

**CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KUMASI**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CHURCH GROWTH: A CASE  
STUDY OF GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, AMAKOM-KUMASI**

**PROJECT WORK**

**(LONG ESSAY)**

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**JUNE, 2023**

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STUDY OF GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, AMAKOM-KUMASI**

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**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY  
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THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY  
WITH ADMINISTRATION.**

**DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY**

**JUNE, 2023**

## DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project work report is the result of our own original research except for sections of which references have been duly made and to the best of our knowledge no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to Almighty God for his guidance, unfailing love and providential care. Again to Rev. Peter K. Amponsah of Charismatic Gospel Church-Kumasi, Deborah Kafui Adzoga the beloved wife of Rev Obed Agzoga and the rest of the families.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

One cannot doubt the fact that the users of social media have overwhelmingly increased from the time COVID-19 pandemic hit the World. Some churches have relied on the use of social media to supplement the conventional face-to-face church meetings and other activities. This chapter serves as an introduction to the problem being investigated, thus the use of social media and its impact on Grace Baptist Church in Amakom-Kumasi, Ghana.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

In the 21st century, the use of social media has become a big part of every individual's life. Kunle Badmos asserts that the influence of social media in these days has become strong that its significant role in the world today is unquestionable. Social media has expanded in acceptance and usability and has become one of the most significant platforms for human connection.<sup>1</sup>

Noah Darko-Adjei, Miriam Ansaa Animante and Harry Akussah posit that social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Tiktok and WhatsApp have the qualities to shape the way people communicate. Some churches have begun utilizing social media in their ministry efforts to publicize, encourage, and to promote events. The use of social media has the inherent advantage of being quick and viral.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kunle Badmos, *Effects of Social Media on the Church* (Thesis: Redeemed Christian Bible College, 2014), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Noah Darko-Adjei, Miriam Ansaa Animante, Harry Akussah, "Use of Social Media by Leaders of Charismatic Churches in Ghana" *Library Philosophy and Practice*, Vol. 1 (2021): 2.

Hjarvard Stig states that, social media shapes religious imagination in line with popular culture genres and cultural contexts, much of the institutionalized religion's social roles have been replaced by social media platforms that also offer community-building and moral and spiritual direction.<sup>3</sup> Today, the effort to introduce one's church service and activities to the world requires the involvement of social media, which is used for the purposes of socialization and promotion, especially, since almost all trending and breaking news are shown and aired to the general public as soon as it happens.

There is a view about social media as to how it operates, having no age limit, who qualifies to use it, and also the manner of things which are accessible on the various social media platforms. One cannot dispute the fact that some of the content which social media users are exposed to are bad in terms of decency, since such platforms do not have a way of controlling who can and who cannot access them when posted. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and among others have the right to block persons who fail to conduct themselves base on the privacy and license agreement of the particular platform, but it is usually done based on frequent reports to the said platform's managers by other persons who are also users. Badmos asserts that, social media minimizes or stops face-to-face interaction, in this modern time, due to the freedoms provided by the virtual world, people are free to develop a dream character and can pretend to be someone else.<sup>4</sup>

This assertion by Badmos makes sense, because people may use that as an opportunity to dupe others by taking their monies, false promises may cause other persons to fall victims in the issue of marriage, pretending to be selling approved products but end up

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<sup>3</sup> Hjarvard Stig, "The Mediatisation of Religion", *A Theory of Media as Agent of Religious Change*, Vol 6 (2008): 10.

<sup>4</sup> Badmos, *Effect of Social Media on the Church*, 5.

selling out fake products and sometimes not even a product to show in exchange for the monies they may be taken since they cannot be traced with such identity. This has made many people across the world fall victim on some social media platforms. Well, one may say bad things did happen even before social media became common to everyone who wants to use it. Badmos states that, there is no better way for any organization, including the church, to reach millions of people around the clock than through social media websites to announce forthcoming fundraising events or introduce new services or products.<sup>5</sup> In the light of this assertion made by Badmos, some churches are encouraged to use social media to promote their events and other activities. Therefore, the use of social media in the church has prompted the researchers to examine the impact of the social media on the church and specifically its effect on the growth of Grace Baptist Church located in Amakom-Kumasi, Ghana.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

A complex range of opportunities and challenges that impact different facets of religious life and community engagement are presented by social media's impact on churches. Comprehending the complex effects of social media on the contemporary church setting poses an important research problem. Badmos and others' work reveal the effects of social media on the church, politics, marketing and among others, however, none has featured the impact of social media on Grace Baptist Church in his writing. This study attempts to examine the ways in which the ubiquitous usage of social media platforms impacts religious discourse, community dynamics, and spiritual experiences of Grace Baptist Church, Amakom- Kumasi.

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<sup>5</sup> Badmos, *Effect of Social Media on the Church*, 4.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The main research question addressed in this essay is: How has the use of social media affected the growth of Grace Baptist Church?

To handle the above question fully, the study brought to light the following subsidiary questions:

- i. Is social media an enemy or a friend to the church?
- ii. How should the church use the social media?
- iii. Should the church consider the use of social media for her growth?
- iv. Should the use of social media be the only source for the church for evangelism?
- v. How has the use of social media contributed to the growth of Grace Baptist Church?
- vi. What is the history of the Grace Baptist Church?

### **1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of the study seeks to examine how the use of social media has affected the growth of Grace Baptist Church.

The objectives are:

- i. To examine whether social media is an enemy or a friend to the Church.
- ii. To examine how the church should use the social media.
- iii. To investigate whether the church should consider the use of social media for her growth.
- iv. The study further seeks to investigate if the church should use social media as the only source for the church for evangelism.

- v. To examine how social media has contributed to the growth of Grace Baptist Church.
- vi. To investigate the historical background of Grace Baptist Church.

### **1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study**

The research work is confined to the Ashanti region of Ghana, precisely at Grace Baptist Church located in Amakom-Kumasi. Its main focus is on the social media and its activities concerning how it has contributed to the growth of the church. Grace Baptist Church was selected because, over the years, the Church has employed the use of social media in many of her activities. As a results, the researchers have taken upon themselves to investigate the use of the social media.

### **1.6 Research Methodology**

The researchers used qualitative method which employed a phenomenological approach. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss posit that a phenomenological approach is suitable when a researcher intends to understand a particular phenomenon or human experience through description provided by the people involved.<sup>6</sup> Therefore this approach is suitable for this research as the researchers intend to examine the impact of social media on the church.

#### **1.6.1 Methods of Data Collection**

Data collection methods include both primary and secondary sources.

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<sup>6</sup> Barney Glaser & Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967), 96.

#### *1.6.1.1 Primary sources*

The primary sources data was collected through structured interviews with some of the Pastors in the Church, media team members, and some of the Church's members. Open-ended questionnaires were also administered to elicit information regarding the topic at hand.

#### *1.6.1.2 Secondary Sources*

Secondary sources as part of the data collection methods, the researchers consulted books, thesis, journals, articles, internet and brochure. These materials were relevant to the study and they were carefully selected.

