

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING OF THE AGED IN SELECTED
CONGREGATIONS IN BOHYEN DISTRICT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF GHANA.**

EDWARD NKANSAH ASAMOAH (REV)

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

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BY

EDWARD NKANSAH ASAMOAH (REV)

(60000087)

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN
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DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY WITH
MANAGEMENT**

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

MARCH, 2017.

DECLARATION

I, Edward Nkansah Asamoah do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my original research except for sections for which references have been duly made, and to the best of my knowledge, no part of this has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of degree.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Edward Nkansah Asamoah

(Student)

Signed: Date:

Rev Isaac Badu- Danso

(Supervisor)

Signed: Date:

Dr S. B. Adubofuor

(Head of Department of Theology)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my lovely wife, Mrs. Rosalyn Edith Nkansah and to our children Georgina Boateng, Christiana Antwiwaa Nkansah, Eugenia Twumwaa Nkansah, and Odiyifo Elisha Edward Nkansah.

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on the study of pastoral care of the aged in the Bohyen District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The target population of the research involved the aged in the church with ages between 60 – 65 years and above. Six congregations with long years of establishment were selected. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of research were employed. A questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The study sampled 60 aged members with 10 from each congregation who were selected through the purposive sampling technique. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS and interpreted. Findings indicated that the aged in the Bohyen District of the Asante Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana have challenges regarding pastoral care. Spiritually, it was established that a greater majority of the aged though able to attend church and communion services were experiencing low frequency of pastoral visitation which meant a lot to them to share their inner world at personal levels. Economically, it was revealed that the aged had a lot of health and economic challenges with limited economic support. The study further showed that the church had little or no welfare incentives that could help alleviate the economic plight of the aged in the church through provision of support to their health needs. Socially, the research showed that some of the aged did experience abuses from the society as well as the church to which the church must take pragmatic steps to address. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that the church takes a serious look at providing effective pastoral care to its aged, to address all their challenges and to integrate them well so that they can have a balance and a meaningful life, living at peace with themselves and with family members and with the church to which they belong.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Aging is a global phenomenon and population aging is increasingly becoming an issue for concern throughout the world¹ as this poses social and economic challenges to the nations concerned. It is an issue that is gradually gaining attention in the Ghanaian society. The aged is an integral group or class of the society as well as the church. The church exists primarily to address the spiritual needs of its members not neglecting the physical, social, economic, psychological and emotional needs. Programs and activities are well and extensively discussed, and carried out in the church whether they border around children, the youth, the men's fellowship, women's fellowship which are of certain age bracket as well as other interest groups. However much attention is not given to that of the aged. Most religious bodies do not have any policy document to address the needs of the aged.

The advanced countries such United States of America and Britain have systems and programs that provide support for the quality of life of the aging population which are absent in the African continent including the church. The population of the developing world keeps on increasing at an astronomic rate, so will it lead to an astronomic increase in the aged which is associated with myriads of challenges that need critical attention.

Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, a gerontologist in his book *Aging in Contemporary Ghana* has stated that "it is evident that the reliance on the extended system to cater for older population is becoming less tenable due to the rapid social change being experienced in the Ghanaian society. The migration of the youth from rural to urban centers in search of jobs and the gradual 'nuclearization' of the extended family unit in Ghana coupled with other socio-economic factors has led to the isolation and sometimes abandonment of the elderly

¹ UNFPA, "Situations and Voices" *The older Poor and Excluded in South Africa and India*, accessed April 4, 2017, <http://www.unfpa.org/aging>.

population, many of whom are widowed and poor.² This challenge of neglect of concern for the aged has led to the deterioration of their condition which the church needs to fix. Should the family, society as well as the nation fail to tackle the concerns of the aged, the next immediate family which is the church to which most of the elderly belong must be proactive. They have served and supported the Church during their youthful moments to bring it to the current state and therefore the church must wake up to the realization of the numerous challenges of the aged and develop practical steps from the pastoral care and counselling prospective to address them

It is worth noting that unless the unexpected happens to end one's life prematurely, old age with its accompanying challenges is inevitable as said in scripture **John 21:18** *I tell you the truth, when you were young you were able to do as you liked ; you dressed yourself wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go (NLT).*³

It is therefore imperative to investigate into the challenges of the aged and provide good pastoral care and counselling to give them that status of life that will bring glory to God.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

The interactions so far from some aged people in the church as they share their challenges before becoming a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana never interested me to research much into their environment to investigate the possible causes and how they can be addressed. The only tool I thought could be of help to them was to say a brief prayer and to find nice way to see them off to be relieved of their countless challenges. Now as a minister, I have a closer and frequent interaction with the aged in the church and is becoming

² Samuel Ayete- Nyampong, *Aging in Contemporary Ghana*, Revised Edition (Accra: Paper and Ink Media, 2015), 15, 16.

³ John 21:18, *Holy Bible, Ghana Standard Edition*, (NLT), (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream 2011), 51.

increasingly clear that they have a lot of unattended issues that the society, family, nation as well as the church are not making them their prime concerns. Some appear to lack family support, some are financially challenged due to retirement from active services, some are suffering from dementia as well as other medical problems, some have marital challenges, some have spiritual challenges, and some are going through gross abuse by relatives, not forgetting problems of neglect and many more. My concerns were that, is the church well informed of these challenges of the aged? How does the church care and counsel these people of the church? Are there any supporting systems that can be put in place to alleviate the plight of these people in the church? It is in the interest of finding answers to these and other questions that this research work is being carried out making use of the few and rich research documents that are available both within and without.

1.3 Problem Statement

Every stage in life, childhood, adolescent, adulthood as well as the aged comes with its own challenges. A lot of information from research works on the various stages, their challenges and the proposed solution to the challenges from the pastoral care and counselling perspective has been addressed by many books. However, knowledge in the area of difficulties of the aged and how to address them through pastoral care and counselling is not adequate in the church or available to leadership. Even if policies regarding addressing the needs of the aged are available, their implementation have been so far slowed or neglected presuming that their needs are being taken care off by their relatives, which in some instances may be a mere mirage. Investigating into the background of the aged to identify their challenges and to help find possible solutions to address the identified challenges of the aged remains the central focus of this research work

1.4 Research Questions.

The research study focuses on addressing the following questions:

- i. What are the challenges that the aged in the Bohyen District of the Presbyterian churches face?
- ii. How can the Presbyterian churches in Bohyen District deliver good pastoral care and counseling to the aged

1.5 Aim and Objectives

The aim of the research is to identify the various ways the Presbyterian churches in the Bohyen district can provide good pastoral care and counseling for aged.

