

**CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT AT EVANGELICAL CENTRE
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN SANTASI, KUMASI**

**DE-GRAFT ARHIN
(10002165)**

**A long essay submitted to Christian Service University College, in partial
fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in
Theology with Administration.**

JUNE, 2018

DECLARATION

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

Sign:
De-Graft Arhin
(Student)

Date:

Sign:
Rev. Isaac Badu-Danso
(Supervisor)

Date:

Sign:
Dr. S.B. Adubofuor
(Head of Department Theology)

Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lovely wife Mrs. Agnes Opoku Arhin, my children and Deacon Kenneth Atta Danquah. I appreciate your effort, inspiration and encouragement, I love you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A work of this kind could not have been possible without helping hands. I wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation and love to the Almighty God for the grace and mercy granted upon me to accomplish the project work. I wish therefore to express my profound gratitude to Reverend Isaac Badu-Danso my supervisor, who spent much time out of his busy schedule to attend to the work. I am grateful for his patience, love and kindness for his constructive criticism, directives and good words of encouragement. I'm very much appreciative for the tireless efforts of our lecturers at C.S.U.C, especially the Department of Theology for equipping us throughout the four years stay in this University College. Special thanks go to my spiritual father Retired Rev. Stephen Akwasi Asare "The Saint" (Former Head-Pastor of Evangelical Assembly of God, Santasi) for his prayer and advice. The following people also need commendation for their part in the work, and they are Pastor Stephen Kwame Mensah, Akua Tweneboah (Mother). To Nana Osei Atta II (Santasihene), John Awere Gambia (Accountant), and the Deacons of Evangelical Assemblies of God, Santasi for their openness to me. Also not forgetting my family, my church members (Miracle Centre Assemblies of God, Fankyerebra), especially Rev. Ebenezer Adu Ampong, Dr. Robert Owusu Agyarko, Dr. S.B Adubofuor (HOD), Dr. David K. Okai and the other lectures. You have all in one way or the other contributed to make me what I am today. God richly bless you all. Amen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Pages
Title Page	i
Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Contents	v

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of Problem	3
1.3 Research Questions	4
1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study	5
1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study	5
1.6 Research Methodology	5
1.7 Literature Review	6
1.7.1 Christian Fellowship and Discipleship	6
1.7.2 The Church and the Urban Environment	9
1.7.3 Strategies for Church Growth	10
1.8 Significance of the Study	10
1.9 Organization and Content of the Study	11

CHAPTER TWO: THE SANTASI COMMUNITY, ASSEMBLY OF GOD AND CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT

2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Background to the Santasi Community	13
2.2.1 Geographical and Economic Profile	14
2.2.1.1 Climate	14
2.2.1.2 Vegetation	15
2.2.1.3 Relief and Drainage	15
2.2.1.4 Condition of Natural Environment	15
2.2.1.5 Culture	16
2.2.1.6 Traditional Set-up	16
2.2.1.7 Ethnicity	17
2.2.1.8 Participation	17
2.2.1.9 Settlements Systems – Built Environment	17
2.2.1.10 Governance	18
2.3 Brief History of Assemblies of God, Ghana	18
2.3.1 Statement of Fundamental Truths	20
2.3.2 Mission Statement of the Church	24
2.4 Conclusion	25

CHAPTER THREE: CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT AND THE HISTORY OF EVANGELICAL CENTRE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN SANTASI

3.1 Introduction	26
3.2 History of Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God	26
3.2.1 Challenges of the Establishment of the Church	28
3.2.2 Their Commitment at that Time	28

3.2.3 The Groups in the Church	29
3.3 The Major Activities of the church	30
3.3.1 Mid-Week Services	30
3.3.2 Auxiliary Group/Ministry Meetings	31
3.4 Factors which account for Lack of Commitment to Church Activities	32
3.4.1 Spiritual Factors	32
3.4.2 Attitudinal Factors	33
3.4.3 Uninspiring Programmes and Activities	33
3.5 Conclusion	34
 CHAPTER FOUR: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT	
4.1 Introduction	35
4.2 Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God and the Urban Situation	35
4.3 Christian Commitment and Church Growth	37
4.4 Spiritual Disciplines and Character Formation	39
4.5 Conclusion	41
 CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 Summary of the study	42
5.2 Conclusion to the Study	43
5.3 Recommendations	43
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	46
 APPENDICIES	49

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In relationship to God, the Church's purpose is to worship him. Paul also directs the Church at Colossae to "sing Psalm, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).¹ God has destined us and appointed us in Christ "to live for the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:12).² Worship in the Church is not merely a preparation for something else: it is in itself fulfilling the major purpose of the church with reference to its Lord. That is why Paul follows an exhortation that we are to be "making the most of the time" with a command to be filled with the Spirit and then to be "singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart" (Ephesians 5:16-19).³ Thus, the scriptures stipulate that the Church has an obligation to nurture those who are already believers and build them up to maturity in the faith. Paul said that, his own goal was not simply to bring people to initial saving faith but to "present every man mature in Christ" (Colossians 1:28).⁴ As a result he told the church at Ephesus that God gave the Church gifted persons "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13).⁵ Also, Jesus told his disciples that they should "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).⁶ This evangelistic work of declaring the gospel is the primary ministry that the church has

¹ New International Version (NIV).

² New International Version (NIV).

³ New International Version (NIV).

⁴ New International Version (NIV).

⁵ New International Version (NIV).

⁶ New International Version (NIV).

toward the world. Yet accompanying the work of evangelism is also a ministry of mercy, a ministry that includes caring for the poor and needy in the name of the Lord.

Christians have been described as people who believe in Jesus Christ and live by the principles set out in the Bible. According to Wayne Grudem, the Church is the community of all true believers for all time, which means that the church is made up of all those who are truly saved.⁷ The physical needs of the world are greater now than they have ever been. There are people who profess to be Christians but in reality, are not, and there are also others who are held captive by all manner of lifestyles, addictions and habits which have led to a lack of commitment in the church. 2 Timothy 3:1-5⁸ talks about some factors that can make the love of the people of God to grow cold and which negatively affects their commitment towards church activities. Christ expects his people to grow in grace and in spiritual maturity. He expects the Church to create the necessary environment for the growth of its members. However, all things being equal, if some people decide to stay away from important Church activities then that needs to be investigated. Paul says that, “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25).⁹ Here, the term “Church” is used to apply to all those whom Christ died to redeem, all those who are saved by the death of Christ. But that must include all believers of all time, including believers in the New Testament age and believers in the Old Testament age. Moreover, Jesus Christ himself builds the Church by calling his people to himself. He promised, “I will build my Church” (Matthew 16:18)¹⁰ and Luke is careful to tell us that the growth of the Church came not by human effort alone, but that “the Lord

⁷Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Nottingham, England: Inter Varsity Press, 1994), 853.

⁸ New International Version (NIV).

⁹ New International Version (NIV).

¹⁰ New International Version (NIV).

added to their number day by day those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47).¹¹ This process whereby Christ builds the Church seems to be a consummation of the pattern started by God in the Old Testament.

According to Charles R. Swindoll being involved means “to draw in as a participant, to relate closely, to connect, to include.” When we involve ourselves with someone, we “connect” with them. We think of them as we make our plans. We actually operate our lives with others in clear focus. We draw them in as participants in our activities, and thus include them.¹² As a Christian community, we are to build bridges to connect people instead of building walls to exclude or separate them. We are to eliminate all factors that tend to exclude people and make them feel unwelcome. On the other hand, as Christians, we are to get “involved” in the Church even if conditions are not too favourable for our liking. Indifference and isolation are “potential killers.” They will rob us of our joy and zeal and it will know would be to be long and we fall by the wayside. It is important and the relevance of fellowship for Spiritual growth. An example of Christian environment is what we read about in the book of Acts. “And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).¹³

1.2 Statement of Problem

As we are in a world that is fast changing because of technology. It is not world of change only but of crisis, a world where events shape peoples’ lives, a world of constant movement, of changing ideas and sophistication which is brought about by technological advancement. But despite all these the world in which we live has an

¹¹ New International Version (NIV).