#### **1.6.2 Sample/ Sampling Procedure or Technique**

This study employed purposive sampling technique. This technique was employed in order to retrieve the right information from the right and targeted respondents. Purposive sampling is the method where a researcher specifies the characteristics of the population on interest and then locates individuals who have these characteristics. A number of study units were chosen from a specified study population. Due to the larger population and the space available, the researchers sampled six (6) qualified representatives of the population. Among the six (6) were two (2) Pastors, two (2) church members and two (2) media team members. These six (6) were chosen because they play key roles in the media, planning, organizing the Church activities.

#### **1.6.3 Data Analysis**

Data analysis often entails reducing raw data to a reasonable amount, creating summaries, and forming conclusions pertinent to answering the research questions provided. To provide meaning for the study, the qualitative data acquired from interviews were analyzed thematically from word narrations and opinion of other scholars were considered as well.

## **1.7 Literature Review**

Numerous writers have written about a range of topics connected to social media and the church. This section showcases the contributions of multiple authors.

### **1.7.1 *Understanding Social Media and the Church***

Manish Dhingra and Rakesh K. Mudgal posit that over time, the archaic postal system which dates back to 550 B.C., when horse riders carried messages over great distances evolved into a sophisticated form of communication. With the invention of the telegraph in 1792, messages could be sent over great distances without requiring the physical exchange of objects.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, the evolution of communication from the ancient postal system to the telegraph marked a significant shift in how information was transmitted. The ancient postal system, originating around 550 B.C, primarily relied on messengers, horse riders to deliver messages across distances, this method seems to be slow.

The introduction of the telegraph in the early 19th century revolutionized long-distance communication. The telegraph used electrical signals to transmit messages enabling almost instant communication across vast distances. This technology considerably accelerated the speed and efficiency of long-distance communication, reducing the reliance on physical transportation of messages.

Later developments, such as the telephone, radio, and eventually the internet, further transformed communication by making it more accessible, immediate, and global.

According to Dhingra and Mudgal, Twentieth Century marks the revolutionary change in technology. Super computers were introduced which later led to the development of

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<sup>7</sup> Manish Dhingra, Rakesh Mudgal, *Historical Evolution of Social Media*, (2019), 1.



internet. The world witnessed Bulletin Board System, UseNet, Online Services, Internet Relay Chat. Later 2000, networks like Ryze, Tribe.net, LinkedIn, Friendster were also introduced. Facebook came into inception in 2004 which opened up for High School Students, those older than 13 years to be able to create their own profiles. Facebook and Twitter became widely available to users across the world. Since this period, the world has witnessed a lot of social media platforms which are accessible to almost individual across the globe.<sup>8</sup>

It is obvious that a variety of entities, including businesses, institutions, and even religious organizations like churches, have been prompted to utilize social media platforms for marketing and outreach purposes due to their widespread availability and accessibility. The use of social media by churches has become more common in today's dispensation.

### ***1.7.2 Positive Impact of Social Media on the Church***

According to Ludwig Neils Hesse, churches are no longer restricted to a street address or a couple of service time each week. Instead, members or potential members can access sermons, connect with other church members, view photos from the most recent church event, regardless of where they are or the time.<sup>9</sup>

In the light of Ludwigs' assertion, the use of social media by the churches has greatly increased churches' accessibility and reach. Sermons and worship sessions are now available for live streaming or recording from many congregations. This removes geographical barriers by enabling churchgoers and prospective members to engage in religious activities from any location with an internet connection.

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<sup>8</sup> Dhingra, Mudgal, *Historical Evolution of Social Media*, 1-3.

<sup>9</sup> Ludwig Neils Hesse, *The Effect of Social Media on Church Management*, (2019), 1-2.

Derick Mckinney posits that Christianity is a community-based religion. Jesus said where two or three are gathered together, God is present (Matt 18:20, NIV). A gathering of Christians has and will always be the church. People now congregate online. Social media provides a means for sharing faith as well as modeling Christian life beyond the building commonly called church.<sup>10</sup>

In reference to Derick's position, ultimately, what defines and upholds the idea of a church is the congregation of believers, regardless of whether they are gathered in a more modern or conventional church edifice. While the significance of this assembly differs among Christian faiths and personal beliefs, it is nonetheless an essential part of Christian community and worship.

Darko-Adjei, Animante and Akussah say that to find out how churches were utilizing social media within their organizations, the majority of churchgoers were first found to be aware of the usage of social media platforms for church activities. It was discovered that 15% had never used Facebook, while more than 30% said they were aware of the site and updated it daily.<sup>11</sup>

With regards to the statement made by Darko-Adjei, Animante and Akussah, it implies that over 30% of the group not only has Facebook profiles, but also actively uses the social media network. Every day they log in, make updates to their profiles, or interact with material.

Peter White, Fortune Tella, and Mishael Donkor Ampofo assert that the development of social media especially Facebook, has helped not only the church but also the secular

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<sup>10</sup> Derick Mckinney, *"Social Media in the Church"*, (Graduate Theses and Dissertation, 2014), 9.

<sup>11</sup> Darko-Adjei, Animante, Akussah, *Use of Social Media by Leaders of Charismatic Churches in Ghana*, 8.

world. It is currently one of the resources available to the church for carrying out the Great Commission.<sup>12</sup>

Upon critical analyses of the assertion by Peter White, Fortune Tella and Misheal Donkor, it is important to accept the fact that a useful tool for churches to fulfill the Christian mandate to make disciples of all nations and propagate the teachings of Jesus Christ is the use of social media, such as Facebook, and other digital tools. This is how digital resources and social media can help achieve this goal.

### ***1.7.3 Negative Impact of Social Media on the Church***

Hesse asserts that the use of social media networks can expose the church members to harassment or inappropriate contact from others. Unless the church leaders are diligent to filter the Internet content or the risk which the members are exposed to, like pornography and cybercrimes.<sup>13</sup>

It is pivotal to consider the assertion of Hesse. In the current digital era, there is increased worry about church members being exposed to explicit information such as pornography and the risks linked with cybercrimes, especially youth and vulnerable individuals.

According to Enoch Akuoko, social media platform like Facebook can hamper the effect of faith-sharing because of its features, such as uploading pictures, chatting with friends, and playing games that can lead to destruction, procrastination and a significant waste of time.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Peter White, Fortune Tella, Mishael Donkor Ampofo, “A missional Study of the Use of Social Media by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors”, *KOERS Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* (2016): 4.

<sup>13</sup> Hesse, *The Effect of Social Media on Church Management*, 2-3.

<sup>14</sup> Enoch Akuoko, *The Impact of Social Media on the Church*, (2017), 49.

Akuoko's position on this makes a lot of sense. Games, chat, and news feeds are just a few examples of the distracting features that are frequently found on social media platforms. These have the potential to draw focus away from religious pursuits. Spending too much time on social media can cause people to procrastinate and lose focus on other crucial areas of life, such as their faith and personal development.

