows transports of delight as God brings home to him in one way or another the glory of the everlasting love with which he has been loved.’

Chester L. Wenger who served as a missionary in Ethiopia for several years has observed that congregational growth depends much on the attitudes of both the spiritual leader and the members. If the pastoral leadership and the members are enthusiastic about their faith and their church such feelings will surely spill over in expressed attitudes of appreciation for what is taking place. This corroborates John Wesley’s statement that

‘no man is successful without a strong touch of enthusiasm.’

It is noteworthy that the main issue at stake in this chapter has to do with the kind of pastoral leadership which presumably would ensure the future survival and ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their own people in their host societies. As we demonstrated in chapter 4,

‘Africans speak their faith/religion, they sing it, drum it, dance it, dramatize it, and manifest its power in every concrete way.’

Even though not all Africans are extroverts as some non-Africans would want to generalize; however when it comes to the issue of faith/religion they do not normally feel inclined to suppress the natural expression of faith which is kindled within. In mainline Christianity in the Ghanaian homeland the expressive Christian witness expected of most of the membership appeared significantly suppressed for several years. This was due to strict conformity to what is often described as stereotyped traditional liturgical forms of worship inherited from the Western Christian tradition, coupled with prolonged waning of spiritual vitality over the years.

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448 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 212.
in the “Mission-established” churches. Obviously the decline of spiritual vitality and the lack of enthusiastic Christian witness adversely affected the spiritual, numerical and functional growth of the church. It was only when the said mainline Churches eventually awakened to the apparent waning of spiritual vitality within and made attempts to promote spiritual renewal in order to meet the challenges they were facing that the situation is believed to have improved considerably.

As we demonstrated in chapter 3 of this study, it is noteworthy that the influence of the Charismatic Movements which emerged within the traditional mainline churches like the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Methodist Church Ghana enabled them to revisit their historic spiritual fervor. The Methodists for instance have eventually been enabled through the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit to reopen old wells of the early “Wesleyan Revivals” characterized by enthusiastic faith sharing and passionate soul-winning. The significant point here is that any marked growth experienced by the homeland Ghanaian mainline churches is attributed to their openness to embrace spiritual renewal which eventually ensures spiritual vitality within the Church, a vitality which is characterized by passionate evangelical faith-sharing.

The implication of the above observations for the GMPCs under review in this study is that the future survival and ministry relevance of these Churches to their people depend much on the evangelical influence of their spiritual leadership in consonance with the spirit of their Church constitution. If the spiritual leaders are warm and enthusiastic about their faith such feelings will surely spill over and impact on the members through the leadership’s influence because as John Maxwell puts it, ‘Leadership is influence.’

The members whose lives are thus impacted will equally be enthusiastic about their faith, their congregation and their spiritual leadership. Obviously, such an expressive winsome, positive attitude will surely promote congregational growth. Both old and new people are likely to return time and time again to a service of which the congregation demonstrates a radiant joy of a happy smiling family and who are continually passing around a lot of encouragement.

5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, efforts have been made to discuss literatures related to general leadership, and come to the conclusion that there is no one right style of leadership for all situations but just different styles that work for different types of people depending on the environment they are in. The implications of the foregoing are that leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the unique challenges facing the organization.

We noted that the environment for the practice of leadership in our present study is the church setting namely, the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Germany and the Netherlands, and for that matter our discussion is placed in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the theological presupposition that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and His people. For this reason, it is in my view basically required of leaders who take the mantle of leadership in the Christian church to lead in consonance with the dictates of the bible or in accordance with biblical principles. The Christian leader serves primarily within the community of believers in Christ, aiming at fulfilling his calling or God-given task by collectively planning and achieving together with his followers their common God-given goals which are not merely physical but spiritual. It actually involves the earnest seeking of the will of God and His leading both for his personal spiritual life and for the ministry and then marshalling his followers to pursue God’s plan. It is in view of the aforementioned context as related to leadership in the church setting that this study identified spiritual leadership as the most feasible and relevant leadership model for addressing leadership issues in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in European societies.

Efforts have been made in this chapter to discuss the theological meaning of spiritual leadership as a leadership model and what is entailed in personal spirituality of spiritual leaders, investigating how all this impact on their membership to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. We have demonstrated that while spiritual leadership involves many of the same principles as general leadership, it has certain distinctive qualities that must be understood and practiced if spiritual leaders are to be successful in inspiring and mobilizing their followers so that together, they can achieve their God-given goals.

In the first place, we noted that since spiritual leadership relates largely with God and His people, it also implies theologically that it is a divine calling and not a mere profession or occupation in the secular sense of the word. For that matter, the spiritual leader maintains a
strong awareness of his calling and stays connected to God. Staying connected to God also entails an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, and a willingness to exemplify because spiritual leadership is not just pointing out great truths and exhorting others to live by them. Once spiritual leaders understand God’s will, they make every effort to move their followers from following their own agendas to pursuing God’s purposes which entails adjusting their lives to God’s will. This underscores the central place of personal spirituality in a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people in a community of believers in Christ. The implication of all this is that spiritual leadership requires superior spiritual power, which can never be generated by the self, because there is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader.

In reality, spiritual leaders cannot produce spiritual change in people; only the Holy Spirit does. Yet the Spirit often uses people to influence others in order to draw them to God for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service. Spiritual leadership actually, transcends the power of personality and other natural gifts. The personality of the spiritual leader influences others because it is penetrated, saturated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. As the spiritual leader depends on the Holy Spirit and gives control of his life to the Spirit, the Spirit’s power flows through him to others, all because spiritual goals can be achieved only by spiritual people who use spiritual methods.

The chapter points to another distinctive feature of spiritual leadership which is their acute sense of accountability and responsibility. Christian leaders are accountable to God for the souls of their followers and for that matter, if they engage in a conduct that is unbecoming of a leader; they cannot blame their followers when they do the same. Spiritual leaders are therefore called to be accountable, and not to make excuses for their behavior. Instead they assume responsibility to guide their followers through an exemplary Christian lifestyle which actually begins from the inside. This calls for a strong inner life if the outward life of the spiritual leader is to be successful because what is on the outside is completely dependent on what is on the inside. The inner life which is the essential precondition of personal spirituality involves seeking the Lord in all earnestness in a life of intimate fellowship and ever growing deeper communion with Him through prayer and worship and meditation on His word for personal edification. It means humbly seeking divine wisdom, knowledge and guidance for personal life and ministry. It is a yearning desire to grow more and more unto the likeness of Christ in full submission to His will so that the Christ-character will be formed in His servant and more especially His servant leader.
Spiritual leadership for this context is the type that draws the grace of spiritual giftedness of leadership through an intimate relationship with Jesus and the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit so that one might be enabled to maintain an exemplary personal Christian lifestyle that will impact on the membership to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. Our perspective on spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations is that their ministry fruitfulness is likely to be in proportion to their personal spiritual vitality. In view of this we examined the kind of spiritual and moral qualities required of the spiritual leadership in such immigrant situations, which are likely to ensure ministry fruitfulness and for that reason ensure the future survival of the GMPCs. In doing this we looked at the following as typical personal leadership qualities needed to ensure ministry fruitfulness in such immigrant situations:

1. **The spiritual leader** must be “ethically-sound”: Our view in this regard is that if the GMPCs which are under review in this study seriously want to ensure their future survival and ministry relevance to their own people, then they must not lose sight of the fact that much depends on the spiritual and moral conduct of their spiritual leadership. The basic assumption here is that for one to be an effective spiritual leader, one’s character will be as equally important as his accomplishments. In reality, spiritual leaders are public figures expected by the masses to lead exemplary lives and for that reason they are examined all the more closely. In view of this, the moral issues behind spiritual leadership obviously cannot be removed. The bottom line of the whole matter is that in Ghanaian evangelical Christianity in the homeland and particularly in immigrant situations like that of the GMPCs the spiritual leadership’s influence and authority stem primarily from their moral credibility and integrity. If the spiritual leaders are found to be credible and not found wanting in moral integrity then their members would maintain their respect for them and follow them so long as they consider them trustworthy. These spiritual leaders then will have the moral courage to enforce church discipline and to motivate the membership to seek continuous revival in spirituality so as to ensure moral sanctity in their Christian communities. Essentially, spiritual leaders are agents of change. The Spirit of God uses them to influence others in order to draw them to God for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service. As we have demonstrated in this chapter, the fact remains that holy living is a hallmark of the believer’s
Christian witness. In other words, the authenticity of the spiritual and moral character of the Christian community particularly of its spiritual leadership is very vital in relation to effective mission. In this regard, we strongly recommend that the GMPCs should do everything within their capabilities to ensure ethical stability and moral integrity in the lives of their spiritual leaders because they stand to gain much from their efforts in this direction in ensuring a truly vibrant Christian community.

2. The Spiritual Leader must be “doctrinally-grounded”: We observed that within the GMPCs established in the European societies there is a new crop of Ghanaian immigrant Christians who do not feel comfortable with any form of adulterated Christianity. In other words, any Christian lifestyle which compromises the core values of the Christian faith and practice are not considered compatible with their fundamental evangelical beliefs in Christ as presented by the New Testament. For these evangelical Ghanaian mainline Christians, their spiritual leader must not only be a shepherd providing care and healing for the community but must also be seen as a prophet convinced of God’s Word and providing spiritual direction and guidance. They often desire to hear God speak to them directly through their spiritual leader in his preaching and the exposition of the inspired Word of God from the Scriptures. If their spiritual leader is perceived to handle the Word of God as if he does not believe in what he preaches and teaches, he will not be taken seriously. They will want spirit-filled spiritual leadership that manifests the grace to teach and preach the word with power and conviction of the truthfulness and authority of the Bible as the only written Word of God without error in all it affirms. In view of the foregoing, the spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in these immigrant GMPCs must be the kind which continually exemplifies and lays emphasis on spiritual vitality through evangelical preaching and teaching.

3. “The need for an experiential encounter with the Divine”: We assert from the theological point of view that the experiential encounter with God is a prerequisite for effective spiritual leadership. Our assumption for the GMPCs under review in this study is that their ministry relevance to their people depends much on the evangelical influence of their spiritual leadership which is in consonance with the spirit of their church Constitution and doctrinal beliefs. We are of the view that congregational growth depends much on the attitudes of both the spiritual leadership and the members which is in consequence of their experiential encounter with God. If the spiritual leaders are warm and enthusiastic about their faith such feelings will surely spill over and impact on the members through the leadership’s
influence since we observed in this chapter that “leadership is influence.” The members whose lives are thus impacted will equally be enthusiastic about their faith, their congregation and their spiritual leadership. We are inclined to believe that such an expressive winsome, positive attitude resulting from an experiential encounter with God will surely promote congregational growth. Both old and new people are likely to return time and time again to a service of which the congregation demonstrates a radiant joy of a happy smiling family and who are continually passing around a lot of encouragement.
CHAPTER V1

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY COMMITMENTS

6. 1 Introduction

As we have already demonstrated in chapter 3 of this study, prior to the formation of the GMPCs, most of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians who had come to live in Germany and the Netherlands did not feel attracted to the indigenous EMPCs. This situation is attributed to the following major factors:

1. In the first place they were looking for the kind of Christianity that would address needs tied to their traditional African worldviews while demonstrating the graces that would satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. What we mean by this is that in view of the inherent religious sensibilities of Ghanaian/Africans in general the kind of Christianity that would make the desired impression on them is the kind that takes a serious view of their existential needs in the context of spirituality. What we mean by existential needs in the context of Ghanaian Christianity are the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and then physical security which is understood to be economic and social well-being.

2. Secondly, since they have a strong passion for a contextualized style of formal community worship they were always looking for a style of worship perceived to be more suited to their needs as African Christians.

3. Finally, these immigrant Ghanaian Christians were looking for a spiritual home where they could enjoy a sense of belonging and acceptance and where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. All these they could not find in the traditional mainstream Protestant Churches in their host European societies.

In view of the unique needs of the immigrant Ghanaian Christians as mentioned above it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided for the GMPCs must be seen to have taken a new dimension which ensures the desired ministry relevance of these churches to the said
Ghanaian Christians. It is noteworthy that this present study which underscores the important role played by the spiritual leadership provided for the GMPCs in their immigrant situations lends credence to the following observation made by Lings and Murray in 2003 as cited earlier in the introduction to this thesis:

‘In the 1990s plants often failed because of inadequate leadership.’ \(^{450}\)

Their suggestion therefore was that denominational churches that initiate or support church planting should as a matter of priority always ensure that church planting pioneers or leaders are adequately trained and equipped for such a task. Similarly, a document produced by the Church of England in 2004 on an enabling framework for a missionary church stated that

‘no one practical factor has greater influence than the quality of leadership.’ \(^{451}\)

Essentially all these observations corroborate the important role played by spiritual leaders in churches in a missionary setting like the GMPCs which are the focus of this study.

In the general Introduction of this study, we pointed at the research on leadership in church planting in 2008 of Stefan Paas and his use of social science research that stated that leadership is always functioning in a context with the expectations and the culture of the group led, with the policy of the organization, with contacts in society, etc. \(^{452}\) We already stated that we can share this view.

Paas also discusses Christian critiques on leadership paradigms. He underlines that in the Gospels Jesus did not reject leadership, nor did Paul, nor the Acts of the Apostles. However, certain styles of leadership were criticized. Referring to these biblical data, Paas elaborates his ideas on ‘visionary’, ‘controlled’ and ‘shared’ leadership of a person or a team in the context of church planting. \(^{453}\) He elaborates especially the change-driven ‘transformational’ leadership which binds together and inspires. This is characterized by four typical behaviors and three properties. The behaviors are: communicating, credible action, concerning, and promoting creativity. The properties (which can be learned): self-confidence, desire to

\(^{450}\) Lings & Murray, *Church Planting*, 19-20.
\(^{452}\) Paas, ‘Leiderschap bij een kerkplanting’, 284-288. Because the studies in this book are in Dutch, I only refer to this chapter which has been provisionally translated for me. Like mentioned before, we will not discuss here the typologies of Avery (classical, transactional, visionary, and organic), Paas refers to.
influence, and vision, also the vision on the contribution of the congregation to the surrounding society. Paas states that this needs a so called ‘level 5’ type of leadership. He typifies this as a combination of personal humility and a strong professional volition. This type of a leader seeks the best for the organization, however not on behalf of his or her ego. This leader stays in the background, compliments others and takes upon himself the responsibilities for failures; he focusses his ambitions in the organization, not on himself. At least four characteristics are important for church planters: he does not start with a right vision, but with the right people; he is hopeful, without illusions; he sticks to his task and that of the organization: concentration on its own power and unique contribution; he creates a culture of discipline, in a culture that recognizes and motivates people.

In the light of the foregoing research conclusions on leadership in church planting we are of the view that the ministry relevance of the spiritual leadership of these GMPCs will be determined by their sheer determination and commitment to tackling the existential and situational needs of their members in the context of spirituality. The said leadership should therefore be the kind that is committed to do all that it takes to ensure the promotion of a harmonious community within which the spirituality of the members is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for.

In essence, the ministry prospects of the GMPCs in providing a community within which the spirituality and communal welfare of their members are enhanced underscores the importance of a contextualized holistic approach to missions. Casely B. Essamuah cites Dana L. Robert as making a similar observation:

‘African mission initiatives in mainline-initiated churches can provide a framework within which issues of popular spirituality, theology and culture, women’s role, the role of mission education in building African societies, and power struggles in the churches can be raised.’

In a similar vein, Omenyo writes:

‘Essentially, authentic theology is one that responds to the existential needs of a people within a specific historical and cultural context.’

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456 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 303.
Our understanding of effective spiritual leadership in the context of these migrant Ghanaian Christians is that it should be functionally vibrant besides being vibrant in personal spirituality as discussed in chapter 5. What we mean by being functionally vibrant is that the leadership should be appreciably dynamic to ensure that the ecclesial practices like those mentioned below are effectively employed in addressing the existential needs of their church membership. It is then that they are likely to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual and communal lives.

In the light of the foregoing, the following ecclesial practices shall therefore be discussed in detail in this chapter.

i. Worship as the Celebration of God’s Redeeming Presence,

ii. Effective Christian Discipleship as means for Transformation,

iii. Pastoral Care and Counselling as means for Transformation,

iv. Ghanaian Communal and the provision of communal welfare in the spirit of Koinonia,

v. Holiness Ethics and Church Discipline as means for spiritual vitality and evangelistic fruitfulness.

vi. “Empowering” leadership for Mission and Church Growth.

In essence, besides the important place of vitality in personal spirituality, the ministry fruitfulness envisioned for the spiritual leadership provided for the GMPCs in such immigrant situations is likely to be in proportion to their functional vitality. In this chapter therefore, we shall attempt to explore what it takes for the spiritual leadership provided for such immigrant situations to be functionally vibrant.

We shall devote this chapter to discussions on the ways and means by which the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs could demonstrate a meaningful commitment in developing the aforementioned ecclesial practices in meeting the needs of the migrant Ghanaian Christians. It is anticipated that the dynamism of the said spiritual leadership in this direction will ensure their ministry fruitfulness and consequently the ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their members.

6.2 Spiritual Leadership and Effective Employment of the Ecclesial Practices

As we have already established in both the main introduction to this study and chapter 4.1, migrant Ghanaian Christians in Europe share the same traditional worldviews with their folks
in their homeland. However, their immigrant situations pose far more unique ministry challenges to these GMPCs established in European societies. The problems and needs of Ghanaian immigrants range widely from spiritual to socio-psychological. In the first place, there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. Moreover, their immigrant situations create for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. Besides all these there is the sense of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, addictive habits and other moral weaknesses, apparent failures, disappointments and numerous difficulties in one’s life. In Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a mission setting like the GMPCs established outside the homeland, the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it capable in meeting the needs of their members cannot be overemphasized. It is worthy of note that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring which enables it to address the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the church to its own people and the community at large.

As we have earlier mentioned in chapter four of this study the ecclesial practices mentioned above are likely to make a strong impression on the membership especially when they are seen to tackle among other things their basic existential needs in the context of spirituality. The said needs are basically the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and physical security in terms of economic and social wellbeing. There is no gainsaying the fact that existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. It is noteworthy that in places where these practices have been effectively employed, the members’ faith is being rekindled, and their lives touched for renewal through the transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit.

In the light of the foregoing, we shall discuss the ways and means by which the new kind of spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs could demonstrate a meaningful commitment to developing the appropriate doctrinal and liturgical means in meeting the needs of these migrant Ghanaian Christians. We shall now proceed to discuss the said ecclesial practices as outlined above.
6.3 Worship as the Celebration of God’s Redeeming Presence

Ghanaians like all other Africans are generally warm and enthusiastic in matters of religion and for that reason they naturally tend to sing, dance and dramatize their religious faith in every concrete way. For the Ghanaian/African Christians the most notable way of expressing their spirituality is through worship, private or corporate. They understand worship as an expression of reverence for God and the celebration of His manifest Presence. To the Ghanaian/African Christian formal community worship becomes more meaningful when it is both expressive and participatory.

Since they opened up to embrace spiritual renewal, the homeland parent Churches of the GMPCs have grown in their belief that the manifest Presence of God is significantly and meaningfully experienced in the context of ‘Praises and Worship’. They tend to believe that the music of praise in the context of formal worship, as much as it celebrates the Supreme ‘Worth-ship’ of God by extolling and ascribing to Him the glory due to His name, also ushers them into God’s presence for the administration of divine grace to their needs. They find in the music of praise in divine worship an emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual healing.

Just like their parent Churches in their homeland, the immigrant GMPCs have since their establishment found the need to make significant innovations in their liturgy for Sunday divine services to include a session devoted to ‘choruses of praise and worship’. These Ghanaian Christians understand worship as the work of the whole people of God and that as a congregation they are not a mere audience or group of spectators. In effect, the church worship services as practiced by the GMPCs aim at enabling worshippers to experience a personal encounter with God in whose Presence there is healing and life in all its fullness. To ensure the reality of the foregoing therefore, it is expedient that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs is the type that seeks the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit to enable them to encourage and inspire their membership so that they might experience a deeper awareness of the manifest Presence of God.

6.3.1 Defining Worship: Evangelical Protestant Perspective

The preface to the Methodist Worship Book expresses the act of formal worship as follows:

‘Worship is a gracious encounter between God and the Church. God speaks to us, especially through scripture read and proclaimed and through symbols and
sacraments. We respond, chiefly through hymns and prayers and acts of dedication. Worship is the work of the whole people of God: a congregation is not an audience or a group of spectators. Those who lead worship are called to encourage and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to enable the whole body of Christ to participate fully. Such participation may include personal testimony and the use of the creative arts.\footnote{The Methodist Worship Book, Peterborough: Methodist Publishing House, 1999, vii.}

The implications of the foregoing are that, true worship is God-centred. It is our active response to God whereby we declare His Supreme ‘Worth-ship’ – He is worthy of our worship. Worship is a “celebration” of God, [Psalm 100]; ascribing to God the glory due His name [Psalm 96:7-8]; extolling God and sounding His praises. Worship, in effect is demonstrating a reverence for God, practicing His presence in our lives and offering praise in the community of God; and by so doing becoming one with God – spirit, soul and body! All this implies that true worship is not passive, but participatory. The entire congregation should therefore be involved in worship [Psalm 149:1].

Charlie Cleverly in his discourse on ‘Church Planting’ has observed that vital and deep experience of the manifest Presence of God among His people becomes possible when the Church draws near to Him in true worship.\footnote{Charlie Cleverly, Church Planting: Our Future Hope, London: Scripture Union, 1991, 56. Charlie Cleverly is a British Anglican Clergyman who has great passion for church planting.} Similarly, Chester L. Wenger in his essay on ‘How Churches Grow’ posits that ‘true spiritual worship is pivotal to the total ministry of the church.’\footnote{Chester L. Wenger, ‘How Churches Grow’ in: C. Norman Kraus (ed.), Missions Evangelism and Church Growth, Scottsdale: Herald Rees, 1980, 115. Charles L. Wenger served as a missionary in Ethiopia, East Africa for several years.}

He explains that satisfying, uplifting, and moving worship service of inspirational singing, prayer, reading and proclamation of the word truly brings worshippers into contact with the living God in a way that fads and ill prepared activities will not. Satisfying, uplifting and enthusiastic worship both draws new members and retains the old ones. In the words of Wenger,

‘People, especially new ones who are visiting for the first time, are not likely to return time and again to a service unless they sense an awe and enthusiastic reverence for the Almighty God in the worship life of the Church.’\footnote{Wenger, ‘How Churches Grow’, 115.}
6.3.2 Worship in Context: Ghanaian Mainline Christianity Perspective

The foregoing definition may account for the significant reforms systematically introduced by the GMPCs into their traditional liturgical forms of worship. As churches in the mission setting, these GMPCs rely heavily on the quality of the Sunday worship experience. My participant observation of their worship services for several years has established the following:

1. In the first place, worship observed primarily as the celebration of the divine Presence of God is also aimed at the spiritual edification of the membership. It is noteworthy that some worshippers have come to experience the manifest Presence of God in a unique way at their worship services and have consequently been brought into intimate loving relationship with God and with one another.

2. Second, formal worship experience also serves as an evangelistic outreach to non-Christians, seekers or casual visitors. They aim at making their worship services more inspiring, uplifting, satisfying and meaningful to participants. Their worship services are in most cases structured in such a way so as to encourage all worshippers to fully participate. New people who find such services an inspiring experience feel like returning time and time again to the said worship services.

The afore-mentioned lends credence to the following observation made by Christian Schwarz:

‘When worship is inspiring it draws people to the service “all by itself”, people (seekers) attending truly “inspired” services typically indicate that “going to church is fun.”

What is implied by this is that when the worship service becomes an ‘inspiring experience’ people do not attend the worship service merely to fulfil a religious duty. It does not then look like an unpleasant exercise that one has to endure patiently in order to be blessed by God. Rather it becomes a wonderful experience that one would not miss for anything.

Just like their parent churches in their homeland, the GMPCs have made significant innovations in their liturgy for Sunday divine service to include a session devoted to ‘(local) choruses of praise and worship’. These ‘choruses of praise’ are songs of praise which make use of a good number of psalms and other scriptural text particularly those that recount the mighty deeds of God in the past, which are still relevant today. All these mainline Protestant congregations are led in this session of ‘praise and worship’ by a “Praise and Worship Team” which comprises some gifted singers within the particular congregation. The “praise and worship” moments are characterized by a free, spontaneous and enthusiastic expression of joyful praise, adoration and thanksgiving to God. The congregational singing of the choruses of praise are accompanied by drumming and the use of all kinds of musical instruments, amidst rhythmic dancing, jumping, clapping of hands, raising of hands and waving of white handkerchiefs, etc.

Ironically, a good number of mainline Christians in the GMPCs appear to participate more meaningfully and enthusiastically in these choruses of praise than they do with their official church hymnal. This situation is attributed to a few factors. In the first place, the shortness and the simplicity of the language make the choruses more understandable than the church hymnal. Second, Ghanaians/Africans are generally warm and enthusiastic in matters of religion. As a result of this when it comes to church worship and particularly the singing of praises it is more likely that their preference will go to the more expressive and celebrative style of worship as against the stiff and stern form of worship which churches in Africa inherited from Western missionaries. Obviously, by adopting the liturgical reforms of their respective parent churches in Ghana, it also meant that these Presbyterian and Methodist churches in Europe were also inclined to create more room for expressive forms of worship in their liturgy. This is typically Ghanaian/African as Livingstone Buamah has rightly pointed out. He writes:

‘Africans speak their faith /religion; they sing it, drum it, dance it, dramatize it and manifest its power in every concrete way. If there is anything that needs to be done in Christian life with spontaneity and resounding enthusiasm (zeal, zest, dynamism, intensity of spirit and total centeredness), within the Ghanaian/African context, then it

462 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 211.
463 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 212.
is worship. In a real sense, worship is the celebration of life from the core of our being...

As we have earlier observed from the Introduction of this study, the formation of the GMPCs came as a relatively latter development compared to that of the Ghanaian-initiated GPCCs. As a result of this, some of the Ghanaian Christians who eventually became members of the GMPCs were already members of the Ghanaian-initiated GPCCs and for that reason they had been influenced by the Pentecostal and Charismatic style of worship which is mostly the expressive and celebrative type. Obviously, those Ghanaian Christians who had enjoyed a taste for the expressive and celebrative forms of praise and worship will definitely not feel very much at home with church hymns with melodies which may not even be so familiar to them. If they had their own way they will rather prefer that more time is allocated to the singing of these more familiar local choruses in that expressive and celebrative style. It is noteworthy that in such an instance if the spiritual leadership fails to demonstrate appropriate sensibility to the situation and rather becomes so repressive regarding the worship life of the church such members may consider the church to be “too cold” and eventually leave the church unceremoniously. On the other hand, there are some members especially the original Presbyterians and Methodists nurtured in mainline Christianity back home in Ghana who still do cherish the old familiar hymns from their respective official hymnbooks. Some of these even do appreciate the solemn and reflective mood which the singing of some of these hymns presents. On the other hand just like their parent churches in Ghana do with some church hymns, they also appreciate the adaptation of the new melodies given to some of their traditional hymns so that they can be appropriately used to clap or dance.