¹² Charles R. Swindoll, *Strengthening Your Grip* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1982), 30-31.

¹³ New International Version (NIV).

open future one in which Christians participate, not to stop the increasing rush in the world but to participate in God's purpose of making the world truly human and truly responsible. Christians are to be committed to church activities to bring about God's plan and purposes for the world. However, there is a lack of commitment to Church activities by some members of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, at Santasi. The church attendance, apart from Sunday services, the evening services continue to receive low patronage. There is therefore the need to examine the trend and to identify the causes and effects, while seeking to find measures to reverse the trend. In line with the study is also set to ascertain how the activities of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God at Santasi in the Kumasi Metropolitan, are impacting the members and the entire Community.

1.3 Research Questions

The study attempts to find answers to the following questions.

1. When was the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God established its presence at Santasi?
2. Why do the mid-week activities have low patronage?
3. What impact has the Church made in the lives of its members and the Community of Santasi?
4. What challenges do the members of the Church face?
5. How do these affect the church itself and the community as a whole?
6. What attempts have been made to address these challenges?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to identify the nature of the challenges faced by members of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God with regards to the commitment to Church activities.

- ❖ To examine the impact of the church in the community setting of Kumasi-Santasi.
- ❖ To specifically identify the nature of the challenges faced by the members in their commitment to Church activities.
- ❖ To examine the effects of the challenges of lack of commitment at Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God.
- ❖ And the propose measures to address these challenges.

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

The study does not seek to examine every detail about the Evangelical Centre Assembly of God at Santasi in the Kumasi Metropolis. It only seeks to identify the causes of the lack of commitment to the Church activities at the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God at Santasi in the Kumasi Metropolis, and to recommend some measures to address them.

1.6 Research Methodology

The study is an explorative and qualitative one, which ascertains the views, perceptions and experiences of people in relation to the issue at stake. Two main methods were used by the researcher to gather data for the study. These are the primary source and the secondary source. For the primary source, the researcher

conducted interviews with key personalities using an interview guide. Again through personal experience and participant observation, data was also gathered. For the secondary source, data was gathered from publications such as books, magazines, journals, brochures, newspapers, and newsletters, as well as from internet sources. The data obtained was evaluated and analyzed in the light of the study objectives and to give a fair picture of the issue at stake.

1.7 Literature Review

Every research requires the consideration of the views of some other scholars who have carried out similar studies. This is essential in order to give a sense of direction to the study on hand. In line with this, the study attempts to consider the following.

1.7.1 Christian Fellowship and Discipleship

Carl Wilson maintains that, of all the qualities of life that must be present if fellowship is to be conducive to spiritual growth, the central quality is love. We should love God foremost, for we are the recipients of His love. God has taken the initiative in sharing Himself by the giving of His Son. Thus, because we know Him and trust Him, Christians must have an attitude of love and a willingness to give themselves.¹⁴ In the view of the author, love is the important quality of Christian fellowship that provides the basis of good relationships. Caring and sharing amongst Christians, can only be made possible if they cultivate the quality of love. Floyd McClung maintains that it is God's will that we grow spiritually. But sadly there are Christians who have not made "every effort to supplement their faith" and they too are retarded in their spiritual development. The author continues that prayer and Bible

¹⁴Carl Wilson, *With Christ in the School of Disciple Building* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 187.

study are important in supplementing our faith. God wants us to reach a place of maturity where we can spiritually feed ourselves and be able to stand firm in the face of any adversity.¹⁵ Growing spiritually according to the author is the purpose of God for His children. We can only do so in our pursuit of the spiritual disciplines of prayer and Bible Study. The Church Fellowship provides the environment for effective Christian development of the Christian life and this should not be compromised. According to Roy G. Irving and Roy B. Zuck, scripture reveals the truth about God, the truth about man, and the truth about the relationship between the two. The truth about God, of course is that He is holy, infinite, eternal and loving. The truth about man is that he is sinful, finite, temporal and very much distant from real love in his natural state. However, the author continues that the glorious crown of biblical truth is the story of redemption telling us how the holy God can sustain a relationship with sinful man.¹⁶ In the view of the authors, Christians can gain the knowledge about which God is and His relationship with man through the Bible. Thus, there is the need to study the Bible in order to grow in our faith and walk with God. This can only be made possible if Christians commit themselves to fellowship which can help them grow in their knowledge about God. According to Donald L. Bubna, spirit-filled Christians should be talking with one another, sharing our life in Christ. We should be praising and worshipping God together. We should always be grateful and we should be honoring Christ by considering the needs of others before our own.¹⁷ The views of the author seems to suggest that building tight relationships in the church context is that which ensures unity and love among Christians Fellowship, thus provide the basis for sharing and caring in the Church, among Christians. Writing about living for

¹⁵Floyd McClung, *Basic Discipleship* (Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), 28-29.

¹⁶Roy G. Irving & Roy B. Zuck, *Youth and The Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 27.

¹⁷Donald L. Bubna, *Building People through a Caring Sharing Fellowship* (Wheaton, Illinois: Living Studies, 1982), 40.

Christ in an unbelieving world, Gene A. Getz is of the view that to remain true to the faith is central and foundational to Christianity, but is only a part of the larger concept of remaining true to the Lord. In doing so, we reflect Christ's light in the world.¹⁸ For the Christian to be true to the faith and also remain true to Christ, demands that he or she becomes committed to the spiritual disciplines as carried out in the Christian fellowship. The church fellowship, thus, provides the avenue for Christians to become mature and develop sound Christian character. This is vital for the study which examines the challenge of lack of commitment in the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in the Kumasi Metropolis. Christian maturity is not automatic. In the view of Douglas D. Webster, it does not just happen by attending church, or growing up in a Christian home. Christians need to be guided; nurtured and shown ways of living that are both, more spiritual and more human. Passage from infancy to maturity, in the spiritual sense, requires obedience and faithfulness, as we move through life's struggle.¹⁹ This is very important because, Christians can only grow in Christ and become more relevant to their society through their commitment to spiritual guidance as offered by the church fellowship. The church is therefore a mother, who nurtures us for spiritual development. This is relevant for the study which focuses on the activities of the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in the urban situation of Kumasi. Charles R. Swindoll writes that, in our involvement with other Christians, and as we "connect" with others through areas of mutual interest, it becomes a major factor in our ability to cope with life on this planet.²⁰ The views of the author seek to suggest that as we relate with each other through fellowship, we are able to stand our grounds in the world of struggles. Thus, we

¹⁸Gene A. Getz, *Encouraging One Another* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1987), 85-86.

¹⁹Douglas D. Webster, *Finding Spiritual Direction* (Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1991), 16.

²⁰ Charles R. Swindoll, *Strengthening your Grip: Essentials in an Aimless World* (Dallas: World Publishing, 1982), 31.

receive encouragement and guidance in the context of the church, and this provides the necessary support for our spiritual development.

1.7.2 The Church and the Urban Environment

Raymond Bakke maintains that if as Christians we are members of the kingdom of God in which all women and men adult, youth and children are valued and can reach their true humanity, whatever their race and background, and then in our Churches we need to find practical ways of living this out. In his view, before people can integrate into a Church or Society they must have a sense of identity and a sense of security.²¹

The views of the author seems to suggest that the Church in the Urban setting has to create the enabling environment for all persons irrespective of sex, status or ethnicity to fully relate with each other. The issue of relationship is a pre-requisite for effective Church ministry. According to Craig W. Ellison, Urban ministry is usually not comfortable or convenient. It requires the best of God's people and demands a deep, sustained, personal walk with Christ, and a willingness to confront evil and its destructive influences in the lives of people and to incarnate the good news.²² The urban setting, in the view of the author, seems to present a complex situation for Christians living for Christ, in the city requires much sustained effort of each Christian and should be well rooted. Thus, one needs to live beyond the evil influences of the city if one is to be a true and committed follower of Christ.