Badmos asserts that the information posted on social media platforms is available to almost anyone who is clever enough to access it. Most fraudsters need just a few vital pieces of personal information to make life of others a nightmare.<sup>15</sup>

Without a doubt, those with bad intentions may find a wealth of information on social media sites. Fraudsters frequently use a technique known as "social engineering," in which they compile seemingly unimportant information from numerous online sources (such as social media profiles) and then combine it to create a more comprehensive picture of a person's identity. This may result in identity theft, financial scams, physical threats, or other types of fraud.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study will specifically focus on the Grace Baptist Church, Amakom-Kumasi. The Grace Baptist Church is no different from the other Christian churches, thus studies done focusing on Grace Baptist Church may be applicable to other churches.

This study is significant in these three ways:

- First is the academia, the study will add to the body of knowledge on social media, opening the door for further study in the field. In other words, the study will act as a foundation for further investigation.

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<sup>15</sup> Badmos, *Effects of Social Media on the Church*, (2014), 6.

- Second is the church, the study will inform the church leaders the impact social media has concerning her growth so that necessary steps can be taken.
- Last is the society in general, the study will highlight the concerns preventing the society from using social media platforms at an exponential rate so that management may implement the proper measures to address these problems?

## 1.9 Organization of Chapters

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one addresses the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, the research question, aim and objectives, scope and focus of the study, research methodology, literature review, significance of the study, organization of chapters and definition of key terms. Chapter two deals with the historical background of Amakom, Grace Baptist Church, and the activities of Grace Baptist Church. Chapter three entails the presentation of data collected; Chapter four takes into account of interpretation and analysis of data collected; Chapter five concerns summary of major findings, conclusion and recommendation.

## 1.10 Definition of Key Terms

**Social Media:** Jammie Manning says that, social media is used to describe emerging types of media that encourage interactive engagement such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and among others. The broadcast age and the interactive age are two eras that have often been used to categorize the growth of social media.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Jimmie Manning, “*Definition and Classes of Social Media*”, *Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics* (2014): 2.

Wolf Maxim, Sims Juliana and Yang Huadong posit that, social media is a group of websites which permit profile creation, user connection and exposure. Web-based programs with sharing, relationship, group, chat, and profile features. It describes a number of data transmission and reception methods and communication routes.<sup>17</sup> For the purpose of this study, the social media will be limited to the internet-based networks listed by Badmos which are Instagram, Zoom, Tik-Tok, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube and other media sites that have content based on user participation and User-created material.<sup>18</sup>

**Church Growth:** Erica Mateus states that, growth in general can be defined as a consistence increase in the number, amount or size of something. In an attempt to limit it to this study, growth is defined as an increase in membership, an improvement in church-member relations, and an increase in the number of people outside the membership who are interested in the Grace Baptist Church.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Wolf Maxim; Sims Juliana; Yang Huadong, “*Social Media*” *What Social Media?* (United Kingdom: AIS Electronic Library, 2018), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Badmos, *Effect of Social Media on the Church*, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Erica Mateus, “The Media and the Church”, *Journal for Communication Studies*, (2017), 5.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY AND ACTIVITIES OF GRACE**

#### **BAPTIST CHURCH - AMAKOM**

##### **2.1 Introduction**

In chapter one the researchers dealt with the general introduction to the study. In this chapter, the study concerns the history of Grace Baptist Church-Amakom in the Kumasi Metropolitan of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The chapter also presents the activities of Grace Baptist Church.

##### **2.2 Grace Baptist Church as a Fellowship (1964-1967)**

Golden Jubilee Brochure reveals that Grace Baptist Church was founded as an English-speaking fellowship at Kumasi's Baptist Reading Room on July 19, 1964 with 60 members. At the invitation of two Baptist missionaries, Maurice Smith and Miss Evelyn Stone, who served as the group's leaders until June 1965 at this and subsequent period, the number has increased.<sup>20</sup>

Growth is a positive sign for any religious community as it indicates an increasing interest and participation in the church's activities and teachings. As the number of attendees increased, the need for a larger place of worship would arise to accommodate the growing congregation and to ensure that all members had space to participate in services comfortably.

##### **2.2.1 When God Smiled at Grace Baptist as a Church (1969-1970)**

When Grace Baptist Church began looking for a parcel of land to put up a church auditorium in November 1969, good fortune struck when the Ghanaian government, in a regrettable move, invoked the Aliens Compliance Order to expel all illegal immigrants. The majority of the Yuroba people who were members of Ebenezer Baptist Church whose auditorium and Sunday school structures were under

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<sup>20</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church* (Amakom: Grace Baptist Church, 2019), 2.

construction left as a result of this choice. These structures were given to the field Smith, who asked Grace Baptist Church to take on the burden of finishing the construction work and furnishing the structures in preparation for moving in for worship services and Bible studies. On February 2, 1970, Grace Baptist Church took possession of the structure after it had been finished and furnished in June of that same year. The former leadership of that Ebenezer had obviously dispersed to different parts of Nigeria, so no coherent response was forthcoming from them. The practical steps taken in this matter are well documented. The leaders of Grace Baptist Church consulted a lawyer by the name of J. J. Peele to help them formulate the change of transfer of the property.<sup>21</sup>

### ***2.2.2 The Mode of Language for service of Grace Baptist Church***

The Church has used English for service from the time of establishment till now. The remaining members of Ebenezer Baptist Church who later joined Grace Baptist Church took an active part in all of Grace Baptist Church's activities. Because they have been using the Twi language for service, Grace Baptist added Twi to their services to foster communication.<sup>22</sup>

### ***2.2.3 The Visitation of Asantehene, Opoku Ware II***

Under the leadership of Joseph Quansah, the service of Grace Baptist Church attracted Opoku Ware II, the Asantehene, and his entourage to be a part of one-time Sunday service in 1971 which he confirmed of enjoying the service.<sup>23</sup>

It's wonderful to hear that Opoku Ware II, the Asantehene, attended the service at Grace Baptist Church in 1971 and enjoyed the experience. Such visits by notable figures can significantly impact and bring attention to a particular congregation, often fostering a sense of community and goodwill between different groups within a region. These kinds of visits can be seen as a symbol of unity and can foster positive relationships between religious institutions and community leaders. It's great to witness such

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<sup>21</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church*, 2.

<sup>22</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church*, 2-3.

<sup>23</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church*, 3.



instances where individuals from different spheres come together, share experiences, and appreciate each other's traditions and practices.

#### ***2.2.4 The Church's Vision to Establish Schools***

As the Church kept increasing numerically, in 1984, a preparatory school's kindergarten level was launched. This was done in response to the need to provide children of church members with a secular education with a Christian background in order to protect them from the cultural diet that was being forced down the throats of children in public schools at the time.<sup>24</sup>

The concern about protecting children from what was considered a potentially detrimental "cultural diet" in public schools reflects a common sentiment in some religious communities. This sentiment often arises from a desire to safeguard children's moral and spiritual development in a way that aligns with the beliefs and values upheld by the church and its members. By integrating secular education with a Christian foundation, the preparatory school aimed to offer an environment where children could receive academic instruction while also being instilled with Christian principles and teachings. Such initiatives often serve as a way for religious communities to ensure that the education provided aligns with their belief systems and values.