1.5.1 The Objectives of this Study Focus On

- i. Identifying the various challenges of the aged in the Presbyterian churches in the Bohyen district
- ii. Identifying various appreciative means of delivering pastoral care and counselling to the aged
- iii. Effectively combining the necessary professional and community resources to develop supporting systems for the comprehensive care of the aged.

1.6 Scope and focus of study

Most researchers use age '60-65' to describe the onset of old age (or threshold age), others describe people aged between '60-69' as young old, '70-79' as middle-aged old, 80-89 as 'old old and 90-99 as 'very old old.⁴

This study therefore considers the aged (60-65 or more years) members in six (6) congregations in the Bohyen District in the Asante presbytery of the Presbyterian church of Ghana.

⁴ Ayete- Nyampong, *Aging in contemporary Ghana* ,15.

The reason for using six (6) congregations is as a result of time constrain and limited funds to undertake the project.

1.7 Research Methodology

The study makes use of both quantitative and qualitative method of research. The use of the quantitative method helps to collect numerical data for analysis using mathematically based method whilst the use of the qualitative method affords the researcher the opportunity to give an in-depth analytical description to the data gathered during the research work so as to provide a detailed insight or interpretation to the collected data.

1.7.1 Data Collection Technique

The procedure for eliciting information or data for the research work is through the use of questionnaires and interview guide as primary sources. The questionnaires are administered to respondents who are literate whiles the interview guide is used to collect more detailed information which otherwise cannot be collected through the questionnaire. The questionnaires and the interview guide inquire about the spiritual, economic and social challenges of the aged in their families, societies and the respective congregations selected and how they are being addressed by the church. Secondary sources are acquired from books, journals, theses, and the internet and from church documents.

1.7.2 Sampling and Sampling procedure or technique.

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected.⁵ A purposive sampling technique or judgmental sampling of non-probability sampling is employed in this research work to select some specific congregations within Bohyen district as well as selecting targeted respondents for the administration of questionnaires and interviews. Purposive sampling technique is the method that enables the researcher to purposefully choose or identify subjects who in his or her opinion are relevant to the research topic and therefore are particularly knowledgeable about the issues under study.⁶ It enables one to use one's judgment to select cases which will best enable one to answer one's research questions and meet one's objectives.⁷ Six (6) congregations are selected on the basis of how long they have been established within the district and therefore are likely to have more aged people to respond to the issues regarding their care and counseling by the church they belong. The sample size is the carefully selected portion of the target population.⁸ In all, a total of sixty (60) respondents are used as the sample size to represent the total population of the aged in the district. Ten (10) respondents, comprising male and female, would be sampled on the basis of their longevity in their respective congregations, capacities they have served and the experiences or the knowledge acquired over the years. Their exposure made them become good informants in helping this study with the relevant data with regards to the care and counseling of the aged in the Bohyen district of the Presbyterian church of Ghana for critical assessment or analysis.

1.7.3 Data Analysis

⁵ K Asamoah-Gyimah, and Felix Duodu, *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*, (Winneba: The Institute for Educational Development and Extension of the University of Education, 2007), 89.

⁶ Francis K. Amedahe and E. Asamoah Gyimah, *Introduction to Educational Research, EPS 203 Educational Course Book For Diploma In Education* (Cape Coast: Centre for Continuing Education of the University, 2001), 140.

⁷ Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill, *Research Methods for Business Students* (Great Britain: Pearson Professional Limited, 1997), 146.

⁸ Amedahe and Gyimah, *Introduction to Educational Research*, 100 -106.

The data collected from the questionnaire would be analyzed using statistical package for the social science (SPSS). The outcome of the analysis would be presented in statistical frequency tables. Responses from the interviews are edited, analyzed qualitatively and integrated into the research based on where necessary.

1.8 Literature Review

The ministry of the church has three tasks: preaching the good news (*Kerygma*), teaching (*Didache*) and the establishment of a caring community (*Koinonia*).⁹ Pastoral care and counseling of the aged employ these tools of the church to address the needs of the aged. The elderly (Old Men and Old Women) in society are described as vulnerable. Those who were ones active members of the church and contributed a lot to the church development are now aged and weak. Most of their daily duties require assistance and care. Some of them may worry about their present aged state where they are not that active as they use to be some time past.

The Pastor as a shepherd of the church has a great responsibility in ensuring that all his or her flock (Congregation) progress both spiritually and physically. A kind of talking therapy that allows a person to talk about their problems and feelings in a confidential and dependable environment is a great quality characteristic that is required of Pastors.

According to the manual, *Pastoral Care vs. Professional Counseling: Discerning the Differences*, by Ronald Brushwyler et al: Pastors are an important resource to a wide range of people with a variety of needs of which the aged is not an exception. This is a wonderful challenge to all. But it is crucial for pastors to focus clearly on their calling, to reflect carefully on their gifts, and to acknowledge humbly their professional limits.¹⁰ This result

⁹Donald W. MacKay, *Lay Ministries Training, Intermediate, Pastoral Care and Counselling* PCG 281 (Abetifi: Ramseyer Training Centre (RTC) Publication, 2008), 6.

¹⁰Ronald Brushwyler et al *Pastoral Care vs. Professional Counseling: Discerning the Difference* (Chicago: The Midwest Ministry Development Service, 1999), 4.

implies that, a pastor's ministry in caring for a congregation should be a balance ministry to cover all generational groups in the church.

According to the Canadian spirituality and health article, there is the need for Canadian pastoral caregivers and counsellors to embrace the "research" side of spiritual care. The article reviews the number of publications on spirituality and health by chaplains and pastoral counsellors in five peer reviewed journals.¹¹ The research promoted caring for the economic and social needs to the neglect of the spiritual care which may not make it balanced. In pastoral care and counselling of the aged in the church, social, economic and spiritual challenges needs to be addressed.

In Christian Counseling Today, there are articles on such relevant topics as marriage and family counseling, spirituality, abuse, pastoral care, lay helping, sexual conflicts, the church as a healing community, and much more.¹² These cover the broad area where people have challenges and needed help from the church. Though it was not specific about the category of people that these questions were asked, the aged cannot also be ruled out since these challenges are common among the elderly. According to Harold Taylor, pastoral care is concerned with helping acts done by representative Christians and are directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling the troubled people.¹³ These areas of counselling can be broadly grouped under Spiritual, Economic and Social challenges of which the pastor is expected to provide care to address them aiming at providing wholeness to the individual.