²¹Raymond Bakke, *The Urban Christian* (Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1987), 138-39.

²²Craig W. Ellison, *The Urban Mission* (Washington DC: University Press of America, INC, 1983), 15.

1.7.3 Strategies for Church Growth

Peter Wagner is of the view that when churches are involved in social ministries, the churches which specialize in Social Service delivery tend to attract more new members.²³

The author sees social service delivery as an important instrument for church growth. Thus, churches that are concerned about the physical and social needs of their members are more likely to experience growth in numbers. On the other hand, those churches that seem unconcerned about the welfare of their members are likely to experience a lack of commitment and indifference from their members. Writing about vital Christian living issues, Roy B. Zuck, maintains that the positive contribution a spiritual Christian brings to the church is through the exercise of his spiritual gifts. The immature Christian promotes division, whereas the mature one seeks unity through the use of his gifts. The church member who is serving the Lord by promoting the welfare of his local church is manifesting a mature spiritual life. Genuine and wholesome spirituality reflects a mature and maturing relationship to the Holy Spirit, which is demonstrated in one's personal life.²⁴ In the view of the author, as church members commit themselves to serving the Lord and themselves through the use of their spiritual gifts, the church would definitely grow in all dimensions.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study is relevant for the following reasons:

- i. It would help create awareness among Christians of how to live the Christian life in the urban setting.

²³ Peter C. Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981), 37.

²⁴ Roy B. Zuck, *Vital Christian Living Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1997), 19.

- ii. Churches wishing to carry out outreach in urban areas, and those who are already in the urban setting, will find this study relevant for their evangelistic planning, and programmers.
- iii. It would help Church leadership to identify the hindrances to the growth of the Church and to find possible solutions.
- iv. It would also enable Pastors to come up with programmers that can enable Christians to live consistent Christian lives, in the urban environment such as the Kumasi metropolis.
- v. Christian's theological institutions offering courses in systematic theology and urban missions will find this study as a useful component for use in drawing their curriculum.

1.9 Organization and Content of the Study

The study seeks to examine the challenges of lack of commitment to church activities in an urban environment of Santasi in the Kumasi metropolis. It is divided into five chapters. The introductory chapter deals with the general overview of the study and considers the introduction and background to the study, the statement of problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, the scope and focus of the study, research methodology, literature review, the significance of the study as well as the organization and content of the study. The two chapters examine the issue of the challenge of lack of commitment in the context of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in Santasi. It addresses issues such as the history of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in Santasi, the major activities in the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God as well as the factors for the lack of commitment to church activities. Chapter three considers some background issues relating to the Evangelical

Centre Assemblies of God in Santasi and Christian commitment. It addresses issues such as the background to the Santasi community, brief history of the Assemblies of God, Ghana as well as the Bible and the urban setting. Chapter four entails an evaluation and analysis based on a theological assessment of the factors for the lack of commitment to church activities at the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in Santasi. The issues addressed include the church and the urban situation. Christian's commitment and church growth, as well as spiritual disciplines and character formation. The fifth chapter concludes the study, and addresses the summary of the study, the conclusion to the entire study, and some recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SANTASI COMMUNITY, ASSEMBLIES OF GOD AND CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter considered the general overview of the study. It considered the introduction and background of the study, the problem at stake, and the methodology to help address the problem as well as the significance and organization of the study. This chapter considers the background to the Santasi community, the Assemblies of God and the Challenges to Christian commitment. Among the issues considered are the background to the Santasi community, brief history and doctrines of the Assemblies of God, as well as the Bible and the urban setting.

2.2 Background to the Santasi Community

According to Nana Osei Atta II, who is the Chief of the community, said that the land of Santasi is for the indigenous people who are of the clan of Oyoko. The name came by means of a tree called “Sante” where the ancestor’ settle under there and now called Santasi. The first chief was called Nana Yaw Siaw, and the subsequent ones were Nana Kwame Nti, and that Nana Osei Akoto and that Nana Amoako Atta 1, and the current chief Nana Osei Amoako Atta II. The Santasi community is on the boundary of Fanhyenebra on the north, Anyinam on the south, Atasomanso on the east and Apire on the west. Thus, the old and the first settlement was named Santasi tree. The land of Santasi lied on the main road of Kumasi to Obuasi. Socially, the young men are very interested in football and the old men use to play draught under trees in the town. They are also singing groups such as Soode, Bosoweh etc. There is not much alcoholism and smoking among the people. They seem to be friendly and

united.²⁵ Religiously, most of them profess to be Christians and only a few of them are Muslims and traditionalists.

2.2.1 Geographical and Economic Profile

Santasi is a community in the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly of the Ashanti Region. In examining the Santasi community, it is essential that we consider it within the general framework of the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly since Santasi is a suburb of the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly. The Metropolitan Assembly is located between latitude 6.650 and longitudes -1.633. According to an official document from the Nhyieaso sub-metro of the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, the area covers a total land area of 162.4 square km. It is located in the southern part of the Ashanti Region, within Kumasi, the regional capital. There are 62 communities in the Metropolitan with 38 Electoral Areas and 9 Zonal councils. The estimate terrain above sea level is 289 meters.²⁶

2.2.1.1 Climate

The metropolis falls within the wet sub-equatorial type. The average minimum temperature is about 21.5°C and a maximum average temperature of 30.7°C. The average humidity is about 84.16 per cent at 0900 GMT and 60 per cent at 1500 GMT. The moderate temperature and humidity and the double maxima rainfall regime (214.3mm in June and 165.2mm in September) have a direct effect on population growth and the environment as it has precipitated the influx of people from every part

²⁵ Interview with Nana Osei Atta II, Santasihene, 9th April, 2018.

²⁶ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

of the country and beyond its frontiers to the metropolis. This is chiefly because the climatic conditions are not harsh.²⁷

2.2.1.2 Vegetation

It falls within the tropical rain forest, the Kumasi city falls within the moist semi-deciduous south-East Ecological zone in Nhyiaeso sub-metro due to rapid pace of urbanization it has rendered the vegetation almost extinct. The only vegetation that is pronounced is the few trees planted in various houses and Asantehene garden as well as royal cemetery at with secondary forest.²⁸

2.2.1.3 Relief and Drainage

The Kumasi Metropolis lies within the plateau of the South-West physical region which ranges from 250-300 meters above sea level. The topography is undulating. The city is traversed by major rivers and streams, which include the Subin, Wiwi, Sisai, Owabi, Aboabo, Nsuben, Atasee, Pinkyem among others. However, biotic activity in terms of estate development, encroachment and indiscriminate waste disposal practices have impacted negatively on the drainage system and have consequently on the brought these water bodies to the brink of extinction.²⁹

2.2.1.4 Condition of Natural Environment

The Kumasi Metropolis falls within the moist semi-deciduous section of the South East Ecological Zone. It is drained by a number of rivers and streams. However, as a result of the effects of the urban sprawl and population growth, the natural environment has been altered. Estate developers have encroached upon the green

²⁷ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

²⁸ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

²⁹ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

reserves. In addition to this, the water bodies have been greatly polluted from human activity to the extent that some are near extinction. Even the few patches of greens along the waterways have cleared for agricultural purposes leading to siltation. Some developers have also built along and across watercourses resulting in occasional flooding in some areas in Kumasi. Industrial and vehicular emissions have also affected the quality of air in the city.³⁰

2.2.1.5 Culture

The people exhibit a typical Akan culture. They are very hospitable, non-violent. They have many cultural practices which ensure unity, good health, protection of the environment and good governance. It is therefore not a mystery that the area is fast growing and developing. Though the people are from diverse ethnic groups, they have become so integrated within the Akan tradition to such an extent that one cannot easily tell who is or not an Akan. The people have a rich culture which helps promote the development of the area. The people are proactive. There is no ethnic or any negative cultural practice amongst the people.