Obviously, the afore-mentioned situation calls for the much needed maturity of the spiritual leadership of these churches to do all that they can to keep a helpful balance between the two different approaches to the worship life of the church for the sake of stability and fruitfulness of ministry. They need to make the conscious effort to seek a balance between the expressive and celebrative forms of worship on the one hand and the contemplative and reflective dimension of worship on the other hand. This lends credence to the following insightful observation also made by Livingstone Buamah:

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464 Livingstone K. Buamah, ‘Christian Worship within the Ghanaian/African context’, Trinity Journal of Church and Theology, (1) 1992, 7. Livingstone Buamah is a past President of the Ecumenical Trinity Theological Seminary in Ghana. He is also a past Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

465 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 211.
‘Worship that is strictly solemn and reflective (meditative) can be rather rigid, frigid and inhibitive (repressive). Worship that is purely celebrative can become trivial and thus degenerate into mere merry-making. The word of God, which demands of us to be reverent, sober and reflective before God is the same word, which summons us to come to his Presence with singing and to enter his courts with praise to make “a joyful noise to the Lord”. The two elements (solemn and reflective on one hand, and the celebrative on the other) are complementary. The solemn and the reflective (meditative) elements help us to grasp and to revere God’s awesome Presence and power. The celebrative element, on the other hand, helps us to reach out and to hit the heights of joy that the victorious life in Christ offers us.’ 466

Up to this point, we have tried to demonstrate these Ghanaian mainline Christians understanding of Praise and Worship as a key element of their spirituality. We shall now proceed to investigate how and to which extent the act of true spiritual worship improves the spiritual lives of the members. Charlie Cleverly observed that

‘the goal of expressing praise is to meet with God in whose presence there is healing and truth and life in all its fullness.’ 467

Due to their evangelical emphasis on experiential Christianity these GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands usually endeavour to make room for more intimate worship in their worship services. For this reason, they continually encourage members to appreciate the Person and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. By opening up to the infilling and empowering grace of the Holy Spirit, members are enabled to experience a fuller life as worshippers. The congregation is then in a position to meaningfully participate in Praise and worship which help to lead them into a deeper awareness of the Presence of God. 468

As already hinted elsewhere in this chapter, there could be many effects of true worship but the goal of worship is not just to get God to do anything for us, but rather to know Him personally and intimately. 469 In reference to Psalm 95: 1-8a, Charlie Cleverly explains that the initial stages of true worship takes the worshippers’ eyes off themselves and get them focused on God. A good time is spent remembering and extolling the attributes of God

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466 Buama, ‘Christian worship within the Ghanaian/African context’, 7.
467 Cleverly, Church Planting: Our Future Hope, 95.
468 Psalm 22:3.
469 Cleverly, Church Planting: Our Future Hope, 100.
through the singing of hymns and songs. These hymns and songs tell of the deeds and character of God just as the Psalmist does in the following:

‘For the Lord is the great God,
The great King above all gods.
In His hand are the depths of the Earth,
And the mountain peaks belong to him…’ 470

In the next stage of worship, which Charlie Cleverly terms as a call to intimacy, the Psalmist continues as follows:

‘Come; let us bow down in worship,
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker,
For he is our God and we are the people of his pasture
The flock under his care.’ 471

Cleverly further explains that at this point of the worshippers’ intimate engagement with God, a deep sense of belonging could arise in them which may inspire tears of joy or repentance or both. They are thus prompted by the Spirit to dedicate their lives afresh unto the Lord. The expression of worship and praise is actually vital as the outward sign of an inward grace. This inward grace is that, ‘one has been born into a new relationship with God’. Whenever one expresses his love for someone, if he is sincere, the relationship deepens. By contrast, if he does not express and verbalizes it something is lost, because love deepens when it is expressed. If one never expresses personally and intimately his love for Christ this intimate relationship side of our inheritance in Christ will remain stunted. 472 This may account for the fact that Christians who have been enabled through the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit to experience a fuller life as worshippers are usually so zealous and enthusiastic about their faith. This is becoming truer of a good number of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians in Germany and Netherlands.

This emphasis on worship is at the heart of the Gospel. Many notorious sinners who were confronted by the saving grace of Christ and who broke down in tears of joy and repentance and worshipped at the feet of Jesus were eventually transformed [Luke 7: 36-50]. Jesus came

470 Psalm 95: 3-5.
471 Psalm 95: 6-7.
472 Cleverly, Church Planting: Our Future Hope, 102.
to bring men and women estranged from God, back into intimate loving friendship with Him. This is the highest purpose for mankind: to know God, love Him, worship and serve Him and enjoy the satisfaction thereof. This has been the main objective and ultimate goal of the worship life of the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands.

It is worthy of note that some worshippers who have fully participated in any of these truly inspired Ghanaian mainline Protestant worship services have come to experience the manifest Presence of God in an unmistakable way. It may be that they have been without any intimate relationship with God, lonely, depressed and irritated, or might have become either desperate or demoralized. But as they drew near in sincere worship they have been born again to a new hope in Christ.

There have been instances whereby some members who were hitherto filled with bitterness, hatred and rage have been brought under strong conviction of sin by the Spirit of God at worship services. They have experienced the manifest Presence of God in a unique way and have consequently been brought into intimate loving relationship with God. People who were laden with feelings of guilt, emptiness and disappointment have also come to know the joy of unclouded embrace of the Father. They have eventually found peace with God and entered into a state of reconciliation with God through faith in His Son Jesus Christ [Romans 5:1, 11]. Consequently, they have been enabled by the Spirit of grace who is at work in them to experience emotional peace [Philippians 4:6-7] as well as interpersonal peace [Romans 12:18].

One undeniable fact is that the prolonged socio-economic difficulties faced by the undocumented migrant Ghanaians in Germany and Netherlands were not conducive to their spiritual edification. This led to increasing level of stress and for that reason some easily got at loggerheads with each other at the least instance of provocation and irritation. It is therefore noteworthy that when some of the said people became members of these newly emerged GMPCs, they were still carrying such emotional stress and irritation. For some of them the healing process and eventual reconciliation became very difficult and much prolonged. However, in some instances members who were previously at loggerheads with each other experienced instant emotional healing during Praise and Worship time. There was an instance in one of these Ghanaian mainline churches in Germany whereby two members who for many years were embittered and at loggerheads with each other experienced the manifest Presence of God as the church had drawn near to Him at worship. While the

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congregation was worshipping and singing choruses of praise these sisters were touched and convicted of their shortcomings. With broken and contrite hearts, they walked straight to each other with open arms weeping and embraced each other as praises was still going on and right away they were reconciled. In other instances the experience of the manifest Presence of God at worship has helped to un-earth some deep-seated and covered-up bitterness and unforgiving attitudes giving the opportunity for counseling, emotional healing and eventual reconciliation.

As we have pointed out earlier in this chapter, the first main objective of formal worship for these GMPCs is the celebration of God’s redeeming Presence and the consequent spiritual edification of the membership. The second main objective however, is to serve as an evangelistic outreach to non-Christians, seekers or casual visitors. There have been several instances whereby casual visitors who have attended such services for the first time have found it an inspiring experience and felt like returning time and time again. It is noteworthy that a good number of the said casual visitors mostly Ghanaians eventually took full membership in these churches.

The following story which relates to the worship experience of one of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches underscores the aforementioned point:

‘A well-educated white Dutch lady around her early thirties bumped into the pastor of one of the GMPCs at a train station in the Netherlands in the beginning of 2008 and the following conversation ensued. “I hope you are the ‘dominee’ (pastor) of the Wesley Methodist Church”, the lady enquired. The pastor was a bit surprised, but replied in the affirmative and further enquired; “Have we met before?” The lady then introduced herself as a friend of a lady chorister belonging to the said Church who invited her for the first time to a Sunday worship service. Since then she has visited on three other occasions, twice with her mother. She then proceeded to express her deep satisfaction and the great inspiration drawn from the worship services and how she feels like coming again and again. The pastor then quizzed her about her usual place of worship. The lady instantly grinned at the pastor as if sharing a big secret: “I must confess”, she said, “I used to belong to the mainline Reformed Tradition but I lost faith in the Church a long time ago, but your church is giving me so much inspiration that makes me feel like going back to the Church”’. 474

474 Conversation between Christine and the researcher at Duivendrecht train station in Amsterdam in February 2008. Written notes are available with the researcher.
6.4 Effective Discipleship as Means for Transformation

Since the formation of the GMPCs, Ghanaian Christians who have been taking their membership in these churches fall under two main categories. In the first place, we have those who were baptized as infants many years back in Ghana. Some of these were confirmed and became regular or irregular communicants prior to their coming to Europe. On the other hand there are those who never took any serious membership in the church in Ghana even though they were schooled in mission educational institutions and for that reason considered themselves to be somehow affiliated to one of these mainline churches. Despite their previous church membership or affiliations in Ghana, not all of these Ghanaian immigrant Christians were seen to be leading significantly transformed Christian lives while resident here in Europe. As time went by, some of them became lukewarm and wayward in their Christian faith and practice since they became non-churched for several years. Whereas some of the very committed Christians among them endeavoured to maintain their moral integrity, others in the course of time got themselves entangled in all sorts of anti-social habits such as drunkenness, smoking and marital infidelity. Some of them became involved in drug trafficking and prostitution in some cases out of economic frustration. In many instances as has been demonstrated earlier in this chapter, the prolonged socio-economic hardships especially for the undocumented and asylum seekers culminated in an increasing level of emotional stress resulting in recurrent irritation, bitterness, unforgiving attitudes, rage, gossiping, quarrelling and hatred among themselves.

Whatever be the case, these Ghanaian immigrant Christians who were taking their membership in the mainline Protestant churches undoubtedly needed a conversion experience like what Asamoah-Gyadu terms as ‘transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit’. 475 What Asamoah-Gyadu means by this ‘transformative encounter’ with God the Holy Spirit’ is that kind of personal conversion involving a confessional commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is a decisive transition resulting in personal transformation which is evidenced in a new life with a new lifestyle. Van der Leeuw speaks of this kind of conversion as constituting ‘new birth’ embodying an ‘inner experience’ that must correspond to an ‘outer process’. 476

Even though some of these Ghanaian immigrants could refer to their previous religious affiliations, talk about having been baptized as infants, having been confirmed and consequently become communicants, yet experientially some of them had not developed any meaningful intimate relationship with God over the years. Obviously their previous religiosity which lacked a conversonal experience and commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and intimate relationship with God, did not lead to any meaningful spiritual and moral transformation. It is worthy of note that as these Ghanaian immigrants were taking their membership in these churches, some of them who previously kept their membership in their mother churches back in their homeland, viewed their situation here as just a renewal of membership without considering the spiritual, moral and social implications of their membership in these churches. Obviously, the situation of the Ghanaian immigrant Christians as portrayed here calls for a new kind of spiritual leadership which is functionally productive and appreciably dynamic to ensure that the ecclesial practice of discipleship is effectively employed so as to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual lives. This leads us to the following important discussion:

6.4.1 The True Nature of Christian Discipleship

Sherwood Lingenfelter in his discourse on the transforming power of the Gospel has observed that ‘the church is the social body within which theology and social environment combine to create a dynamic living group.’ He explains that the church grows out of the process of making disciples, “followers” of Jesus Christ, described in the Gospels and the Book of Acts. He however points out that becoming a disciple is a personal process. When the individual person receives the Gospel and responds by the enabling grace of the Holy Spirit, he/she is nurtured in the Word of Christ and thus becomes his companion and follower. Lingenfelter further explains that:

‘The church must be based upon people who are committed to becoming Christ’s disciples, and who recognize that such a commitment requires rethinking basic assumptions about life, and reinterpreting them to form a biblically based, Christ-centred world view.’


In a similar vein, Walter Brueggemann, makes the following observation in his essay on evangelism and discipleship:

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‘Discipleship is not just a nice notion of church membership or church education; it entails a resituating of our lives. The disciples of Jesus are the ones who follow their Master, able to do so because they have been instructed in his way of life, both his aim and his practice of embodying that aim. The disciple is one who is closely associated with the master-teacher a profoundly undemocratic notion, for the relation consists in yielding, submitting, and relinquishing oneself to the will and purpose of another.’

Brueggemann posits that:

‘Our talk of mission must of course pay attention to Matthew 28:16-20. The imperative of the risen Lord to the remaining eleven followers is clear and firm: ‘go, make disciples, baptize and teach.

He offers the following explanation for the three-fold task of the disciples in recruiting others into the counter-community of Jesus:

- To make disciples means to bring others under the disciplines that mark the followers of Jesus. It is assumed that the primal core of disciples is under discipline itself, so that its members can instruct new recruits into the practices and habits that will sustain life and mission in the counter-community.

- Baptism, reflecting a more ecclesial assumption on the part of Matthew, has become the rite of initiation into an alternative community. In the earliest church, baptism was a decisive, dramatic transfer of life into a new community with new disciplines, new loyalties and new obligations.

- Teaching is fundamental to the missional church that is sent. The primal curriculum of the church’s teaching pivots on the twin Trinitarian claims that (a) the historical person of Jesus is the embodiment and disclosure of God’s true character and that (b) Jesus’ spirit continues to infuse this community (and the world) after his departure from the earth. This mandating text of the close of Matthew already recognizes in the earliest church, that knowledge of the tradition is fundamental to mission; ignorance of the tradition will make mission either impossible or undertaken for the wrong reasons.


In his essay on ‘Goals of Church growth,’ Harold E. Bauman points out that making disciples is a ‘holistic’ process. People need to be evangelized as whole persons. On the interpretation of the missional task of the church as implied in Matthew 28:19-20, he explains that the first phrase in the text is not the imperative “go” but a participle, “as you go”. The imperative is in the main verb, “make disciples”. This is followed by two participles that explain disciple making. The first is “baptizing them” which includes the whole conversion, regeneration and incorporation experience. The second participle is “teaching them”, which he considers to be the nurture. 480 Having made a point on discipleship, Bauman then poses the very important question, how do we do “disciple” prospective believers? 481 I will add to his question: When does discipleship begin and how do we connect evangelism and discipleship?

Paul Chilcote and Laceye Warner explain that the long-standing debate among scholars and practitioners on the interface of evangelism and discipleship falls into two distinct camps. Those who view these two aspects of the Christian life as distinct and separate believe that evangelistic practice brings the new believer to a point of faith where the practices of Christian discipleship takes over. On the other hand those who conceive discipleship and evangelism as both inseparable and indistinguishable believe that no easy line of demarcation can be drawn that separates the activity of either sphere. Brueggemann on his part argues for a ‘distinct but not separate’ understanding of the relationship between the two, and views the practices of discipleship and evangelism as interdependent. 482 Touching on the ecclesial practice of discipleship, church growth advocates like Donald McGavran recommend that one first calls for a general commitment to Christ, then after baptism and reception into full membership their ethical nurture begins. 483 Leslie Newbigin on the other hand, argues as to ‘how we can defend a form of evangelism that says nothing about ethical views putting them all into nurturing’. 484

481 Bauman, ‘Goals of Church Growth’ 156.
483 See Harold Baumann, ‘Goals of Church Growth’, 156.
Baumann corroborates Newbigin’s opinion by asking how a person can make a decision for Christ as Lord and not relate it to personal morality or a given issue in his or her life. The question then is, at which point does one need to be taught about the real cost of following Jesus since we have Jesus’ teaching about the importance of knowing the cost before we enter the Kingdom? Baumann on the other hand points to the views of others who give illustrations of people who might never have entered the church had they been required to give their positions on very sensitive ethical or societal issues. However, given time and loving nurture they became deeply committed on the issue.

In the light of the foregoing the question then arises; what minimal teaching should be given to those who present themselves for membership? In my opinion, due consideration should be given to the view of Bauman, who suggests that our evangelistic method ought to be consistent with our understanding of the nature of the church. He explains that:

‘If the church is a community of belonging, a fellowship and close support group, then in our evangelism we ought to invite people into the group when they are ready to walk along with us in the belief that the Holy Spirit will confront them when the time is ready.’

According to him, when our relations or acquaintances are invited into the congregations or small study and fellowship groups, they have every opportunity to see how the alternative community operates. As they hear teaching and testimony about costly discipleship, they would be motivated to decide to identify with the Christian community, and when they do so, they have some indication of what they are identifying with. He rightly points out that this necessitates an effective evangelistic method for congregational work.

The afore-mentioned view on disciple-making corroborates the missional view expounded by John Westerhoff who argues for the importance of connecting evangelism, evangelization and catechesis. He points out that in a real sense the word evangelization is not a synonym of evangelism as it is usually assumed. Whereas evangelism took place in the society where people lived and worked, evangelization on the other hand took place within the life of the church. In his own words:

‘The early Church understood its mission to be that of proclaiming the Gospel of God’s salvation through word and example to those who did not know it or had not

486 Bauman, ‘Goals of Church Growth’, 158.
487 Bauman, ‘Goals of Church Growth’, 159.
accepted it. The objective was to attract persons to the church with its Good News concerning aspect of the total mission of the church which he terms ‘evangelism’ was believed to have taken place in the society where they lived and worked."\(^{488}\)

He further explains that persons who were attracted to the Christian community of faith and its way of life through acts of evangelism were brought to initial commitment to Christ and incorporated into the life of God’s reign. This initiation process termed as evangelization was aimed at conversion and the preparation of persons for baptism and it took place within the life of the church. As soon as this process was completed, another intentional, life long process of learning and growth took over. According to Westerhoff this process which he terms “catechesis” was meant to enhance and enliven the faith of the newly baptized so that their Christ-like character might be fully formed. It is an ‘intentional life-long process by which Christians are made, fashioned, and nurtured.’ \(^{489}\)

Westerhoff points out that in the case of adults, evangelization precedes catechesis as implied in Matthew 28:19-20 to ‘make disciples of all nations, baptizing them…’ \(^{490}\) The process is however different for children who have been baptized. Children are taken through catechesis which has an evangelization dimension toward making a personal affirmation of faith and commitment to Christ and the Christian way of life. This is understood by some as ‘confirmation’. From that point the life-long process of catechesis for Christian nurture continues through adulthood. \(^{491}\)

Paul Chilcote and Laceye Warner have observed that even though Westerhoff’s definitions of the afore-mentioned terms seem unusual and different from popular views the model of disciple making that he offers affords important insights with regard to the health of the Christian community in this new millennium. His model of discipleship actually helps to rediscover the lost practice of evangelization which is conceived to be the missing link between evangelism and catechesis. \(^{492}\) I personally share the view that evangelization and


\(^{490}\) Matthew 28:19-20: ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you…’

\(^{491}\) Westerhoff, ‘Evangelism, Evangelization and Catechesis’, 236.

catechesis as missional practices of the church are considered to be very crucial for effective disciplining of a community of faith that is continually being renewed and reformed since they take place within the life of the church.

The afore-mentioned missional practices which are directed at the formation of Christ-like people may be conceived to be very relevant to the ministry situation of the GMPCs which are the focus of this present study. It may be presumed that the success of these Ghanaian churches in addressing the spiritual needs of their members depends largely on how seriously they commit themselves to these two missional practices of the church. This obviously called for a renewed approach to the ecclesial practice of discipleship which took a serious view of evangelization and catechesis as expounded by John Westerhoff. The foregoing observation rightly corroborates the following view expressed by Chilcote and Warner:

‘Just as evangelism is the heart of the church’s mission, so evangelism is the core of all ecclesial practices. If practices of worship, discipleship, or pastoral care are pursued without an evangelistic orientation – namely an intentional proclamation and embodiment of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – then such practices not only lose their motivation and power, but arguably cease to function as Christian practice.’

From the outset of the formation of the GMPCs, it became quite obvious to the leadership of most of these churches that many of their members lacked a meaningful conversional and transformative experience which is supposed to be marked by a new life with a new lifestyle. The leadership understood that in spite of their previous religious affiliations or church membership in Ghana, not all of these Ghanaian mainline Christians were well grounded in their Christian faith. Even, some of those baptized and confirmed had only learnt their churches catechism by rote without any meaningful commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In addressing this situational need, those churches which like their mother churches

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in Ghana became more seriously committed to spiritual renewal adopted an evangelistic approach to the discipling of their membership. They took a more evangelistic approach to expository preaching, systematic Bible teaching and then small group Bible studies all of which were aimed at the personal transformation of members so as to get them well grounded in their Christian faith. Right from the outset of their formation, the Methodist congregations in Germany and the Netherlands adopted the Methodist Class Meetings system meant basically for small groups Bible studies and fellowship just as is practiced by their parent Church in Ghana. For these Methodist congregations each Class Meeting could have an average membership of 12 to 30 members depending on the congregational size and the availability of qualified Class leaders. The involvement of every church member in one of these Class Meetings ensures active membership and eventual congregational renewal. Besides the weekly meetings for fellowship and Bible studies, the leaders of the Class Meetings maintain a constant contact through phone calls and personal visitations especially for the irregular ones as well as the sick. The Methodist congregations in the Netherlands make good use of the ‘Weekly Bible Lessons’ study material published and used by the parent Church in Ghana.\footnote{The Weekly Bible Lessons is a weekly Bible study material produced by the Methodist Church Ghana and designed to facilitate and enhance organised group Bible studies within group meetings and also for personal devotion. It is aimed at getting members well-grounded in their Christian faith so as to be enabled to maintain a more personal relationship with Christ.} The Class Meetings are organized weekly for about an hour and are incorporated in the Sunday service schedule.

The Presbyterian congregations have put in place at least a once in a month group Bible studies to form part of the Sunday church schedule. Besides this, they have the Bible Study and Prayer Group (BSPG) established in the various congregations which also meet weekly for Bible studies and prayer.\footnote{The Bible Study and Prayer Group here functions just like that of the parent church in Ghana. The Group comprises a cross-section of the very committed church membership.} In addition to the afore-mentioned organized congregational Bible studies, the Methodist and the Presbyterian churches have also established Fellowship groups like the Women’s Fellowship, the Men’s Fellowship and Youth Fellowship. These church organisations also provide opportunities for Christian fellowship, periodic Bible study, reflection and action.

It is noteworthy that for those GMPCs which have consistently pursued evangelistic discipleship, members have begun to experience transformative conversions which are
evidenced in new life with new lifestyle. From time to time as the evangelistic preaching and teaching continue to make stronger impression on the members; those among them who might have compromised with anti-social habits like marital infidelity are periodically getting convicted of their sinful lifestyles. Some who do get convicted of their shortcomings eventually put their marital relationships in order and rededicate their lives to Christ.

The on-going conversion and transformation experiences in the GMPCs underscore the following assumption which is considered by John Westerhoff to be foundational to evangelization:

‘Evangelization is understood as a personal journey that calls for creativity, flexibility and adaptability. It is not an institutional program that is identical for everyone. It is a person, with a personal story and life history, who is being evangelized. Evangelization therefore is a process that needs to be made relevant to each person. For another thing, evangelization is a process that takes place in a community of faith, a community that is continually being renewed and reformed.’

It is noteworthy that discipleship as being practiced by these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches is gradually making the desired impact on their members. Lives are being transformed and the conversion experiences of some of their members are evidenced by the cessation from the old anti-social habits. With time, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit has enabled some of them to cast off old identities and anti-social habits like recurrent irritation and quarrelsomeness, heavy smoking and excessive drunkenness, marital infidelity and prostitution, cheating and lying as well as drug trafficking. The on-going spiritual transformation process in these churches again, lends credence to the following assumptions also considered by Westerhoff to be foundational to evangelization:

‘Evangelization assumes that conversion is a process and not an event, which involves over a period of time, transformations in a person’s faith, character and consciousness in a person’s loyalties, convictions and commitments. Evangelization intends to aid persons to repent, that is, to change the way they see things and therefore change the direction of their lives.’

These on-going experiences of conversion and renewal as demonstrated in Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christianity in Germany and Netherlands may be considered as a significant development in mainline traditional Christianity particularly in these two European countries.

In her book *Halfway to Paradise*, Ter Haar cites Oomen and Palm in their 1993 pilot study of the role of religious communities in the process of spiritual renewal which eventually impacts on their social communal lives. The two authors identified a significant difference between the Christian revivalist movements (referring to African-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatic churches) and the traditional mainstream churches in relation to this renewal process. According to them this difference is particularly seen in the nature and intensity of religious participation. Oomen and Palm further write:

‘Christian revivalist movements are almost exclusively aimed at personal renewal, requiring a total change of life. These Christian faith communities offer the psychological and social support individuals may need to achieve this. Such a change of heart, followed by a total surrender to Christ, is not required in the traditional churches where moral precepts tend to be more ambiguous.’ 499

Even though the observation made by Oomen and Palm at the period they did their research is indisputable, the situation however, is gradually changing after nearly two decades of their research particularly as demonstrated in Ghanaian immigrant mainline Christianity. As we have attempted to demonstrate above, the level of spirituality is gradually changing particularly within those newly emerged GMPCs in Germany and Netherlands which of recent times have become seriously committed to renewal.

Having said that we must point out that if the GMPCs would hope to experience any significant transformative conversion of the membership as illustrated above then much depends on their spiritual leadership. They should be the kind which demonstrates a meaningful commitment to developing the ecclesial practices like discipleship in meeting the spiritual needs of their members. In other words, they should be appreciably dynamic in the practice of discipleship so that this ecclesial practice would be effectively employed to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual lives.

499 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 195.
6.5 Pastoral Care and Counselling as Means for Transformation

In working with Ghanaian immigrant Christians in Germany and the Netherlands, pastoral care and counselling proves to be an indispensable ecclesial practice in view of their unique existential and situational needs. In the first place it is an undeniable fact that most of these Ghanaian Christians have been detached from their families and homeland for years, a situation which makes them feel isolated and marginalized. For this reason they naturally tend to cling to the Christian community as an extended family and to the pastoral leadership not only as a counsellor but also as a spiritual father they could count on for the much needed support at all times. Besides this, they also have other existential needs which are tied to their traditional African worldviews. In view of the inherent religious sensibilities of Africans in general, it is presumed that the most effective pastoral care that would make the desired impression on these Ghanaian Christians is the kind that takes a serious view of their concept of well-being that combines material and spiritual dimensions. There is no gainsaying the fact that existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians the important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. It is noteworthy that in places where these practices are being effectively employed, the members’ faith has been rekindled, and their lives have been touched for renewal through the transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit.