#### ***2.2.5 Branches Established Under Rev Osei Owusu***

As the church's membership increased quickly, a third Sunday service became necessary. As a result, the church started a second Sunday service, the third overall in January 1991. The Church planting under Osei-Wusuh's direction and branches were established in places including Adukrom, Dichemso, Bomso, Atonsu, and Effiduase.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church*, 4.

<sup>25</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church*, 4.

The rapid increase in membership at Grace Baptist Church necessitated the introduction of a third Sunday service, leading to the establishment of a second Sunday service overall in January 1991. The expansion of services often indicates a growing congregation and the need to accommodate the spiritual needs of a larger community. The Church's vision of church planting under Osei-Wusuh was successful, resulting in the establishment of branches in various locations.

#### ***2.2.6 Branches Established under Rev Samuel Nana Poku and Daniel Addai Smith***

After Osei-Wusuh's left to study in USA, these two pastors Samuel Nana Poku and Daniel Addai Smith toiled arduously to carry on the church's work. Before their departure, the Church had established branches in Kumawu, Nkawkaw, Onwi, Obogu, Kokofu, Kwaso, Ayeduase, Trede, Pakyi No 2, Akomadan, Duayaw Nkwanta, Esienimpong, and Santasi.<sup>26</sup>

These two pastors played a role which did not conflict the vision of the Church by expanding the wings of the Church in terms of church planting.

#### ***2.2.7 From Year 2008 to the Current Administration of Grace Baptist Church***

Johnson Owusu asserts that, the history of Grace Baptist Church cannot be complete without the name of Robert Kwadwo Asante who was appointed as the head pastor in 2008.<sup>27</sup> The Grace Baptist Church currently has five (5) full-time pastors, The Head Paster and four (4) Associate Pastors. George Owusu Mensah (Head Pastor), Johnson Owusu (Associate Pastor), Mary Fosu (Associate Pastor), Nana Agyeman Prempeh (Associate Pastor) and Andrews Moses Opare (Associate Pastor) and six (6) other auxiliary Pastors.<sup>28</sup> Now, let us look at the activities of Grace Baptist Church.

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<sup>26</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church* (Amakom), 1-5.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, Amakom Grace Baptist Church, 27th February, 2023.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, 27th February, 2023.

## **2.3 The Activities of Grace Baptist Church**

The Grace Baptist Church has a well-planned activity during the whole week to ensure the Church stays active. The Church has Sunday service, midweek service, deliverance and healing service and counseling section. All these activities have specific days and times allotted for.

### **2.3.1 *Sunday Service***

In many Christian churches around the world, Sunday church service is a regular religious gathering. These services, which are often held on Sunday mornings, give members of the church community a chance to meet together to worship, pray, sing and listen to a sermon from a pastor or other religious authority. A Sunday church service's format and organization might change based on the denomination and the particular church.

Owusu states that, the Sunday services of Grace Baptist Church is divided into two sections, first service and second service. The leaders of Grace Baptist Church have a unique way of conducting both services. Thus, the first service is conveyed in Twi language, it starts from 7:00am and closes at 10:00am. The main service is done in the early hours from 7:00am to 9:00am in their main auditorium and uses 9:05am to 10:00am to do Bible studies in their school classrooms. In a nutshell, the first service closes and leave the auditorium at 9am and use the rest of the one hour (1hr) left outside so that the main service of the second service can begin.<sup>29</sup> Owusu continued to say that the second service is an English service, it starts from 9:00am and closes at 11:30am. As the first service holds its main service in the auditorium, the second service will be in the school classrooms having the Bible studies from 8:00am to 9:00am. As soon as

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, 27th February, 2023.

the first service closes from the auditorium at 9:00am, the second service also closes from the classrooms and start their main service in the auditorium while the first service takes over the classrooms for the Bible studies.<sup>30</sup>

### ***2.3.2 Mid-Week Service***

In addition to the traditional Sunday service, a mid-week church service is a religious meeting of a congregation that occurs during the week, typically on a Wednesday or Thursday evening. The midweek service offers a chance for congregation members to gather in worship, prayer, and friendship in a more personal and relaxed atmosphere.

Owusu states that, the midweek service of Grace Baptist Church is scheduled on Wednesdays from 6:00pm to 7:30pm at the Church's auditorium. The mid-week service is purely prayers and teaching service. This is when the entire church come together to study the unadulterated word of God and also spend time to pray as Christians.<sup>31</sup>

The researchers joined the midweek service of the church for personal observation. The researchers observed that a large number of people including those who are not members of the Church come to listen to the word of God and pray.

During the teaching service, the Pastor takes his time to explain the word of God to everyone's understanding which the researchers realized that it is one of the utmost priorities of the church meeting on Wednesday. What makes the prayer section unique is that the Church does not pray imprecatory prayers. When someone prays an imprecatory prayer, he is pleading with God to punish or damage their adversaries or those who have harmed them. Christians are often discouraged from chanting imprecatory prayers because they go against the virtues of love, forgiveness, and mercy

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, 27th February, 2023.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, 27th February, 2023.

that are important to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Jesus instructed his disciples to love their enemies, pray for those who persecute them, and do good to those who oppose them in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:44). This means that all individuals, even those who have harmed or offended Christians, are entitled to love and compassion. Amanda Akua Ardin states that, she likes the way the midweek service is handled by the church leaders, that is, it is not handled by one particular Pastor all the time so she never got bored attending the meeting.<sup>32</sup> The researchers observed that the facial expressions of the members show how happy they were in the presence of the Lord.

### ***2.3.3 Deliverance and Healing Service***

John Wesley Nguuh posit that, deliverance is the action of being set free. It is also the state of being rescued from danger, evil or pain.<sup>33</sup> The Golden Jubilee Brochure states that, the church places a lot of emphasis on its deliverance and healing ministry because it deals with medical difficulties. This ministry's purpose is to exorcise the demonized, which frequently leads to the victims' mental, physical, or both types of healing. It is only carried out on the pastor's advice following counseling, it is conducted on Monday evenings.<sup>34</sup> Emmanuel Nkrumah is one of the selected people who handles the deliverance section in the Church. According to him, the deliverance section is one of the difficult sections in the Church since it has to do with delivering people from the hands of the devil. He recounted how some of the deliverance team members have gotten injured on countless occasion as a result of the manifestations of the evil spirit been casted out.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Interview with Amanda Akua Ardin, Amakom Grace Baptist Church, 21st March, 2023.

<sup>33</sup> John Wesley Nguuh, *Demonology and Deliverance* (Kabarak: Kabarok University, 2016), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build my Church*, 10.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Nkrumah, Amakom Grace Baptist Church, 21st March, 2023.