2.2.1.6 Traditional Set-up

The area is under the traditional authority of the king of Ashanti. The area has a Paramount Chief who supervises activities of various sub-chiefs all in the communities. The whole system is therefore a local form of decentralization. Such traditional set-up gives rise to popular participation and smooth development. This also explains the strong communal spirit and absence of conflicts amongst the people.

³⁰ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

2.2.1.7 Ethnicity

In terms of ethnicity, the community is cosmopolitan. Every known ethnic group in Ghana is represented. This is a result of trading and other related socio-economic activities going on in the municipality. Despite this, the predominant ethnic group is the Akan.

2.2.1.8 Participation

The level of participation in the development programmers and project of the community is quite encouraging. This is borne out by the fact that they are consulted and their views incorporated in activities within the various sectors in the community. In addition, Public understanding, interest and participation in the decentralization process should be increased and sustained through interaction and education, since it was very clear from the study that the general public was ready to co-operate to move the programmer forward. The town councils should endeavor to court the action co-operation and participation of our traditional rules in their activities because they command great respect and influence in our communities and they can bring this to bear positively on their operations.³¹

2.2.1.9 Settlements Systems

The Nhyiaeso Sub-metro has a nucleated settlement pattern with limited spaces in between houses. This phenomenon is common in the old settlement areas resulting in narrow roads and streets. In the urban settlements especially Santasi, most of the long settled are well laid-out with defined access roads and other facilities like drains, open spaces and well-designed housing units. However, some parts of these urban

³¹ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

settlements are not well planned and have the characteristics of slum development. Such areas include Patasi-Suntreso and Ridge/Nhyiaeso.³²

2.2.1.10 Governance

It is bounded to the North-East by the Subin Sub-Metro, to the North-West by the Bantama Sub-Metro, Kwadaso Sub- Metro to the West, Asokwa Sub-Metro to the East and Atwima Kwawoma District to the South. And the land size is about 28.7m².³³ Transition of other religious group, the Santasi is a place where many churches have their begins such as Deeper life Bible church, the Resurrection Power and Living Bread as the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God is supposed to be the first Pentecostal church in the community.

2.3 Brief History of Assemblies of God, Ghana

The Assemblies of God missionaries from the U.S.A in the persons of Rev. Lloyd and Margart Shrier the two were then in Mosiland, Ouagadugou then Upper Volta now Burkina Faso, crossed over on horseback to the Northern Region of the then Gold Coast in the early 1931 to survey the land for mission work. When they came they settled in Yendi on the invitation of the then Ya-Naa, the King of Dagbon. Later they left and returned in September, 1931 with their first recruits, Miss Boulah Buchhwalter and Guy Hickok to start the first Assembly of God in the country at Yendi.³⁴ Some other missionaries who joined later were Florence Blossom, Henry Garlock, Eric Johnson and Thelma Godwin. The zeal of these early missionaries was so strong that they consistently worked and witnessed for the Lord under very harsh conditions and in hostile environment. Yet they did all that they can because of the

³² Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

³³ Document Office Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

³⁴ Assemblies of God, Ghana, 75 Anniversary Brochures (6th August, 2006).

love of God and the influence of the Holy Spirit power till the likes of Buchwalter and Guy Hickock died on the mission field in 1942. On December 23, 1948 the “Christ Ambassador” plan of Assemblies of God landed in Accra bringing the Wheeler Andersons, Rody Johnson and Ozella Reid to join the missionary family in the then Gold Coast. When the missionaries arrived in the country, their preoccupation was to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people. In no time they soon realized that apart from preaching the gospel they were faced with the daunting and enormous task of fighting, hunger, disease, poverty and illiteracy. To give practical meaning to the Biblical teaching of caring for the needy and alleviating the suffering of the people, the female missionaries organized literacy classes for the indigenous women while the men organized working crews teaching their male counterparts to make swish blocks, door and windows frames and roof trusses. In respect of that Rev. Lloyd Shirer served as community Department Officer in Tamale during the early days of the establishment of the Church. During the inception of the Church, the Shirer’s and Garlocks were aware of the needs of the Kokomba Tribe which was about forty (40) miles northern of Yendi. They were war-like and were feared by many, but the missionaries believed God and made a medical work among the Kokombas which became a real asset to the whole mission as well as the needs of the people, many of whom had never heard the name of Jesus nor did they have any medical help closer than Yendi. In 1928 the General council voted to put up its new headquarters building in Kumasi and subsequently relocated to Accra in 1984. The General Council in 1986 elected Rev. Dr. Simon Bamalong Asore as the General Superintendent to succeed the then indigenous Rev. Elijah Nyamela Panka. The church experienced tremendous growth under the leadership of S.B. Asore through the nationwide evangelistic campaigns dubbed ‘Decade of Harvest from 1990 – 2000’. Churches at that time were

to be planted in every town and village. During this period the church in Ghana also engaged in missionary work in the following counties reaching the black community largely as well as the indigenous people. They are Italy, Israel, Canada, USA, UK and Gambia amongst others. The current leadership is in the person of Rev. Dr. Paul Frimpong-Manso.³⁵

2.3.1 Statement of Fundamental Truths

i. The scriptures Inspired

The scripture, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the Revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3 : 15 – 17; 1 Thessalonians 2 : 13 ; 2 Peter 1:21).³⁶

ii. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM,” The Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6: 4; Isaiah 43: 10, 11: Mathew 28: 19; Luke 4: 22).³⁷

iii. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Church

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The scripture declare:

- a. His virgin birth (Mathew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 25).³⁸
- b. His sinless life (Hebrews 7: 26; 1 Peter 2: 22).³⁹
- c. His miracles (Acts 2: 22; 10: 38).⁴⁰

³⁵ Assemblies of God, Ghana, *Constitution and Bye-Laws Fundamental Truth* (August, 9th 2013).

³⁶ Assemblies of God, Magazine – July, 2012.

³⁷ New International Version (NIV).

³⁸ New International Version (NIV).

³⁹ New International Version (NIV).

⁴⁰ New International Version (NIV).

- d. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15: 3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).⁴¹
- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Mathew 28: 6; Luke 24: 39; 1 Corinthians 15: 4).⁴²
- f. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1: 9, 11; Philippians 2: 9-11; Hebrews 1:3).⁴³

iv. The Salvation of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1: 26, 27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5: 12-19).⁴⁴

v. The fall of Man

Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

- a. Conditional to Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24: 47; Romans 10: 13 -15; Ephesians 2: 8; Titus 2: 11, 3: 5-7).⁴⁵
- b. The Evidences of Salvation: The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8: 16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2: 12).⁴⁶

⁴¹ New International Version (NIV).

⁴² New International Version (NIV).

⁴³ New International Version (NIV).

⁴⁴ New International Version (NIV).

⁴⁵ New International Version (NIV).

⁴⁶ New International Version (NIV).

vi. The Ordinances of the Church

- a. Baptist in water: The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28: 19, Acts 10: 47, 48; Romans 6:4).⁴⁷
- b. Holy Communion: The Lords Supper, consisting of the elements-bread and the fruit of the vine – is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1: 4);⁴⁸ a memorial of His suffering and death (1Corinthians 11: 26);⁴⁹ and is enjoined on all believers “till He comes!”

vii. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the outpouring of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of all believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the ministry (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12: 1 – 31).⁵⁰

viii. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12: 1, 2; Hebrew 13: 12).⁵¹ Scriptures teach a life of holiness

⁴⁷ New International Version (NIV).

⁴⁸ New International Version (NIV).

⁴⁹ New International Version (NIV).

⁵⁰ New International Version (NIV).

⁵¹ New International Version (NIV).

without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrew 12: 14).⁵² By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye Holy, for I am Holy” (1 Peter 1:15, 16).⁵³ Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1 – 11, 13; 8: 1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13).⁵⁴

ix. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16: 15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23, 24), and (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16) meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10. James 1: 27).⁵⁵

x. Divine Healing

Divine Healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Mathew 8:16, 17).⁵⁶

xi. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the

⁵² New International Version (NIV).