In the light of the foregoing, it is anticipated that in order to ensure their ministry relevance to these Ghanaian Christians, the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs should be appreciably dynamic so that the practice of pastoral care and counselling are effectively employed in meeting the said needs. We shall now proceed to explore the form that this kind of pastoral care and counselling should take if it should meaningfully make the desired impression on these Ghanaian Christians in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual and communal lives.

6.5.1 The Nature and Form of Christian Counselling

When we come to consider Christian counselling as an ecclesial practice we need to understand that Christian pastors may not necessarily be specialist pastoral counsellors, but rather trained pastors in general pastoral care. However, by nature of their pastoral duties in their parish they will be called on to give some of their time to counselling. There may also be
a few lay leaders within the church who even though are not trained counsellors, by reason of their natural gifts however do possess real pastoral ability which enable them to assist in pastoral counselling. 500

William K. Kay and Paul C. Weaver in their comprehensive manual on Pastoral Care and Counselling have observed that counselling in recent years has become a massive and complex subject where a variety of systems and approaches are advocated. They explain that whereas it has been estimated that there are over 400 different approaches to counselling currently in use, most of these are purely humanistic approaches. 501 They have all developed from the humanistic conception of people which by definition insists that people have within themselves all they need to solve their problems. Humanists are of the opinion that we are ‘alive on earth’ and there is no God on whom we may call for help. 502 Even though Christian counsellors have adapted these humanistic approaches, the Christian position is that by surrendering to the grace of God, people are enabled to do what they could not otherwise do. God will give grace in time of need [Heb. 4:16]. 503 On the issue of Christian adaptations of humanistic approaches, Kay & Weaver cite R.F. Hurding in his two sensitive and learned books (1985; 1992) offering an in-depth discussion on how Christians may use counselling theories and techniques originally developed in a secular framework. 504 Kay and Weaver have observed that whereas many Christians who over the years have tried to bring pastoral care and counselling together have ended up assimilating their pastoral care into the secular or religious trends of their day, others have never succumbed. In spite of using the insight of secular psychology, a Christian worker like Selwyn Hughes for instance, in his work has never surrendered an evangelical position on the work of Christ. He holds the view that the needs for security, self-worth and significance are all fulfilled by a relationship with Christ. 505 Kay & Weaver corroborate Selwyn Hughes' evangelical approach to counselling as follows:

501 William K. Kay & Paul C. Weaver, Pastoral Care and Counselling, Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997, 137.
502 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 146.
503 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 146.
'Counselling takes place by working through a ‘layer’ model of human personality exploring inwards from the layer of the body itself through the layers of emotion, will, and reason to the spiritual core. The counselor assesses each layer for problems. If the body needs attention, a medical appointment is advised; if the emotions are negative, they are brought into the open and treated by using Scripture for meditation; if the will is misdirected, aims and choices are examined; if reasoning is based on false assumptions it, too, is treated by Scripture, as is the spiritual core.' 506

Kay and Weaver cite Meier, Minirth, Wichern and Ratcliff in their argument that in spite of their differences in terms of personality, the training they have received, working experience and the setting in which they practice, the kinds of counselees they assist, Christian counsellors have three basic things in common in their approach to counselling namely:

- They listen to the counselee;
- They help the counselee gain insight;
- They keep the counselee formulate a plan of action. 507

I fully share the view of Kay & Weaver who corroborate the viewpoint of Meier, Minirth and Wichern that in Christian counselling one simple and effective way of showing concern is by listening. The warmth and empathy emphasized in the person-centred approach in Christian counselling that they recommend is very appropriate since it gives the counselee every reason to trust the Christian counsellor with his or her deepest spiritual needs. They also point out that a prayerful approach also helps the Christian counsellor to be aware of the prompting and guidance of the Holy Spirit while listening. 508

Kay and Weaver again cite Meier, Minirth, and corroborate their recommendation that one useful way of helping counselees gain insight is by asking questions that lead them to reach appropriate conclusions. They explain that since the intention of Christian counselling is to produce mature and responsible Christians within the fellowship of a congregation, it is recommended that the counsellor does not become too directive-oriented but rather adopt an ‘indirect-directive’ approach. This allows the counselees to reach conclusions about the will of God in a particular situation for themselves. However, necessary advice and clarification

506 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 148.
507 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 148-149.
508 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 149.
may be given by the counsellor when needed. Kay and Weaver recommend that when it comes to the final stage of formulating a plan of action,

‘the counsellor helps to form the plan, but does not prescribe it. The plan must come from the counselee on the basis of his or her own meditation on scripture and prayer. This is a matter of discovering the will of God: the guidance of Scripture, of the Spirit, and of circumstances must concur.’

6.5.2 The Place of counselling in Pastoral Care

R.S. Lee has observed that for the pastor to be successful in using methods of counselling in his pastoral work he will have to divest himself of authoritarianism. He may even find that he can free himself in all his work from the authoritarian attitude and arrive at a true reconciliation between the different roles he will be called to play. The following view expressed by R.S. Lee makes the foregoing point clear.

‘To be a successful pastor requires complete reconciliation between his counseling work and the rest of his duties, and it demands that his counseling springs out of his religious faith and is an expression of it. This means, we have seen that persons must be valued before systems of belief and morals. But it also implies that in his other, non counseling work the methods he uses and the attitudes he adopts must be at least non-contradictory to those which have been proved most successful in counseling, and probably they should conform to them. His preaching, for instance, ought not to be dogmatic but encouraging dialogue and discussion; his moral teaching pointing to ideals of conduct and explaining the reasonable justification of principles, rather that laying down laws. He will not condemn sinners but seek to understand their motives and to help them.’

The implication of the view expressed above is that the effective use of pastoral counselling methods helps to reshape the approach and attitude that one adopts for pastoral care. At the end of the day it is counselling which becomes the model for the general pastoral care. It opens the way to the understanding of “sinners” and makes it possible for them to be helped to receive forgiveness and healing. The practice of pastoral counselling provides the means of helping people in need who were previously beyond help and thus enabled pastors to fulfil

509 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 150.
510 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 151.
511 Lee, Principles of Pastoral Counselling, 129.
their responsibility of effecting the healing of the sick on a scale not possibly attainable otherwise. Lee explains that pastoral counselling brings us to a deeper understanding of God and enriches our understanding of his self-revelation. It actually throws new light on the nature of personality and makes relations between persons the essential area of religious life, whereby love is exalted above virtue. It shows us how divided and despairing men and women may be made whole. However, this is not the work of God from outside; it is God living in and at work in both the pastor and the counselee as the pastor seeks to administer pastoral care to the flock. 512 As we have earlier pointed out, in view of the particular situation in which the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians find themselves, a meaningful pastoral care that would eventually make a lasting impact on them should be the kind that seeks to tackle the issue of their existential needs as explained above.

6.5.3 Biblical Foundation of Pastoral Care

Having identified the practice of Christian counselling as a core element of pastoral care, we now proceed to discuss the biblical foundation of pastoral care as an ecclesial practice. In trying to understand pastoral care as an ecclesial practice it is appropriate to consider it from a biblical viewpoint. In reality, pastors must look after their congregations as a shepherd looks after sheep, taking care of their basic necessities of life [1Peter 5:1-3] 513. The aim of the pastoral task as shared by all the ministries outlined in the key Ephesians 4 passage is summarized as follows:

‘…to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming’ [Ephesians 4: 12-14].

512 Lee, Principles of Pastoral Counseling, 129-130.
513 ‘To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.’
The implications of the above scriptures are that pastors have to carry a series of activities appropriate to their situations which may include Christian nurture and equipping, provision of spiritual, physical and material security that enhance growth and maturity. All these together help bring their congregations nearer to the afore-mentioned goal. The aims of pastoral care can be considered according to three broad categories of pastoral activities usually used to carry them out. They are as follows: caring for the flock, teaching the flock and managing the flock in the sense that pastoral care is analogous with the scriptural imagery of shepherding of the flock. In this section we will confine ourselves mostly to the caring aspect of pastoral care. The teaching ministry of pastoral care as related to the equipping of the believers for the works of service is covered in another section. The management of the flock which covers a whole range of activities connected with effective structures, empowering leadership, style, direction and discipline of the flock will also be considered in a different section.

The Old Testament imagery of being a good shepherd is the exact opposite of the behaviour of the bad shepherds as explained in Ezekiel 34: 1-4. The bad shepherds did not strengthen the weak, heal the sick or bind up the injured: they ruled them harshly; they failed to bring back the strays or search for the lost; instead of leading them to pasture, they allowed them to become food for the wild animals. In Matthew 9:35-10:8, Jesus taking up the Old Testament imagery of true shepherding, demonstrates the Christ mission as a ‘holistic’ ministry which he also entrusted to his disciples or the church.

It is noteworthy that in the afore-mentioned mission of Jesus Christ, as entrusted to his disciples, redemption or full salvation that comes by the preaching of the Good News of the Kingdom of heaven, healing every disease and sickness, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore to send out workers into his harvest field. He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: …as you go, preach this message: the kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give’ [Matthew 9:35-10:8].

514 Kay & Weaver, Pastoral Care, 39.
515 ‘The word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally’ [Ezekiel 34: 1-4].
516 ‘Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore to send out workers into his harvest field. He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: …as you go, preach this message: the kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give’ [Matthew 9:35-10:8].
Kingdom is perceived as a holistic package. It embraces not just freedom from servitude to sin and redemption from ultimate power of death but also healing from sickness and deliverance from demonic infestation or possession. The New Testament Apostolic church consistently sought to fulfil this holistic mission through “Word”, “Deed” and “Sign”. As implied in Acts 5:12, 15-16, a holistic approach to the proclamation of the Gospel which took into account the provision of the existential needs of the believing community like healing from sicknesses and diseases and deliverance from demonic bondages proved most appropriate and effective in the Apostolic church. 517

6.5.4 Healing and Deliverance in the Context of Ghanaian/African Christianity

Deliverance and healing are two important spiritual blessings that contemporary African Pentecostals seek in their religious practice. The two are underpinned by the belief that evil and suffering, including ill-health, are generally, the result of interferences in human affairs by evil spirits. This belief naturally, implies that the cure for evil and suffering also come from God. 518 Abamfo Atiemo argues that deliverance, in concept and practice, shares similarities with the indigenous Akan religious practice of musuyi (warding off of evil), which is found also among the other ethnic groups in the southern regions and the middle belt of the country. 519 He maintains that this affinity explains the general attraction of Ghanaian Christians to these aspects of Pentecostalism. Exorcism often forms part of deliverance when it is believed that actual spiritual possession is involved in a person’s condition of suffering. 520

Healing and deliverance as practiced by the New Testament Apostolic church recovers for Ghanaian Christianity important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation that has everything to do with spiritual and physical wellbeing. 521 Healing and deliverance actually fit

517 ‘The Apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits and all of them were healed’ [Acts 5:12, 15-16].
521 Asamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics, 166.

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into the Ghanaian/African worldview of religion as a survival strategy and in view of this are sought after vigorously through religious means. The following observation by Emmanuel Larley underscores this crucial point:

‘In Africa, medicine has always been practiced by traditional priest-healers. Healing, exorcism, divination, diagnosis and the restoration to wholeness of ill or disturbed persons are seen as crucial functions of the priest. To the traditional African the most important activity of a priest is the medical one, the ability to diagnose correctly and to prescribe accurate remedies for various diseases. To separate this function from his or her priestly activities, or to disclaim the authenticity of this as a valid service of a religious person, is to seriously detract from a priest’s acceptability and recognition with a traditional African. This appears to be what happened with the Western mission-founded churches’. 522

Healing and deliverance employed as a form of pastoral care, has always proved popular in the Ghanaian context. This is because it takes the traditional African worldviews seriously by addressing one of the central concerns of religious ritual in Africa which has to do with the warding off of evil spirits from the affairs of humankind. 523 The belief that some sicknesses or diseases are either caused or worsened by Satan and demons is very popular in the traditional African worldview. It is for this reason that healing and deliverance are in most instances not separated. For many Ghanaians/Africans

‘prayer for healing is invariably prayer to God to deliver the victim from the bondage of the devil and demons which caused the sickness or which render orthodox medicine impotent.’ 524

For a long time, Ghanaian indigenous Pentecostals have paid considerable attention to healing and deliverance. In the past few decades however these ministries have gained an enormous resurgence within Ghanaian Christianity. It has effectively moved even beyond the frontiers of neo-Pentecostalism and now exists as a subculture within Ghanaian Christianity. 525 It is note-worthy that for a long time the mainline churches like the Presbyterian Church of Ghana


523 Asamoah Gyadu, African Charismatics, 166.

524 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 237.

525 Asamoah Gyadu, African Charismatics, 165.
and the Methodist Church Ghana had acknowledged the need to incorporate the healing ministry in pastoral care; however it seemed they did not have the clue to its implementation. As early as 1963, a consultation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana dealing with the Ibadan Report on the Holy Spirit and the Christian community had discussed ‘The role of the Holy Spirit and the gifts, particularly spiritual healing’. The following recommendation was then made:

a. The consultation wishes to see the New Testament ministry of healing through prayer restored within the congregations of the church…;

b. The ministry of healing through prayer should never be isolated from other healing ministries, especially medical treatment, but also the visit and care of other Christians. God can use all these means to give healing.  

The formal recognition of the Bible Study and Prayer Group (BSPG) as a charismatic group within the church by the 1966 Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana eventually helped to show the way to the implementation of divine healing and deliverance as a practical ministry within the Church. In recognizing the group, the Church took note of the fact that divine healing played a major role in the activities of the group.  

Ghanaian Methodism on the other hand inherited a tradition characterized by zeal and enthusiasm with prayer occupying a central place. Over the years the Church had regularly sought to renew the spiritual life of the entire Church through regular fervent and inspiring prayer meetings, revival and healing services. However when the Church for a period of time lost its original spiritual fervor, it was not until the 1993 Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana that the Church became fully awakened to officially take concrete steps towards spiritual renewal. The 1994 Annual Conference adopted a resolution that established the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme (MPRP) which among other things seeks to promote “Prayer and Worship” and to facilitate “Healing and Counseling”.  

Since the mainline traditional churches in Ghana formally expressed the need for the incorporation of divine healing in their ethos, this ministry is gradually finding its way to the centre of the life of the churches in Ghana. For some time now pastors are getting more and more involved in seminars and programmes that address issues such as healing and deliverance. Moreover, the mainline Churches are of late giving recognition to healing centers

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526 See report on congregational prayer meetings: what has happened to our prayer services? Issued by the worship committee of the PCG in 1963.
527 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 143.
528 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 165.
established by gifted persons or healing and deliverance teams affiliated to the churches. It is worthy of note that the wide influence and the great demand for the ministration of healing and deliverance by both the church membership and the needy non-churched community remains a challenge to pastors and the entire church leadership. It is this challenge which has gradually paved the way for the integration of this ministry into pastoral responsibilities while giving charismatic groups within the church like the BSPG of the Presbyterian Church a free hand to operate. The following remarkable story recounted by the Very Rev. Anthony A. Beeko, a former Moderator (1994-1998) of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana lends credence to the afore-mentioned observation:

‘Whilst serving as the chairman of the Akim Kibi Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, I was in the office one morning preparing a Conference paper. Suddenly I heard loud noises from a crowd which had gathered at the office premises. When I went out to enquire what was happening, I was confronted with a traditional priestess followed by a sizeable crowd. The priestess claimed she had been told by a certain voice to come to see me, and that I would deliver her from her fetish. She had become ecstatic and I was told by a member of the crowd that the woman was a priestess of the river deity Bootwiri of Kibi. I was confused because I had no knowledge of how to undertake deliverance, yet the woman wanted to be free from the deity to become a Christian. I dismissed the crowd, and with a few of my elders, we sang some hymns, I prayed and then read Psalm 23. At the end of these prayers, the priestess had become sober. I then invited the leaders of the BSPG who I knew were conversant with the ministry of deliverance to deal with the situation. They did exorcise the spirit of Bootwiri from the priestess. The former priestess was subsequently baptized and she enlisted as a member of the Presbyterian Church at Akim Kibi.’

In recounting this dramatic story, the Very Rev. Athony A. Beeko noted that for a very long time he had remained skeptical of the BSPG and their activities, but the experience he had changed that completely. According to the former Moderator,

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529 Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 238.
‘the experience taught me that the BSPG had more to offer than I knew; above all they taught me that I must move away from book theology.’

Asamoah-Gyadu corroborates the above story by stating that:

‘In the neo-Pentecostal ministry of healing and deliverance, God’s salvation is given active expression as a salvation of power meant to be experienced. Dwelling on the experience of the power of the Spirit to deal with evil such that the full measure of God’s salvation may be made possible underscores an inseparable link between the pneumatology and soteriology of African Pentecostal movements…’

What Asamoah-Gyadu implies by the foregoing observation is that the experience of the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit by Christian believers ensures the exercise of the gift of healing and deliverance which recovers for Christianity important dimensions of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being.

6.5.5 Healing and Deliverance as Integral Part of Pastoral Responsibilities in the Context of the GMPCs

As we have earlier pointed out, in working among Ghanaian immigrants in Germany and the Netherlands, the practice of pastoral care and counselling may be perceived as an indispensable ecclesial practice in view of their particular situation as explained above. However, such an ecclesial practice should be pursued with a holistic evangelistic orientation which takes a crucial view of healing and deliverance ministry as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities. By addressing oneself to the existential needs like healing and deliverance in pastoral care and counselling, the saving grace of God is given active expression as a salvation of power meant to be experienced as Asamoah-Gyadu has observed above.

As we have already established in this study, immigrant Ghanaian Christians in Europe share the same traditional worldviews with their folks in their homeland. However, their immigrant situations pose far more unique ministry challenges to these GMPCs established in European societies. The problems and needs of Ghanaian immigrants range widely from spiritual to socio-psychological. In the first place, there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. Moreover, their immigrant situations create for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want of

532 Quoted in Asamoah Gyadu, African Charismatics, 199.
533 Asamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics, 199-200.
warmth, care, friendship and affection. Besides all these there is the sense of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, addictive habits and other moral weaknesses, apparent failures, disappointments and numerous difficulties in one’s life.

In Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a mission setting like the GMPCs established in European societies, the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it capable of meeting the needs of their members cannot be overemphasized. It is an undeniable fact that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring which enables it to address the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the church to its members and to the Ghanaian immigrant community at large. In this regard, if the membership of the GMPCs would perceive the complete relevance of these churches to their immigrant situations then much depends on their spiritual leadership. It is expected of them to meaningfully demonstrate their commitment in tackling the aforementioned needs of the membership as they seek to improve their spiritual lives. As we have already mentioned in chapter four of this study, if this does not happen, then there is always the likelihood that some of their members will be attracted to and eventually drawn to other churches and places where they presume that their needs will be meaningfully addressed. Such a situation affects general church attendance, financial contributions of the said members to their own churches and eventually the dwindling of church membership.

In reality these Ghanaian mainline Christians are in constant search for holistic healing—spiritual, emotional and physical. It is this situation that makes them crave a sense of mystery, a spiritual experience that transforms and provides guidance and empowerment for life. One of the greatest challenges that the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs constantly face is the situation whereby their ministry is not perceived to be making the desired impression on the membership. This becomes more evident when the members deem the ministry of their spiritual leaders as being non-charismatic or lacking the touch of effective prayer that could meaningfully address their needs. In a situation like this since some of the membership have a taste for the charismatic experience; they begin fellowshipping with other PCCs periodically by attending their programs like prayer retreats. Then once they have developed a full taste for that ministry they eventually leave their own church unceremoniously to join such churches. Others who do not appear so committed to the church but at the same time maintain their membership tend to become more and more inactive in church attendance and this obviously does not augur well for church growth.
In view of the contextual needs of immigrant Ghanaian Christians as discussed above, it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs must be seen to be committed to addressing such pertinent existential needs as discussed in this chapter. The congregations themselves must constitute dynamic environments in which people find friendship, empowerment, and fulfilment. The role of the spiritual leadership in creating such an environment therefore cannot be over-emphasized.

As we have earlier observed in this study, pastoral care becomes more relevant and meaningful to the Ghanaian/African Christians when it seeks to address their existential needs like healing and deliverance. As observed earlier in this study, healing and deliverance employed as an integral part of pastoral care recovers for Ghanaian Christianity important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. In view of the foregoing, any approach to ministry amongst these Ghanaian Christians must be the kind that makes meaning to their immigrant situation and inherent religious sensibilities and yet, faithful to the heritage of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This will ensure the ministry fruitfulness of their spiritual leadership and consequently the ministry relevance of the said GMPCs to their members.

It is for this reason that in my view, the importance of mysteries in practical Christianity which is a key element of religion need not be down-played especially in a context like that of these GMPCs where the supernatural is as real as the natural to their members. For these immigrant Ghanaian Christians there seems to be a constant need for a sense of divine Presence, a sense of need for a super-natural power to overcome oppressive forces and difficulties in their immigrant life situations. It is in such situations that the ministry relevance of the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs is called for. The spiritual leaders must be seen as shepherds, providing care and healing for the community in the power of the Holy Spirit who is present with us in Christ. They must also be seen as dependable friends, ready and available to be turned to for the much needed support in times of distress and moreover, as religious functionaries who demonstrate the graces to satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. When this does not happen, the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring for these Ghanaian immigrant Christians is brought into serious disrepute. Such a situation also questions the relevance of the GMPCs and their spiritual leadership to their needs in their immigrant situations.

It is noteworthy that in this ministry of healing and deliverance in mainline Protestant Christianity, the Ghanaian pastors in Germany and the Netherlands ensure that their approach is theologically sound and well-grounded in scripture. For that reason, in their counselling
sessions they emphasize the reality of the new birth and the availability of the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit for the Christian believer to overcome human weaknesses so that one could fully appropriate the divine promises in scripture through fervent prayers. It is noteworthy that when a sense of commitment to pastoral care is demonstrated on the part of the spiritual leadership of these churches, lives are touched and there is evidence of transformed lives. Some share testimonies of deliverance from obsessive compulsive behaviour and aggressive attitudes, drug addiction, excessive drunkenness, depression resulting from personal conflicts, poor relationships and the sense of being unjustly treated. Others also testify to healing and deliverance from various ailments or physical infirmities. There have been instances whereby sick members have experienced divine healing at their congregational prayer meetings. Healing could be either instantaneous or gradual when the entire congregation is mobilized to pray for the sick. Members do share testimonies about instances whereby their persistent prayers for healing and deliverance are believed to have speeded up the recovery of sick members or relatives who were undergoing medical treatment. In other instances whereby sick persons concerned appeared to be in very critical and seemingly helpless medical condition, congregational prayer motivated and mobilized by the leadership contributed immensely to eventual recovery. It is noteworthy that such instances of divine intervention for recovery through congregational prayers eventually become a source of inspiration to many church members who at a point in time find themselves in similar situation.

6.5.6 Holistic Ministry of the Church from the Ghanaian/African Christians’ Perspective

As we have earlier observed in this study, healing and deliverance employed as an integral part of pastoral care recovers for Ghanaian/African Christianity important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being as demonstrated in Jesus’ ministry recorded in the Gospels [Mark 1: 21-28].

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534 'They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to
It is for this reason that the existential import of the Christ event as related to his holistic ministry which he also entrusted to his disciples has always proved popular in the Ghanian/African context. In Africa, health is often viewed as wholeness; the unity of the ‘natural’ and the ‘supernatural’ and it is for this reason that healing has always been sought after vigorously through religious means even when orthodox medical treatment appears to prove ineffective. Wout van Laar has observed that

‘healing as practiced by Jesus is closer to the everyday life of non-Western Christians than for us children of the Enlightenment.’

He explains the African Christian’s perspective by stating further that:

‘In conjunction with ancient African traditions, they know Christ as the healing medicineman. They show a holistic view of healing and health that is far removed from that of the Westerners with their faith in the Enlightenment: illness not only affects the individual, but is experienced as rupture and disturbance of the state of equilibrium. It is a matter of restoring the cohesion of things.’

In the view of Van Laar, the concept of healing which bespeaks of “wholeness” gets us to think of physical health as well as spiritual and social well-being, because the human being is a being who comes into his or her own in community with others, with nature and with God. The ultimate goal of holistic ministry therefore, is the restored relations with God, with one’s fellow human being, and with oneself. In healing communities, people do not only experience physical healing but they experience the shalom (peace, wholeness) of God and restored relations; they find new home, rediscover their dignity and create for themselves the space that others denied them.

The view taken in this study is that the holistic mission fulfilled by the New Testament Apostolic church embraced not just freedom from servitude to sin, fear and power of death,
but also healing and deliverance from emotional, psychological, mental or physical infirmities. In the Book of James, even though there is teaching about the place of suffering in the Christian life [James 1:2-4, 12], yet the evidence in James 5:13-15 supports the case for divine healing through prayer. The implication of the foregoing is that it is appropriate to pray for divine healing in accordance with scripture trusting God to deal with even the most trying health situation in a way that will eventually glorify His name.

The fact that Ghanaians/Africans believe in divine healing by faith in God does not mean that they consider the ministry of healing through prayer as isolated from other healing ministries. Healing and deliverance ministry as understood and practiced by Ghanaian/African mainline Christians only complement conventional or orthodox medicine, diaconal service, and social care among others. However, as much as they acknowledge that orthodox medicine has taken strides to combat and control ailments, they also believe that persistent prayer of faith does speed up the recovery of sick people undergoing medical treatment. Moreover, they believe that even when orthodox medical treatment appears to prove ineffective, God may choose to intervene through His divine healing grace. Van Laar points out that in Western society, medicine is practiced in the hospital, religion in the church, but in Africa matters are different, in the sense that healing is an integral part of church life and of the church’s ministry.

Van Laar concludes that in Africa and Latin America, countless people gain faith by way of healing since one does not just hear the biblical accounts of Jesus who heals the sick and casts out demons, but knows them to be part of one’s own experience or that of a relation or acquaintance. In their daily lives many continue to experience what Jesus taught about a God of mercy, who binds up wounds and becomes a source of life amid death and brings joy amid suffering. In essence, the mission of the church in our time is amid the brokenness and in conflict situations, to offer ‘healing places’ where men, women and children find ‘healing’ for body, mind and soul; welcoming meeting-places where wholeness, reconciliation and forgiveness are received and shared.

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539 ‘Is any of you in trouble? He should pray… is any of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If they has sinned, they will be forgiven’ [James 5: 13-15].

540 Van Laar, ‘Churches as Healing Communities’, 144.

541 Van Laar, ‘Churches as Healing Communities’, 144-145.
6.6 Ghanaian Communality and the Provision of Communal Welfare in the Spirit of Koinonia

The promotion of a harmonious community within which the spirituality of members is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for, remains the central concern of the GMPCs. The importance which the GMPCs attach to the promotion of a harmonious community life in their congregations is informed by the following three factors:

1. The challenges of the immigrant situation of the immigrant Ghanaian Christians and the craving for a sense of belonging and acceptance as a marginalized community.
2. The unique significance of communal life to Ghanaians/Africans in general.
3. The strong sense of Christian community for personal spirituality in the lives of these Ghanaian Christians.