#### **2.3.4 Ministerial Practices**

Nkrumah emphasized that anointing oil, “sobolo”, holy water and other objects used are thought to have healing and transformational powers, as well as the power to ward off evil spirits, in various Christian traditions. Thus, pastors may anoint people as a means of appealing to God's ability to bring about bodily or spiritual healing and deliverance during prayer and healing services, but Grace Baptist Church does not use them with the exception of anointing oil which is used in some few cases when it is necessary. It's crucial to remember that the use of anointing oil and other objects for healing and deliverance do not imply that every issue will be resolved or cured. Instead, it is a sign of trust and a way to enlist God's assistance and direction when facing challenges. The effectiveness of those objects ultimately depends on the person's faith and willingness to believe in God's ability to affect healing and transformation.<sup>36</sup>

#### **2.3.5 Counseling**

Counseling is a professional relationship between a trained counselor and a client, aimed at helping the client explore and work through personal or interpersonal challenges, gain insight, and develop coping strategies to improve their well-being and quality of life. Counseling typically involves a collaborative, non-judgmental process that encourages clients to express their thoughts and feelings, identify and work through issues, and set goals for personal growth and development. The ultimate goal of counseling is to help clients achieve greater self-awareness, emotional health, and overall life satisfaction.

Golden Jubilee Brochure reveals that Fridays are always set aside for the members and general public to meet with the Pastors to share with them their issues and to ask for

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<sup>36</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Nkrumah, 21st March, 2023.

counseling and prayers. To ensure that people have access to freedom for their bodies, souls, and spirits, all kinds of issues are addressed.<sup>37</sup> Owusu stated that, a crucial component of any Christian community is counseling. It gives people the chance to get support and direction through trying times and aids them in navigating difficulties that could be harming their mental, emotional, and spiritual welfare. He referred to (Prov. 15:22), which says without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed. This verse emphasizes the importance of seeking counsel from others in making decisions, so therefore it is important for the Church to make that provision.<sup>38</sup>

In addition, the Church refrains from accusing someone during counseling as some pastors may do. Being accused of witchcraft or bewitching someone can be a serious problem that can result in revenge, legal action, and harm to relationships and reputations, even violence and harm can result from accusations of witchcraft in some cultures and societies. Pastors and counselors can assist the person to concentrate on their own ideas, feelings, and actions and work toward finding solutions that will help them get over their troubles rather than trying to pinpoint a certain person or group as the cause of the problem. He concluded by saying with joy that the counselling section has helped many people and has brought joy to many homes.<sup>39</sup>

## **2.4 Conclusion**

For the purpose of the study, there is the need to know the history of the church being under-studying since the history may have impact on the findings of the researchers. This chapter has provided a beautiful history of Grace Baptist church in Amakom-

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<sup>37</sup> Golden Jubilee Brochure, *I Will Build My Church*, 10.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, 27Th February, 2023.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Johnson Owusu, 27th February, 2023.

Kumasi. The chapter has also highlighted the well-arranged activities of the church which is worth emulating by any other contemporary churches.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE CONTEXT OF GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In chapter two, the researchers dealt with the overview of the history and activities of Grace Baptist Church. In this chapter, the researchers would present the data collected from the field concerning the study. Targeted individuals in the church were selected for this interview which the data were collected from.

#### **3.2 Awareness of and Use of Social Media Platforms in Grace Baptist Church**

The researchers interviewed Frank Agyapong who is a Pastor at Grace Baptist Church. In the interview, he said he was aware of the various social media platforms, how they work, and their potential impact on individuals and society. Using social media refers to actively engaging with these platforms, whether it be by creating and sharing content, interacting with other users, or consuming information.<sup>40</sup>

Charles Asamoah Donkor, a member of Grace Baptist Church in an interview told the researchers that it is not uncommon for individuals to use social media platforms in today's society as they provide a means of connecting with others, sharing information and ideas, and staying up-to-date with current events. Social media platforms have become an integral part of modern communication and are used by people of all ages, backgrounds, and professions.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Frank Agyapong, Amakom Grace Baptist Church, 4th April, 2023.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Charles Asamoah Donkor, Amakom Grace Baptist Church, 30th March, 2023.

In an interview with Amanda Akua Ardin, a member of Grace Baptist Church told the researchers that she is aware of social media and admitted of using some of the platform since it has become ubiquitous part of modern communication and connectivity.<sup>42</sup>

Emmanuel Osei is a media team member in the Grace Baptist Church. He revealed that the Church has over 5000 followers on Facebook which suggests that the church has an active presence on social media and that a considerable number of members are aware of and engage with the church's Facebook page. It indicates that the church has likely recognized the importance of social media as a means of communication and outreach, and has made efforts to connect with its members and the wider community through this platform.<sup>43</sup>

### **3.3 Types of Social Media Platforms Used by the Respondents**

#### **3.3.1 *WhatsApp***

According to Ardin WhatsApp is a cross-platform messaging service which allows users of smartphones and computers to call and exchange text, photos, audio and video message with others. The use of WhatsApp aids people to join the Church's WhatsApp platform where events are announced periodically. It is also used to text messages and share sermons meant for the Church members and the world at large.<sup>44</sup>

#### **3.3.2 *Facebook***

Facebook is a website which allows users, who sign-up for free profiles, to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they do not know online. It has also made provision

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with Amanda Akua Ardin, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Osei, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Ardin, 31st March, 2023.

for individuals and institutions to stream their live programs for a large viewership across the globe.

According to Agyapong, the use of Facebook became more effective during the COVID-19 pandemic where physical meetings as a church were discouraged. Facebook allowed people to monitor the Church's activities put there for their consumption. Most importantly, they always get the chance to join the live streaming of the Church Service on Facebook while at home and also shared with their friends and family who are not the members of the Church, as a form of evangelism.<sup>45</sup>

### **3.4 Efficient Utilization of Social Media**

Agyapong mentioned that, he is active on social media platforms multiple times every day.<sup>46</sup> Donkor said that, though social media platforms have many benefits, such as staying connected with others and keeping up-to-date with news and trends, he does not spend much time on the social media platforms. He said once or twice in a day has been his routine.<sup>47</sup> Ardin stated that, she spends few hours in a day on the social media platforms but many hours during the night.<sup>48</sup> Osei said that social media is now a powerful tool for churches to engage with their congregation and wider community. For this reason, the media team is always posting events, sharing messages, leaving updates and monitoring the growth of the platforms.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Interview with Agyapong, 4th April, 2023.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Agyapong, Amakom, 4th April, 2023.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Donkor, Amakom, 30th March, 2023.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Ardin, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Osei, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

### **3.5 The Purpose of Using Social Media**

#### **3.5.1 Bible Study**

According to Donkor, social media can be used in various ways for different purposes but one of the numerous purposes is to do Bible studies. This is when ideas are shared about a word of God until proper understanding is gained.<sup>50</sup>

#### **3.5.2 Evangelism**

Evangelism is the act of preaching the Gospel with the intention of sharing the message and teachings of Jesus Christ. From the respondents, they use social media to share the message of Jesus Christ by sharing Christian tracts, share messages about salvation and post placards on social media to prompt people about the second coming of Jesus. Social media platforms have billions of active users, which makes it easy for the Church to potentially reach a massive audience with its message of faith, build relationships and engage with potential followers. Enoch Akuoko asserts that “more than half (52%) use two or more social media sites, especially Facebook and WhatsApp to communicate with their families and friends.”<sup>51</sup>

#### **3.5.3 Socialization**

Among all, the respondents above said they use social media for socialization. Sometimes a question would be put on the platform for brainstorming, “get the answer and win a prize.” These are done to foster the relationship among themselves and the potential church members.