According to Ayete-Nyampong, most researchers use age '60-65' to describe the onset of old age (or threshold age), others describe people aged between '60-69' as young old, '70-79' as middle-aged old, 80-89 as 'old old' and 90-99 as 'very old'. In pursuit of broader categorization, some researchers divide the age into two broad categorizations, the third age

¹¹Thomas St. James O'Connor and Elizabeth Meakes, "Canadian spirituality and health," *A pastoral care And counselling perspective* (accessed April 4, 2017), 20. www.acrjournal.com.au/assets/journals.

¹² American Association Christian Counselors, *Christian Counseling Today*, 1(2003) accessed April 4, 2017), www.aacc.net > resource > publications.

¹³ Harold Taylor, *Tend My Sheep*, (United Kingdom: SPCK Publishing, 1983), 30

and the fourth age. The third age refers to those older adults who are active and independent and are over 60 years of age, while the fourth age refers to those over 65 years who depend on others for their basic welfare.¹⁴ This presupposes that, the description of who an aged is according to literature is sixty (60) years and above. This means that, discussing the pastoral and counselling needs of the aged will have for its focus men and women who have attained the age of 60 and above. According to Emmanuel Asante “in some of the surrounding nations in the ancient near east, helpless aged dependents were normally cast out to be eaten by beast or die of exposure”¹⁵ This informs us of how uncared for the aged are treated in some societies which lives much to be desired. They have been young, strong and supportive in providing for their families, building society and their nation. However, in their old age society is treating them with pain and disrespect. This act cannot be emulated by our society. In contrast to the above, Ting and Woo stated that traditionally, elder care has been the responsibility of the family members as was provided within the extended family home. Increasingly in modern societies, elderly care is now being provided by state and charitable institutions. The reasons for this change include decreasing family size, the greater life expectancy of the aged people, the geographical dispersions of families and the tendency for women to be educated and work outside their homes.¹⁶ From this background the church cannot look on unconcern and must engage herself in activities that will ensure holistic ministry including the care and counseling of the aged.

The Decalogue seen as a way of facilitating a lasting relationship with God explicitly informs how the elderly or the aged should be treated in our society and for that matter in our church. The whole commandments have two main charges, the charge towards God and the charge towards fellow human beings. The first charge towards human being as found in Exodus

¹⁴ Samuel Ayete Nyampong, *Aging in contemporary Ghana*, 15, 16.

¹⁵ Asante Emmanuel, *Gems from the Preachers Pedestal: A Collection of Sermon and Talks* (Accra: Sonlife Printing Press, 2006), 144.

¹⁶ GHY Ting and Woo, J, “Elder Care: Is legislation of family responsibility the solution?” *Asian Journal of Gerontology and Geriatrics* 4, No. 2, (December 2009): 74, accessed April 4, 2017, ajgg.org >AJGG.

20:12 commands that “honor your father and mother then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”¹⁷ Showing respect and care for the aged in the church will result in the reward of long life and prosperity. This care must be initiated by the church leadership in providing supporting systems and programs that meet the needs of the aged.

In addition to addressing the pastoral needs of the aged, Paul advises Timothy on need to treat the elderly or the aged in the church. In 2 Timothy 5:1-2(KJV), Paul said “Rebuke not an elder but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters with all purity.”¹⁸ It implies how challenging it was for Timothy to sometimes handle the issues of the aged and Paul shows the way to him to respect them and care for them so that the promise of long life and prosperity shall be enjoyed. Our failure to meet the challenges of the aged in the church will not be a blessing according to scripture. It is therefore imperative that through pastoral care and counselling, we investigate to unearth the challenges facing our aged men and women and find practical means of support to address the spiritual, economic and social needs of the aged.

1.9 Significance of the study

The significance of this research work is that it will first and foremost serve as an academic resource material for the university college, to students who will want to study and research in gerontology either to add to their knowledge or to build upon it. It will also help the Bohyen District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to identify and appreciate the numerous challenges facing the aged in the District so as to be in the position to offer effective pastoral care and counselling counting on the tools used in this research. It will again make the churches in the District become conscious and proactive towards the need to develop or adopt supporting systems that will help alleviate the plight of the aged. Other Presbyterian

¹⁷Exodus 20:12, *Holy Bible, Ghana Student Edition, (NLT)*, (Illinois. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2011), 51.

Churches and non – Presbyterian churches which do not have policies on how to take care of the aged can fall on the findings of this research work and then develop a policy to address the challenges of the aged.

1.10 Organization or Structure of the Work

Five chapters shall be covered in this work, chapter one shall focus on the general introduction which includes – background of the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, scope and focus of the study, research methodology, and methods of data collection, sampling procedure or technique, literature review, significance of study, organization of chapters and definition of terms if any. Chapter two shall deal with the historical background of the study, which contains the context of the main issue. Chapter three shall be discussion of main issues emanating from the research. Chapter four shall deal with interpretation and critical analysis of the issues that came up from the research while five shall be concerned with summary, conclusion and recommendation. It shall be followed with bibliography and appendixes.

1.11 Ethics of the research work

The elderly or aged who are being researched shall never be forced to provide answers against their wish during the filling of questionnaires. The full rights of the aged shall be held in high esteem during this research work. All data collected in questionnaires shall be highly confidential and kept for research purposes only unless otherwise permitted by the individual concerned for usage of any information provided by him or her.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 History of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana is a Christian denomination established in 1828 by the Basel Mission society. The Basal Missionary Society was established in 1815 in Switzerland to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in heathen countries.¹⁹ The Danish government with their governor in Christiansburg Castle had interest in introducing Christianity in areas it had trading and political interest and the interest was toward Gold Coast. It then approached the Basel Mission Society through Governor Johan Christian von Richelieu on 1822 for the said purpose which received affirmative response.²⁰

It was in this Spirit that the first batches of four missionaries were sent in March 1827 and they arrived on the Gold Coast on December 18, 1828²¹ under the leadership of Johan Philip Hencke. The other three were Holzwarth, Schmidt and Salbach.²² Between August 8 and 29 of 1829 Holzwarth died of liver infection and both Salbach and Schmidt died from Malaria leaving Henke who survived till 1831.²³ The Home Committee on hearing the news remained optimistic in the face of the terrible blow and decided to send a second batch of three missionaries for the Gold Coast missions. They were Andreas Riis, Peter P. Jaeger and Dr. Christian Frederick Heinze, who arrived in March 13, 1832 to find in their dismay that Hencke had also died in November 1831.²⁴

Once again death pruned their number and hope from three to one; Heinze, the Medical Doctor died of fever on April 26 and Jager died of malaria and dysentery on July 18, 1832, leaving Riis whose life was spared having been treated on the plantation of Lutterodt by an

¹⁹ Kofi Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana: History, Mission and Achievement* (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, .2000), 22.