It is noteworthy that the immigrant situation of these Ghanaian immigrants creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. Most of these Ghanaian immigrants are economic refugees detached from families and homeland. Some are documented whereas others are not yet fully documented. For the undocumented in particular their immigrant situation makes them experience feelings of isolation and depression in their constant struggle to find shelter and to fend for themselves. It is here that the inherent strong traditional communal factor of Ghanaians which enables these churches to provide group solidarity becomes very essential. These churches endeavour to provide within their means varied assistance for the jobless and homeless among them. They also provide group solidarity for all their members in times of marriage, birth, birthday celebrations, illness, bereavements and other crises moments. The Ghanaian churches thus create a sense of belonging, caring and support which many immigrants detached from their families and homeland usually lack in the foreign land, especially in a culture seen as more individualistic than communal. The significant point here is that these churches aim at providing a “spiritual home” where people can feel more at home in a fellowship where they can find intimate community of practical loving and caring relationships and intensive spiritual interaction in the spirit of koinonia. In this context we understand koinonia (Greek) to mean that kind of Spirit-inspired caring fellowship or communion of Christian believers in which members are growing in loving relationships with God and with each other.

In the light of the foregoing, it is anticipated that in order to ensure the desired ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their members the spiritual leadership provided by these churches
must be seen to demonstrate appreciable commitment towards the promotion of the said harmonious community life. The spiritual leadership must be appreciably dynamic to ensure that their congregations are fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment. In essence this vision will become a reality only if the Ghanaian immigrant Christian community would be constantly challenged to embrace the true sense of Ghanaian communality which is invigorated to express itself in the spirit of koinonia. This leads us to the following discussion.

6.6.1 The Significance of the Traditional Communal Factor of Ghanaians in their Immigrant Situations

Essentially, the traditional Ghanaian society emphasises a strong network of family relationships and communal cohesiveness. Moses Biney in his study on Religion and Adaptation among Ghanaian Immigrants in New York has observed that Ghanaians understand community as not merely an association of individuals but rather an organic whole of which the individual is part. Biney cites John Mbiti, the renowned theologian and scholar of African religion in his argument that within African belief systems there is a tendency for the concept of community to have ontological priority over that of the individual. In other words, the community largely (but not entirely) determines an individual’s personhood. The Ghanaian/African community provides sustenance, guidance, and protection for its members and through its norms, values and traditions defines their individual statutes and roles. In effect, it is within the community that the individual finds the fullness of his or her being and provides the context within which he is socialized. As we have mentioned earlier in this study, the traditional Ghanaian society emphasises a strong network of family relationships and communal cohesiveness which naturally promotes group solidarity. According to Omenyo this strong network of communal cohesiveness is unfortunately breaking down in the homeland due to the pressure of urbanization. The situation however, is somehow different for Ghanaian immigrants outside the homeland. The immigrant situation of Ghanaian immigrants in places like Europe constantly challenges them to strive to promote the said inherent traditional communal cohesiveness for their common good. All such efforts enable them to provide the much needed group solidarity for their members in special

542 Biney, From Africa to America, 105-106.
543 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 252.
occasions like marriage, birth, birthday celebrations, illness, bereavements and other crises moments. It is noteworthy that this typically African understanding of the relationship between the community and the individual stands in total contrast to the individualistic ethos of the host Western societies of these Ghanaian immigrants. Obviously, this conflict of culture poses a big challenge to first time Ghanaian immigrants to the host Western societies. At the first instance there is a feeling of a sense of displacement coupled with alienation which naturally creates for the typical Ghanaian immigrant a want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. It is at this instance that the practical demonstration of the relevance of the GMPCs to the immigrant community is called for. Both for their own authenticity and for their evangelistic fruitfulness, the GMPCs must continually learn ways to recover the dynamics of genuine Christian community. Since the typical African Christian understanding of the relationship between the community and the individual constitute the basis for, and a vehicle for communicating spirituality, the GMPCs should aspire to translate the true essence of traditional Ghanaian communality into an experience of genuine Christian koinonia. We now proceed to discuss how these GMPCs endeavour to meet the foregoing challenges.

6.6.2 The Experience of Christian koinonia in the Immigrant Situations of the GMPCs

Our discussion in this study seeks to establish the significant point that the GMPCs aim at becoming an avenue where people could be brought to experience Christian love and to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance; a spiritual home where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. In essence, the Ghanaian churches endeavour to create a sense of belonging, caring and support which many immigrants detached from their families and homeland usually lack in a foreign land especially in a culture seen as more individualistic than communal. The foregoing lends credence to the observation made by Afe Adogame that African churches in the Diasporas, established in European societies have come to fill a spiritual vacuum and offer ‘a home away from home’ for many disenchanted Africans. The important question raised here then is how does that traditional Ghanaian/African communality translate into that caring fellowship (koinonia in Greek) among these mainline Christians in the GMPCs?

Ter Haar in her study of African Christians in the Netherlands points out that in religious as well as sociological terms, there is no doubt that the aspect of community is of prime importance since this is as much a feature of the structure and organisation of these African Ghanaian churches as it is of their ritual and belief. She has observed that those who join these Christian communities become part of a supportive network. In effect these Ghanaian churches endeavour to contribute meaningfully to the material and immaterial well-being of their members.

As we have earlier observed, one most important concern besides the sustenance of spirituality for the newly emerged GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands is the promotion of a harmonious community within which the communal welfare of the members is catered for. The afore-mentioned communality of these GMPCs lends credence to the following observation by Lartey:

‘The whole life of a church is to be more one of caring, comforting and growing…’

The significant point here for the GMPC’s is that their immigrant situation motivates them to endeavour to provide models of a caring Christian community which without doubt envisions the model of the early Christian community as mentioned in Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47. Wenger in his essay on ‘How churches grow’ has identified ‘caring fellowship’ (*koinonia* in Greek) as one of the vital characteristics of growing congregations. In the words of Wenger:

‘Churches grow when the needs of all the members are being fulfilled. Each member must feel wanted and cared for. Special programmes and gimmicks will not bring people into Christian fellowship, but love will. What is needed is genuine love among the people of God, not only for those already in the church but for those outside. As Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love for one another” [John 13:35].’

In a similar vein, Charlie Cleverly in his study on ‘Church Planting’ points out that God planned for the church to be a community where people love each other in a way that is irresistibly attractive. According to Cleverly,

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545 Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 43.
‘we see this vividly at the birth of the church where “all the believers were together”, “all the believers were one in heart and mind…”, they shared everything they had…”, “there were no needy persons among them…”, and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” [Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37].

It is noteworthy that the central concern of both the initiators and those who take their membership in the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands is the enhancement of spirituality and communal life. In view of this, these churches endeavour to focus on spirituality and communality both of which are seen to be core elements of the Christian ‘koinonia’. The significant point here is that these churches aim at providing a “spiritual home” where people can feel more at home in a fellowship where they can find intimate community of practical loving and caring relationships and intensive spiritual interaction in the spirit of koinonia. As we have stated above, koinonia in this context is understood to mean that kind of Spirit-inspired caring fellowship or communion of Christian believers in which members are growing in loving relationships with God and with each other.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the GMPCs in Germany and Netherlands aim at becoming avenues where people could feel a sense of belonging and acceptance; a spiritual home where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally, a privilege that many immigrants usually lack in a foreign land. It is an undeniable fact that once the leadership of these churches demonstrate genuine love and care for the basic human needs of their members, they give them every reason to trust them with their deepest spiritual needs. In most instances where trust building is enhanced through genuine loving and caring relationships in the spirit of koinonia, marked spiritual renewal results from this as the church consistently provides spiritual and social guidance. In other words, whenever the fellowship provided by the church proves to be the kind that welcomes and supports those who enter as friends, helps them to relate their lives to God and eventually gets them strengthened in their relationship with God, there are usually positive results. Members with anti-social habits experience deliverance from such bondages, and others both young and old receive the much needed help that protects them from falling victim to the anti-social practices prevalent in the society.

For most of those who happen to experience spiritual renewal or otherwise upon becoming members of the GMPCs, much depends on the extent of help they receive through loving and caring relationships in the spirit of koinonia as exemplified by the early Apostolic

548 Cleverly, Church Planting: Our Future Hope, 119.
Church [Acts 2:42-47]. For some the fellowship and security provided by the church becomes their source of motivation in breaking with apparent destructive bad company and anti-social habits.

A youth leader belonging to one of the GMPCs in Germany shared the following story about one of their female young adults:

‘As a young teenage student this church member became wayward, developed a sour relationship with her parents, left home and eventually dropped from school. She got into bad company and hanged about with friends in the street. However through the loving and caring relationship extended to her by a few devoted and committed Youth leaders of her church she was inspired to rededicate her life to Christ and started fellowshipping with them in church. After experiencing spiritual renewal through their loving and caring relationship and invaluable spiritual and material support, she eventually got her life reorganized, got her relationship with her parents restored and resumed her schooling after she had dropped from school for a couple of years.’ 549

It is worthy of note that the immigrant situation of the GMPCs constantly challenges them to function more or less like a ‘church in the mission setting’. What is implied by this is the conscious commitment to a holistic view of missions which includes the proclamation in authentic word and deed. In other words, there should be a common understanding of missions as the enhancement of spirituality and promotion of social welfare. These two are considered to be integral parts of the witness to Christ. This crucial factor and understanding of missions in the ministry of the GMPCs leads to the following discussion:

1. Promotion of social welfare in the spirit of koinonia

The GMPCs have adopted welfare bye-laws and set up welfare committees to cater for the social needs of their members. The Methodist churches in the Netherlands as well as Germany for instance have adopted Welfare Bye-laws the preamble of which reads:

‘The Wesley Methodist society is a mission congregation ministering primarily to people who have been separated from their families for years and who cling to the congregation as an extended family. We are therefore conscious of the fact that ministering to such a community should not just be limited to the spiritual needs but

549 Interview was conducted in October 2011 by the researcher with one of the youth leaders who counseled and supported the said young female student. The recorded interview is on tape and is available with the researcher.
also to the social and financial needs as well. In view of this, the society has adopted the following Welfare Bye-laws that will help address the most basic social and financial needs of its members.\footnote{550 Wesley Methodist Church Amsterdam-Netherlands. Adopted Welfare Bye-Laws: Document Adopted by the ‘Society Meeting’, 15th October, 2000.}

The welfare committee which sees to the implementation of the Welfare Bye-laws, among other things gathers information about the specific welfare needs of members critically assesses them, and makes recommendation for the necessary action to be taken. In accordance with the said Bye-laws, basic welfare assistance in cash donation or in kind could be extended to the jobless and financially handicapped especially the undocumented who also in most cases face housing problems. The welfare committee tackles the foregoing issues by coordinating the exchange of information on housing and job opportunities among church members. The committee is also mandated to consult with persons with the expertise to assist with medical and legal issues affecting members; for instance medical, legal and educational seminars are occasionally organized by the church to enlighten the congregation on such important issues. The job schedule of the welfare committee also includes planning visits to the sick, the bereaved, expectant and nursing mothers, those held in custody and all those who find themselves in extreme difficult situation particularly undocumented immigrants. It is noteworthy that for most of these welfare services rendered in the name of the church, it is the individual members of the church community who voluntarily constitute themselves into a supportive network to assist their fellow brothers and sisters in need. This undoubtedly lends credence to the observation made by Ter Haar that for these Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands religion has become one of the main supports of life there, not just for the spiritual reassurance it can provide, but also on account of its social functions.\footnote{551 Ter Haar, \textit{Halfway to Paradise}, 43.}

There is no gainsaying the fact that the primary aim of the welfare services provided by these churches is to promote the social welfare of both their members and non-members in the context of spirituality, but in most cases however, growth becomes a consequent factor. As much as there could be misgivings in some quarters about this kind of support especially for the economic and socially disadvantaged African immigrants, it is reassuring to know that it is worth it. A good number of such immigrants who benefit from the benevolence of church members in most cases accompany them to church, commit their lives to Christ, get their
spiritual and social lives better organised and eventually become active members of the church.

A very active and committed member of one of the GMPCs in the Netherlands shares the following personal testimony:

‘As an undocumented and homeless Ghanaian immigrant I was privileged to receive immense support from the family of one of the lay leaders of the church who among other things provided me with accommodation and catered for my basic needs for several months. Sometime later, I began to suffer acute psychiatric disorders which landed me in police custody which eventually afforded me the opportunity to receive medical treatment. However, all along my host family and the leadership of the church continued to provide me with the much needed assistance in terms of pastoral counselling, prayer and social support. While receiving medical treatment, I continued to receive the loving and caring support from the entire church community until I fully recovered from my ill-health, found job and eventually became self-supporting.’

Another very active and committed member of one of the GMPCs in the Netherlands also relates the following story:

‘The first time I arrived in the Netherlands I got stranded in Amsterdam. I eventually located the place of worship of one of the congregations of the GMPCs and introduced myself to the congregation at an evening church service. One of the key lay leaders of the church readily volunteered to offer me accommodation coupled with the kind support of the church leadership. I continued to be well accommodated and catered for until I found a job and eventually got well settled to fend for myself.’

2. Social Celebrations

As we have earlier observed from the main introduction of this study, the inherent strong traditional communal factor of Ghanaians enables these churches to provide group solidarity for all their members in times of marriage, birth, birthday celebrations, illness, bereavements and other crises moments. By so doing these Ghanaian churches create a sense of belonging

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552 Interview was conducted by the researcher with the said member in Amsterdam in March 2010. The interview was not recorded on tape, but the interview notes are available with the researcher.

553 Interview conducted by the researcher with the said church member in Amsterdam in September 2009. The interview recorded on tape is available with the researcher.
and mutual care which many immigrants detached from their families and homeland usually lack in the foreign land.

Besides the above-mentioned job schedule, the Welfare committee also collects and collates information regarding scheduled dates for impending celebrations of the aforementioned functions of church members held either within or outside the church premises. There are varieties of special functions which include customary marriage, blessing of marriage in church, mother’s thanksgiving and child dedication (which is a form of Christening), baptism and confirmation, funerals, memorial and thanksgiving service for deceased close relatives of church members who might have died in Ghana. On such occasions the Welfare committee organizes donations from the congregation to be presented to the concerned members. The noticeable advantageous factor for the ministry of the church is the opportunity that such an occasion offers the church to share the Gospel with the good number of invited guests in attendance some of whom may be non-churched. Such church functions attract a vast gathering of family members, friends, neighbours, workmates and all kind of acquaintances who may include Dutch and other non-Ghanaian nationals. During the service the guests usually sit behind the member(s) concerned. They also follow them and stand behind them apparently to give them spiritual and moral support when summoned to the front to share liturgical prayers with the officiating clergy. It is gratifying to note that on such occasions some of the casual visitors receive the most needed inspiration to commit or rededicate their lives to Christ and eventually become members of the church.

There is no gainsaying the fact that at such celebrations, for the particular member who is in the spotlight for the day as well as his or her guests, the church becomes an avenue where they could come and feel important and feel valued. It becomes ‘a home away from home’ where they could feel a sense of belonging and acceptance and where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. As they experience communality in loving and caring relationships in the spirit of ‘koinonia’, they are thus motivated to relate their lives to God through the inspirational worship service of the church. This undoubtedly lends credence to the following observation made by Christian Schwarz:

‘People do not want to hear us talk about love they want to experience how Christian love really works.’

Schwarz further explains that

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unfeigned, practical love endows a church with a much greater magnetic power than all the marketing efforts of this world.' 555

The significant point here is that people feel more at home in a fellowship where they can find intimate community of practical loving and caring relationships. Each member must feel wanted and cared for. Special programmes by themselves and gimmicks will not bring people into Christian fellowship but sincere caring love, not only for those already in the church but for those outside will.

Obviously the spiritual and social challenges on the mission grounds as illustrated above have unique implications for the spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in these Ghanaian immigrants’ church situations. In view of the foregoing, it is anticipated that in order to ensure the desired ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their members the spiritual leadership provided by these churches must be seen to demonstrate appreciable commitment towards the promotion of a harmonious community. The spiritual leadership must be appreciably dynamic to ensure that their congregations are fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment. In essence this vision will become a reality only if the Ghanaian immigrant Christian community would be constantly challenged to embrace the true sense of Ghanaian communality which is invigorated to express itself in the spirit of koinonia.

When that happens, the church then becomes an avenue where people could be brought to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance; a spiritual home where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally, a privilege that many immigrants usually lack in a foreign land. It is an undeniable fact that once the leadership of these churches demonstrate genuine love and care for the basic human needs of their members, they give them every reason to trust them with their deepest spiritual needs. In most instances where trust building is enhanced through genuine loving and caring relationships in the spirit of koinonia, marked spiritual renewal results from this as the church consistently provides spiritual and social guidance. In other words, whenever the fellowship provided by the church proves to be the kind that welcomes and supports those who enter as friends, helps them to relate their lives to God and eventually gets them strengthened in their relationship with God, there are usually positive results in terms of church growth.

6.7 Holiness Ethics and Church Discipline as Means for Vitality in Spirituality and Evangelistic Fruitfulness

It is noteworthy that mainline traditional churches like the PCG which was founded and led by Western Evangelical Mission Societies, inherited rich evangelical tradition that had a firm belief in the centrality and the authority of the Bible. From the outset of its foundation, the PCG in conformity with its evangelical tradition remained committed to the maintenance of strict Christian spiritual and moral standards. The Methodist Church Ghana (MCG) on the other hand happens to be a direct offshoot of British Methodism which stands directly in historical succession to the Wesleyan Revivalist Movement led by John Wesley in the early eighteenth century. Incidentally, the Wesleyan Movement believed to be the mother of modern evangelicalism laid emphasis on experiential conversion with a change of heart evidenced by the fruits of that change which is consequently shared with others through active evangelism.

In his book on ‘John Wesley and the Methodists’, Robert Aboagye-Mensah has observed that the issue of ‘holy living’ or personal ‘holiness’ happens to be one of the three basic doctrines that John Wesley emphasized in his preaching and teaching besides the doctrines of justification and sanctification. He explains that Wesley understood justification to be that act of God the Father whereby the penitent sinner is saved from the guilt of sin and restored to the favour of God through personal faith in Christ’s atoning sacrifice on the cross for the sins of mankind. On sanctification which Wesley considers to be immediate consequent to justification, Aboagye-Mensah points out that we are acknowledging that God has actually begun in us a process growth into the image of God. It is a process by which we are saved from the power, root and contamination of sin and enabled to grow into Christ-likeness. In sanctification there is a gradual process of God’s inward activity through His Spirit which is brought into effect in conjunction with our personal faith in Christ. This inner activity of the Spirit of God in the life of the believer which is expressed outwardly in human works.

556 Omenyo, Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, 127.
557 Ter Haar, Halfway to Paradise, 12-13.
558 Aboagye-Mensah, John Wesley and the Methodists, 52.
consequently bears fruit outwardly which is described by Wesley as ‘holy living’ or personal ‘holiness’. The words of St. Paul in Ephesians 2:8-10 summarize it all. 559

Wesley points out that what gave rise to Methodism was the concern for holy living. However Wesley, after his life transforming religious experience in 1738 which eventually led to the Wesleyan Revival came to understand that holiness comes by faith, and that men are justified before they are sanctified and that holiness is the outward manifestation of sanctification. 560 Until his death, Wesley maintained that Methodism was raised by God to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land. In the words of Wesley:

‘This doctrine (holy living) is the grand deposition which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propagating this chiefly he appeared to have raised us up.’561

Aboagye-Mensah has noted that the doctrine of entire sanctification or holiness has at least one important value for us as we face so much broken relationship with Christ with its consequent moral laxity among both the laity and the clergy of our Church. In his view:

‘By setting holiness as a goal for Christian living, Wesley is reminding us that we should make a conscious effort to defeat sin in our lives through the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.’562

There is no doubt that this conscious effort by the Christian believer to defeat sin in pursuit of holiness is motivated by the intention to seek to love God with all our minds and strength, and to love and serve our neighbours. In effect holy living is the hallmark of the believer’s Christian witness. Jongeneel posits that the merits of holiness in the life of a Christian and as a means of mission are undisputable. In a similar vein Carmelo B. Torranova is cited by Jongeneel as making the following observation about holy living in relation to the mission of the church:

‘A holy life, a holy church will evangelize, pray and open new mission fields with greater efficiency and better results than any other priority out of the context of a holy life.’563

559 ‘For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do’ [Eph.2:8-10].
560 The Works of John Wesley, Vol, VI, 509.
The afore-mentioned observations lend credence to the following most challenging statement made by John Wesley:

‘Give me a hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen. Such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the Kingdom of God on Earth.’  

The implication of John Wesley’s statement is that the character or the lifestyle of the Christian community is quite significant since it increases the credibility and effectiveness of its evangelistic witness. It is just as Snyder puts it, ‘in our evangelistic lifestyle we need a holistic witness that gives both depth and credibility to our proclamation and evangelism.’

In view of this it cannot be overemphasized that the authenticity and vitality of the local congregation should by no means be compromised. After all, as Snyder points out,

‘Evangelism is sharing life, and the church cannot share what it does not possess. Therefore a congregation’s evangelistic fruitfulness will be in proportion to its spiritual vitality.’

It is for this reason that the present author shares the view that a congregation must have more than correct doctrine for its message to be received, understood and eventually effect a significant change in the lifestyle of its audience both within and outside the church community. In effect, the congregation must have a spiritual life and must be spiritually vital because Gospel truths divorced from experience generally fail to communicate the intended message and draw new converts that could be effectively discipled. A congregation which lacks a meaningful spiritual vitality may succeed in drawing in new people who may claim allegiance to Christ, but eventually little will change in their lifestyles. Their lives will present no real challenge to the inherent evils of oppression, prejudice, moral decadence and exploitation in society.

As we have earlier observed, the authenticity of the spiritual and moral character of the Christian community is very vital in relation to the mission of the church since it increases the credibility and effectiveness of its evangelistic witness. In the light of the foregoing, the

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564 Charlie Cleverly, *Church Planting: Our Future Hope*, 75.
present author shares the view that any successful mission-minded congregation that concerns itself with winning disciples and bringing them to Christ-likeness must seek ‘to inculcate in her members personal holiness in both private and public lives.’

It is worthy of note the fact that the afore-mentioned observation happens to be one of the most significant challenges facing the GMPCs since their formation in their host European societies. As we have observed above, there is no gainsaying the fact that the GMPCs and their mother churches have sound doctrine and rich evangelical traditional heritage. It is noteworthy that the GMPCs have since their formation adopted the constitution of their mother churches for their spiritual, moral and administrative guidance. The main challenge they face however is the effective enforcement or maintenance of church discipline, especially in terms of personal holiness among their members to enhance the credibility and effectiveness of their evangelistic witness. The view we want to express here is that the situation on the mission grounds demands their spiritual and moral resolve to maintain the kind of evangelical ethical standards which conform to their official church doctrine and church regulations so as to ensure evangelistic fruitfulness.

It is noteworthy that there are stipulated regulations in their official church constitution regarding the personal and social conduct of the membership. In this regard, the Constitution and Standing Orders (MCG SO) of the MCG stipulates the following as introductory statements to ‘THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CONDUCT OF CHURCH MEMBERS’:

‘The Christian Standard

(1) It shall be the duty of every member of the Methodist Church to seek holiness of character and life after the pattern of Christ and the teaching of the New Testament, recognizing that those matters on which the Methodist Church has found it expedient to lay down the following rules for the guidance of its members represent only a small part of the whole obligations of a Christian.

(2) Ministers and Leaders’ Meeting shall take the law of God contained in Holy scripture as their primary standard of judgement and even when a particular form of delinquency does not contravene a distinct and specific rule of the church, they shall have the right to discipline members who in their judgement show themselves unworthy of their membership of the church.\(^{567}\)

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\(^{566}\) Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 217.

\(^{567}\) *The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Ghana*, Revised edition, 2000, SO (Standing Orders) 748.
The following four rules on the use of intoxicants and narcotic drugs are representative of the Constitutional Provisions in that regard:

‘Use of Intoxicants and Narcotic Drugs

(1) There shall be regular teaching in all societies, especially during Christian citizenship Week and in classes of preparation for baptism and full membership, upon the dangers inherent in the use of intoxicating liquors and narcotic drugs and members shall be required to be of sober and temperate habits.

(2) Members shall be urged to avoid as far as possible all participation in the manufacture and sale of such liquors; and such participation shall be regarded as tending to disqualify a member from holding office.

(3) Any member found guilty of drunkenness shall be placed under discipline for at least three months. An office-bearer so disciplined and subsequently restored to membership shall be allowed to resume office as and when Leaders’ Meeting so decides.

(4) No church organization or group shall accept alcoholic drinks in connection with a wedding, funeral or any other public function.’

The regulations of the PCG explicitly admonish members to

‘be sober, refraining from taking or offering intoxicating drink…’

There are also stipulated constitutional regulations on marriage and members are admonished to obey the Christian rule of life-long monogamous fidelity in marriage and shall encourage the same for their children and dependants. Furthermore, the constitutional provisions of these churches also caution members against the inherent evils of oppression, prejudice, all forms of anti-social habits and exploitation in society. On church discipline, the constitution of the PCG stipulates the following among other things:

‘CHURCH DISCIPLINE

(1) The application of the discipline of the church shall be based on the Scriptures.

(2) The discipline shall be:

568 The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Ghana, Revised edition, 2000, SO (Standing Orders) 748.
(a) To the glory of God, the purity of the church and the spiritual benefit of members, including the erring member
(b) Administered in faithfulness, love and tenderness.
(3) The discipline shall consist in the appropriate censures of the Church to those whose conduct shall have given occasion for it.\textsuperscript{570}

Similarly, on the mode of church discipline, the constitution of the MCG stipulates that:
‘Church discipline has to be exercised from time to time for the spiritual and moral welfare of the whole society and of erring members, both clergy and lay, and to maintain a truly Christian witness to the community.’\textsuperscript{571}

It is significant to note here that the goal of church discipline does not entail just the spiritual and moral welfare of church members including the erring member but also to seek the glory of God in the maintenance of a credible Christian witness to the larger community even beyond the sphere of the church community. As we have earlier pointed out in chapter four of this study, right from the very outset of the formation of the GMPCs there were two distinct views held by the Ghanaian immigrant Christians who were taking their membership with regard to spirituality and organisational structure of the GMPCs.