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<sup>50</sup> Interview with Donkor, Amakom, 30th March, 2023.

<sup>51</sup> Akuoko, *The Impact of Social Media on the Church* (Thesis submitted to Christian Service University College, 2017), 17.

### **3.6 The Challenges of the Use of Social Media**

#### **3.6.1 *Network Challenges***

According to Osei, one of the greatest challenges in using social media is the unstable network issues. The speed the network providers offer their users is usually 3G or 4G which is not always helpful when one wants to use social media effectively, especially when one wants to follow a live streaming program or watch videos to boost their faith in Christ. It takes huge sums of money to buy the 5G+ network to be able to use it effectively.<sup>52</sup>

#### **3.6.2 *Hacking of Social Media Account***

According to Agyapong, the hackers can break into your social media account and use it to deceive and harm others in your name. The understanding is that it is not every user who knows how to protect his/her account, this make such users prone to such system attack.<sup>53</sup>

### **3.7 The Performance of the Media Team in the Church**

Agyapong indicated that the performance of the media team in Grace Baptist Church is very good and effective because the team uses various social media platforms to enhance the church's communication, outreach, and engagement with her members and the wider community.<sup>54</sup> Donkor said, a good media team produces high-quality content that resonates with its target audience, and that is aligned with the organization's goals and values. They are able to effectively distribute the content across various channels

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<sup>52</sup> Interview with Osei, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Agyapong, Amakom, 4th April, 2023.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Agyapong, Amakom, 4th April, 2023.

and monitor its performance to ensure that it is reaching the intended audience. In the light of this, the performance of the media team is good.<sup>55</sup>

Ardin said the performance of the media team is outstanding. She stated that the media team is playing a vital role in helping the Church to connect with the congregation and share messages with the wider community.<sup>56</sup> Osei said, the media team's efforts in utilizing social media for communication, engagement, and outreach have a positive impact on the Church community and beyond. By leveraging social media effectively, the media team has enhanced the church's visibility, foster community engagement, and promote the church's mission and values.<sup>57</sup>

### **3.8 The Impact of Social Media on the Attendance of Grace Baptist Church**

According to Agyapong, the impact of social media on the Church attendance is a positive one. The use of social media has put the Church on the map which has attracted new people to the Church. I have seen a positive change in the attendance”, he stated.<sup>58</sup>

Donkor said, the increase in the Church attendance through the use of social media is not significant in terms of overall numbers, but it is still a positive development since the online church platforms are meeting the needs of a particular segment of the congregation.<sup>59</sup> Ardin disclosed that the use of social media has had a positive impact on the Church attendance by making it easier for the Churches to promote her events, build communities, and engage with members. One that has prevented increase in attendance was lack of information about church activities, but because of the use of social media all events and updates are posted to remind the congregation, this has

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with Donkor, Amakom, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Ardin, Amakom, 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Osei, Amakom, 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023.

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Agyapong, Amakom, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Donkor, Amakom, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.

improved the attendance.<sup>60</sup> According to Osei, social media has helped to promote church events, such as outreach programs, service projects, or special services, to a wider audience beyond the immediate church community. This increased visibility has led to more people attending these events, potentially increasing overall church attendance.<sup>61</sup>

### **3.9 Growth Rate Table**

Year	2008	2018	2019	2020	2021
Membership	4217	3150	3274	3015	4604

### **3.10 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the data presented in this chapter is the findings the researchers gathered from the selected people in Grace Baptist Church through structured interviews. The authors recorded just as the selected people said in the interview concerning the topic which is being understudied.

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Ardin, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Osei, Amakom, 31st March, 2023.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH-AMAKOM**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In chapter three, the researchers presented the data collected from the targeted people at Grace Baptist Church. In this chapter, the researchers will analyze the data presented in the chapter three accordingly.

#### **4.2 Awareness of and the Use of Social Media**

This section brings to bear the awareness of the leaders and congregants about the use of social media in the Church. The awareness of social media refers to the understanding and recognition of the impact and influence that social media platforms have on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. Darko-Adjei, Ainmante and Akussah posit that, use involves critical awareness. This implies that before using social media networks, people must be familiar with them. The degree to which any information system is used depends critically on awareness. It goes without saying that there will be no chance for potential consumers to use a platform if they are not aware of it.<sup>62</sup> In this case, the researchers asked the interviewee to indicate whether they are aware of the use of social media in the Church. All the 4 selected people answered favorably that they are aware of the use of social media in the Church. It can be deduced that the percentage of the people in the Church who are aware and use social media in the Church is high.

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<sup>62</sup> Darko-Adjei, Animante & Akussah, *The Use of SOCIAL MEDIA by Leaders of Charismatic Churches in Ghana*, 14.



### **4.3 The Use of Social Media for Church Activities**

It is known to the researchers that the use of social media for church activities has become increasingly popular in recent years. Social media platforms offer a variety of benefits and opportunities for churches to engage with their congregation, promote their message, and reach out to a wider audience.

#### ***4.3.1 The Administration of Communion using Social Media***

The administration of communion in every church is done based on Jesus' instructions as written in (ESV. Luke 22:19-20). It says, "And He took the bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

This statement made by Jesus means the church of Christ must practice it as a holy sacrament. The two elements in this sacrament are bread which represents the body of Christ and the wine which represents the blood of Christ. When all these are set, there must be a qualified clergy to pray over them before eating it. The use of social media in the Church means the individual can be at the comfort of his/her home and join the Church online. When it gets to the turn of communion, he/she is to look for bread and wine to administer it while it is happening in the physical Church. The question is, where does he get the bread and wine, and is everyone qualified to administer the communion? However, Mathew Dereck and Jonathan Armstrong posit that, "the body of Christ should not only be limit to a physical space, thus allowing this sacrament to be performed in online gatherings."<sup>63</sup> Ferdinand Kruger asserts that, "performing communion service online is no different from the physical church provided the

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<sup>63</sup> Mathew Dereck & Jonathan Armstrong, *"Digital Ecclesiology"* (2019), 3.

participants do not ignore the meaning of the sacrament.”<sup>64</sup> Using social media to administer the Lord’s Supper is also part of the church service. With this members are to get their own bread and wine at where ever they find themselves, while the pastor blesses it in the church. They repeat as the pastor recites the words of the Lord and pray via social media. This is believed that as the Holy Spirit is without boundaries, blessing the bread and the wine from the church is the same as taking it in person.