²⁰ Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana: History and Impact*, 36.

²¹ Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievement*, 36.

²² D.N.A. Kpobe, C.N.Omenyo and A.O.Atiamo, *Vision and Achievement: A Hundred and Fifty Years of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1828 – 1978*, (ed.) Michael Albert Kwabena-poh, (Accra: Waterville Publishing House 2011), 35.

²³ Kwabena- Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 37.

²⁴ Kwabena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement* 38.

African herbalist. On his recovery he decided on the advice of Lutterodt, an Osu trader to move the mission station to the Akuapem hills where the weather was considered more congenial.²⁵

On March 21, 1835, Riis arrived at Akropong to a warm reception by Okuapemhene,²⁶ Nana Addo Dankwa I (1816-36). Soon he was granted a piece of land and showing dexterity in building, built a house which earned him the title “OSIADAN”, (The builder). Prior to this, the Okuapemhene had promised to allow Riis to stay and work in Akropong if the Danish authorities at Osu would confirm that he was a “persona grata.”²⁷ Riis was joined at the station in 1836 by John Murdter and Andreas Stanger. In their company was M.A Wolter, the would-be wife of Riis. Again within the space of two years, the new arrivals died, Stanger on December 24, 1837²⁸ and Murdter in November 14, 1838.²⁹

In 10 years, the mission death toll was eight persons and no soul has been won as a fruit of their mission work though Riis paid visit to the surrounding towns and preached to the inhabitants. By the end of a decade his missionary tours had taken him to Krobo, Akwamu, and Akyem and to Kumasi being assisted by Owusu Akyem, the nephew to Addo Dankwa. Following the unsuccessful missionary attempt by Riis in all the numerous places he went, Riis left Kumasi in January 13, 1840 to Akropong and from there he joined his family at Osu and they sailed home, arriving in July 1840 to make a report to the committee in Basel, leaving behind in the Gold Coast neither a group of Christians nor school children but the graves of eight missionaries. However the people of Akropong begged him to return.³⁰

The Home Committee in Basel after thoughtful consideration argued that the mission had failed and should be abandoned but for the timely intervention of Wilhelm Hoffmann. He

²⁵Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievement*, 23.

²⁶Okuapemhene- means the Paramount Chief of Okuapem Traditional Area.

²⁷Kwabena- POH, *Vision and Achievement*, 41.

²⁸Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievement*, 24.

²⁹Kwabena- POH, *Vision and Achievement*, 44.

³⁰Kwabena- POH, *Vision and Achievement*, 48.

challenged them to the restart of the missions in Gold Coast. Andrews Riis willing to come back had felt challenged by the statement of Nana Addo Dankwa I, the paramount chief of Akuapem and was determined to disabuse the King's mind of his statement: "When God created the world, he made Book for the Whiteman and juju for the Blackman, but if you could show us some black men who could read the Whiteman's books, then we would surely follow you"³¹

Riis, his wife and J.C Widman then went to Jamaica and enlisted a total of six families and three bachelors totaling twenty-four people for phase two missionary work. They finally sailed from Kingston on February 7, 1843 and arrived at Christiansburg on Good Friday, April 16, 1843, Riis old friend George Lutterodt was on hand to receive them. They arrived at Akropong on June 18, 1843 to the warm reception by some few people. Not long after the arrival of the Black West Indian missionaries, there also arrived 4 energetic European missionaries, namely J.C Dieterle (30), Fiedr Melscher (36), J. Stanger (26) and Joseph Mohr (32). Together, and with an old hand, J.G Widmann directing affairs, a new impetus was injected into the evangelistic cause. Following their presence, Akropong became a city set on a hill, the light of which could not be hidden.³² After 1847 the missionaries began to live longer to continue with the missionary work. Those who made remarkable contributions included Widmann, Dieterle, Zimmermann, Mohr, Suss and Mader.³³ One unfortunate incidence that happened which was also a blessing in disguise to the missionary pursuit was the introduction of the Poll-tax of 1850 by the British colonial government. This tax was resisted by the people and led to the bombardment of Osu by the government on September 13, 1854. Zimmermann and Stainhauser led the missionaries, moving inland and using the opportunity to spread the gospel. Her Majesty Ship (H.M.S) scourge incident resulting in many converts and as a result important missionary stations emerged which included

³¹Nkansa- Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievement*, 26.

³²Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History, Mission and Achievement*, 27.

³³Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History and Impact*, 46.

Abokobi, Krobo, Akyem Abuakwa, Gyadam and Kyebi, Begoro, Anum, Kwahu and Beyond; Abetifi, Bompata, Kwanyaako and environs, Oda and Nsaba.³⁴

In 1869, the Basel Mission was in the position to make this statement of encouragement:

“We have filled the regions of the Eastern Province of the colony with the gospel. Congregations have been gathered for which catechists are being ordained as pastors; schools have been founded; native assistants educated; the Bible translated into two languages; other books for schools and church published in the native languages; workshops opened; agriculture promoted, and progress made towards building up a native church by several of the Faithfuls”³⁵

2.2 Ramseyer and the Asante Mission

The Reverend Fritz August Louis Ramseyer was born on October 7, 1840 in Neufchatel, Switzerland.³⁶ He came to Gold Coast in January, 1864 as a missionary and from Osu, he went to Anum to open a mission station. Within a year the mission house was erected at Anum, and there was hope of successful and peaceful Basel Mission activity in the Volta Region. The missionary expectations at Anum were cut short when in June 1869, an Asante army commanded by Adu Bofo, the Gyasehene of Kumasi captured the towns of Anum and Ho, burnt the mission house and took the Reverend Ramseyer, his wife and child, Kuhn, a mission cotton trader from Anum and a Frenchman, M.J. Bonnat from Ho, as captives and marched them at the pace of the fighting army to Kumasi.³⁷ They stayed in Kumasi for four-and-half years under the then Asantehene, Kofi Karikari, who later agreed to release them on a ransom of €1000. They departed Kumasi only to be brought back when they reached Fomena. In the face of this disappointment and the treatment the Asantes were giving to the

³⁴Nkansah – Kyeremateng, *History and Impact*, 55 -59.

³⁵Nkansah – Kyeremateng, *History and Impact*, 54 -55.

³⁶Kwamena – POH, *Vision and Achievement*, 138.