⁵³ New International Version (NIV).

⁵⁴ New International Version (NIV).

⁵⁵ New International Version (NIV).

⁵⁶ New International Version (NIV).

imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52).⁵⁷

xii. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7). The millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3-4).⁵⁸

xiii. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43,48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15).⁵⁹

xiv. The New Heavens and the New Earth

“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:22).⁶⁰

2.3.2 Mission Statement of the Church

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission.⁶¹ Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn,

⁵⁷ New International Version (NIV).

⁵⁸ New International Version (NIV).

⁵⁹ New International Version (NIV).

⁶⁰ New International Version (NIV).

⁶¹ Assemblies of God, *Constitution and Bye-Law Fundamental Truth*.

which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:22; Hebrew 12:23).⁶² Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that, which is lost, to be worshiped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for the world evangelizing (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15).⁶³
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).⁶⁴
- c. To be channels of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).⁶⁵ The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-to-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- d. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).⁶⁶

2.4 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter centred on the Santasi Community, Assemblies of God and Christian commitment. It considered issues such as the background to the Santasi community as well as brief history of the Assemblies of God, Ghana.

⁶² New International Version (NIV).

⁶³ New International Version (NIV).

⁶⁴ New International Version (NIV).

⁶⁵ New International Version (NIV).

⁶⁶ New International Version (NIV).

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT AND THE HISTORY OF EVANGELICAL CENTRE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN SANTASI

3.1 Introduction

The discussion in the previous Chapter centered on the background to the Santasi Community and its people, brief history of the Assemblies of God, as well as the Bible and the urban setting. This Chapter focuses on the Christian Commitment of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God of Santasi. Among the issues addressed is the history of the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, the major activities in the Church, as well as the factors militating against commitment to Church activities.

3.2 History of Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God

Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, initially started as home cell group at Santasi a suburb of Kumasi in the late 1970⁸. The initial work began in June, 1979 through the efforts of Mr. Oteng Asamoah (Now Reverend), Kwame Adu Anane, Akwasi Dumfeh and Emmanuel Boakye who were then members of the Roman Catholic Church. It should be remembered that these young men were kicked out of the Roman Catholic Church after receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and were speaking in tongues anytime the congregation met for service. In fact their zeal caused nuisance to the church hence their exit from the church. In view of their youth exuberance, they joined the Lighthouse Central Assemblies of God where they met Ama Kusi, Nana Kyerekyire, Maame Akua Afriyie, Opanin Osei Kofi and Agya Anane who were then members of the Central church. With Central Assemblies of God as the mother of all churches, both within the Kumasi and in the surrounding towns and villages, four (4) days crusade was held to outdoor the new church in October 1979 at Santasi under the

leadership of Rev. Nicholas Opuni. It was not clear who the first converts were, but membership were 50 who met at the Santasi L/A Primary School for prayer meetings and evening Bible classes where Mr. Oteng Asamoah was a lay person at that time. With the church population increasing rapidly, the late Rev. Christopher Antwi Dapaah was brought as first pastor from 1979-1980. With effective evangelization, more and more souls were won for the Lord and it was during his term of office that late Evangelist Francis Akwasi Amoako and Adu Jones (now Reverend) joined the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God whose ambitions were to do God's work. Mr. Kwabena Darko at that time presented singing attire to Bright Angels. During the latter part of 1983, the late Evangelist Francis Akwasi Amoako was asked to sit down as a lay worker for failing to enter into the Bible School. During that time the church was ushered into the hands of the constituted deacons comprising Oteng Asamoah (Now Rev.), Kwame Adu-Anane, Albert Asumadu (Now Rev.), Boachie Emmanuel, Peter Baidoo and the rests. In 1990's with the church population constantly exceeding four hundred and fifty (450), the realization that the development of the soul should be complemented by a concurrent development of the mind led to the establishment of SEA international school. Construction of the Parsonage which was completed in 1995. Under the auspices of Rev. John Ewusi Kuranchie, the Deacons and the entire members. As the church continued to increase in number with the operation of the spiritual gifts, Satan also set in and it resulted in chaos and misunderstanding which brought the General Council to its toes. Indeed what happened in late 1994 to early 1995 was unhealthy.⁶⁷ In 1996 Rev. Joseph Mensah (Principal of the Mid-Ghana Bible College) was appointed to take over as a caretaker Pastor with the support of appointed committee made up of the late John

⁶⁷ Document Office Santasi, Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, 20th Anniversary Report.

Afranie, Madam Janet Opoku Bota and Maame Christiana Anto (Mrs. Gyening). These were the people of faith who stood in when the going was tough. Today, we can salute such gallant people with the necessary recognition and applause. With the coming into office of Rev. Stephen Asare who took over from Rev. Mensah in May, 1996, until his retirement the church has regained its past glory and strength. Indeed, Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God has since its birth been in the forefront of the battle to win souls for the Kingdom of God. It has been blessed with Pastors, Leaders and members whose vision has had a major impact on the course of Christ. This vision has been manifested in various ways particularly in Evangelism, Education and Hospitality.

3.2.1 Challenges of the Establishment of the Church

Some of these were lack of facilities and resources for children and youth ministries. Also there was lack of matured leaders to handle the challenges which came along with the unexpected growth of the congregation within a short period. It also happened that some issues relating to indiscipline which were handling caused some disaffection among a section of the membership. Thus, the way some of the indiscipline issues were handled in the church caused some of the members to leave the church and this affected the membership greatly.

3.2.2 Their Commitment at that Time

The members at that time of the establishment of Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God at Santasi by the head Pastor of the Lighthouse Central Assemblies of God at Akwatia-line (the Central Church) in the person of Rev. Nicholas Opuni. The people were happy and committed to the work of God in the church as they were free from journeyed to the Central Church at Akwatia-line. They had their morning devotion in

the hours of 5:00am to 6:00am every day, the Tuesday evening 6:00pm to 8:30pm set aside for Bible study, Wednesday 8:00am to 11:00am set for prayer meetings while Thursday was also set for witnessing and evangelism. As the members were anxiously increasing in their witnessing and evangelism by preaching in the commercial buses, house to house, etc. there was a great tremendous acceptance of the church and the ministry of Assemblies of God in the Santasi community. Since it was the first Pentecostal church in the area at that time, the church received high patronage by the members in the community and its surrounding towns. The church judiciously used their own internal funds and members gave freely to support the church development and projections. In less than two years the church had bought a piece of land and had opened two branches, one at Heman and the other one at Trede.⁶⁸

3.2.3 The Groups in the Church

The groups in the church at that time as the church grew faster and the commitment of the members was tremendous. Punctuality was not a problem in the church and everything was in order. They set up some grouping according to the constitution and bye-laws of the Assemblies of God, Ghana. These groups are the women, men, youth and children ministries, under the departmental of the organization. They also set up singing groups like “The Bright Angels and Evangelical” and later the Almighty Church Choir. The departmental group like the women ministry meets on Monday evenings from 6:00pm to 7:30pm while the men ministry and the youth ministry also known as “Christ Ambassador” (C.As) also meets from 7:00 to 8:00pm.

⁶⁸Interview with John Yamoah, Men’s Ministry Former Secretary, 16/04/2018.

3.3 The Major Activities at the Church

The Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God is like any other Christian church that meets for major or divine service each Sunday morning. In every morning the services start at the hours of 9:00am to 12:00pm in the afternoon. The first part of the service begins with prayers, sometimes by a lead member of the Prayer Tower, a deacon or the Sunday School Superintendent for about 15mins. Then the Sunday school begins with each class member of average 10 to 15 including a class teacher and a secretary for 45mins. At this classes can one ask questions, answering and have time to read the Bible and the Sunday school material that help all to understand difficult question that bordering their minds. The class learns memory verse and the Sunday school Superintendent climax the study with major questions from the joint class before closing in prayers. The divine service also gives the opportunity for the members to enter into worship with songs, prayers and thanksgiving in a way of appreciating what the Lord has done for the members. After the worship, the team that led the congregation will also lead for praises. During this time, the members sing, clap and dance in fellowship with one another and also to celebrate the goodness of God. Again, the divine service gives the host pastor the opportunity to meet all the congregations in the church and to proclaim the word of God to them for their spiritual build up in the Christian faith. At this time the pastor pray for the sick, the new converts and tithe offerings. However, the church secretary will give announcement and the church pray closing prayer.