#### **4.3.2 The Issue of Holy Baptism**

Baptism is an instruction given to the disciples, (ESV. Matt 28:19). It says “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”. Baptism is done as part of the initiation process for a newly repented individual into Christ. Generally, baptism is done by immersion and other churches accept sprinkling and pouring of water on the person. In any case, whether immersion, sprinkling or pouring of water, there should be a qualified clergy to baptize the individual. Roland Giese stated that “the church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacrament are administered rightly”.<sup>65</sup> The use of social media for the Church’s activities may or may not be able to fulfil this command by Jesus Christ.

#### **4.3.3 Destructions in the use of Social Media in the Church**

##### **4.3.4 Nudity**

Some social media platforms have a way of” advertising content for different web-site owners which some of the contents are nudes. It can pop at any time while using the social media. There are others which are posted directly on the social media by other

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<sup>64</sup> Ferdinand Kruger, “Descriptive Empirical Perspective on Participants’ Attitudes on Virtual Worship Services kindle an Ineluctable Revisiting of Ecclesial Assumptions in a Post-Pandemic World”, *Theological Studies* (2021), 7.

<sup>65</sup> Roland L. Giese Jr., *The Church as God’s Church* (2020), 348.

users to cause traffic on their page or to sell their products. Unfortunately, many end up being distracted and forget they are at church online because their attentions are taken away because of the enticement of nudes they see. In this case, the use of social media in the Church should be critically looked at.

#### **4.4 The Facebook Page of Grace Baptist Church**

The researchers noticed that the official Facebook page of Grace Baptist Church has over 5.7K followers and 4.3K likes.<sup>66</sup> The 5.7K means that 5700 people follow the Church on Facebook and 4.3K likes means the people who likes the Church's page is 4300. The "follow" means those number of people will automatically see any update being put on the page. The "likes" mean those number of people are showing interest in your content and want to see more from it.

#### **4.5 The Use of Social Media and Church Growth in Grace Baptist Church**

The use of social media in the context of Grace Baptist Church has several positive impacts on its growth and community engagement. Social media platforms have allowed the Church to reach a broader audience beyond its physical location. Through sharing sermons, inspirational messages, and church events online, the Church is able to connect with individuals who might not have otherwise been aware of its activities. It has fostered a sense of community by enabling members to connect, interact, and engage in discussions. It has served as a platform for sharing thoughts, prayers, and discussions, creating a sense of unity among the Church members and the potential members.

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<sup>66</sup> <https://facebook.com/1.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gracebaptistchurchofficial.com>, accessed on 12th May, 2023.

It has enhanced the visibility of the Church. Regularly posting about the church's values, missions, and events has created a consistent and recognizable brand for the Church, making it more appealing to potential members.

The Churches is able promote events, such as seminars, social gatherings, through social media. This allows for wider promotion and increased attendance.

Social media has helped made the Church's resources more accessible. Posting sermons, teachings, and study materials online to enables individuals to access them at their convenience, regardless of their physical location.

The table in the chapter 3 shows that the use of social media in Grace Baptist Church has a positively impact on its growth. It means that the Church has effectively leveraged social media for outreach, engagement, and community building, engaging content, interacting with followers, and consistent messaging about their values and activities which have contributed to this growth.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

The successful use of social media in Grace Baptist Church is involved consistency, authentic engagement and a focus on building a supportive and inclusive online community. Social media has had a transformative impact on the Church, revolutionizing how it communicates, reaches out, and builds community. While it comes with challenges, the potential benefits are vast, empowering churches to extend their influence and connect with people in ways that were not possible before.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of social media on Grace Baptist Church. The purpose of the study is to examine whether the use of social media by churches has impacted the churches positively or negatively especially Grace Baptist Church in Amakom-Kumasi, Ghana. This work employs qualitative method and phenomenological approach which dwells heavily on both primary and secondary data.

It was observed that social media is a friend to the church if it is well managed. It was observed that with the help of the use of social media by the Church, many people have been reached with sermons, discussions, testimonies, among other activities of the Church. It was observed that gone are the days which church members could miss sermons if they were not able to join the face-to-face church service. Now they can join the service online from everywhere they maybe.

The study found that the use of social media come with challenges like security issues, unstable internet service, and among others. However, we cannot say that social media has impacted the church negatively according to the findings of this research work. Social media is a great and reliable tool to help accomplish the mandate of the church which is the “Great Commission”.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

The use of social media has significant benefits for churches in terms of reaching and engaging with a wider audience, fostering community, and promoting their message. Social media has revolutionized communication and provided churches with powerful

tools to connect with people in ways that were not possible before. By utilizing the social media platforms, churches are able to extend their reach beyond the physical walls of their buildings and engage with individuals on a global scale.

One of the key advantages of social media for churches is the ability to share their message and teachings with a broader audience. Through regular postings of sermons, inspirational quotes, devotional content, and engaging videos, churches can reach people who might not otherwise attend in-person services. Social media allows churches to spread their message, share biblical teachings, and provide encouragement to individuals regardless of their geographical location or time constraints.

Additionally, social media enables churches to foster and strengthen community among their members and followers. It provides a platform for open dialogue, discussions, and sharing of personal experiences. Churches can create online groups or communities where individuals can connect, support one another, and engage in spiritual conversations. Social media also allows churches to organize events, share updates, and communicate important information to their congregation more efficiently.

Moreover, social media offers a unique opportunity for churches to address social issues, promote justice, and participate in meaningful conversations. Churches are able to use their platforms to raise awareness about important causes, share resources, and advocate for positive change. By engaging with current events and social trends, churches are able to demonstrate relevance and show their commitment to making a positive impact in the world.

However, it is important for churches to approach social media with wisdom and discernment. They should ensure that their online presence aligns with their values, maintains authenticity, and reflects the teachings of their faith. It's crucial to prioritize

meaningful connections over mere numbers, focusing on building relationships rather than solely pursuing popularity or online metrics.

Furthermore, social media presents churches with an incredible opportunity to expand their reach, engage with a diverse audience, foster community, and promote their message. When used effectively and responsibly, social media can be a powerful tool for the church to fulfill its mission of spreading the Gospel, nurturing discipleship, and positively impacting the lives of individuals both within and outside of their congregation.

### **5.3 Contribution to Knowledge**

This research has made some key contributions to the area of social media and the church. The findings and the discussions have contributed greatly to the church's understanding of the use of social media in the church for effective results. It has also brought into the light the bad things which can happen if the use of social media is not controlled properly. This contribution is very important in our contemporary world where technology is gradually taking over. This research, therefore, serves as a springboard for further researchers in the area of social media and the church.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

If a church wants to have the best out of the use of social media, here are some recommendations:

- **Define Your Goals:** Determine the specific objectives and goals you want to achieve through social media. It could be reaching a wider audience, increasing engagement with members, or promoting specific events. Clear goals will help you develop a focused strategy.