On the one hand there were a good number of people who either advocated for experiential transformative conversion or at least were more inclined to the maintenance of moral uprightness in the spiritual life of the church. In the light of the foregoing, the said prospective members some of whom eventually became members of these GMPCs categorically disapprove of any anti-social habits such as smoking, use of intoxicating liquors, marital infidelity, co-habitation etc. In their judgement, as Ter Haar has observed,
‘these habits are seen as corrupting the person and inimical to a Christian way of life.’\textsuperscript{572}

In view of this such members are easily put off when they detect such anti-social habits in the church especially among the church leadership. Some of these people get disheartened and eventually withdraw their membership from the church unceremoniously especially when to their view proper discipline is not enforced to check such moral lapses detected among church members. In their view the church stands to gain much from its resolve to maintain

\textsuperscript{571} \textit{The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Ghana}, 2000, SO 150 (1).
\textsuperscript{572} Ter Haar, \textit{Halfway to Paradise}, 45.
evangelical ethical standards which conform to its official church doctrine. In the light of the foregoing, it is anticipated that if the church leadership becomes lax and turns a blind eye on any form of moral lapses in the church there is the likelihood that the church stands to lose most of its potentially gifted members.

On the other hand there were members who in view of their previous church membership in Ghana viewed their situation here as simply a renewal of membership without seriously considering its spiritual and moral implications. Some of these people upon entering the church did not seriously resolve to put a hold on any life of self-indulgence which is contrary to the life-style characterized by their understanding of Christian holiness. Since most of such members may lack any meaningful experiential transformative conversion, some of them would not take kindly to any strict disciplinary action taken against their life of self-indulgence viewed as inimical to a true Christian life and witness to the community. Here too, in some instances if due care is not taken by the church leadership in their approach to any form of censure the member whose conduct may have given occasion for it takes offence at the disciplinary action and either becomes inactive or withdraws his or her membership altogether. There have been instances however, whereby members who took offence at the censure of the church and withdrew their membership in the course of time experienced a change of heart and came back to the church to renew their membership.

The following story which relates to a particular church member of one of the GMPCs in the Netherlands underscores the foregoing point:

‘A church member took offence at the censure of a leadership committee handling a marital conflict between the said member and his wife and consequently withdrew his membership from the church. Sometime later, this former member was held in custody over an alleged anti-social practice. Whilst in custody his wife who was then not properly documented began to experience acute financial constraints. When the church leadership learnt of this they mobilized their financial resources to support her. When the husband was eventually released from custody, he got a change of heart, appreciated the kind gesture of the church leadership and renewed his church membership. He eventually became one of the most active and dedicated members of the church.’

573 Interview conducted by the researcher with the church member concerned in May 2009. The interview was not recorded on tape but the interview notes are available with the researcher.
Touching on church discipline, it is noteworthy that in most instances the church leadership is in a fix as to how best to apply censures to offending members of the church. Even though the leadership of these churches do share a common view on the nature of the spiritual and moral life of the church and its membership, they sometimes lack consensus in effecting a disciplinary action against an offending member. It is noteworthy that the lack of consensus is partly attributed to two distinct views held by the leadership. On the one hand, there is the view that the church in the mission-setting should not be found to dictate ethics as Newbigin is quoted in this chapter to suggest, rather the church

‘acknowledges the sovereignty of the Spirit who gives fresh insight into God’s will.’\textsuperscript{574}

On the other hand, others are of the opinion that when church discipline is not enforced right from the very beginning the church will never know exactly when and where to begin from. Eventually, it will never be in the position to maintain evangelical ethical standards which conform to the official doctrine of the GMPCs. When that happens, the church considered to have relaxed some of its ideals might not be taken seriously and consequently would not make any meaningful impact on the community.

In the light of the afore-mentioned observations, I am of the view that the GMPCs stand to gain much from their resolve to enforce the kind of church discipline that ensures personal holiness in the lives of their members. However, every form of discipline must be enforced in Christian love and tenderness. By so doing they will be in a better position to maintain evangelical ethical standards that conform to their official church doctrine. Since holy living is a hallmark of the believer’s Christian witness, the authenticity of the spiritual and moral character of the Christian community is very vital in relation to mission. As we have earlier observed, it increases the credibility and effectiveness of the church’s evangelistic witness. Actually, the situation on the grounds for these GMPCs in their mission setting suggests that their congregational evangelistic fruitfulness will be in proportion to their spiritual vitality. In reality the mainline congregation which experiences spiritual, numerical and functional growth happens to be the one that takes its spiritual life more seriously.

\textsuperscript{574} Bauman, ‘Goals of Church Growth’, 156.
6.8 Empowering Leadership for Mission and Church Growth

In this chapter we have been discussing the ways and means whereby the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs could demonstrate a meaningful commitment to developing the relevant ecclesial practices in meeting the needs of their members. Our understanding of spiritual leadership in this context is that it must be seen to have taken a new dimension that ensures their ministry relevance not only to the first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians but to the second and future generations as well. By so doing the survival of these churches for the present and future generations will be ensured.

We observed in chapter 4.3 of this study that to the initiators of the GMPCs the primary aim and objectives for the formation of these churches were more or less chaplaincy oriented in the context of their immigrant situations. This involved contacting and gathering such Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians especially those who belonged to their particular denomination back home in Ghana and providing a place for moments of worship, congregational life and pastoral care. This meant that right from the outset of the formation of these churches the main target group for their missionary thrust was primarily the first generation Ghanaian mainline Christians who belonged to their particular denomination. The implication of all this for the GMPCs is that should they remain preoccupied with the said chaplaincy mission then they may not be in a position to ensure any meaningful mission outreach beyond their target group.

Our assumption is that beyond the chaplaincy mission stage as they consolidate their gains from the ingathering and the nurturing of their established members they should be motivated to launch out a meaningful mission outreach beyond their primarily target group. We presume that the future survival of these churches beyond the first generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians will depend much on their wholehearted commitment to intentional mission outreach in their host European societies. What we mean by intentional mission outreach is that they should seek to reach new people and bring them into the church for Christian nurture. But such a missionary vision cannot materialize unless these churches have the right calibre of spiritual leadership that can help both the first and second generation membership develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry. They should be competent to inform, train and mobilize church workers for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. It should be the kind of spiritual leadership that equips support and mentor individuals to become all that God wants them to become in
Christian life and ministry. This leads us to the next discussion below related to the foregoing discussion.

6.8.1 Empowering Leadership for Gift-Based Ministry

Christian A. Schwarz has observed in his worldwide ‘Church Growth’ research project that:

‘Leaders of growing churches concentrate on empowering other Christians for ministry. They do not use lay workers as “helpers” in attaining their own goals and fulfilling their own visions. Rather, they invert the pyramid of authority so that the leader assists Christians to attain the spiritual potential God has for them. These pastors equip, support, motivate and mentor individuals, enabling them to become all that God wants them to be.’

It is noteworthy that Schwartz distinguishes “empowering” leadership which is under consideration here from “Empowered leadership”. “Empowered leadership” could mean that there is one ingenious multi-gifted leader with a great vision, and this leader needs volunteers to help him turn his vision into reality. “Empowering” leadership is exactly the opposite. Here the said leaders consider it as one of their most important task to help Christians develop greater degrees of empowerment which according to God’s plan already belongs to them. Rather than handling the bulk of church responsibilities on their own, they invest the majority of their time in discipleship, delegation, and multiplication. Thus the energy they expend can be multiplied indefinitely.

Schwartz further points out that the role of church leadership is to help its members identify their gifts and integrate them into ministries that match their gifts. He explains that when Christians serve in their areas of giftedness they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit who enables ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary. This quality characteristic is what he terms as “gift-based ministry”.

In the words of Schwartz, this gift-based approach reflects the conviction that God sovereignly determines which Christians should best assume which ministries in the church.

575 Schwarz, Natural Church Development, 24.
576 Schwarz, Natural Church Development, 24-25.
577 Schwarz, Natural Church Development, 26.
The important issue that Schwarz is raising here is that there are some important principles which should guide us if we want to see our church make better progress in terms of church growth. In effect, the above-mentioned are two of the said principles namely: “empowering” leadership and “gift-based ministry”. To put it in a nutshell, churches which aspire to make better progress foster visionary leadership; in other words among other things they give their hearts to the long-term task of helping church members identify their gifts and training them so that they will reach the goals that the Lord has purposed for their lives.

6.8.2 ‘The Jesus Model’

It is worthy of note that the aforementioned was a fundamental principle emphasized by Jesus in his choosing of the small, intimate team of disciples whom he intensively trained and fostered so that each one would be able to multiply himself. The significance of Jesus’ emphasis on discipleship is seen in the light of the constant awareness he had of His calling to redeem and reconcile the lost world unto God [compare Jn 3:16; 2Cor 5:18-19].\textsuperscript{578} For this reason Jesus knew that however successful he was his divine mission on earth would not be fully accomplished unless his disciples continued doing it. Jesus’ emphasis therefore was on training, developing and sending out disciples whose ultimate goal in mission like his own was to fish for men - winning them for the Kingdom of God. Effective fulfilment of this divine mission demanded a two-dimensional approach to their training – the development of their inner life and then training in evangelism. Jesus trained them in two aspects by teaching as well as by example.

Jesus was indeed a perfect role model for the small band of disciples he recruited. Jesus was perfect example, not only in outward methods, but above all in his inner life and relationship with the Father in terms of intimate fellowship, absolute commitment, trust and obedience to the Father. In a similar manner Jesus taught the disciples to pray, meditate on his words and deny themselves and increasingly experience the same dependency that he had on his Father.

Jesus continually proclaimed the Good News of the Kingdom of God in most instances through parables or simple illustrations from life, but usually explained their meaning to the disciples by teaching. By so doing the disciples were taught how they could preach the Gospel

\textsuperscript{578} 2 Cor. 5: 18-19: ‘All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.’
themselves as well as teach others [Mk 1:14-15; 4:1-34]. 579 Jesus’ model of training was unique in the sense that the disciples were trained on the job, and out in real life situation. In the cause of their training, Jesus assigned them with a responsibility by delegating them with authority and sending them out in practice rounds [Lk 9:1-6]. 580 By giving them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases and sending them out ‘to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal’ Jesus was training them to serve in their areas of giftedness. At this point there is no indication that they had finished their training, rather the sending out was part of the training for two obvious reasons:

‘that they would be developed and polished, and above all, so that they would not just have a theoretical faith, but living experience.’581

Ekman has observed that the above mentioned fundamental principle of Jesus whereby a team of potential lay workers who shares everyday life together is trained, sent out and comes back for evaluation, correction and encouragement seems to have been forgotten in many places. This eventually makes it difficult to grasp what the Christian life is all about; in terms of committing oneself fully to Jesus on his conditions and becoming a genuine disciple. 582

The significant point here, in a nutshell, is two-fold. In the first place, churches whose spiritual leadership are committed to multiplying themselves through intensive spiritual training of other individuals by equipping, supporting, motivating, mentoring and enabling them to become all that God wants them to be are likely to experience significant growth. Furthermore, if believers who are thus equipped and empowered are identified and encouraged to serve in their areas of giftedness, they are likely to function more effectively to advance the work of the ministry of the church.

This leads us to a practical issue discussed below regarding the place and challenges of a visionary leadership in the new immigrant setting of the GMPCs.

579 Mk. 4:1-34: ‘...With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.’
580 Luke 9: 1-6: ‘Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal...’
581 Ekman, The Spiritual Leader, 180.
582 Ekman, The Spiritual Leader, 180-181.
6.8.3 Living out the ‘Priesthood of all Believers’

It is noteworthy that the aforementioned observations have significant implications for the GMPCs under review in this study particularly in view of their immigrant situation and for the fact that they function more or less as churches in the mission setting. We presume that the need for a paradigm shift within the Christian thinking of both the pastoral leadership and the lay membership to recapture and live out the reformation watchword of the “priesthood of all believers” is likely to ensure their future survival. However, this can be realized only if the spiritual leadership assumes their responsibility to invest the majority of their time in discipleship, delegation and multiplication as explained above.

Obviously one significant problem with most churches within traditional mainline Christianity is that the bulk of church responsibility is handled by the pastoral leadership or more specifically the clergy. Traditionally, the ordained Ministers are called to exercise their special functions in the ministry of the word, sacrament and order. Yet, too often they get so much distracted and even overwhelmed by the church administration and other extra functions which could have been conveniently handled by lay persons mostly at the expense of the ministry of the Word in terms of spiritual teaching and training. In this regard, John Stott has observed that

‘sometimes it is the pastor’s fault for they want to keep all the reins of leadership in their own hands and refuse to delegate. But sometimes it is the people’s fault, for they want their pastor to be a general factotum. “We pay him,” they say and so let him get on with it.’

When that happens the pastor is not set free from excessive administration to concentrate on spiritual leadership teaching and training which will ensure that people are adequately equipped and free to exercise their gifts so that the church will flourish. In the light of the foregoing, I presume that the GMPCs stand a better chance for their future survival and ministry relevance if they take concrete steps to address the above-mentioned leadership problem.

In the first place, there is the need for intensive congregational education on the said doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers” which their church tradition and church constitution uphold. By so doing the membership will experience a paradigm shift within their thinking that basically they do not exist to help their pastor to fulfil his (the pastor’s) ministry.

583 Stott, The Living Church, 75.
On the contrary, it is the pastor helping them to be adequately prepared and equipped to fulfil their ministry.\textsuperscript{584}

In the second place as we have demonstrated, when Christians serve in their area of giftedness they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit who enables ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary. Nevertheless, this can only be realized when individual Christians become more conscious of their giftedness. However, in the situation whereby some traditional mainline Christians do not even recognize their God- given gifting and calling then it is vital that the pastoral leadership assists in this direction. This will involve consistent teaching which will encourage members to appreciate the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Needless to say, it is with the Spirit’s infilling and empowering grace that Christian believers are enabled to identify their gifts and exercise them to profit all.

The next step should be effective and consistent training of the membership that aims at making them feel adequately equipped and actively involved in the ministry for which they can feel responsible and accountable. It is only when the spiritually gifted and adequately trained lay persons are meaningfully integrated into church ministries that match their gifts do they have a sense of fulfilment in their Christian calling and a real sense of belonging in their place of worship.

As we have earlier demonstrated in this chapter, before the establishment of the GMPCs there were many Ghanaian Christians with traditional mainline Christianity background who were already absorbed in the PCCs. It so happened that while in Europe they became either initiators or key leaders of the numerous Ghanaian-led PCCs. With the establishment of the GMPCs some of the said core leaders lent their support. But most of them who considered themselves well gifted and already experiencing a fulfilled ministry in their place of worship did not feel like returning to their denominational roots. Among other things they maintained a pessimistic feeling that they will not receive the much needed encouragement or find room in the church structure or established plan to operate in their area of giftedness.

It is noteworthy that there were a few instances whereby at the initial stages of their establishment some presumably gifted Ghanaian Christians with the Methodist or Presbyterian background attempted to join these churches but never maintained their membership for reasons like the above-mentioned. In this regard, it is significant that we look

\textsuperscript{584} Eph. 4:11-12: ‘The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.’
at the issue from two different angles. In the first place some of these presumably gifted lay workers could be the over-ambitious type who is not inclined to submit to authority for guidance in ministry. On the other hand, there could be others who are sincerely motivated to serve in humility in their area of giftedness provided their gifts are recognized and meaningfully integrated into appropriate ministries in the church life and ministry.

I presume that if the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs would rise up to meet their leadership challenges in this regard as true visionary leaders who are committed to multiplying themselves through leadership training then they can ensure a flourishing ministry. It is significant to note that for these GMPCs their historic tradition and constitutionally laid down church structure mandates the pastoral leadership to train, equip, support, motivate and mentor potential lay leaders to take leadership positions in the church.

The traditional features of the Methodist church for instance include the following:

‘The importance of lay leadership in preaching, pastoral care, and the administration of the local congregation. The subdivision of congregations into small groups for instruction, pastoral care and fellowship; this is termed society “Class Meeting” and each Class is overseen by a lay Class leader.’

It is noteworthy that the Church constitution stipulates the duties of a Class leader among other things to be as follows:

‘The duties of a Class Leader shall be:

i. To share with the Minister the responsibility for the spiritual and pastoral oversight of a Christian community connected with the society;

ii. To meet the members of his/ her class weekly for fellowship and Bible study and to visit those who are sick or in trouble.’

With regard to lay preachers the Constitution and Standing Orders of the MCG categorically states that:

‘Any literate Full Member who appears to have a call to preach and gifts as a preacher shall be encouraged to seek the office of a Local Preacher. It is a part of the pastoral

585 A CATECHISM for the use of the people called METHODISTS, Peterborough: Methodist Publishing House, 36.
586 The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Ghana, Revised edition, 2000, SO (Standing Orders) 725 (1).
duty of Ministers, Catechists, Deacons and Leaders to look out for potential Local Preachers. The office may be held by men or women.\(^{587}\)

In the light of the foregoing I presume that the spiritual leadership of these GMPCs stand a chance of ensuring both ministry fruitfulness and the survival of their churches far beyond the first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians provided they are committed to helping all categories of the membership develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry. This brings us to a discussion on the place and role of the second generation congregants in relation to mission expansion and church growth that will ensure the future survival of the GMPCs.

6.8.4 The Second Generation and Leadership Empowerment for Mission and Church Growth

In chapter 4.3 of this study we identified the ministry challenges facing the GMPCs in relation to the second generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians. We observed that the immigrant Ghanaian Christians belonging to the GMPCs are living in the first and second generations and this implies for many, a life between two worlds. The second generation congregants are children of the first generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians who were either born and raised in the host European societies or born in Ghana but brought to join their parents at early childhood or at youthful stage. These young ones who are under the age of thirty with majority of them under the age of twenty-five, have been raised in European schools and culture but nurtured by first generation Ghanaian parents who speak their indigenous language at home with them and impress on them their Ghanaian religio-cultural values. For most of these second generation youth and young adults who have been raised in the Western culture however, this attempt at keeping a tenuous balance between adaptation to Western life (whatever that may be) and the maintenance of Ghanaian moral and religious values is stressful, confusing, and frustrating.\(^{588}\) They seem to have problem trying to negotiate two worlds – their parent’s world and their own contemporary one – in order to form their own identity.\(^{589}\)

\(^{587}\) The Constitution and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church Ghana, 631 (1).
\(^{588}\) Biney, From Africa to America, 132.
\(^{589}\) Biney, From Africa to America, 136.
We also observed in chapter 4.3 that for the first generation adult members one of the major challenges facing them is how to keep their second generation children especially those in their teens or in their young adulthood in the church. These adults believe that the spiritual and community life of the church will help their children to uphold the much needed moral and religious virtues which in their view are indispensable for the attainment of a good life. Whereas these first generation adults consider the community life of the church conducive to their spiritual and social wellbeing in their immigrant life situation the second generation youth in some instances find the church services boring. While at a younger age they will accompany their parents to church and remain attached to the church especially in places where they have a well-organized Sunday school for children which are usually graded into distinct groups according to age. But once they grow into their teens they begin to drag their feet when it comes to church attendance to the extent that many eventually drop out of church especially in churches which do not have well-structured programs for the youth who graduate from the Sunday school at about age sixteen. In most places since they do not have a separate youth service for these youth they are made to worship with the adult on Sundays. In such instances the worship setting perceived to be more suited to the needs of the adult congregants does not so much excite the youth who have a taste for contemporary music and want sermons which will be more relevant to their life situation. Moreover, they expect that sermons will be preached in a language that they are more conversant with. Furthermore, this second generation youth do not feel meaningfully involved in the worship life of the church and so all these factors amount to a sense of boredom when they come to church. Ironically, this second generation immigrant Ghanaian youth presumably constitute the future adult congregants of these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches.

In the light of the foregoing we consider the issue at stake here to be a significant ministry challenge to the future survival of the GMPCs that will need a serious attention. As a participant observer for several years I have come to the conclusion that if the GMPCs hope to retain their second generation in the church as their future adult congregants then their spiritual leadership need to do more just as Biney has suggested in his study on the immigrant Ghanaian PCG congregation in New York.\textsuperscript{590}

In the first place I suggest that provided these churches are able to find adequate space they should think of a separate Sunday worship service for the youth and young adults above the age of sixteen who graduate from the Sunday school. These second generation

\textsuperscript{590} Biney, \textit{From Africa to America}, 174.
congregants must be made to feel that they have a church ministry which addresses needs pertinent to their spiritual and social lives in their immigrant and adaptation situation. They must be encouraged to have a strong sense of active involvement in a ministry to which they can invite friends and peers for a life changing experience in the Christian faith. Since in most places they have a good number of young adults between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five and even up to thirty in some cases, it means they can find capable leaders among themselves who can share in the leadership of their ministry. What is needed here then is competent spiritual leadership which will be committed to encourage, train, equip, support and mentor such potential leaders among these young adults to become all that God wants them to become in Christian life and ministry. They should be committed to helping them to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry, train and mobilize them for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. It is my candid opinion that these youth and young adults who constitute the future congregants of the GMPCs have a stake in the mission expansion and church growth that will ensure the future survival of the GMPCs.

6.8.5  The Second Generation and Ministry Survival

In order that this ministry for the young people in the church will constitute a meaningful life-changing experience for them they will need to be provided with capable leaders from among themselves with the support of a few adult leaders to share in the leadership of the said ministry. Such youth leaders should be young adults who undoubtedly understand the world of the youth and the youth culture of the day. Roy Crowne who is the National Director of British “Youth for Christ” identifies four trends of contemporary youth culture which trained and equipped youth leaders can connect with and use to communicate the Gospel to the young people of our day. 591

*The trend of consumerism*

The younger generation of our day are captivated by the thought that their value and significance as a person is determined by the products they buy as they are made to understand by the media. If you do not have those things, then your value and significance as a person is not good and to them image is everything. Roy Crowne explains that this

influences the presentation of the Gospel message because there is a massive paradigm shift whereby they are seeing Christianity as a resource that you buy into. In view of this it becomes necessary to package the Gospel message in such a way that it becomes more appealing, clear and relevant to their life situation. The Gospel must be expressed in their own language and vocabulary and should be seen and understood to be self-elevating, offering exactly what they are looking for.

_The trend of fascination with modern technology_

Young people do have peculiar fascination with modern technological gadgets which provide access to rock stars and music, sports and global world of fashion, film and movies, media and ideologies. In reality the youth everywhere are watching the same movies the same videos, listening to the same music, wearing the same clothes, making the same mistakes and desperately needing the same Saviour as Ron Hutchcraft puts it. In view of this Ron Hutchcraft explains that if we seriously want to reach young people for Christ and draw them into the church then we need to incorporate technology in youth ministry since it is an essential access point. We need to communicate the Gospel to them through contemporary music and media - film and movies, television and internet access. On top of this youth culture are the last two trends namely:

_The changing family impact on young people and the erosion of moral values_

Family patterns have changed drastically in most instances due to broken families and broken homes resulting in loss of security and lack of intimate family relationships and a meaningful role model for young family members. Moral issues for the young people of our time are more complex than they were for their parents and for that matter there are contrasting views between the older and younger generations about the way the young people should lead their lives. Most young people do not want to be dictated to by parents about how they should organize their lives. They feel they need freedom to be themselves, to cooperate or rebel, to agree or disagree, to express opinion or not, to belong, but not to be held captive.593

592 Ron Hutchcraft, ‘Reaching the Global Youth Culture’ in: The Mission of an Evangelist, 2001, 303-304. Ron Hutchcraft is an evangelist, author and president of Ron Hutchcraft Ministries, USA. The few pages of his presentations included in this Conference publication are only extracts of a series of workshop presentations on Global Youth Culture delivered by Ron Hutchcraft at the said Conference.

However, they have a lot of concerns which make many worry a lot. High on their problem list are relationships with peers, relationships with parents, and relationships between the sexes. As a result of these two trends most young people are actually tormented by loneliness, saturated by sex, fascinated with the dark side of the supernatural, and susceptible to suicide. Loneliness runs so deep that they are home alone, being raised by their music, by television, by video games and by internet access. They will do anything to get a loving feeling, even if only for a night. Ron Hutchcraft explains that a lot of what is going on sexually is not about biology but about intimacy, a feeling close to someone for a few minutes. Tom Harriger has observed that the things that make this generation so needy also make them prime candidates for God because they are searching, and they are empty. These young people are hungry for something that works, and they want relationships because some of them are from broken families and broken homes. In view of the changing family impact on young people and the erosion of moral values the adult congregants of these GMPCs need to understand that religio-cultural influence at home alone is not likely to keep the youth in church but a life-changing experience and personal encounter with the Divine. This is the more reason why these churches need to create an environment to build spiritual leadership among these young congregants who will eventually inspire and involve the young people in their community in a life-changing mission experience.

What is needed here then is a competent spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs who will be committed to encouraging, training and equipping, supporting and mentoring such potential youth leaders among these young adults to become all that God wants them to become in Christian life and ministry. They should be committed to helping them to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry, train and mobilize them for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. It is my candid opinion that since these youth and young adults who constitute the future congregants of the GMPCs has a stake in the mission expansion and church growth efforts of these churches everything will to be done to help them catch the right vision to ensure a viable ministry.

*Where do we begin?*

If the spiritual leadership of these GMPCs would want to ensure a meaningful life-changing experience in personal faith and ministry for their second generation congregants so as to

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ensure the future survival of their churches then they need to consider a number of factors which include the following:

First and foremost they need to influence their younger congregants to make a personal life-changing commitment to Christ as their Lord and Saviour. This will enable them to make godly choices as they grow in their faith. They will then become life-changers, having effective Jesus-focused and life-changing ministry with their friends and peers. Many times Jesus is in the background and young people grow up in church but do not really know him personally. What will constitute an effective youth leadership then are young men and women who have an intimate transformative encounter with the risen Christ and are full of faith and the Holy Spirit and for that matter can make a difference with their lives for Jesus Christ. If the young people of today can be influenced to make a meaningful commitment to Christ, then they will need role models from among both the spiritual leadership of the church and their own youth leadership. They need adult examples of behaviour and thinking characteristic of Christians. As Joanne Owens has observed they need a Christian faith to steady them and assure them that they are forgiven, accepted, and born again. They need spiritual leaders who can meet them on their own levels, and who can be a friend, not a judge; adults or senior brothers and sisters they can choose to talk with about their problems.595

Second, the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs under focus here need to create an environment to build spiritual leadership among the second generation congregants for a ministry they can call their own. The Christian educationist Esther L. Megill 596 has observed that even though youth ministry is the responsibility of the entire congregation, the whole people of God, it should be recognized that youth also share in the leadership of the group. The youth leadership should be responsible for the overall planning with help and advice from adult leaders as needed. The older the youth, of course, the more responsibility they can take for leadership of the group.597 Megill cites the following statement of the United Methodist Church (USA) on affirmations about youth ministry:

596 Esther L. Megill was Africa secretary to the Methodist Board of Missions from 1968-72. She lectured for several years in Christian Education at the University of Ghana, Legon and directed a program of lay-training and continuing education for pastors.
597 Esther L. Megill, Education in the African Church, London: Geoffrey Chapman (Cassel Ltd), 1976, 128.
1. Youth are full members of the Church. They should be able to participate with adult members in the total life of the congregation – worship, study, fellowship, social action, ministries. They can serve as full members of boards and committees and can participate in decision-making processes of the congregation, if adults will allow it.