³⁷Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 139.

prisoners of war and to criminals who became victims of human sacrifices, moved Mrs. Rosa Ramseyer to propose that, they could use their captivity to preach the word of God to the Asantes.³⁸ They preached to the Asantehene, Kofi Karikari but to no avail. However the Asantehene opened door for missionary activity and as a result they were allowed to open school. The Ramseyers planned to make Kumasi become a mission station but the establishment of the nursery of the church was not allowed to mature and continue. The Asante invasion of the coast led to the flee of British officers as well as few coastal Fantemen. The British retaliated and sent a Major General, Sir Garnet Wolseley, an appointed governor with 2500 British troops and some few African supporters to fight back the Asantes, which they succeeded in February 4, 1874. They entered Kumasi, released the European prisoners and on February 7 left Kumasi completely sacked and burnt down.³⁹ The Ramseyers and Kuhn went to Akropong, spent few days and proceeded on leave to Europe with the determination to return to Kumasi to conduct a full missionary enterprise there.

2.3 Basel Mission in Kumasi

Ramseyer returned to Kumasi at the invitation of the then British Governor in the company of his nephew Perregaux in February 22, 1894 after twenty two years and eighteen days of his release from imprisonment in the same city. The re-entry was a great joy to him. He wrote: “It is no longer a dream, I am again in Kumasi and can now say: Kumasi is a Basel mission station. Here stand Perregaux and I as free missionaries and the entire country is open to us”⁴⁰ Kumasi Basel Mission station began in July 1886, suffered from initial disadvantage following British military occupation, making it unpopular. Between 1896 and 1899 sixteen outstations founded were destroyed during the Yaa Santewaa War in 1900 and the Reverend and Mrs. Ramseyers, Mr. and Mrs. Jest, Mr. Weller and others escaped to the coast. The

³⁸Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 141.

³⁹Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 142.

⁴⁰Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 193.

Ramseyers returned to Europe and they were seen again in the Gold Coast to the surprise of everyone in 1901.⁴¹ Twice the life of the Ramseyers had been spared in the Asante missionary work and twice they were prepared to return to the land of their affliction. Mrs. Ramseyer on their way to Europe became invalid and returned again invalid. Missionary work in Kumasi after their second return proceeded smoothly and peacefully. However in 1904 the health of Mrs. Rose Ramseyer deteriorated so that she was sent home and passed away the following year in Switzerland. The Reverend Ramseyer returned to Kumasi to complete his last tour of missionary work and left finally in 1908 to his home country, Switzerland where he died in 1914 at the age of seventy-four.⁴² The spread of the Christian religion in Asante today has not depended on the Basel mission alone spearheaded by the Ramseyers but together with the Methodist, they held the field until beginning of the Roman Catholic Mission work in 1902 followed by the Anglican Church Mission, the Seventh - day Adventist, the A.M.E Zion and other Pentecostal and African Initiated Churches.⁴³

2.4 Church Polity

Ecclesiastical polity is the operational and governance structure of a church or denomination. Also it denotes the ministerial structure of the church and the authority relationships between churches.⁴⁴ The Presbyterian or Reformed polity comes from the Greek word *Presbuteros* which translates the word elder (Presbyter). Each local congregation duly elects presbyters (ruling elders) to represent it and to be joined with the Agents (teaching elders) who may either be the minister or in his absence, the catechist to make the session which is in charge of the governance and discipline of the Church.⁴⁵

⁴¹Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 194.

⁴²Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 197.

⁴³Kwamena – Poh, *Vision and Achievement*, 201.

⁴⁴PCG document for the commissioning of Ministerial trainees, (Abetifi- Kwahu August, 2015), 12.

⁴⁵ PCG Constitution (Revised Edition, 2016), 27.

2.5 Church Structure

The church is governed through four courts. They are the Local Session, District Session, Presbytery session and the Generally Assembly. The Session governs the local congregation. It is made up of the agent(s) and the elected presbyters. In the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the word agent refers to the Minister or the Catechist. The agent is responsible for the main leadership of the congregation and therefore chairs the session to take decisions for the good of the congregation. The elected presbyters serve a term of four years and they are to help the agent in the running of the congregation. They are eligible for a second term of four years after which they must step down. They are then eligible for re-election after a four year break.⁴⁶

The District Session is the next court. The district is made up of a number of congregations and their representatives form the district session. It is led by a District Minister who is an ordained minister. It deals with all matters affecting the congregations within the District. The District Session meets once a year to receive reports from the various congregations. Between the periods, the District Session is managed by the District Session Council which meets every three months. The Council also has a Standing Committee which meets monthly. All decisions taken at the various meetings are ratified during the District Session which is the highest decision body within the district. The officers of the district are the District Minister and the District Session Clerk.⁴⁷

The next court is the Presbytery Session. It is made up of a number of District session representatives. It deals with matters affecting the Districts. Between Presbytery Session meetings, the Presbytery is managed by the Presbytery Council which meets every three

⁴⁶ *PCG Constitution*, 18 – 24.

⁴⁷ *PCG Constitution*, 30 - 41.

months. The Council also has a Standing Committee which meets monthly. The principal officers of the Presbytery are the Presbytery Chairperson and the Clerk of the Presbytery.⁴⁸

The General Assembly is the church's highest court. It covers the whole of the nation and also Presbyteries abroad. The General Assembly meets annually to receive reports from the Presbyteries. It also formulates policies for the entire church. The decisions of the Assembly are the decisions of the church and all courts must ensure that these decisions are adhered to. Between General Assemblies, the church is led by a General Assembly Council which meets every three months. The council has a Standing Committee which meets monthly. The principal officers of the General Assembly are the Moderator of the General Assembly and the Clerk of the General Assembly.⁴⁹

The church runs an administrative structure that has seven departments namely Administration and Human Resources Management, Church Life and Nurture, Ecumenical and Social Relations, Development and Social Services, Mission and Evangelism, Finance and Education.⁵⁰

Currently, the Presbyterian church of Ghana can boast of twenty Presbyteries in Ghana and Abroad namely Akuapem, West Akyem, Akyem Abuakwa, Asante, Asante Akyem, Brong Ahafo, Central, Dangme –Tongu, Ga, Kwahu, Volta, Western, Sekyere, West Brong, Upper, Northern Sefwi, Asante-South, Europe and North American. Plans are far advanced to divide the Ga Presbytery into three Presbyteries; Ga East, Ga West and Tema with headquarters at Kaneshie, Osu and Tema North respectively. There are numerous districts, congregations and preaching posts with about a million memberships⁵¹

⁴⁸ *PCG Constitution*, 48 - 64.

⁴⁹ *PCG Constitution*, 68 – 92.

⁵⁰ Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History and Impact*, 75.

⁵¹ Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History and Impact*, 45.