- **Choose the Right Platforms:** Different social media platforms have distinct user bases and functionalities. Select the platforms that align with your target audience and communication goals. Popular options include Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Tik-Tok.
- **Develop a Content Strategy:** Create a content plan that aligns with your church's values, mission, and audience. Provide a mix of inspiring messages, Bible verses, event promotions, testimonies, and practical resources. Ensure the content is engaging, shareable, and relevant to your audience's needs.
- **Consistency and Frequency:** Regularly post content to maintain an active presence on social media. Establish a posting schedule and be consistent with your updates. However, prioritize quality over quantity and avoid overwhelming your audience with excessive posts.
- **Measure and Adapt:** Utilize analytics tools provided by social media platforms to track the performance of your content. Monitor metrics such as reach, engagement, and conversions to assess what works best for your audience. Use these insights to refine your strategy and adapt accordingly.



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## **APPENDIX I**

### **PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED**

<b>NAMES</b>		<b>POSITION</b>		<b>DATE</b>
Rev. Johnson Owusu	-	Associate Pastor	-	27th Feb, 2023
Amanda Akua Ardin	-	Member	-	21st March, 2023
Emmanuel Nkrumah	-	Deliverance Team Member - 21st March, 2023		
Frank Agyapong	-	Pastor	-	4th April, 2023
Charles Asamoah Donkor	-	Member	-	30th March, 2023
Emmanuel Osei	-	Media team member	-	30th March, 2023

## **APPENDIX II**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

#### **CONGREGATION**

My name is Cosmos Frimpong and my colleague is Obed Adzoga, Degree candidates of the Department of Theology, Christian Service University College, Kumasi. We are researching on the topic: The Impact of Social Media on The Church: A case study of Grace Baptist Church, Amakom. Could you please assist in the answering the following questions? We confidently assure you that, any information obtained from you would be treated confidentially.

#### **PART I**

1. Name .....
2. Gender .....
3. Date.....
4. Age (Optional) .....
5. Position in Church .....

#### **PART II**

1. Do you use social media? Yes [ ] No [ ]
2. If yes, which social media platform do you use the most?  
  
Facebook [ ] WhatsApp [ ] Twitter [ ]  
  
Tik-Tok [ ] Instagram [ ] Other [ ]

3. How often do you check Grace Baptist social media platform(s) for announcements and events?

Most often [ ]

Not often [ ]

Not at all [ ]

4. How do you rate the performance of the media team in Grace Baptist Church?

Very good [ ]

Good [ ]

Average [ ]

Poor [ ]

5. Have you ever seen a content on social media which conflicts with your Church's teachings and practices? Yes [ ] No [ ]

a. If yes, how does it affect your Christian life?

It has made you confused [ ]

You do not pay attention to them [ ]

6. How has social media affected your daily spiritual practices?

It has increased your faith in the Lord because you can listen and share your views with both current and prospective church members [ ]

You spend much time on Facebook instead of reading my Bible [ ]

It has contributed to your lateness in the Church [ ]

7. Do you join the Church online when you are not able to join the physical church?

Not frequently [ ]

Yes, I do join [ ]

No, I do not join [ ]

8. How often do you engage in prayers, discussions of church activities and Bible Studies with others using social media?

Not at all [ ]

Not often [ ]

Most often [ ]

9. Do you support the idea that the Church should continue to use social media?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. Any other information? .....

### **APPENDIX III**

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

##### **MEDIA TEAM**

My name is Cosmos Frimpong and my colleague is Obed Adzoga, Degree candidates of the Department of Theology, Christian Service University College, Kumasi. We are researching on the topic: The Impact of Social Media on The Church: A case study of Grace Baptist Church, Amakom. Could you please assist in the answering the following questions? We confidently assure you that, any information obtained from you would be treated confidentially.

##### **PART I**

1. Name .....
2. Gender .....
3. Date.....
4. Age (Optional) .....
5. Position in Church .....

##### **PART II**

1. Which social media platform(s) does the Church use most?

WhatsApp [ ] Facebook [ ] Twitter [ ]

Tik-Tok [ ] Instagram [ ]

2. Do you share upcoming events and announcements on social media?

Not frequently [ ] Not at [ ] Frequently [ ]

3. How do you react to criticisms concerning events and announcements you share?

You fight back [ ] You accept and work hard [ ] You ignore them [ ]

4. Are people who are not members of the Church showing interest in your announcements and events on social media?

Not many [ ] Many people [ ] Not at all [ ]

5. Who are the people who usually join your online services?

Church members [ ] Non-church members [ ] Both Church and non-church members [ ]

6. What are the reactions of the Church members to the introduction of social media in the Church?

They are happy [ ] Many are not happy [ ] Few are not happy [ ]

7. Are you able to protect the privacy of your followers?

Not my responsibility [ ] It is my responsibility to do so [ ] Not necessary [ ]

8. What are the challenges you face as the media team in the Church?

Poor internet connection [ ] Unstable electrical power [ ] No challenge [ ]

9. In what way do you think the use of social media in the Church has affected the growth of the Church?

Increase in membership [ ] Decrease in membership [ ] No significant effect [ ]

10. Any other information? .....



## **APPENDIX IV**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

#### **PASTORS**

My name is Cosmos Frimpong and my colleague is Obed Adzoga, Degree candidates of the Department of Theology, Christian Service University College, Kumasi. We are researching on the topic: The Impact of Social Media on The Church: A case study of Grace Baptist Church, Amakom. Could you please assist in the answering the following questions? We confidently assure you that, any information obtained from you would be treated confidentially.

#### **PART I**

1. Name .....
2. Gender .....
3. Date.....
4. Age (Optional) .....
5. Position in Church .....

#### **PART II**

1. Do you use social media? Yes [ ] No [ ]
2. Which social media platform(s) do you use most?

WhatsApp [ ] Facebook [ ] Twitter [ ]

Tik-Tok [ ] Instagram [ ]

3. Is social media a reliable tool for evangelism?

Very reliable [ ] Not reliable [ ]

4. Do you engage those who are non-members of the Church but follow you online?

Not often [ ] Most often [ ] not at all [ ]

5. Considering the introduction of Social media in the Church, do you think the Church can keep her members if face-to-face meeting is discouraged like in the time of COVID-19? Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. How do you see the effectiveness of the media team in the Church?

Very effective [ ] Average [ ] Not effective [ ]

7. In what way do you think social media has affected the growth of the Church? Increased in membership[ ] Decreased in Membership [ ]

8. How do you see social media and the future of the Church?

Encouraging [ ] Uncertain [ ]

9. Would you encourage the Church to continuously use social media because it helps in sharing the Gospel with the unreached?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. Any other information? .....

## APPENDIX V

### RELEVANT PICTURES

#### GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH BUILDING IN PICTURES





## Sunday Service in Pictures





The interface of official Facebook page of Grace Baptist Church in pictures





## Mid-week Service in Pictures



## Regular Communion Service in Pictures