2. The youth ministry should be planned by the youth themselves, with guidance by adult leaders.

3. The youth ministry needs to be planned to fit each local situation and needs.

4. However, there is also need for some overall organization in the larger Church (Conference, Synod, Diocese) to give resources, ideas, leadership training, and to give a sense of community, fellowship and common purpose to youth scattered throughout the country.

5. A youth ministry should be ecumenical, if at all possible, or have ecumenical aspects. We need to be concerned about ways we can live and work in unity with other denominations and faith.

6. A youth ministry must be people centred. Plans should be made especially for the people who will be involved, considering individual needs, aspirations, limitations, and concerns.\(^{598}\)

The objective is that these youth leaders become multipliers. Youth and young adults trained and on fire are going to be the catalyst in the churches for revival. These youth leaders are to be encouraged to become spiritual leaders in evangelism and discipleship. They should be enabled to lead their own discipleship groups and instruct others with everything they have learned and by so doing multiply their faith. They need to be involved in mission and evangelism, trained and equipped to know how to share their faith and to follow up people they have reached out and led to personal faith in Christ.

Third, if the GMPCs and their spiritual leadership hope to influence their second generation congregants to make a meaningful personal commitment to Christ, so that they can have effective ministry with their friends then they have to model a relational approach. Their discipling ministry should be centred in relationships because young people want adults who accept them and will help them develop the adult side of their lives. What they want is an adult they can relate to, someone who is going to enter their world, understand where they are coming from and model a Christian life and teaching that they respect. As we have earlier

\(^{598}\) Megill, *Education in the African Church*, 130.
pointed out in this section young people are hungry for something that works and they want relationships. Since some of them have broken families and broken homes, discipleship creates a community where they feel needed and accepted. In his study on the community life of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana congregation in New York, Moses Biney expressed concern about intergenerational relationships within the church. The youth who constitute the second generation congregants of the church felt that the church’s concern for them lagged far behind its concern for the first generation. Biney quotes one of them saying “they tell us, for instance, that we are the future of the church, but they pay little attention to our concerns and needs.” There is no gainsaying the fact that the same situation prevails within most of these Ghanaian mainline churches especially in places where the spiritual leadership have not developed effective relationships and modelled a relational approach in ministry with the second generation congregants. This leads us to the next important factor which if given due attention is likely to ensure a meaningful ministry with the youth and eventually ensure church growth and mission expansion for these churches.  

*Fourth*, there is the need to give the youth and young adults a spiritual experience that comes out of mission, a taste of ministry. Roy Crowne explains that these young people may not show any readiness to pray and read the Bible but when you get them involved in mission they will read the Bible and they will pray. Ministry and mission will transform them more than teaching and entertaining. There they will see the supernatural and they will see revival. A well-focused mission actually transforms the youth into a prayer force which is considered to be a much needed area of ministry which prepares the hearts of workers as well as the soil for effective church-based ministry. Prayer changes things, changes people and changes their life situation. Prayer is not only a great privilege but it opens one to the call for involvement in the mission of God. People who are challenged by the demands of mission are motivated to commit themselves to consistent earnest praying for specific persons, groups and mission needs. In reality there cannot be any remarkable spiritual awakening in the community or any significant church growth without earnest individual and congregational praying for a mighty divine visitation. These young people want a purpose, actually something bigger than themselves and for that reason they want an experience with God. Moreover, they want to be actively involved in the church because they want recognition and acceptance other than that they easily lose interest in church and consequently the needed

599 Biney, *From Africa to America*, 134.
motivation to come to church. The fact that most of these young congregants especially those born and raised here in European societies are not very conversant with the typical Ghanaian language as used in formal worship cannot be overlooked. This necessitates the effort to put in place a separate worship service for the youth and young adults especially in places where the language for formal worship is the native Ghanaian language they are not conversant with. It should be a ministry they can call their own, and a place where their gifts and leadership potentials can be developed.

Irrespective of the general lack of active involvement of the youth in leading roles in the worship ministry of these churches, in some places however, some of them take the opportunity to serve as ushers, lay readers, and liturgists at occasional “Youth Sunday” at which the youth organize and lead the entire congregational worship service. It is noteworthy that those who demonstrate the graces for preaching take preaching appointments on such occasions. Moreover, in some places some of these young congregants have even been made permanent lay readers at Sunday worship services. Some few others also assist in the Sunday school (Nursery and Kindergarten). One huge component of youth ministry is music which draws many a youth to church. It is noteworthy that in places where the youth are significantly involved in the worship life of the church, a few young congregants sing in the church choir, and a few others who are gifted in singing ministration are actively involved with the ‘Praise and Worship Team’ who lead the congregation in typical choruses of praise. Moreover, in some of these churches the youth play a prominent role as church musical instrumentalists.

Considering the aforementioned potentialities and giftedness of these youth and young adults we suggest that what is needed is the visionary leadership commitment of the spiritual leadership provided by these GMPCs in helping these young people develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry. We presume that the spiritual leadership of these GMPCs stands a chance of ensuring both ministry fruitfulness and the survival of their churches far beyond the first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians provided they are committed to helping their second generation congregants develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry. They should be committed to educating, training, equipping and mobilizing these young people for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. It is my candid opinion that since these young people who constitute the future congregants of the GMPCs has a stake in the mission expansion and church growth efforts of these churches everything needs to be done to help them catch the right vision to ensure a viable ministry.
6.9 Conclusion

In this chapter we have argued that the immigrant situational needs of Ghanaian Christians who take their membership in the GMPCs established in their host European societies pose unique ministry challenges to the said churches. We have observed that the immigrant situation of these Ghanaian Christians creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want of warmth, care, friendship and affection. Most of these Ghanaians are economic refugees without the benefit of the family support of which they would have been assured at home. They are exposed to harsh conditions and experiences, including feelings of isolation and depression as they engage in a constant struggle to find shelter and other necessities of life. The undocumented migrants experience these challenges more acutely.

As we have pointed out earlier in this chapter, in the first place there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. Besides all these there is the sense of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, addictive habits and other moral weaknesses, apparent failures, disappointments and numerous difficulties. We have explained that in Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a mission setting like the GMPCs which are established outside the homeland, the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it capable in meeting the needs of their members is critical. It is noteworthy that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring which enables the spiritual leadership to address the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the church to its own people and the community at large.

In the light of the foregoing, we have demonstrated that the immigrant situation of the GMPCs constantly challenges the spiritual leadership provided for these churches to pursue their ecclesial practices like formal worship, discipleship, pastoral care and counselling, loving and caring relationships (koinonia), and holiness ethics from an evangelical, contextual and a missionary perspective. If such an approach and vision is neglected by the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs, the said ecclesial practices will definitely lose their motivational power to influence the spiritual lives of their members.

In the first place, we have seen that due to their evangelical emphasis on experiential Christianity members are encouraged to seek the infilling and the empowering grace of the
Holy Spirit who enables worshippers to experience a deeper awareness of the manifest Presence of God as the congregation is gathered in worship. In most instances worshippers who are enabled to experience the manifest Presence of God are brought into intimate loving relationship with God. Moreover, some people who previously had lived their lives without any intimate relationship with God and lacked a meaningful interpersonal relationship or carried emotional distress have come to experience the three dimensional peace of God through the worship experience of these GMPCs. In other words, some have found peace with God and consequently experienced emotional peace as well as interpersonal peace. In effect, the church worship services as practiced by the GMPCs enable worshippers to experience a personal encounter with God in whose Presence there is healing and life in all its fullness.

Secondly, we have observed that at the outset of the formation of the GMPCs, despite the fact that a good number of the prospective members had previous church membership in Ghana, not so many of them were seen to be leading significant transformed Christian lives. For some of them, their stressful immigrant situation obviously had an adverse effect on their morale. They were eventually subjugated to compromise their moral integrity and for that reason they necessarily needed a transformative encounter with God through the power of the Holy Spirit. This obviously called for a renewed approach to the ecclesial practice of discipleship which took a serious view of evangelization and catechesis as expounded by John Westerhoff. We have shown that for those local congregations of the GMPCs which have consistently pursued evangelistic discipleship laying emphasis on expository preaching and teaching, some members who previously were entangled in all sorts of anti-social habits have been led to experience a life-transforming power of God in Christ.

Thirdly, we have established that in view of their immigrant situation, Pastoral care and counselling as practiced by the GMPCs are perceived as indispensable ecclesial practices which essentially enhance church growth. However, these practices should be the kinds that take their African/Ghanaian religious worldview into consideration if they would make a strong impression on these Ghanaian Christians. In other words, these practices should be seen to meaningfully address their existential needs like the provision of divine healing and deliverance, economic and material security, as well as spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces. We have sought to demonstrate that existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. For this reason, in
places where these practices have been effectively employed, lives have been touched and transformed and members’ faith in Christ has been rekindled.

In the fourth place, the GMPCs aim at providing for their members a meaningful “holistic” life-support in the spirit of koinonia which obviously imbues them with a sense of belonging and acceptance. Essentially they aspire for the provision of a spiritual home where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. As these churches endeavour to demonstrate genuine love and care for the basic needs of their members, they give the members every reason to trust their leadership with their deepest spiritual needs. This eventually helps them to relate their lives to God and get their relationship with God strengthened. We have observed in this study that in places where the spirit of koinonia is genuinely expressed in loving and caring relationships members of these churches are motivated to open their hearts to receive the living Word of God. Consequently, some members trapped in anti-social relationships and practices are enabled to experience the saving-power of God in Christ and eventually get their lives re-organized.

Furthermore, an effort has been made to discuss the validity of the disposition of the GMPCs to inculcate in their members the conscious effort to maintain ‘scriptural holiness’ or ‘personal holiness’ which is in conformity with their official church doctrine. We have noted in this study that the congregations of the GMPCs which tend to enforce ‘personal holiness’ and church discipline have two main objectives. In the first place they have an evangelistic disposition to win disciples and bring them to Christ-likeness in obedience to Christ’s commandment. Secondly, they seek to ensure credibility and effectiveness of their Christian witness in their various communities. The significant observations made here are that: First, church discipline itself if administered in faithfulness, love and tenderness may eventually lead erring members to relate their lives to God and eventually enhance their spirituality. Second, in reality the situation on the grounds for the GMPCs for the practice of their religion and for their Christian witness suggests that as churches in a mission setting, their congregational evangelistic fruitfulness will be in proportion to their spiritual vitality.

Finally, we have established that in view of the unique circumstances and needs of the Ghanaian immigrant Christians as mentioned above it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs must be seen to have taken a new dimension which ensures the desired ministry relevance of these churches to the said Ghanaian Christian community. In effect to ensure the desired ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their members the spiritual leaders who take the mantle of leadership in these Ghanaian immigrant situations must be seen to demonstrate a meaningful commitment in developing the aforementioned
ecclesial practices in meeting the needs of this immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. In the first place the ministry relevance of the spiritual leadership will be determined by their sheer determination and commitment to addressing the existential and situational needs of the members in the context of spirituality. Moreover the said spiritual leadership should be the type that is committed to do all that it takes to ensure the promotion of a harmonious community within which the spirituality of the members is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for. The spiritual leadership must therefore be seen to be appreciably dynamic to ensure that their congregations are fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment. In essence this vision will become a reality only if the Ghanaian immigrant Christian community would be constantly challenged by their spiritual leadership to embrace the true sense of Ghanaian communality which is invigorated to express itself in the spirit of koinonia.

Beyond the aforementioned leadership responsibility commitments towards the promotion of a harmonious community within which the spirituality of the GMPCs membership is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for, other leadership responsibility commitments have also been discussed in this chapter. This has got to do with their second generation congregants as well as the relevance of these GMPCs to the larger community of their host European societies.

In the first place, we have established in this chapter that the second generation youth and young adults beyond the age of sixteen who graduate from the Sunday school do not feel meaningfully involved in the worship life of the church and for that matter most of them do not show any keen interest in church attendance. This is due to a number of factors which include language limitations since the adult worship services are conducted mostly in the Ghanaian vernacular which these young ones are not very conversant with. Ironically, this second generation immigrant Ghanaian youth presumably constitute the future adult congregants of these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches. The issue at stake here in my view poses a significant ministry challenge to the GMPCs and their spiritual leadership in terms of the future survival of these churches, but how are they going to address the issue? In my view, if these churches and their leadership hope to retain their second generation in the church as their future adult congregants then they need to strategically plan to retain them.

We have suggested that provided these churches are able to find adequate space which in most cases however, is difficult to come by; they should think of a separate Sunday worship
service for the youth and young adults who graduate from the Sunday school. This should be a bi-lingual Sunday worship service in English and German or English and Dutch as the case may be.

These second generation congregants should be made to feel that they have a church ministry which addresses needs pertinent to their spiritual and social lives in their immigrant and adaptation situation. They should be encouraged to have a strong sense of active involvement in a ministry to which they can invite friends and peers for a life changing experience in the Christian faith. Since in most places they have a good number of young adults between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five and even up to thirty in some cases, it means they can find capable leaders among themselves who can share in the leadership of their ministry besides adult helpers. What is needed here then is competent spiritual leadership which will be committed to encourage, train, equip, support and mentor such potential leaders among these young adults to become all that God wants them to become in Christian life and ministry. We are of the view that the spiritual leadership would be committed to helping them to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry, train and mobilize them for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. The spiritual leadership will hopefully prove themselves capable of helping these second generation congregants to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry as they seek to operate in their various areas of giftedness.

Second, we have also established in this chapter that in view of their immigrant situation the primary aims and objectives of the initiators of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches were more or less chaplaincy oriented. The formation of these churches involved contacting and gathering immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians especially those who shared the same denominational background back home in Ghana and providing a place for moments of worship, congregational life and pastoral care. This meant that right from the outset the target group for their missionary thrust was primarily the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. The assumption is that beyond the so called chaplaincy stage as they consolidate their gains from the ingathering and the nurturing of their established members they would be motivated to look beyond their initial target group for missions.

We are of the view that in order to ensure the relevance of the GMPCs to the larger community the entire membership of the GMPCs will be motivated to demonstrate a meaningful commitment in reaching out to new people besides their initial target group. They should seek to provide the non-churched with a meaningful life changing experience in the Christian faith and bring such new people into the church for Christian nurture. But this can
only be realized if in the first place the members themselves can testify of an experiential encounter with the Lord and moreover, they have been empowered to live in an intimate relationship with Jesus. Then they will be inspired to live out their faith with power and contagious enthusiasm sharing their faith through personal loving relationships. To ensure that the members are well motivated for mission and evangelism the spiritual leadership will hopefully be committed to consistent congregational education and training in mission and evangelism while inspiring and encouraging the membership to operate in their areas of giftedness as they seek to share their faith. The spiritual leadership will then seek to create special events and an environment where members can bring non-churched relatives, friends or acquaintances to church to hear the Gospel.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, it becomes necessary to revisit our research questions and summarize the various issues which were raised and discussed under them and then draw our conclusions.

The central question that has guided this research is: What type of spiritual leadership does the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in Germany and in the Netherlands need to ensure their ministry relevance to the present and future generations of immigrant Ghanaian Christians and for that matter ensure the future survival of these churches? We sought to respond to this question by exploring the following sub-questions:

i. What are the main characteristics of the newly emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in Germany and the Netherlands?

ii. What are the main problems or challenges that confront these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches and their membership in their immigrant situations in their host European societies?

iii. How could a new type of spiritual leadership provided by the said churches deal with these problems so as to ensure their ministry relevance to their membership of the present and future generations?

In this concluding chapter, we discuss the issues raised within the framework of our proposed three standard-ingredient set of models for evaluating and predicting the effectiveness or otherwise of leadership in African migrant congregations. These are ingredients of spiritual leadership as members of the GMPCs understood them. These came out of the field research activity as a set of indices with which members of the GMPCs determine the direction and effectiveness of spiritual leadership. These, we identified as personal spirituality, the ability to effectively guide ecclesial practices; and the ability to empower lay-leaders and members of the congregation for mission and church growth.
Our basic assumptions in framing the research questions as outlined above are as follows:

1. Most Ghanaian immigrants in Europe are generally presumed to be economic refugees detached from families and homeland. Some are documented whereas others are not fully documented and for that matter are not gainfully employed. For all these Ghanaians especially the undocumented their immigrant situation makes them experience feelings of isolation and depression in their constant struggle to find shelter and to fend for themselves. It is here that the inherent strong traditional communal factor of Ghanaians which enables these churches to provide group solidarity becomes very essential.

2. Scholars of African religions like Ter Haar hold the view that even though Ghanaian churches established in European societies appear to have developed a life of their own, the flow of people and ideas from Ghana to Europe continues to be significant. Migrant Ghanaian Christians in Europe share the same traditional worldviews with their folks in their homeland. However, for the Ghanaian Christians in Europe their immigrant situations pose far more unique ministry challenges to those Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches (GMPCs) established in European societies. The problems and needs of migrant Ghanaian Christians range widely from spiritual to socio-psychological. In the first place, there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. Moreover, their immigrant situations create for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want of warmth, care, friendship and affection. Besides all these there is the sense of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, addictive habits and other moral weaknesses, apparent failures, disappointments and numerous difficulties in one’s life. It is noteworthy that in most instances the effectiveness of the church’s ministry of caring which enables it to address the aforementioned needs of its members determines the relevance of the church to its own members and the community at large.

3. We posit that in Ghanaian Christianity, particularly for a church in a mission setting like the GMPCs which are established outside the homeland, the role of the spiritual leadership in shaping the church so as to make it capable in meeting the needs of their members cannot be overemphasized. The spiritual leadership must therefore be seen to be appreciably dynamic to ensure that their congregations are fashioned to constitute
7.2 Spiritual Leadership in the Context of the Ghanaian Mainline Protestant Churches

The approach to our discussion of spiritual leadership in this study is from two angles. The first, which reflects the character of the spiritual leadership and defines what it means to be a spiritual leader, which we are discussing in this section, was the focus of discussions in chapter five of this study. The second approach which deals basically with the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leaders of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations largely constituted the discussions of chapter six of this study the summary of which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

7.2.1 Understanding the theological implications of spiritual leadership

In chapter five, efforts were made to discuss literatures related to general leadership, and come to the conclusion that there is no one right style of leadership for all situations but just different styles that work for different types of people depending on the environment they are in. The implications of all this were that leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the unique challenges facing the organization.

We noted that the environment for the practice of leadership in our present study is the church setting namely, the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches in Germany and the Netherlands, and for that matter our discussion is placed in a unique context. The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the theological presupposition that it is a leadership which relates largely to God and His people. The understanding here is that the Christian leader who takes the mantle of leadership in this church setting serves primarily within the community of believers in Christ, aiming at fulfilling his calling by collectively planning and achieving together with his followers their common God-given goals which are not merely physical but spiritual. It actually involves the earnest seeking of the will of God and His leading both for the personal spiritual life of the leader and for the ministry and then marshalling his followers to pursue God’s plan. The implication of all this for the leaders who serve in such church environments is that it is scripturally mandatory for them to lead in consonance with the dictates of the bible or in accordance with biblical principles in order to achieve their God-
given goals. It is in view of the afore-mentioned context as related to leadership in the church setting that this study identified *spiritual leadership* as the most feasible and relevant leadership model for addressing leadership issues in the immigrant situations of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches established in European societies.

Efforts were made in chapter five to discuss the theological meaning of *spiritual leadership*, investigating how all this impact on their membership to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. We demonstrated that while spiritual leadership involves many of the same principles as general leadership, it has certain distinctive qualities that must be understood and practiced if spiritual leaders are to be successful in inspiring and mobilizing their followers so that together, they can achieve their God-given goals.

We noted that since spiritual leadership relates largely with God and His people, it also implies theologically that it is a divine calling and not a mere profession or occupation in the secular sense of the word. For that matter, the spiritual leader maintains a strong awareness of his calling and stays connected to God. Staying connected to God also entails an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, and a willingness to exemplify because spiritual leadership is not just pointing out great truths and exhorting others to live by them. Once spiritual leaders understand God’s will, they make every effort to move their followers from following their own agendas to pursuing God’s purposes which entails adjusting their lives to God’s will. This underscores the central place of personal spirituality in a leadership which relates largely to God and to His people in a community of believers in Christ. The implication of all this is that spiritual leadership requires superior spiritual power, which can never be generated by the self, because there is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader.

### 7.2.2 Personal Spirituality as a vital component of effective spiritual leadership

Personal spirituality which was discussed in chapter five is a vital component of effective spiritual leadership and it reflects the character of spiritual leadership and defines what it means to be a spiritual leader.

In reality, spiritual leaders cannot produce spiritual change in people; only the Holy Spirit does. Yet the Spirit often uses people to influence others in order to draw them to God for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service. Spiritual leadership actually, transcends the power of personality and other natural gifts. The personality of the spiritual leader influences others because it is penetrated, saturated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. As the spiritual leader depends on the Holy Spirit and gives
control of his life to the Spirit, the Spirit’s power flows through him to others, all because spiritual goals can be achieved only by spiritual people who use spiritual methods.

Spiritual leaders assume responsibility to guide their followers through an exemplary Christian lifestyle which actually begins from the inside. This calls for a strong inner life if the outward life of the spiritual leader is to be successful because what is on the outside is completely dependent on what is on the inside. The inner life which is the essential precondition of personal spirituality involves seeking the Lord in all earnestness in a life of intimate fellowship and ever growing deeper communion with Him through prayer and worship and meditation on His word for personal edification. It means humbly seeking divine wisdom, knowledge and guidance for personal life and ministry. It is a yearning desire to grow more and more unto the likeness of Christ in full submission to His will so that the Christ-character will be formed in the spiritual leader as a servant leader of the flock of Christ.

Our basic assumption in this discussion is that personal spirituality forms the bedrock of a true and effective spiritual leadership especially in the church environment like the new immigrant situations of the GMPCs in Germany and the Netherlands which are the focus of this study. *Spiritual leadership* for this context is the type that draws the grace of spiritual giftedness of leadership through an intimate relationship with Jesus; and the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit so that one might be enabled to maintain an exemplary personal Christian lifestyle that will impact on his membership to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. Our perspective on spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations is that their ministry fruitfulness is likely to be in proportion to their personal spiritual vitality. In view of this we examined the kind of spiritual and moral qualities required of the spiritual leadership in such immigrant situations, which are likely to ensure ministry fruitfulness and for that reason ensure the future survival of the GMPCs. In doing this we looked at the following as typical personal leadership qualities which in my view will be needed to ensure ministry fruitfulness in such immigrant situations:

1. The *spiritual leader* must be “ethically-sound”: Our view in this regard is that if the GMPCs which are under review in this study seriously want to ensure their future survival and ministry relevance to their own people, then they must not lose sight of the fact that much depends on the spiritual and moral conduct of their spiritual leadership. The basic assumption here is that for one to be an effective spiritual leader, one’s character will be as equally important as his accomplishments. In reality, spiritual leaders are public figures expected by
the masses to lead exemplary lives and for that reason they are examined all the more closely. In view of this, the moral issues behind *spiritual leadership* obviously cannot be removed. The bottom line of the whole matter is that in Ghanaian evangelical Christianity in the homeland and particularly in immigrant situations like that of the GMPCs the *spiritual leadership’s* influence and authority stem primarily from their moral credibility and integrity. If the spiritual leaders are found to be credible and not found wanting in moral integrity then their members would maintain their respect for them and follow them so long as they consider them trustworthy. These spiritual leaders then will have the moral courage to enforce church discipline and to motivate the membership to seek continuous revival in spirituality so as to ensure moral sanctity in their Christian communities. Essentially, spiritual leaders are agents of change; the Spirit of God uses them to influence others in order to draw them to God for their personal edification, and empowerment for Christian growth and service. As we sought to demonstrate in both chapters five and six, the fact remains that holy living is a hallmark of the believer’s Christian witness. In other words, the authenticity of the spiritual and moral character of the Christian community particularly of its spiritual leadership is very vital in relation to effective mission. In this regard, we strongly recommend that the GMPCs should do everything within their capabilities to ensure ethical stability and moral integrity in the lives of their spiritual leaders because they stand to gain much from their efforts in this direction in ensuring a truly vibrant Christian community.

2. The Spiritual Leader must be “doctrinally-grounded”: We observed in the previous chapters, four, five and six that within the GMPCs established in the European societies there is a new crop of Ghanaian immigrant Christians who do not feel comfortable with any form of adulterated Christianity. In other words, any Christian lifestyle which compromises the core values of the Christian faith and practice are not considered compatible with their fundamental evangelical beliefs in Christ as presented by the New Testament. For these evangelical Ghanaian mainline Christians, their spiritual leader must not only be a shepherd providing care and healing for the community but must also be seen as a prophet convinced of God’s Word and providing spiritual direction and guidance. They often desire to hear God speak to them directly through their spiritual leader in his preaching and the exposition of the inspired Word of God from the Scriptures. If their spiritual leader is perceived to handle the Word of God as if he does not believe in what he preaches and teaches, he will not be taken seriously. They will want spirit-filled spiritual leadership that manifests the grace to teach and preach the word with power and conviction of the truthfulness and authority of the Bible as
the only written Word of God without error in all it affirms. They want to see that the doctrines of the ‘Evangelical Faith’ based upon the divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures which Protestant mainline Christians have held from the beginning still holds and are taught meaningfully.

To put it in a nutshell, the spiritual leadership which is believed to ensure ministry relevance to these churches must be the kind which continually exemplifies and lays emphasis on spiritual vitality through evangelical preaching and teaching. The spiritual leadership must be teaching and encouraging members to appreciate the Person and ministry of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They must be seen to be teaching about the new birth that results in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the empowering grace of the Spirit that ensures a transforming Christian witnessing lifestyle.

3. “The need for an experiential encounter with the Divine”: Our theological viewpoint is that an experiential encounter with God is a prerequisite for effective spiritual leadership especially among this immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. We are of the view that congregational growth depends much on the attitudes of both the spiritual leadership and the members which is in consequence of their experiential encounter with God.

As we demonstrated in chapter six of this study, Africans speak their faith/religion, they sing it, drum it, dance it, dramatize it, and manifest its power in every concrete way. Even though not all Africans are extroverts as some non-Africans would want to generalize; however when it comes to the issue of faith/religion generally they do not normally feel inclined to suppress the natural expression of faith which is kindled within. The implication of the above observations for the GMPCs under review in this study is that the future survival and ministry relevance of these churches to their people depends much on the evangelical influence of their spiritual leadership which is in consonance with the spirit of their official church Constitution and doctrinal beliefs. If the spiritual leaders are warm and enthusiastic about their faith such feelings will surely spill over and impact on the members through the leadership’s influence since we observed in chapter five that ‘leadership is influence.’