2.6 The Beliefs of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

Presbyterianism is not only a form of government in the church (that is eldership), but is also a well-defined system of beliefs or doctrines. In the exaltation and interpretation of the Bible, the Reformation reached its zenith in the teaching and writings of John Calvin. Thus Presbyterianism, following his interpretation of the Bible is known as Calvinism. More specifically, the Calvinism of Presbyterians is based on the Westminster Confession of Faith and the larger and shorter catechism, documents which were written nearly a hundred years after Calvin died.⁵²

Presbyterians believe that in the Reformed system (another word for Calvinism), the teachings of the Bible are most fully and most accurately set forth. Every Presbyterian officer and minister takes a vow that he/she believes the reformed faith to be that system of doctrine which the Bible teaches. He or she then vows that steps will be taken to be out of the occupying position should he or she ever find that his or her beliefs have taken another direction. Now the strength of Presbyterians lies in its central loyalty to the scriptures. Presbyterians agree with what the scriptures teach and that it contains nothing contrary to what the scriptures teach.⁵³

In the light of the above endorsement, the core beliefs or tenets of the church include the following: The sovereignty of God, Total Depravity, Salvation and Election, Sanctification, The Catholic Church, The Centrality of the Word of God, The Priesthood of all Believers, The Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), the Resurrection and life everlasting.⁵⁴

2.7 The Asante Presbytery

Until the creation of Presbyteries, the church was working with the existing districts. The existing districts before 1992 were eleven and included the following: Christiansburg (Osu),

⁵²PCG document for commissioning ministers, 4.

⁵³PCG document for commissioning ministers, 4.

⁵⁴ Nkansa – Kyeremateng, *History and Impact*, 80 – 82.

Abokobi, Odumase-Krobo, Aburi, Akropong, Anum, Kyebi, Begoro, Nsaba, Abetifi and Kumasi.

The Asante Presbytery was erected in 1964 and covers the northern sector of the Presbyterian church of Ghana with its headquarters in Kumasi. Its geographical demarcation stretched from Asante Akyem through to Sefwi, Brong and Ahafo, to the Northern part of Ghana.⁵⁵

From 1964 to 1990 the stationed Kumasi District Pastors served and doubled as Chairmen of the presbytery and were appointed by the then Synod Committee. They were accommodated at the Kumasi Manse and operated from the Kumasi church office.⁵⁶ It was in 1991 that the independent chairperson was elected to occupy the completed Presbytery Manse and to operate from the Presbytery Office. The Asante Presbytery by dint of hard work by its committed and dedicated Ministers, Catechist, Evangelist, Presbyters as well as both the generational and interest groups, since its creation has been able to give birth and nurture additional Presbyteries out the Asante Presbytery. This became necessary to allow for meaningful and effective evangelism as well as efficient administration of the Presbyteries.⁵⁷

With respect to the Presbyteries created, the very Rev. Sam Prempeh in his brief history write-up to the 90th Anniversary of the Asante Presbytery writes “Asante has the privilege of being a most progressive one. This is exemplified by the number of presbyteries erected out of the one initially erected. Some forty years ago the church Administration found it expedient to create Brong Ahafo Presbytery. A similar exercise was carried out in 1988 by the Administration to create another Presbytery, namely, Asante Akyem Presbytery.”⁵⁸ In 2003, Sekyere Presbytery followed and that of Sefwi Presbytery was subsequently created in 2013 and the latest one also from the same Asante Presbytery was Asante South Presbytery in

⁵⁵Sam Prempeh, Introduction to Asante Presbytery History, paper submitted to the 90th Anniversary celebration of the Asante Presbytery (2012), 1.

⁵⁶Prempeh, Introduction to Asante Presbytery History, 1.

⁵⁷J.O.Y Mante and D. Aboagye – Danquah, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana: Synod Decision and the Rational Behind the Decisions* (Accra: Adwinsa Publication (GH) Ltd, 2014) 75.

⁵⁸Sam Prempeh, Introduction to Asante Presbytery History, 3.

2015.⁵⁹ The above creations of the five additional Presbyteries from the already existing Asante Presbytery is an indication of how unrelenting the Asante Presbytery has been in the expansion of Kingdom business through evangelism to establish more churches and the creation of more Districts. The very Rev. Dr. Sam Prempeh has this to say about the creation of more presbyteries, that, this exercise demonstrates the immaculate way Asante Presbytery has nurtured them into maturity to become fully fledged Presbyteries

2.7.1 Formation of Districts

Districts are created within Presbyteries. Currently the Asante Presbytery can boast of thirty-six (36) districts with several congregations and preaching posts within the various districts. A number of congregations are being opened within the districts which will eventually lead to the formation of more districts. It is anticipated that with the rate of growth within the Presbytery, a district could be created in every four (4) years to the glory of God and for effective management by their respective leadership.⁶⁰

2.7.2 Income generating projects

The Asante Presbytery, in addition to fulfilling its core mandate of making disciples of all nation through evangelization of the word of God, has over the years been also involved in other projects that could bring additional income to enable it support the financial demands it is expected to meet. This venture is in agreement with the church's vision statement. That is "To be Christ - Centered, Self - Sustaining and Growing Church". In the light of the above the Presbytery is currently running the Kyirapatre Ramseyer vocational institute, Kyirapatre Presbyterian Girls Senior High School, Pakyi Senior High School, Presbytery Guest House

⁵⁹Sam Prempeh, *Introduction to Asante Presbytery History*, 3.

⁶⁰ Sam Prempeh, *Introduction to Asante Presbytery History*, 3.

being used for Hospitality services., the Presbytery Restaurant, the SSNIT Model School at Kwadaso and it will soon commence the production of sachet and bottled water.

All these and other impending projects are aimed at making the presbytery self-sustaining in the areas of finance so that it can fully fulfilled the spiritual, economic and the social mandate expected of the Presbytery.⁶¹

2.7.3 Leadership provision

The Presbytery in no small measure has been very instrumental in the provision of good quality leaders for the church both within and without. From the highest office of the church, that is the Moderator's position, the Presbytery could count the following spiritual servants: E.M.L Odjidja, G.K Sintim-Misa, Daniel Koranteng, Sam prempah (alive) and Yaw Frimpong-Manso (alive).⁶² Rev. Dr. Opuni Frimpong the immediate past Presbytery Chairperson is currently the General Secretary to the Christian Council, Ghana. The North American Presbytery Chairperson, the Europe Presbytery Chairperson, the Sekyere Presbytery Chairperson and the current Asante Presbytery Chairperson in the person of Rev. Dr. Kofi Amfo-Akonnor are some Spiritual servants who are associated with the Asante Presbytery excelling in their various callings to the glory of God. The Presbytery looks into the future with more hope to fulfill its calling and to achieve greater laurels for the master who has sent them.⁶³

2.8 Bohyen District

Bohyen District became a full-fledged district on the Sunday, 27th March, 2011 after assuming a sub-district status for some time. The district is about six years old and hitherto, it

⁶¹ Kofi Amfo – Akonnor, The Fruit of the Holy Spirit and the Believer: Empowered to Work together For Transformed Mission, (Address, 92nd Asante Presbytery Conference, Presby Girls SHS, kyereapatre, Kumasi, April 6, 2014), 14 – 17.