3.3.1 Mid-Week Services

The mid-week services take place in every Wednesday morning and Friday evening. The fact that Wednesday morning is set aside for prayer meeting led by the Pastor and

the Prayer Tower, supported by the church board, the programme begins at 8:00am to 11:30am. At the meeting, the Pastor, the Deacons and the Prayer Tower join hands to pray for the sick, the barren, those need deliverance, prayer request, etc. the Wednesday prayer meeting helped many people including the late Evangelist Francis Akwasi Amoako and others too received miracles. The Friday service is also set aside for thanksgiving, testimony and sometimes all night. The evening service begins at 6:00pm to 8:30pm and the all night starts from 10:00pm to 4:00am, and the all night were held twice in every month and it helped a lot of people to grow in the Lord.⁶⁹

3.3.2 Auxiliary Group/Ministry Meetings

Other auxiliary group like “Missionettes” that help and develop the talent and potentials for the young girls under 15years for a useful life meets on the evening of Saturday at 4:00pm to 6:00pm. The “Young Singles”: known as “YS” a ministry for single young women aged between 16 to 30 years also meet at 5:00pm to 6:30pm on Sunday. “The Royal Rangers” and the “Pathfinders.” The Royal Rangers meet on Saturday evenings at 4:00pm to 5:30pm to train young boys and girls in the church to become active in life and the Christian activities like a disciplinary soldier. While the Pathfinders ministry is for the grooming and preparation of the young men to move into the men ministry and also for a better future. They are like the (Y.S) that meets on Sunday evenings at 5:00pm to 6:30pm. Yet the singing groups meet on Wednesday and Saturday evening from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. The groups at that time meet to bring the much needed fellowship, love and cordial relationship in the church.

⁶⁹ Interview with Deacon B. Y. Sarpong, Former New Convert (New Members) Teacher, 16/04/2018.

3.4 Factors which Account for Lack of Commitment to Church Activities

It has been found out that various activities and programmes have been put in place for the spiritual upliftment of the members. Even though some of the members patronize these programmes, it is sad that a majority of the members do not attend or participate. A lot of reasons may be put forward for this from the members and also the church leadership. Even though the members are very much aware of the advantages that they can derive from participating in church programmes, they seem to be hindered by some factors including distance residence, relocation, poor business and economic hardship, marriage and transfer, etc.

3.4.1 Spiritual Factors

Some of the members interviewed were of the view that, there are some factors which cannot easily be explained. These, according to them, may be spiritual, which often affect their attitudes towards church activities. For some it is always a struggle within them as they hear competing voices. Whereas one voice may prompt them to respond to church activities the other voice may bring some different agenda in the thoughts, which often become a discouragement rather than encouragement.⁷⁰ Another factor which also seems to militate against the commitment of members is negative influences. Some people are of the view that some friends who are either non-Christian or lukewarm, may, though, many ways, be an impediment to important church programme. These negative influences may cause some members to become discouraged. Issues such as foreign football matches (European Champions League

⁷⁰Interview with Deacon Edward Dapaah, Former Youth President, 16/04/2018.

and the Spanish La Liga) appear to be causing more harm to the spiritual development of some youth.⁷¹

3.4.2 Attitudinal Factors

Some people also attribute the lack of commitment to church activities, to attitudinal factors. The poor attitude of some church members to new comers seems to be a disincentive for church growth. According to Deacon Kenneth Atta Danquah every Sunday, new comers attend service and express interest in becoming members of the church. However, these people are off to go out, as the church members including the leaders do not pay the needed attention to these new comers.⁷² Again, it has been found out that the attitude of some of the leaders to church activities and programmes tend to discourage other people. Leaders are expected to show the way through exemplary lifestyle. They are to be the punctual, regular and actively engage in all church programmes to serve as object lessons for others to emulate. However, this is not the case, as it is said to find a handful of leaders at mid – week services. The question is, if the leaders are not themselves present to make church programmes successful?

3.4.3 Uninspiring Programmes and Activities

Some people interviewed on the reasons for their non – participation in some church programmes especially the gender and aged group in fellowship meetings, gave some reasons especially uninspiring programmes. According to these people, some of the programmes seem very boring that they seem not to be encouraged to come the next time. Some were of the view that, the starting time and closing time for church

⁷¹Interview with Deacon Edward Dapaah, Former Youth President, 16th April, 2018.

⁷²Interview with Kenneth Atta Danquah, Current Church Secretary, 16th April, 2018.

activities should be strictly adhered to so that it will help members to plan their own schedules and other commitments. In line with this, it is important that church programmes become very appealing and relevant to the people so as to encourage participation and patronage.⁷³

3.5 Conclusion

The chapter considered the factors for the lack of commitment to church activities at the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, the major activities of the church, as well as the factors for the lack of commitment to church activities and programmes.

⁷³Interview with Mrs. Agnes Gyampadu, Children's Teacher and Rep, Santasi District, 14th April, 2018.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter an attempt was made to examine the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God and the lack of commitment to the church activities. Among the issues discussed is the history of the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, the major activities in the church, as well as the factors accounting for the lack of commitment to the church activities in the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in Santasi. This chapter is a theological reflection on the church and Christian commitment. The issues discussed here include the church and the urban situation, Christian commitment and church growth, as well as spiritual disciplines and character formation.

4.2 Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God and the Urban Situation

It has been established by Craig W. Ellison that the church that is situated in the urban environment faces some challenges. These challenges seem to be hindering the spiritual growth of many churches.⁷⁴ The pressure of work schedules seems to keep some urban dwellers from serious involvement in the church activities. Since the Church can do little about the work schedules, some efforts will have to be made to help members who find themselves in such situations to get involved in church activities and programmes.

⁷⁴ Ellison, *The Urban Mission*, 15.

Again, Craig Ellison maintains that the urban centre is a place of much evil. This presupposes that, the church will have to cultivate a new vision with respect to the urban situation and to confront evil as part of its missionary agenda. The issue is that some church members are harbouring some fears regarding the evil in the community. The supposed fear of robbers seems to keep many members away from evening services.⁷⁵ It is important to understand that the church must speak against the evil of the urban centre, while creating awareness among its members. However, the attitude of the church members towards evening programmes may be justified. In responding to the urban situation, the church would have to adopt the attitude of judgment, condemnation and complete separation but rather find ways of making Christ relevant in the urban environment. The most crucial concern is to find out what God wants us to do about the urban situation. Craig Ellison has again suggested that it requires a deep sustained personal walk with Christ and a willingness to take risks and to live with uncertainty, while confronting evil and its destructive influences in the lives of people.⁷⁶ In the light of this, the church must consider itself as an instrument of God to bring about change in the urban environment. This can be done if the church considers home cell or satellite churches to help the members appreciate evening programmes. However we need to ask ourselves if the church is living up to its mandate as far as the urban setting is concerned. We also need to find out if the programmes and activities of the Church are limited only to the church hall. Again the urban Christian would have to see the need to evangelize the people within their reach in the urban centre. The crucial question is what is the church doing in equipping its members for urban ministry?

⁷⁵ Ellison, *The Urban Mission*, 14.

⁷⁶ Ellison, *The Urban Mission*, 15.

In the light of these concerns, it is significant to consider the Church's ministry as one that transcends all boundaries into all terrains where human beings reside, and make the attempt to bring about meaningful change in their lives and thereby making lasting impact. In the view of the researcher, the church should therefore live above conformity to the status quo in the urban situation and rather be a light for all people.