The members whose lives are thus impacted will equally be enthusiastic about their faith, their congregation and their spiritual leadership. We are inclined to believe that such an expressive winsome, positive attitude resulting from an experiential encounter with God will surely promote congregational growth. Both old and new people are likely to return time and time again to a service of which the congregation demonstrates a radiant joy of a happy smiling family, and who are continually passing around a lot of encouragement.
7.3 The relevance and implications of the ability to guide ecclesial practices

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the approach to our discussion of spiritual leadership in this study is from two angles. The first which reflects the character of the spiritual leadership and defines what it means to be a spiritual leader is summarized above in this concluding chapter. It was the focus of discussions in chapter five of this study. The second approach which deals basically with the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations, which we are summarizing now in this section largely constituted the discussions of chapter six of this study.

Effective employment of the ecclesial practices is the second leadership characteristic model which deals basically with the responsibility commitments of the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs in their immigrant situations.

We demonstrated in chapter six that in their search for a spiritual home in their host European societies, immigrant Ghanaian Christians look for at least three basic things namely:

i) The kind of Christianity that would address itself to needs perceived as tied to their traditional African worldviews while demonstrating the graces that would satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. The understanding here is that in view of their inherent religious sensibilities the kind of Christianity that would make the desired impression on them is the kind that takes a serious view of their existential needs in the context of spirituality. The existential needs in the context of Ghanaian Christianity include the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and then physical security which is understood to be economic and social well-being.

ii) A contextualized formal worship setting perceived to be more suited to their needs as African Christians.

iii) A spiritual home where they could enjoy Christian love and care, a sense of belonging and acceptance and of course a place where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally. This is in consequence of the fact that their immigrant situation creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want of warmth, care, friendship and affection.
We established in chapter six that in view of the existential and situational needs of Ghanaian immigrants as mentioned above, it is anticipated that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs should be appreciably dynamic in addressing these needs in the context of spirituality. In this regard, it is incumbent on the spiritual leaders to ensure that the relevant ecclesial practices are effectively employed so as to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual and communal lives. They should pursue the relevant ecclesial practices like formal worship, Christian discipleship, pastoral care and counselling, loving and caring relationships (koinonia), and holiness ethics from an evangelical, contextual and a missionary perspective. We are of the view that if such an approach to mission is neglected by the GMPCs; the said ecclesial practices will definitely lose their motivational power to influence the spiritual lives of their membership. We presume that the ecclesial practices mentioned above are likely to make a strong impression on the members especially when they are seen to address their basic existential needs as mentioned above in the context of spirituality.

We sought to demonstrate in chapter six that the ecclesial practices mentioned above are likely to make a strong impression on the members especially when they are seen to tackle among other things their basic existential needs like the provision of divine healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and physical security in terms of material and social well-being. We are of the view that existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. It is noteworthy that in places where these ecclesial practices which are summarized below have been effectively employed the faith of the membership is being rekindled and their lives being touched for renewal through the transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit.

Worship as a transformative experience in mainline Protestant Christianity

We established in chapter 6.3 of this study that as churches in the mission setting, these GMPCs rely heavily on the quality of the Sunday worship experience in achieving two main objectives.

1. These Ghanaian Christians understand worship as an expression of reverence for God and the celebration of His manifest redeeming Presence. In essence, such a celebration
enables worshippers to experience a personal encounter with God in whose Presence there is healing and life in all its fullness. In view of this these Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians rely on their spiritual leaders to make room for more intimate worship in their worship services by means of inspirational singing, prayer, reading and proclamation of the Word. We have established that since these Ghanaian Christians like all other Africans are generally warm and enthusiastic in matters of religion worship becomes more meaningful to them when it is both expressive and participatory. Just like their parent churches in their homeland who have opened up to embrace spiritual renewal these GMPCs have grown in their belief that the manifest Presence of God is significantly and meaningfully experienced in the context of ‘praise and worship’. They tend to believe that the music of praise in the context of formal worship, as much as it celebrates the Supreme ‘Worth-ship’ of God by extoling and ascribing to Him the glory due to His name, also ushers them into God’s presence for the administration of divine grace to their needs. They find in the music of praise in divine worship an emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual healing. As we observed in Chapter 6.3 of this study there have been instances whereby some members who were hitherto filled with bitterness, hatred and rage have been brought under strong conviction of sin by the Spirit of God at worship services. They have experienced the manifest Presence of God in a unique way and have consequently been brought into intimate loving relationship with God. People who were laden with feelings of guilt, emotional distress, emptiness, disappointment and strained relationships have also come to know the joy of unclouded embrace of the Father in the context of ‘praise and worship’. It is noteworthy that some members have eventually found peace with God and entered into a state of reconciliation with God through faith in His Son Jesus Christ as they participated in ministration. They have consequently been enabled by the Spirit of grace who is at work in them to experience emotional peace as well as interpersonal peace with those with whom they were previously at loggerheads.

2. We have also established that the type of inspiring, uplifting and satisfying worship experience as pertains to the GMPCs serves as an evangelistic outreach to non-Christians, seekers or casual visitors. The understanding here is that when the worship becomes an inspiring experience many a people does not attend merely to fulfil a religious duty; rather it becomes a wonderful experience that one would not miss for anything. The following story about the worship experience of a Dutchman in one of the congregations belonging to the GMPCs underscores the foregoing point: This elderly Dutchman who happens to be a family
friend to one of the church members has for some years now been accompanying this church member periodically to the worship services of this Ghanaian congregation. Incidentally this man does not speak any of the two languages (Akan and English) in which the services are conducted. However, this man gets so excited whenever he is in church. He usually joins some of the members who choose to come to the front during praises time, dancing with them as the entire congregation sings along accompanied by the musical instruments. Essentially, satisfying, uplifting and enthusiastic worship both draws new members and retains the old ones. In the light of the foregoing it is incumbent upon the spiritual leadership of all the GMPCs to ensure that their congregational worship truly becomes all that satisfying, uplifting and enthusiastic experience that draws people to the service “all by itself” as was the case of this Dutch man mentioned above.

Transformative discipleship in traditional mainline Protestant Christianity

Our basic assumption is that if the GMPCs which are the focus of this study hope to ensure ministry survival and ministry relevance to their members then they will have to do whatever it takes to live up to their afore-mentioned basic aim. This becomes more necessary in view of their situation as immigrant traditional mainstream Protestant churches in a mission setting. As we mentioned earlier in chapter 6.4, the 1993 pilot study of Oomen and Palm in the Netherlands as cited by Gerrie ter Haar has established two significant differences between the African-initiated Pentecostal/Charismatic churches and the traditional mainstream churches in the Netherlands. According to the study the difference is seen first, in the nature and intensity of religious participation which is more pronounced in the former than the latter. Second, the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches are almost exclusively aimed at personal renewal, requiring a total change of life. They explain that these churches offer the psychological and social support that individuals may need to achieve this. According to the study however, such a change of heart, followed by a total surrender to Christ, is not required or seriously emphasized in the traditional mainstream churches where moral precepts tend to be more ambiguous.

We established in chapter 6.4 of this study that even though the observation made by Oomen and Palm at the period they did their research is indisputable, the situation however, is gradually changing after a decade of their research particularly as witnessed in the immigrant Ghanaian traditional mainline Protestant Christianity. We demonstrated that the level of spirituality is changing significantly particularly within those newly emerged GMPCs in
Germany and Netherlands which of recent times have become seriously committed to renewal. It is noteworthy that for those churches which have consistently pursued evangelistic discipleship as discussed in chapter 6.4 of this study members have been enabled to experience transformative conversions which are evidenced in new life with new lifestyle. As consistent congregational evangelistic preaching and teaching continue to make stronger impression on the members, those among them who might have compromised with anti-social habits like marital infidelity get convicted of their sinful lifestyle. They rededicate their lives to Christ and eventually put their marital relationships in order as was the case of a lady who got convicted of her sinful lifestyle at a Bible teaching session in her local church. Yet, for a period of time she lacked the moral courage to break up an illicit relationship she had maintained for a long time with a married man. However, as time went by and as the evangelistic congregational preaching and teaching in the church continued to make a stronger impression on her she began to carry a heavy guilty conscience that did not make her find peace with God whilst she remained hooked to this married man. At a point in time she experienced an intense conviction of sin and a drastic transformation of heart which enabled her to renounce her old sinful lifestyle. She eventually broke up that illicit relationship, rededicated her life to Christ and took on a new lifestyle.

The point we are making here is that these GMPCs which belong to the traditional mainline Protestant churches stock which Oomen and Palm cited in their research appear to be equally committed to spiritual renewal of their membership. These churches are playing a significant role in the whole process of spiritual renewal of their membership which eventually impacts on the social life of their various communities.

Having said that we must however point out that if all the immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches seriously want to experience any significant transformative conversion of the membership as discussed above then much depends on the spiritual leadership provided for these churches. The spiritual leadership should be the kind which is appreciably dynamic and demonstrates a meaningful commitment in developing an ecclesial practice like discipleship among others in meeting the spiritual needs of their members. They should aim at building congregations that constitute dynamic environments in which people find the much needed spiritual and social support to achieve personal renewal that ensures changed and transformed lives.
We established in chapter 6.5 of this study that in working with Ghanaian immigrant Christians in Germany and the Netherlands, pastoral care and counselling proves to be an indispensable ecclesial practice in view of their unique immigrant situational needs coupled with other existential needs. The problems and needs of Ghanaian immigrants range widely from spiritual to socio-psychological. In the first place, there is the continuous search for wholeness – healing from pain, from the feeling of dejection, disappointments and emptiness. The fact that most of these Ghanaian Christians have been detached from their families and homeland for years creates for them the tendency to cling to the Christian community as an extended family and to the pastoral leadership as not only a counsellor but as a spiritual father they could count on for the much needed support at all times. In essence, the immigrant situation of these Ghanaian Christians creates for them a deeper sense of insecurity and the want of warmth, care, friendship and affection. This situational needs experienced by these Ghanaian Christians are quite understandable in view of their traditional and cultural heritage. Contrary to the Western culture these Ghanaians are coming from a typical African traditional society which emphasises a strong network of family relationships and communal cohesiveness which naturally promotes group solidarity the absence of which creates for them feelings of isolation and dejection.

Besides the said immigrant situational needs, these Ghanaian Christians also have other existential needs like the provision of divine healing and deliverance, economic and material security, as well as spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces. These existential needs are perceived to be tied to their traditional African worldviews. In view of their inherent traditional and religious sensibilities they have the sense of a constant feeling of need for spiritual guidance and for supernatural power to overcome oppressive forces, spirits of affliction, apparent failures, disappointments, moral weaknesses and other numerous difficulties in one’s life. For these Ghanaian immigrant Christians there seems to be a constant need for a sense of a super-natural divine Presence to overcome all the numerous difficulties experienced in their immigrant life situations. It is in such situations that the ministry relevance of the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs is called for. The spiritual leaders provided for these immigrant Christians must therefore be seen as shepherds, providing care and healing for the community in the power of the Holy Spirit who is present with us in Christ. They must also be seen as dependable friends, ready and available to be turned to for the much needed support in times of distress. Moreover, they must be seen as
religious functionaries who demonstrate the graces to satisfy their deep religious quest for an authentic spirituality. When this does not happen, the effectiveness of the Church’s ministry of caring for these Ghanaian immigrant Christians is brought into serious disrepute. In the light of the foregoing the position taken in this study is that in view of the particular situation of the Ghanaian immigrant Christians as discussed here, any approach to pastoral care and counselling by the GMPCs must necessarily be the kind that makes meaning to their immigrant situation and their cultural context and yet, faithful to the heritage of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In other words, the most effective pastoral care that would make the desired impression on these Ghanaian Christians is the kind that takes a serious view of their situational and existential needs in the context of spirituality.

Our presumption in the light of the discussion above is that in order to ensure ministry fruitfulness the spiritual leadership should be appreciably dynamic in employing the practice of pastoral care and counselling in addressing the said existential needs of these Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians. As we have demonstrated in Chapter 6.5 the existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of the pastoral responsibilities recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which has everything to do with spiritual and physical well-being. It is noteworthy that in places where these practices have been effectively employed, there are indications of life-changing experiences.

Christian koinonia in context - Ghanaian immigrant situations

In chapter 6.6 we observed that the immigrant situation of Ghanaian immigrants in places like Europe creates for such immigrants a feeling of a sense of displacement coupled with alienation, a want for warmth, care, friendship and affection. It is at this instance that the practical demonstration of the relevance of the GMPCs to the immigrant community is called for. Both for their own authenticity and for their evangelistic fruitfulness therefore, it behoves the GMPCs to learn ways to recover the dynamics of genuine Christian community. The significant point here is that these churches aim at providing a “spiritual home” where people can feel more at home in a fellowship where they can find intimate community of practical loving and caring relationships and intensive spiritual interaction in the spirit of koinonia. In essence these churches become an avenue where people could be brought to experience Christian love and to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance; a spiritual home where dignity
and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally, a privilege that many immigrants usually lack in a foreign land.

We established in chapter 6.6 that the immigrant situation of these Ghanaian Christians constantly challenges them to strive to promote their inherent traditional communal cohesiveness for their common good. Essentially, they provide the much needed group solidarity for their members in special occasions like marriage, birth, birthday celebrations, illness, bereavements and other crises moments and by so doing translate their African communality into that caring fellowship of *koinonia*. Our understanding of *koinonia* in this context as explained in chapter 6.6 is that kind of Spirit-inspired caring fellowship or communion of Christian believers in which members are growing in loving relationships with God and with each other. It is noteworthy that our discussion in chapter 6.6 helped to demonstrate how the traditional Ghanaian communality translates into the said *koinonia* among these mainline Protestant Christians of the GMPCs. Since the typical African Christian understanding of the relationship between the community and the individual constitute the basis for, and a vehicle for communicating spirituality the spiritual leadership of the GMPCs are constantly challenged to work hard so as to ensure the translation of the true essence of traditional Ghanaian communality into an experience of genuine Christian *koinonia*. As we established in chapter 6.6 once the leadership of these churches demonstrate genuine love and care for the basic human needs of their members, they give them every reason to trust them with their deepest spiritual needs. In most instances where trust building is enhanced through genuine loving and caring relationships in the spirit of *koinonia*, marked spiritual renewal results from this as the church consistently endeavours to provide spiritual and social guidance and care. In this regard members with deviant behaviour or anti-social habits are helped to relate their lives to God and supported to get their relationship with God strengthened resulting in marked transformation of lives. Similarly, members both young and old receive the much needed help that rescues or protects them from falling victim to the anti-social practices prevalent in the society. As we demonstrated in chapter 6, for most of those who happen to experience spiritual renewal or otherwise upon becoming members of the GMPCs, much depends on the extent of help they receive through loving and caring relationships in the spirit of *koinonia*. For some the fellowship and security provided by the church becomes their source of motivation in breaking with apparent destructive bad company and anti-social habits as was the case of that young female student belonging to one of the GMPC’s in Germany.
This female student in her late teens became wayward, developed a sour relationship with her parents and eventually left home. She eventually dropped from school, got into bad company and hanged about with friends in the streets. At a point in time however, through the loving and caring relationship extended to her by a few young youth leaders of her church she got inspired to relate her life to God and made a deeper commitment to Christ. Through their invaluable spiritual and material support she eventually got her life reorganized, resumed her schooling and eventually got her relationship with her parents restored. The significant point here is that people feel more at home in a fellowship where they can find intimate community of practical loving and caring relationships. Each member must feel wanted and cared for. Our understanding here is that whereas special programmes by themselves and gimmicks will not bring people into Christian fellowship, sincere caring love will, not only for those already in the church but also for those outside. In this regard it is incumbent on the spiritual leadership that they are seen to be appreciably dynamic so as to ensure that their congregations are fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment.

So far we have attempted to demonstrate that in order to ensure ministry fruitfulness two important requirements must necessarily be met by the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs.

In the first place we have established that the spiritual leadership that takes the mantle of leadership in such immigrant situations must be seen to exemplify vitality in personal spirituality. In other words they should be committed to maintain an exemplary Christian lifestyle which will make a meaningful impact on their members so as to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community.

Secondly, the spiritual leadership should be appreciably dynamic to ensure that the relevant ecclesial practices are effectively employed so as to make the desired impression on the members in contributing to the improvement of their spiritual and communal lives. In my candid opinion this is what it takes to ensure a meaningful ministry relevance of the spiritual leadership of these churches to their members as well as the survival of these churches especially for the first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians.

Beyond our foregoing discussions however, the relevance of these GMPCs to the larger community also needs to be considered. This leads us to the concluding discussions below.
7.4 Living out the “Wesley Declaration”: “The world is my parish”

It was John Wesley the 18th Century revivalist and founder of Methodism who made this famous declaration, “The world is my parish.” It was a revolutionary idea at the time, in a British context where the cities were divided into parishes and clergy assigned to everyone within the parish bounds. John Wesley an Anglican priest after his Aldersgate transformative encounter with God the Holy Spirit in May 1738 had been branded as an enthusiast and considered to have become too emotional for the Church of England and for that matter had to be kept outside its buildings. How could John Wesley be a Minister of the Gospel without a defined parish? Nevertheless Wesley insisted:

‘I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am that His blessing attends it…. ’

What does the foregoing declaration mean for the GMPCs in terms of mission? Perhaps “The world is my parish” suggests that the GMPCs could possibly be motivated to look beyond their initial target group for missions.

As we established in chapter 4.3 of this study, in view of their immigrant situations the primary aims and objectives of the initiators of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches were more or less chaplaincy oriented. The formation of these churches involved contacting and gathering immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians especially those who shared the same denominational background back home in Ghana and providing a place for moments of worship, congregational life and pastoral care. This meant that right from the outset the target group for their missionary thrust was primarily the first generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. In this regard one wonders if by so doing they consciously turned a blind eye to a potential mission field beyond their target group. The presumption is that beyond the so called chaplaincy stage as they consolidate their gains from the ingathering and the nurturing of their established members they would be motivated to look beyond their initial target group for missions. We presume that the future survival of these churches beyond the first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians will depend on a meaningful commitment to intentional mission outreach beyond their initial target group. What we mean by intentional mission outreach is that they should seek to reach new people besides the initial target group.

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of first generation immigrant Ghanaian Christians, provide them with a meaningful life changing experience in the Christian faith and bring such new people into the church for Christian nurture. When that happens they should strategically plan to put in place an English worship service which will cater primarily for non-Akan/Twi speaking worshippers (Akan/Twi being a Ghanaian vernacular spoken by majority of Ghanaian immigrants) who might be drawn into the church. A second service in English which definitely has some Ghanaian congregants as core members becomes necessary for the fact that full translation of the whole service for non-Akan speaking worshippers is not so feasible and prolongs the service. Moreover the service cannot be conducted entirely in English due to the language limitation of some of the Ghanaian congregants (especially the elderly who form the majority) when it comes to the use of a foreign language other than Akan/Twi for a formal worship service.

7.5 Empowering lay- Leadership and General Membership – A Responsibility of the Spiritual Leadership

“Empowering” leadership for mission and church growth is the third leadership characteristic model which bespeaks of the spiritual leadership’s commitment to the important task of helping Christians develop greater degrees of empowerment in their areas of giftedness which according to God’s plan already belongs to them.

As we have established in the section above, in order to ensure the relevance of the GMPCs to the larger community the entire membership of the GMPCs should be motivated to demonstrate a meaningful commitment in reaching out to new people besides their initial target group. They should seek to provide the non-churched with a meaningful life changing experience in the Christian faith and bring such new people into the church for Christian nurture. But this can only be realized if in the first place the members themselves can testify of an experiential encounter with the Lord and have been empowered to live in an intimate relationship with Jesus. Then they will be inspired to live out their faith with power and contagious enthusiasm sharing their faith though personal loving relationships. To ensure that the members are well motivated for mission and evangelism the spiritual leadership should be committed to consistent congregational education and training in mission and evangelism while inspiring and encouraging the membership to operate in their areas of giftedness as they seek to share their faith. The spiritual leadership should seek to create special events and an
environment where members can bring non-churched relatives, friends or acquaintances to church to hear the Gospel.

It is in view of the foregoing that relational evangelism is highly recommended as a realistic communication method of evangelism that can be used in the context of this immigrant Ghanaian Christians. Our understanding of relational evangelism in this context is the Christian witness to non-Christians or non-churched through existing channels of communication. Such channels of communication could be relationships with friends, neighbours, family members, co-workers, and anyone with whom one comes into contact in the natural course of one’s daily life. Essentially, the utilization of personal relationships is one of the most effective communication methods used in the African culture to get message across. Coming from a traditional culture in which a communalistic orientation to life is cherished, transmitting the Gospel is easier if it is done in the context of relationships over a period of time. It is noteworthy the different ways that these Ghanaian Christians could utilize personal relationships with the non-churched to draw them into the church community.

A good number of this immigrant Ghanaian Christians work as house-helps for Dutch and German families as well as families of other nationals. In most cases these families relate so well with these Ghanaian house-helps that some readily accompany them to church upon invitation to support them on special occasions like blessing of marriage, child dedication and memorial and thanksgiving service for their departed family members. These occasions offer them the opportunity to hear the Gospel and to draw inspiration from the lively and inspirational worship services of these Ghanaian mainline churches. In some other instances some of those families who employ these Ghanaian Christians in their homes and private work places are so much touched by the vibrant expression of their Christian faith that they ask for their prayer support in difficult situations like ill-health. These instances could offer these Ghanaian Christians the opportunity to invite them to church.

This becomes more realistic when members are inspired to function in their area of giftedness in the daily expression of their Christian faith as was the case of the Ghanaian lady chorister and the non-churched white Dutch lady mentioned in 6.2.1 of this study. This Ghanaian chorister who belonged to one of the GMPCs in Amsterdam used to sing inspirational church hymns with contagious enthusiasm while doing her evening job as a cleaner in the office of a Dutch firm where this Dutch lady worked. Actually, it was this chorister’s expression of vibrant faith through the singing of church hymns that inspired this Dutch lady to accompany her to church on a number of occasions. In most instances these non-Ghanaian casual worshippers who are invited to experience these Ghanaian mainline
worship services are greatly inspired by the well-structured and inspirational worship services. However, in all such instances they do not get established in these churches mostly due to language limitations since these services are conducted mostly in the Ghanaian language with inadequate translations into English.

Ironically, the GMPCs under focus in this study belong to international worldwide denominational church bodies. Methodism for instance which started in England as an evangelical Movement in the 18th Century is widely spread all over the continents. Today, the Methodist Church as a single denomination is established in nearly every country in the world having a global membership of nearly 80 million people. Incidentally in the Netherlands for instance there is no visible and vibrant indigenous Methodist presence besides the Caribbean and Ghanaian Methodist congregations established in few major cities. This also means that in most instances practicing Methodists who travel from all over the places to the Netherlands for temporal or permanent stay and who naturally look for a place to worship in a Methodist worship setting for example are likely to find themselves in one of these Methodist congregations. Actually, there have been a number of instances whereby some practicing Methodists of other nationalities who have come to settle in the Netherlands have managed to locate and worship with these Ghanaian congregations for a few occasions. But as usual as much as they enjoyed the inspiration and warmth of these Ghanaian services they did not eventually get their membership established mostly due to language limitations.

It is for the aforementioned reasons that we recommend that if these GMPCs seriously plan to reach out beyond their original target group to other non-Ghanaian speaking nationals, then they should consider putting in place an English worship service. This English service which could be structured to have some Ghanaian congregants as core members to begin with can be established alongside their vernacular services to cater for worshippers of other nationalities. Such a worship service should have a clear purpose in order to keep priorities straight. It should be a kind of warm, friendly, accepting atmosphere which is sensitive to other cultures and deemed as much easier to come into rather than a seemingly culturally-exclusive church service that might intimidate at first. They should place ministry to the non-churched, seekers, new converts and all new members at the top of their list and they should work hard to be biblically sound and culturally relevant in their preaching and teaching sessions. In a nutshell such a church ministry should exist to celebrate God’s Presence, to communicate God’s Word, to incorporate God’s family, to educate God’s people and to demonstrate God’s love.
In the light of the discussions above we suggest that in order to ensure a remarkable church growth the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs should aim at making their membership feel adequately equipped and meaningfully committed to building bridges through personal loving relationships. These churches should therefore be committed to a two-fold “Presence witness” in their host European societies. What we mean by “Presence witness” in this context is that first, members should be inspired, equipped and motivated to live out their Christian faith with power and contagious enthusiasm, sharing their faith through realistic personal loving relationships. Second, the spiritual leadership and the membership of these churches should always ensure that their worship services become an inspirational experience for those who attend, rather than a mere Christian duty needed to be fulfilled. Satisfying, uplifting and enthusiastic worship service which incorporates effective discipling both draws new members and retains the old ones. Casual visitors to such worship services get inspired and richly blessed and feel like visiting again and again.

7.6 The Second Generation and Leadership Empowerment for Mission and Church Growth

In chapters four and six of this study we identified the ministry challenges facing the GMPCs in relation to the second generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians. We observed that the immigrant Ghanaian Christians belonging to the GMPCs are living in the first and second generations and this implies for many, a life between two worlds. The second generation congregants are children of the first generation immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians who were either born and raised in the host European societies or born in Ghana but brought to join their parents at early childhood or at youthful stage. These young ones who are under the age of thirty with majority of them under the age of twenty-five, have been raised in European schools and culture but nurtured by first generation Ghanaian parents who speak their indigenous language at home with them and impress on them their Ghanaian religio-cultural values. For most of these second generation youth and young adults who have been raised in the Western culture however, this attempt at keeping a tenuous balance between adaptation to Western life (whatever that may be) and the maintenance of Ghanaian moral and religious values is stressful, confusing, and frustrating. They seem to have problem trying to negotiate two worlds – their parent’s world and their own contemporary one – in order to form their own identity.
We also observed in chapters four and six that for the first generation adult members one of the major challenges facing them is how to keep their second generation children especially those in their teens or in their young adulthood in the church. These adults believe that the spiritual and community life of the church will help their children to uphold the much needed moral and religious virtues which in their view are indispensable for the attainment of a good life. Whereas these first generation adults consider the community life of the church conducive to their spiritual and social wellbeing in their immigrant life situation the second generation youth in some instances find the church services boring. While at a younger age they will accompany their parents to church and remain attached to the church especially in places where they have a well-organized Sunday school for children which are usually graded into distinct groups according to age using Dutch, German, English and occasionally Akan/Twi. But once they grow into their teens they begin to drag their feet when it comes to church attendance to the extent that many eventually drop out of church especially in churches which do not have well-structured programs for the youth who graduate from the Sunday school at about age sixteen or seventeen. In most places since they do not have a separate youth service for these youth where they could use Dutch or German as the case may be, they are made to worship with the adult on Sundays where the services are conducted mostly in Akan/Twi (being a Ghanaian vernacular spoken by most Ghanaians). In such instances the worship setting perceived to be more suited to the needs of the adult congregants does not so much excite the youth who have a taste for contemporary music and want sermons which will be more relevant to their life situation. Moreover, they expect that sermons will be preached in a language that they are more conversant with like Dutch or German. Furthermore, this second generation youth do not feel meaningfully involved in the worship life of the church and so all these factors amount to a sense of boredom when they come to church. Ironically, this second generation immigrant Ghanaian youth presumably constitute the future adult congregants of these Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches.