⁶² Sam Prempeh, Introduction to Asante Presbytery, 4.

⁶³ Sam Prempeh, Introduction to Asante Presbytery, 4.

was part of the Bantama District which nurtured it until its elevation into a full District. The district is currently made up of eleven congregations and five preaching posts. History for the six early churches are included for the purpose of this research.⁶⁴

2.8.1 Star of David congregation, Bohyen

Star of David Congregation is the first Presbyterian Church Congregation to be established in the Bohyen District in April 1972 by the Bible Study and Prayer Group in the Bantama district, led by Mr. Fred Yaw Darko and assisted by Sister Mary Nyanteng; and under the pastoral leadership of the late Rev. M.O Amo, the then Bantama District Minister gave birth to the church.⁶⁵ The evangelistic crusade was carried out on the third, fourth and the fifth days and on the sixth, which was a Sunday, the first forenoon divine service was conducted in house No. BN72/A belonging to one Opanin Kwaku Antwi. A total of 27 people were in attendance. On 3rd April 1972, the Bantama District celebrated Emmaus Day at Bohyen in a vast congregational procession to announce the birth and presence of the new Presbyterian Church Congregation at Bohyen. The occasion in the end yielded some dividends culminating into an increase in the total membership up to 32 on the following Sunday, 9th April 1972. The young church was not spared of the initial teething problems of backsliding in membership. The initial membership dwindled to fifteen (15) by the first anniversary. One Mr. Patrick Offei, a Terrazzo machine operator, worked indefatigably to mobilize members and later became the Catechist in-Change.⁶⁶ Some members who could be remembered to be part of the early Bohyen Presbyterian Church Congregation include Mr. P. K. Offei (Catechist), Mr. Ofosu, Mr. Benjamin Osei, Mr. J.K. Appiah, Mr. Samuel Okyere, Mr. R.K Osei, Mr. Akyena, Madam Margaret Amponsah, Madam Margaret Oppong, Madam Peace

⁶⁴ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation Brochure*, (Kumasi:Leading Star Printing Works,2011), 1 – 2.

⁶⁵PCG, *Bohyen District elevation brochure*, 20.

⁶⁶PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 21.

Afrifa and Mr. Kofi Amponsah.⁶⁷ In September, 1972, the first sets of fifteen (15) persons were baptized by Rev. M.O. Amo whilst the number of members was still unacceptably low. The above situation persisted until the fortunate advent of the late Mr. Sam Prempeh who maintained a regular visit to the church on Sundays insisted on house – to - house visitation with the whole church on Sundays with the message that “the lost sheep must be sought after” (Luke 15:14). This exercise was religiously continued for two (2) years from 1974 to 1975 to revamp the church.⁶⁸

In 1975, the Congregation enrolled for the New Life For All (NLFA) studies to strategically and systematically study the whole church to position the church for growth in all phases of its life⁶⁹. The programme aroused the enthusiasm and zeal of members to prepare for growth especially in terms of its membership. It was around this time, in 1976 that the mantle of leadership was relinquished to Mr. S.O. Afrifa⁷⁰ as the new Catechist. No sooner had the new Catechist assumed office than there was an introduction of the “Here is life campaign” which caused the church to experience an unprecedented upward numerical growth from forty-three to one hundred and eight in membership.⁷¹ This growth was farther boosted when Rev. Felix Marfo, the Associate Director of NLFA and Mr. Edward Okyere (a.k.a Wofa) of Scripture Union took two weeks of their busy schedules to run leadership and counseling training for selected members to equip them to effectively nurture the increasing congregation.⁷²

2.8.1.1 Land Acquisition and Chapel Construction

In 1984 the Congregation saw the need to acquire her permanent land. Hitherto they were worshipping in the L/A Primary School, Bohyen. On 15th December, 1985, Nana Adom

⁶⁷PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 21.

⁶⁷PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 21.

⁶⁸PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 21.

⁶⁹PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 21.

⁷⁰He was catechist from 1976 to 2015 where he retire at a full age of 70 and still active in ministry with the Bohyen congregation.

⁷¹PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 22.

⁷² PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 22.

Dandua-Bohyenhene and Nana Osei Kwadwo, Twafohene handed over an allocation paper for a twelve (12) plots of land to the church in a grand ceremony. The chapel construction started in earnest in 1989 with initial technical advice being offered at no cost by Mr. Anyomedie as well as Mr. Larbi. This project was started together with the construction of primary school building for the church which was to be used as a temporal chapel and by the grace of God it was able to have its maiden forenoon service in their own school premises on Sunday, 20th December 1992.⁷³

The church subsequently did not relax but work tirelessly on the chapel under construction and successfully moved to the new chapel around mid-year, 1994.⁷⁴

2.8.1.2 Church Planting

The Bohyen Presbyterian Church Congregation has been instrumental in the establishment of other sister Congregations at Adankwame in 1983 led by Mr. Adom Boateng, Ohwim in 1989 by the Bible Study and Prayer Group, Pasoro in 1992 which still remains as a preaching post as well as Abrepo in 1999, the second largest congregation of Bohyen Presbyterian Congregation formed from a cell group which grew to a number of about 140 members in the Abrepo community.⁷⁵

2.8.1.3 Ministerial Posting

The first Reverend Minister to be posted to Bohyen was Rev. Erasmus Mensah Laryea who doubled as the Prempeh College Chaplain during whose time the now Bohyen District was given a sub-District Status, from 2002-2009. He was succeeded by Rev. Stephen Opoku Frimpong who happened to be the first Resident sub-District minister and in whose time the

⁷³PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 23,

⁷⁴Catechist S. O. Afrifa (retired), interviewed on 6th of August, 2016.