4.3 Christian Commitment and Church Growth

The first and foremost the priority of every Christian is to become like Jesus Christ. As Christians we are also to express that in our relationships with one another. In this regard, we are to be active in supporting and encouraging one another in the body of Christ, as we build each other up in that Christ like manner. This is what is referred to as spiritual growth. Against the background of the situation in the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, the attitude of the members towards church programmes needs much to be desired. In order for Christians to grow into maturity, there is the need for the right environment to be created. This is where each believer is recognized, encouraged and empowered to exercise his or her potential in the church situation. If there is little room for visitation, then a church member may feel unwelcome and is more likely to demonstrate the attitude of indifference and lack of cooperation towards some church activities. In the church situation, every individual member should feel very important of being part of the church. In that case, that person will joyfully involve himself or herself in the church. But when the opposite is the case, then it is more likely to affect the church in terms of commitment and growth. We understand that Christians have a unique role to play in the church and these contribute to the building up of the entire body of Christ. But if some members of the church decide to stay away from the church programmes then that objective cannot be

achieved. In this case, it is more important to understand that the New Testament Church has no room for a special group of people who are seen more valuable than others. The New Testament teaches that we are all in the body of Christ together. We are one body; we all have different functions, but we are all involved in the ministry to which God has called us as a people (1 Corinthians 12:12).⁷⁷ Thus, no group of people should be treated as more special than others. This is very important in order to keep the unity of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-20; 26-27).⁷⁸ It is important to understand that church members can be committed to church activities, if there is understanding of love, and tolerance among themselves. Where quarrels are rightly addressed by church leadership to make peace prevail then all members may become happy in the church. However, if the attitude of “holier than thou” is demonstrated in the church environment, it would surely lead to division, and eventually stagnant growth. Thus, it is important that church leadership stamps its authority on all seeming acts of pride, arrogance, resentment and frustration in order to keep the church under control. There should be no room for people to feel rejected or sidelined. All should feel “at home” in the church premises because Paul says “there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).⁷⁹ As Christians, we should see the church as our first and foremost priority in life above all else. God commands us to be involved because He has made us dependent beings. We need to remember what He said to Adam just before He gave him Eve; “it is not good for the man to be alone.” (Genesis 2:18).⁸⁰ In the family of God, there is no such thing as a completely independent member of the body. We may act like that for some reason at times, but ultimately God shows us how much we need one another. One important

⁷⁷ New International Version (NIV).

⁷⁸ New International Version (NIV).

⁷⁹ New International Version (NIV).

⁸⁰ New International Version (NIV).

issue that needs to be addressed in line with Christian commitment and church growth has to do with dealing with vulnerability. As Christians, we need to be seen as working for the good of each other. We are told in 1 Corinthians 12:26, ‘if one part suffers, every part suffers with it, if one is honoured, every part rejoices with it.’⁸¹ This presupposes that, we need to sympathize with one another and encourage one another in our everyday lives. As we encourage and support each other that will create a warm and lively church atmosphere of which everybody would like to be part of. This is exactly what happened in the early church a period where, we are told the Lord added onto the church, each day. It was as a result of their cordial atmosphere that prevailed and which ensured that all members felt welcomed and happy. This is what the contemporary church requires. We are living in times when the church seems much divided, and where the “haves” are considered as more important than the “other have.” This is not right enough. Some people are of the view that, there is too much partiality in the church situation today. However, this perception should not be allowed to gain roots if we desire growth in the churches of God today.

4.4 Spiritual Disciplines and Character Formation

The church exists to equip its members to live for Christ and to do ministry for God. God requires of us as Christians to remain true to the faith in Christ and to declare His purposes in the world. We are to demonstrate the love of Christ for mankind and how God desires all humanity to be reconciled to Him. Peter admonishes his readers to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).⁸² But this cannot be possible in the lives of people who are not committed in church activities. We can only grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus, only when

⁸¹ New International Version (NIV).

⁸² New International Version (NIV).

we make ourselves available, God would build us up so that we do not only become like Christ, but we also manifest His glory. We need to examine the church programmes if they are edifying enough to attract the members. Again, we also need to question ourselves if the programmes involve the entire membership. We need to ask ourselves about what made the early church so attractive. Definitely, it was not their cathedral, as they did not have one, or their musical instruments of which we have not told of. Rather it is important to note that it was their observance of the spiritual disciplines that transformed their lives. We are told in Acts 2:42⁸³ “And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”⁸⁴ These are facts of devotion on the part of the early Christians that ensured their steady growth. It is not surprising that, they were recognized as having been with Jesus. They were recognized not by their dressing or any other outward feature. Rather they were recognized by their lifestyle which was Christ-like. We are also told in Acts 12:36⁸⁵ that the disciples were first called “Christians” in Antioch because of their attitude and commitment. Thus, they were recognized as people who demonstrated Christ in their daily life. It is important for contemporary Christians to understand that the quality of our spiritual lives depends on how rooted we are in Christ. We can only grow in Christ, when we make ourselves available for the spiritual disciplines of teaching, prayer, fellowship and sharing. These disciplines are what make the church environment conducive and attractive. We can maintain believers in the church, if all Christian leaders; will make it our priority to enforce these spiritual disciplines in the church. In doing so, all Christian must be seen to be involved in ourselves. The church situation at Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God where some of the leaders do not involve themselves in church

⁸³ New International Version (NIV).

⁸⁴ New International Version (NIV).

⁸⁵ New International Version (NIV).

activities is not good enough and it does not encourage some of the members. The leaders are to show good example, but this is not the case at Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God. The participation of leaders in church programmes, especially in respect of the spiritual disciplines can encourage the entire membership. We need to inspire one another, to get to greater heights in Christ.

4.5 Conclusion

The study discussed in this chapter centered on the theological reflection on the church and the Christian commitment. It considered the church and the urban situation, Christian Commitment and church growth, as well as spiritual disciplines and character formation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study examined the challenges of lack of commitment to church activities in urban settings, a case study of the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God in the Kumasi Metropolitan. It was divided into five chapters with some subdivisions where necessary. It begins with a general overview which addressed the introduction and background to the study, the statement of problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, the scope and focus of the study, research methodology, literature review, significance of the study, and the organization and content of the study. The work further examined some background issues relating to the study which include the background of the Santasi community, brief history of the Assemblies of God, Ghana fundamental truth, as well as the Bible and the urban setting. Moreover, the study examined the issue of Christian commitment in the context of the Santasi. It addressed issues such as the history of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, the major activities in the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, as well as the factors militating against the members in their commitment to church activities. Furthermore, the study considered a theological reflection on the Christian commitment and urban settings. It addresses issues such as the church and the urban situation, Christian commitment and church growth as well as spiritual disciplines and character formation. The study concludes with a summary on the entire study, conclusion to the study and some recommendations.

5.2 Conclusion to the Study

The study set out to examine the challenge of lack of commitment to church activities in urban settings, a case study of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God, in the Kumasi Metropolitan. It has been found out that church is made up of true believers in Jesus Christ whose aim and ambition is to be like Christ. In their quest to live for Christ in the world, they are reminded by the Bible to remain committed to their Lord Jesus Christ. Their commitment to Jesus Christ needs to be sustained at all times to ensure their stability in the Christian faith. It has been established that the church in context provides the atmosphere for Christians to live out their Christian faith and to demonstrate their love for and commitment to Jesus Christ. However, it is clear from the study that some factors coming from the community in the Kumasi Metropolitan, are impacting negatively on the lives of the members of the Santasi Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God. These include spiritual, socio-economic, attitudinal as well as uninspiring programmes, which seem to draw the church members back from the major church activities. As a result of some members' lack of involvement in most church programmes and activities, the result is manifested in a general lack of spiritual growth in the lives of these people. Additionally, it also affects the numerical growth of the church, as the continuous lack of participation or attendance at church services and programmes gradually reduces the membership of the church. This attitude of lack of commitment presents a negative image about the church, which can affect its evangelistic endeavors in the Santasi community.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the objectives set out in this study, the following recommendations are being spelt out:

New Approaches in Programme Planning

It has been found out that when programmes are drawn and imposed on church members, they sometimes show lack of cooperation. For them, once the programme is coming from somewhere, it does not concern them. To reverse this attitude and to make church programmes very inspiring, a “bottom-up” approach can be adopted whereby the views of church members are considered in the drawing of church programmes. Once they find out that their views are considered, they would begin to demonstrate positive attitudes towards church activities and programmes. Thus, programme planning should be based on consensus building and not an imposition.