In the light of the foregoing we consider the issue at stake here to be a significant ministry challenge to the future survival of the GMPCs that will need a serious attention. As a participant observer for several years I have come to the conclusion that if the GMPCs hope to retain their second generation in the church as their future adult congregants then their spiritual leadership need to do more.

In the first place we suggest that provided these churches are able to find adequate space which in most cases however, is difficult to come by; they should think of a separate Sunday worship service for the youth and young adults who graduate from the Sunday school. This
should be a bi-lingual Sunday worship service in English and German or English and Dutch as the case may be for the second generation youth and young adults who presumably constitute the future congregants of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches. This becomes necessary for a number of reasons which include language limitations for the youth who are not very conversant with the Akan language used mostly in the adult worship service. The English language factor besides the Dutch and German becomes necessary for the involvement of Ghanaian adults who are more conversant with English than the Dutch and German; English being the second language of most Ghanaians. This bi-lingual service for the youth and young adults will constitute a ministry and a spiritual home to which they will seek to invite their friends and peers including the non-churched for a life changing experience in the Christian faith.

These second generation congregants must be made to feel that they have a church ministry which addresses needs pertinent to their spiritual and social lives in their immigrant and adaptation situation. They must be encouraged to have a strong sense of active involvement in a ministry to which they can invite friends and peers for a life changing experience in the Christian faith. Since in most places they have a good number of young adults between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five and even up to thirty in some cases, it means they can find capable leaders among themselves who can share in the leadership of their ministry besides adult helpers. What is needed here then is competent spiritual leadership which will be committed to encourage, train, equip, support and mentor such potential leaders among these young adults to become all that God wants them to become in Christian life and ministry. They should be committed to helping them to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry, train and mobilize them for effective practice of mission within one’s own culture and across cultures. The spiritual leadership should prove themselves capable of helping these second generation congregants to develop greater degrees of empowerment for ministry as they seek to operate in their various areas of giftedness.

It is my candid opinion that these youth and young adults who constitute the future congregants of the GMPCs have a stake in the mission expansion and church growth that will ensure the future survival of the GMPCs.

7.7 Concluding Remarks

In this present study, we have attempted to demonstrate that the ministries of the Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches established in Germany and the Netherlands are basically aimed
at providing a community within which the spirituality of the membership is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for. Essentially, the central concern of both the initiators and others who become members of these churches is to improve their spiritual and communal lives. These two important goals take precedence over any thought of preservation and perpetuation of the immigrants’ ethnic identity.

One important observation we made in this study is that significant church growth – numerical and spiritual, takes place within the religio-cultural setting provided by these Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches. These newly established GMPCs are performing vital missionary function by their very presence. By their very presence these churches provide worship opportunities for most migrant Ghanaian Christians who before the establishment of the said churches remained non-churched for several years and without any motivation to seek any church membership elsewhere. In the light of the foregoing we have demonstrated that these churches have been established basically with the worthy objective of serving a specific African immigrant group with their own pattern, and their own rate of growth.

Another important observation we have made is that in view of their inherent religious sensibilities the type of Christianity that would make the desired impression on these Ghanaian mainline Christians is the type that takes a serious view of their existential and contextual needs in the context of spirituality. In consequence of their peculiar circumstances therefore these newly emerged GMPCs generally crave the spiritual leadership of persons whose background and training as well as spiritual orientation is appropriate for such a responsibility. This present study has sought to establish that in order to ensure meaningful ministry fruitfulness in new immigrant situations as pertaining to the GMPCs two essential qualities are desired of the spiritual leadership provided by these churches.

First, that the spiritual leadership that takes the mantle of leadership in such immigrant situations necessarily exemplify vitality in personal spirituality. They should endeavour to maintain an exemplary Christian lifestyle which will impact on their members so as to ensure the reality of a vibrant Christian community. When the spiritual leadership is found to be credible and not wanting in moral integrity then they will assume the moral courage to enforce church discipline and to motivate the membership to seek revival in spirituality so as to ensure moral sanctity in their Christian communities. We are of the view that since holy living is a hallmark of the believer’s Christian witness the authenticity of the spiritual and
moral character of both the spiritual leadership and membership of the GMPCs is very vital to effective and successful mission.

Second, that in view of the unique contextual and existential needs of the migrant Ghanaian Christians as mentioned above it is required that the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs is seen to have taken a new dimension which ensures the desired ministry relevance of these churches to the said migrant Ghanaian Christians. In effect, to ensure the desired ministry relevance of the GMPCs to their members the spiritual leadership provided for these immigrant situations must be seen to demonstrate a meaningful commitment to developing the relevant ecclesial practices in meeting the needs of this immigrant Ghanaian mainline Christians. The spiritual leadership, comprising both clergy and lay should therefore be the type that is committed to do all that it takes to ensure the promotion of a harmonious community within which the spirituality of the members is enhanced and their communal welfare catered for. Essentially, the spiritual leadership must be seen to be appreciably dynamic to ensure that their congregations are fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment.

Our basic assumption is that these GMPCs have come to stay and for that reason they aspire to ensure fruitfulness in ministry so as to survive not just for the first generation of immigrant Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians but the second and subsequent generations as well as discussed above. If that is the case then the qualitative factor aspect of spiritual leadership required in such new immigrant situations as demonstrated in this study must be meaningfully addressed by the appropriate Church bodies. In this regard we strongly recommend that the issues being raised in this study regarding the type of spiritual leadership that is needed in such new immigrant situations be given due consideration by the responsible Church bodies who have the mandate to appoint church workers for such challenging mission environments. We further recommend that in view of the unique leadership challenges facing church functionaries in their immigrant situations, the appropriate Church bodies should create avenues under their auspices for a prayerful healthy conversation, counselling and spiritual guidance that will help to maintain an atmosphere conducive to harmonious and effective leadership. We anticipate that the relevant issues raised will inform the mission policy of the said Church bodies in Ghana – for instance the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Methodist Church Ghana among others and their partner churches in Europe who may be
already involved or seek future partnership in missions among Ghanaian/African migrant Christians in Europe or elsewhere.

It is noteworthy that this present study which underscores the important role played by the spiritual leadership provided by the GMPCs in their host European societies lends credence to critical observation made by theologians and scholars of church missions and church planting like George Lings and Stuart Murray as cited in chapter 6.1 of this study. Essentially, the ministry prospects of the GMPCs in providing a community within which the spirituality and communal welfare of their members are enhanced underscores the importance of a contextualized holistic approach to missions as discussed in chapter 6. In this regard, we have attempted to demonstrate unequivocally in this study that authentic theology is one that responds to the existential needs of a people within a specific historical and cultural context as Omenyo posits in chapter 6.1. In the light of the discussions above we anticipate that this dissertation presented as a mission theology might have some relevance for theology particularly in the sense that it would open up new vistas for both the immigrant and indigenous Churches concerned in intercultural theology in the context of the globalization phenomenon.

One significant limitation of this present study is that it did not aim at providing a much detailed assessment of typical Ghanaian/African migrations to Europe. Essentially, our main focus was on the main characteristics of the newly emerged Ghanaian mainline Protestant churches and the type of spiritual leadership needed in such immigrant situations that will ensure the improvement of the spiritual and communal lives of the membership. However, we envisage that this study might be of academic and social significance and as a modest contribution to the on-going global discussion on migration by providing a lead to a clearer understanding of the role that religion plays in this type of migration. In essence, this dissertation throws light on the role of religious minorities in the process of spiritual renewal of the lives of their membership, which definitely has a bearing on their social lives, for the betterment of the community life of their host European societies.

It is noteworthy that the type of spirituality pursued by these Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches is gradually making the desired impact on their membership. Lives are being touched by the Lord for transformation and the conversion experiences of some of their members are evidenced in new life with new lifestyle. Furthermore, the congregations belonging to these Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches are being fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment and fulfilment.
APPENDICES
# APPENDIX 1

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APPENDIX 2

Interview Schedule regarding the foundation history of the church

FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT (FREE UNIVERSITY) AMSTERDAM

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1  -  FOR THE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP OF THE GHANAIAN MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS

Introduction: The researcher is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Theology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He is researching into the type of spiritual leadership that the Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches (GMPCs) in Germany and the Netherlands need so as to ensure their ministry relevance to the present and future generations of Ghanaian immigrant Christians and for that matter ensure the future survival of these churches in their host societies. The information needed is primarily for academic purposes.

You are kindly requested to provide information regarding foundation history of your church; church structure; pastoral leadership; statistics of membership, church affiliations etc. as stated below.

1. The setting: Place, time and manner in which the congregation was started.

2. The vision and motivation for the formation of the congregation.

3. Founding members; First service and official inauguration (dates to be provided)

4. Initial developments within the congregation

5. Any affiliation with historic European churches like Lutheran, Dutch Reformed Church and The United Methodist Church etc.? If so, to what extent are their involvement/role in the formation and ministry of the Ghanaian churches and what assistance do they provide for the said churches?

6. Are the conditions for the acquisition of place of worship favourable and affordable?

7. What impact is your style of worship making on your church membership?
8. What kind of church structure, leadership and pastoral oversight etc. does your church provide? What impact are all these making on the membership in terms of church growth and for that matter the future survival of the church?

9. How effective are church organisations like Singing Groups, Women’s Ministries, Youth Ministries and Sunday school for children?

10. Kindly provide statistics of church membership in terms of the following:
   a) Current numerical strength and rate of church growth
   b) Denominational roots of members of your congregation (i.e. number of Presbyterians, Methodists, Roman Catholics and Pentecostals etc.
   c) Church affiliation of members while in Europe before removing their membership to join your church; providing the figures for the previously non-churched if any.

11. Missionary vision, set goals and church projects etc.

12. Church planting efforts in terms of new congregations established by your church and information related to their establishment and development.

13. Does your church own a connection to any parent denominational Church in Ghana and how is that affiliation structured?
APPENDIX 3

Membership Questionnaire

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Introduction: The researcher is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Theology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He is researching into the type of spiritual leadership that the Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches (GMPCs) in Germany and the Netherlands need to ensure their ministry relevance to the present and future generations of Ghanaian immigrant Christians and for that matter ensure the future survival of these churches in their host societies. The information needed is primarily for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is assured.

Membership Questionnaire.

1 For how long have you been resident in the Netherlands/Germany?

2 Which denominational Church did you belong to before moving into Europe?

3 Did you fellowship with any other congregation in the Netherlands or Germany before taking your membership in:

   i) this present church? -------------------------
   
   ii) If yes mention that previous church………..

4. What were your main reasons for choosing to join this particular Church?
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- March 2004: Ampomah-Nketiah, Yaw, Church secretary, together with other founding members of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), Amsterdam.
- May 2004: Amankwah, S., Arhin, N.K. together with other founding members of Wesley Methodist Church, Amsterdam.
SUMMARY

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN NEW IMMIGRANT SITUATIONS:
Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches in Germany and the Netherlands

The central place of leadership in the newly emerged migrant African Christian communities in Europe gave rise to this study. The circumstances of these Churches and the central role of their leaders require that the theological concept of ‘Spiritual leadership’ among them is explored for a better understanding of how they negotiate the peculiar challenges they encounter in their new context in Europe. The study focuses on two Ghanaian mainline Protestant Church denominations in Germany and the Netherlands: the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and The Methodist Church Ghana (MCG). Those Churches are different from the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, which have been present in Europe longer and are more familiar to Europeans. They are different because they are churches that were, more or less, exported to Africa from Europe by Missionaries in the 19th Century.

The study finds out that even though these Churches established in Europe appear to have developed a life of their own, the flow of people and ideas from Ghana to Europe, which continues to be significant keep alive African indigenous spiritual concerns among their members. Therefore, these migrant Ghanaian Christians in Europe essentially hold the same religious worldviews as their folks back home. However, their immigrant situation also poses for them, far challenges that are unique. Such challenges include a deep sense of insecurity, want of warmth, care, friendship and affection. Since they are mostly economic refugees detached from their families and homeland, they are prone to experiencing feelings of isolation and depression in their constant struggle to find shelter for themselves, especially, in the case of the ‘undocumented’ amongst them. In consequence of their peculiar circumstances the study observes that in their search for a spiritual home in their host European societies, three factors are extremely important:

• A kind of Christianity that addresses itself to needs perceived as tied to their traditional African worldviews. Such needs include healing and deliverance, spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces and then physical security which is understood to be related to their material and social well-being.

• A contextualized formal worship setting perceived to be more suited to their needs as African Christians.

• A spiritual home where they could enjoy Christian love and care, a sense of belonging and acceptance and of course a place where dignity and self-worth brought from home could be expressed naturally.

The study argues that what is understood by these African Christians as ‘spiritual leadership’ is crucial to meeting the aforementioned needs and ensuring the future survival of these communities in Europe. Spiritual leadership as understood by these African Christians is found to involve three ingredients – personal spirituality, the ability to effectively guide ecclesial practices, and the ability to empower lay-leaders and members of the congregation for mission and church growth. These three ingredients are developed into a three standard-
ingredient set of models for evaluating and predicting the effectiveness or otherwise of leadership in African migrant congregations in Europe.

The study establishes that leadership practices should be the kinds that take both their African/Ghanaian religious worldviews and immigrant situations into consideration if they would make a strong impression on these Ghanaian Christians. In essence, these practices should be seen to meaningfully address their existential needs such as divine healing and deliverance, economic and material security, as well as spiritual security in terms of protection from spiritual forces. The study demonstrates that existential needs like healing and deliverance when employed as integral part of pastoral responsibilities of leaders recovers for these Ghanaian Christians important dimensions of the Christian message of salvation which encompasses spiritual and physical well-being.

The thesis concludes that essentially, ‘Spiritual leadership’ deemed to be appreciably dynamic in these immigrant situations is the type which equips and ensures that their congregations are fashioned to constitute dynamic environments in which people find a sense of belonging and acceptance, Christian love and care, friendship, empowerment, spiritual vitality and fulfilment. It is the kind that is committed to do all that it takes to ensure the promotion of a harmonious community within which the spirituality of the members is enhanced, their communal welfare catered for and their indigenous spiritual concerns, such as healing, deliverance and protection from the activities of evil spirits catered for.

The relevance of the thesis lies in its contribution it makes to the theological discussion of the critical issue of Spiritual leadership and the important role it plays in new immigrant situations. It offers a contribution to the on-going global discussion on migration by providing leads to a clearer understanding of the role religion plays in it. The study is also set to deepen academic reflection on the role of religious minorities in the process of spiritual renewal of the lives of their membership, which definitely has a bearing on their social lives, for the betterment of the communal life of their host societies. Finally, we anticipate that the findings of this study will inform the mission policy of both the mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana and their partner Churches in Europe who may either be already involved or seek future partnership in missions among migrant Ghanaian/African Christians in Europe or elsewhere. It will inform them particularly as to the type of spiritual leaders that are needed to serve in such new immigrant situations.

Chapter 1 provides the background information necessary for a clear understanding of the religious context of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Christians in Germany and the Netherlands. It begins with an overview of the demographic, historical, political and socio-economic developments of Ghana. The final section of the chapter is devoted to a general overview of Ghanaian migration as related to these developments.

Chapter 2 focuses on the History of mainline Churches in Ghana. The first part, under the sub-heading: Mission history of mainline Churches in Ghana, traces the history of Christianity in Ghana. In the second part headed, History of mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana, we have limited our discussions to two of the mainline Protestant Churches in Ghana namely, the PCG (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) and the MCG (Methodist Church Ghana) whose overseas Churches in Germany and in the Netherlands are the focus of this study.
Chapter 3 examines the emergence of Ghanaian mainline Protestant Churches in Germany and the Netherlands. An attempt is made to trace the history of the formation of these churches, looking at both the spiritual and structural developments of these congregations.

Chapter 4 identifies the challenges that confront the GMPCs; challenges which are seen to evolve mostly from the spiritual sensibilities of the Ghanaian mainline Christians in their immigrant situations. The chapter illustrates that in view of the existential and contextual needs of these immigrants a new type of Spiritual leadership is required in such immigrant situations. It should be the type which is spiritually and functionally vibrant and thus committed to do all that it takes to ensure the ministry relevance of these Churches.

Chapter 5 is an elaboration of the first of the three ingredients of Spiritual leadership, first mentioned in the introductory chapter, personal spirituality. It explores the kind of spiritual and moral qualities required of the spiritual leader in such immigrant situations, which are likely to influence ministry fruitfulness and for that reason ensure the survival of the GMPCs.

Chapter 6 takes up the remaining two ingredients of spiritual leadership, which are the ability to guide ecclesial practices and the ability to empower lay-leaders and the general membership for mission and Church growth. It discusses within these models, leadership and pastoral activities, including pastoral care and counselling, healing and deliverance ministry, worship and discipleship as well as the promotion of communal welfare in the context of koinonia.

Chapter 7 is the concluding chapter, and an attempt is made to draw together the various strands of discussions. It revisits the research question and discusses issues within the framework of the proposed three standard-ingredient set of models for evaluating and predicting the effectiveness or otherwise of leadership in African migrant congregations in Europe.
SAMENVATTING

GEESTELIJK LEIDERSCHAP IN NIEUWE IMMIGRANTEN-SITUATIES:
Ghanese Protestantse hoofdstrom-kerken in Duitsland en Nederland

Leiderschap heeft een centrale plaats in christelijke gemeenschappen van Afrikaanse immigranten in Europa. Dit én de context van deze kerken vergen dat het theologisch concept ‘geestelijk leiderschap’ nader wordt onderzocht met het oog op de wijze waarop zij ingaan op de bijzondere uitdagingen waarvoor zij staan in hun nieuwe omgeving. De focus van deze studie is gericht op de rol van het geestelijk leiderschap in vrij recent ontstane kerkelijke gemeenten van met name Ghanese immigranten in Duitsland en Nederland, die zijn verbonden met twee hoofdstromen van het door de Europese missie en zending gevestigde protestantisme in het thuisland Ghana: in casu de Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) en de Methodist Church Ghana (MCG). Deze kerken verschillen van de Pinkster-/charismatische kerken die al langer in Europa bestaan en waarmee de meeste mensen beter bekend zijn. Het grootste verschil is dat het om kerken gaat die in met name de negentiende eeuw min of meer vanuit Europa naar Afrika zijn geëxporteerd door zendelingen.

Uit deze studie blijkt dat beide kerken in Europa een eigen kerkelijk leven hebben ontwikkeld, maar daarbij toch nog steeds worden gevoed door de komst van mensen uit Ghana en het gedachtengoed daar, met name ook als het gaat om het spirituele aspect. De immigranten hebben dezelfde traditioneel-religieuze wereldbeelden als hun geloofsgenoten in hun thuisland. De situatie van deze immigranten levert evenwel unieke pastorale uitdagingen op voor de Ghanese kerken. Hun situatie is niet zelden benadert vanwege het gebrek aan veiligheid, warmte, zorg, vriendschap en genegenheid. Vaak zijn zij economisch vluchteling, ver verwijderd van familie en land van herkomst. Dan staan zij broot aan het gevoel gesoleerdheid te staan, of aan depressiviteit in hun voortdurende worsteling om een veilige plek te vinden, in het bijzonder wanneer zij ‘ongedocumenteerd’ zijn. Als gevolg van hun bijzondere omstandigheden kunnen drie belangrijke factoren worden aangewezen die essentieel zijn voor hun zoektocht naar een geestelijk thuis in hun gastland:

- Een gecontextualiseerde vorm van eredienst die afgestemd is op hun behoeften.
- Een geestelijk thuis waar zij christelijke liefde en zorg ervaren. Een plek waar de van huis uit bestaande eigenwaarde op een natuurlijke manier tot uiting kan komen, vaak in scherp contrast tot hun huidige, maatschappelijke situatie.

De studie stelt dat hetgeen deze Afrikaanse christenen onder ‘geestelijk leiderschap’ verstaan cruciaal is bij de inzet van de GMPCs voor het lenigen van existentiële en contextuele noden en voor de toekomst van deze gemeenschappen in Europa. Hun verstaan van dit leiderschap

Vastgesteld wordt dat dit leiderschap rekening moet houden met zowel de Afrikaanse/Ghanese religieuze wereldbeelden als de concrete situatie van de immigranten, wil dit een sterke band met hen houden. Ten diepste moet dit leiderschap betekenisvol ingaan op hun existentiële behoeften aan Goddelijke genezing en bevrijding, economische en materiële zekerheid en geestelijke veiligheid in de zin van bescherming tegen spirituele machten. Deze studie toont aan dat wanneer de aandacht voor deze existentiële behoeften integraal onderdeel zijn van de pastorale verantwoordelijkheid van hun geestelijk leiders, dit voor deze Ghanese christenen belangrijke dimensies herstelt van de christelijke boodschap aangaande hun redding, die voor hen geestelijk én lichamelijk welzijn betreft.

Het proefschrift concludeert dat ‘geestelijk leiderschap’ dat wezenlijk dynamisch kan zijn voor immigranten van het soort moet zijn dat ervoor zorgt en bestendigt dat hun kerkelijke gemeenten zijn opgebouwd tot een dynamische omgeving waarin mensen verbondenheid en acceptatie ervaren, christelijke liefde en zorg, vriendschap, bemoediging, geestelijke vitaliteit en het tot je bestemming komen. Het is van het soort dat zich inzet voor alles wat nodig is voor een harmonieuze gemeenschap waarin de spiritualiteit van de leden kan opbloeien, waarin zorg wordt besteed aan hun gemeenschappelijk welzijn, net als aan hun specifieke geestelijke vragen zoals die naar genezing, bevrijding en bescherming tegen boze geesten.

De relevantie van de dissertatie ligt in de bijdrage die deze levert aan de theologische discussie over de cruciale kwestie van het geestelijk leiderschap en de belangrijke rol hiervan voor nieuwe immigranten. Daarbij wil de studie bijdragen aan de academische reflectie omtrent de rol van religieuze minderheden in het proces van geestelijke vernieuwing van hun leden en hun gemeenschap, en de invloed daarvan op het sociale leven in hun nieuwe context. Verder hopen we dat de bevindingen van deze studie kunnen bijdragen aan het missionair beleid van zowel de mainline protestantse kerken in Ghana als ook hun partnerkerken in Europa die zich richten op geëmmigreerde Ghanese/Afrikaanse christenen. Deze studie biedt met name informatie over het type geestelijk leider dat deze nieuwe immigranten behoeven.

Hoofdstuk 1 geeft de achtergrondinformatie die nodig is voor een goed begrip van de religieuze situatie van Ghanese mainline protestantse christenen in Duitsland en Nederland. Het geeft demografische, historische, politieke en sociaal-economische en religieuze ontwikkelingen van Ghana weer. Het laatste deel is gewijd aan een algemeen overzicht van de Ghanese emigratie in relatie tot de politieke en sociaal-economische ontwikkelingen in Ghana.

Hoofdstuk 2 schetst de geschiedenis van de grote kerken in Ghana. Het eerste gedeelte betreft de Zendingsgeschiedenis van de grote kerken in Ghana. Dit tracht inzicht te geven in de entree van het christendom in de bestaande, religieuze context van Ghana en hoe daarop werd gereageerd. Het tweede deel is een korte weergave van de kerkgeschiedenis van twee
mainline Protestantse Kerken in Ghana, de PCG (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) en de MCG (Methodist Church Ghana).

Hoofdstuk 3 onderzoekt de opkomst van de Ghanese mainline protestantse kerken in Duitsland en Nederland. Het hoofdstuk bespreekt eerst de opkomst van die Ghanese gemeenten. Daarna wordt gepoogd hun geschiedenis tot dusver te beschrijven, waarbij vooral wordt gekeken naar de geestelijke en structurele ontwikkelingen in deze gemeenten.

Hoofdstuk 4 gaat in op de uitdagingen aan de GMPCs, met name hun confrontatie met de geestelijke gevoeligheden van deze Ghanese christenen in hun immigrantenstatus. Geïllustreerd wordt dat de existentiële en contextuele behoeften van deze immigranten een nieuw soort geestelijk leiderschap vergen. Dit moet spiritueel en functioneel zijn en aldus toegewijd aan alles wat nodig is om de relevantie van deze kerken voor hun leden te waarborgen in hun eigen specifieke context.

Hoofdstuk 5 kan worden gezien als een uitwerking van het eerste, cruciale aspect van spiritueel leiderschap dat in het voorafgaande hoofdstuk werd genoemd, namelijk persoonlijke spiritualiteit. Het tracht aan te tonen dat de bijzondere aard van de bediening in mainline kerken van Ghanese immigranten vergt dat de leiding vitale persoonlijke spiritualiteit toont. Verkend wordt welke spirituele en morele kwaliteiten nodig zijn, zowel voor vruchtbaar pastoraat als voor de toekomst van de GMPC’s.

Hoofdstuk 6 gaat in op beide andere aspecten van spiritueel leiderschap, namelijk het vermogen om kerkelijk werk te begeleiden en de toerusting van leken-leiders en leden voor missionair werk en kerkgroei. Besproken wordt het leiderschap in dezen en het pastorale werk, waaronder pastorale zorg, counseling, genezing en bevrijding, aanbidding en discipelschap, alsmede de bevordering van het gemeenschapsleven in de zin van de koinonia.

Hoofdstuk 7 trekt conclusies en maakt een aanzet om de uiteenlopende onderdelen van de discussies samen te brengen. Het gaat na wat omtrent op de centrale onderzoeksvraag nu gesteld kan worden binnen het frame van de voorgestelde drie standaard-onderdelen voor een model voor evaluatie en effectiviteitsverbetering van het leiderschap in gemeenten van Afrikaanse immigranten in Europa.
CURRICULUM VITAE

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Education:
- Theological education started in 1985 at Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, Ghana. In 1988 awarded a Diploma in Theology and a Diploma in Study of Religions (External), University of Ghana, Legon.
- Postgraduate Theological study started in 2003 at the Vrije Universiteit (Free University) Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In 2004 awarded Master of Arts in Theology. (MTh.)
- In 2008, started Doctoral study at the Faculty of Theology, Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Working Experience:
- June 1988: Commissioned Minister of the Methodist Church Ghana
- August 1991: Ordained Minister of the Methodist Church Ghana.
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Family:
Married to Beatrice Amoah since August 1991. Blessed with a son and a daughter: Daniel Adom Amoah and Debora Kyerewa Amoah.