Regular Open Fora

In order to have good knowledge of the problems or challenges confronting the church members in their involvement in church activities, it is recommended that church leaders organize periodic open fora to enable the church members to express their views and problems. This will help church leadership to put measures in place to address the concerns of church membership especially with the departmental heads.

Regular Visits by Church Leaders

Some church members may fall out of church activities and programmes unnoticed. When this trend continues, it might affect the general church membership in terms of growth. These members may have genuine concerns and problems, but if these are not brought to the attention of church leadership, they might remain unresolved. In order to come to terms with the concerns of church members, it is recommended that regular visits by church leaders to church members be considered as a priority in order to create a conducive church environment for all members. Such regular visits should not involve partiality, but rather be carried out for all church members irrespective of

status or position in the church. Paul said, “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Gal. 6:2).⁸⁶

⁸⁶ New International Version (NIV).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Bakke, R. *The Urban Christian*. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1987.

Bubna, D. L. *Building People through a Caring Sharing Fellowship*. Wheaton, Illinois: Living Studies, 1982.

Claerbaut, D. *Urban Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library, 1983.

Dubose, F. M. *How Churches Grow in An Urban World*. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1978.

Ellison, C. W. *The Urban Mission*. Washington DC: University Press of America, INC, 1983.

Getz, G. A. *Encouraging One Another*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1987.

Greenway, R. S. *Disciplining the City*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1992.

Grudem, W. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Nottingham, England: Inter Varsity Press, 1994.

Irving, R. G. & Zuck, R. B. *Youth and the Church*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1968.

McClung, F. *Basic Discipleship*. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1990.

Schaller, E. E. *Strategies for Change*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993.

Swindoll, C. R. *Strengthening your Grip: Essentials in an Aimless World*. Dallas: World Publishing, 1982.

Wagner, P. C. *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981.

Webster, D. D. *Finding Spiritual Direction*. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1991.

Wilson, C. *With Christ in the School of Disciple Building*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976.

Zuck, B. *Vital Christian Living Issues*. Grand Rapids, MI: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1997.

BROCHURES

Assemblies of God Constitution and Bye-Laws, 9th August, 2013.

75th Anniversary of Assemblies of God, Ghana, 6th August, 2006.

The Retirement Brochure of Rev. Stephen Asare, November, 2015.

The Vision of the Leadership Team, 1st Edition Magazine July, 2012.

Official Document Nhyiaeso Submetro, 4th April, 2018.

Official Report Documented 20th Anniversary of Santasi Evangelical Assemblies of God, 17th October, 1999.

PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED

Deacon B. Y. Sarpong, Former New Convert (New Members) Teacher, 16/04/2018.

Mrs. Agnes Gyampadu, Children's Teacher and Rep, Santasi District, 14th April, 2018.

Nana Osei Atta II, Santasihene, 9th April, 2018.

Deacon Edward Dapaah, Former Youth President, 16th April, 2018.

Kenneth Atta Danquah, Current Church Secretary, 16th April, 2018.

John Yamoah, Men's Ministry Former Secretary, 16/04/2018.

Deacon Edward Dapaah, Former Youth President, 16/04/2018.

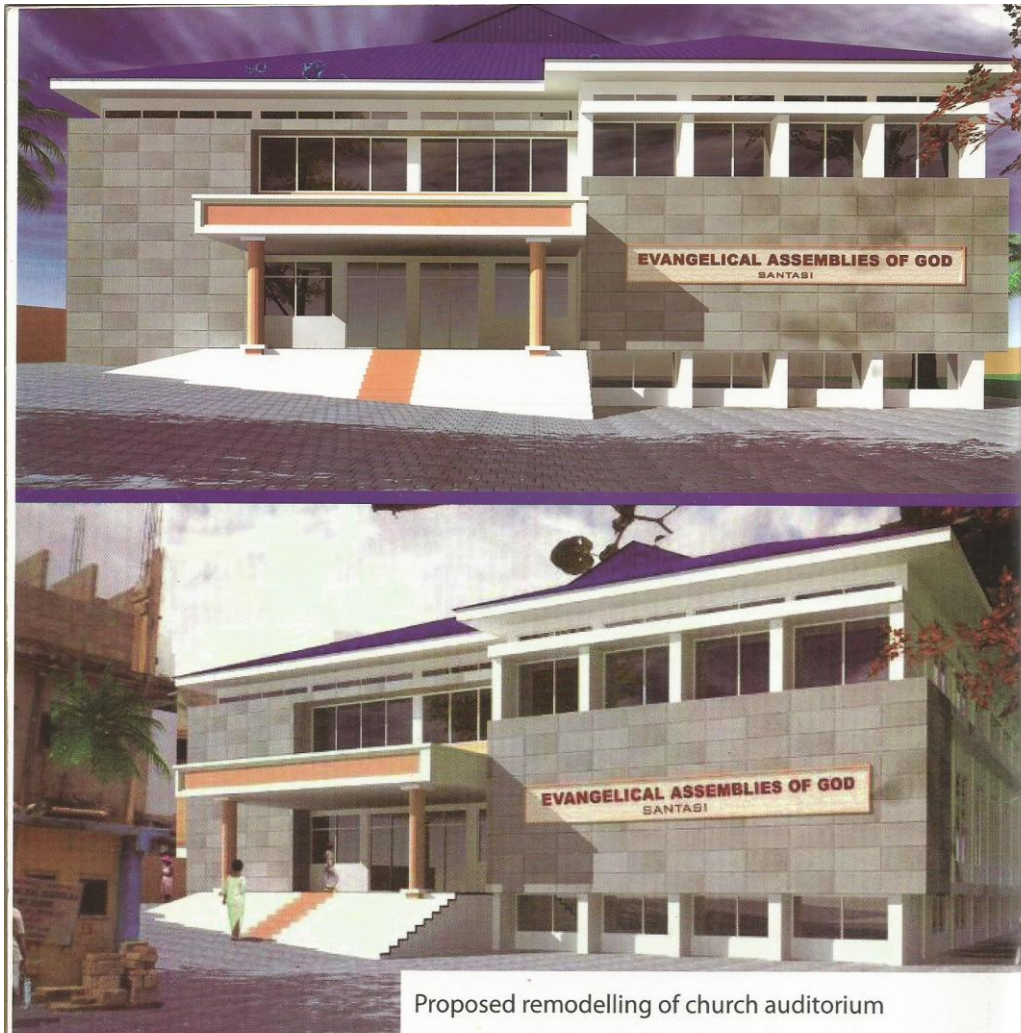
APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When did the Assemblies of God establish its presence at Santasi?
2. Who are the Leaders now?
3. How many people were present at its first meeting?
4. Who were the founding Pastor and the other founding fathers and mothers of the Evangelical Centre Assemblies of God at Santasi?
5. How do members commit to evening service and Sunday morning services?
6. What challenges do the members of the church faced?
7. How do these affect the church itself and the community as a whole?
8. What attempts have been made to address these challenges?
9. How many members are in the church now?
10. What impact has the church made in the lives of its members and the community of Santasi?

APPENDIX II

RELEVANT PICTURES



© Copyright, November 2015
EVANGELICAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, SANTASI
Address: Box SN 140, Santasi - Kumasi

Ink-dot Press 0242306964 / 0262306964 | MARKYNS, 0242539261