⁷⁵PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 23.

sub-District was elevated to a full District status on 27th March, 2011.⁷⁶ The third minister, currently at post since 2011 and a full District minister is Rev. J.H Ofosuhene

2.8.1.4 Ministries of the Church.

Through the hard work of the members of the church and by the help of the Holy Spirit, the church has been growing steadily and can now boast of a congregation population number of a little over seven hundred. The various ministries expected to be functioning include the Children Ministry, the Youth Ministry, Women's Ministry and the Men's Ministry. In addition to the above, the singing ministries under the interest groups include the Choir, the Singing Band, the Praise and Adoration teams as well as King David's Royals are all functioning. Departments with their sub-committees on Welfare, Finance, Mission and Evangelism, Church Life and Nurture among others are well formed and in full function. The only exception category of people who unfortunately has been included in the women's and men's ministry is the category of the aged. In as much as the children, the youth and the adult need special care and are provided by the church, the pastoral care and counselling of the aged who form integral part of church should also be singled out as we have for all the generational groups and their needs well addressed. This is the missing link in the ministries of the church.

2.8.2 Asuofua Ebenezer Congregation.

The second congregation to discuss is Ebenezer congregation, Asuofua. It all started in 1979 by Madam Agnes Mintah, a midwife, who was a Presbyterian and has been transferred to the then Asuofua health centre. She started to worship with her health assistants at the health Centre. Following the relocation of the towns around Barekese Dam by the then government to pave way for the construction of the dam to settle at the present Asuofua town. The then

⁷⁶PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 23.

government engaged a lot of estate construction workers to work on the new site to house the affected towns. Some of the estate construction workers were already Presbyterians who quickly joined the infant church at the health centre. These included Mr. Wilson Acquah, Mr. Adutwum, Agya Owusu (a caterpillar operator) and wife. Madam Donkor as well as Mr. Ebenezer Aduoni (an accountant of Rural Development Corporation) to form the founding members together with Mr. Nsiah Afriyie and wife, Mrs. Sarah Afriyie and Mad Cecilia Dufie of Asamang.⁷⁷

After worshipping at the health centre for a while, reports were raised against the group with regards to the interferences the services were causing to the health service delivery and for that reason, they moved the church to Asuofua L/A School. Ramseyer congregation at Adum when informed moved in to help revive the growing church and they were also engaged in regularly exchange programs with the Daabaa Presby Church. Catechist Agyei (now Rev. Agyei) became the first Catechist in charge of the congregation⁷⁸. He was succeeded by Catechist Aduse Poku (now Rev. Aduse Poku). On 27th September, 1987, the church was officially inaugurated by the Rev. Asiamah Bekoe.⁷⁹

2. 8.2.1 Construction of Manse

The Asuofua Presbyterian Church Congregation was the first in the Bohyen District to start building a Manse. The sod-cutting ceremony for the construction of the building was done on 11th August, 1994 by Rev. Addo of Ramseyer who was the District Minister.⁸⁰ It has since be partly completed and was first inhabited by Catechist Aduse-Poku (now Rev. Aduse-Poku)

⁷⁷PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 28.

⁷⁸Mrs. Nsiah Afriyie, she is among the early members, served as a presbyter of the church, an old member still with the church, interviewed on 8th August, 2016.

⁷⁹PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 28.

⁸⁰PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 28.

2.8.2.2 Pastoral station

By dint of hard work of the various leadership and the entire church the Presbytery Council made a proposal that the station be elevated to a Pastoral station which was subsequently approved on 11th September, 2011. The first Resident Minister and a Teacher-Pastor in the person of Rev. Edward Nkansah Asamoah was posted to the station and has since been at post.⁸¹

2.8.2.3 Ministries of the Church

The church by the grace of God is engaged in the various ministries of the church as endorsed by its constitution. These ministries cover the children, youth and the adults as well as other interest ministries, all towards edifying the church members to grow into the nature of Christ. The less attended to, if not abandoned is the ministry to the aged for which reason, the researcher seeks to address how effective pastoral care and counselling could be offered to make the ministry of the church holistic and all-encompassing.

2.8.3 Mount Oliver's Congregation, Adankwame

The next congregation to consider is Mount Oliver's congregation at Adankwame. On 22nd July 1984, the Adankwame Presbyterian Congregation was established by an eight (8) member Sowers Team (an evangelistic group) from Bohyen congregation led by Messrs Felix Nyarko Antwi and Adom Boateng.⁸² Through an open air crusade by the team, twelve (12) new converts were used start the church. Bohyen congregation supervised the church and later entrusted into the care of the then headteacher of Local Authority Middle School in the person of Mr. Ernest Oppong-Poku. Having led the church for two years, the caretaker left the church in pursuance of university education and this absence led to a great shortfall in

⁸¹PCG, Ebenezer congregation, Asuofua, The Chronicle of the church, 2011 issues.

⁸²PCG, Bohyen District Elevation brochure, 29.

membership but for the timely intervention by the Bohyen church with the appointment of a new caretaker in the person of Mr. Aboagye Appeah. He was supported by some three committed members who brought the church back to vibrancy and these were Osei Kwaku Johnson, Arhin David and Miss Esther Boahemaa. Having worked hard and with the help of the Holy Spirit the congregation grew to a membership of forty (40) after one year and as a result it became officially inaugurated by then Bantama District Minister, Rev. A.K. Sah on 25th October 1987.⁸³ The Session, having been made aware of the intended relocation of the Catechist to Abuakwa agreed and decided to sponsor Mr. Patrick Adomako⁸⁴ who was the Session Clerk to undergo a Catechist Training Course at Abitibi in 1995. Subsequent to his completion in 1997, the mantle to leadership was successfully handed over to him on August 23rd 1998 and has since been at post till date. The church, for all these years was worshipping in a classroom. It then decided to move to its own acquired plot of land on 6th July 2008. The church is currently concentrating on Children Ministry, Youth Ministry (YPG) and on 25th October, inaugurated the Women's Ministry in addition to one interest group, the Singing Band. It is yet to embrace other ministries being pursued by its sister Congregations and for that of the care of aged, the least said the better.

2.8.4 Gethsemane Congregation, Ohwim.

The third congregation to consider is Gethsemane congregation located at Ohwim. It was started in the year 1989 by the Bible Study and Prayer Group of Bohyen Presbyterian Congregation. A three-day Crusade at Ohwim yielded nine converts including Mr. Boniface Addai, Opanin Kwaku Amponsah, Madam Afua Amponsah, Madam Mercy Ampofo, Madam Yaa Afriyie, Agya Akwasi Owusu, Madam Akosua Pinamang, Mr. Charles Boateng and

⁸³*PCG, Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 29.

⁸⁴Mr. Patrick Adomako, the current Catechist- In – Charge of the Adankwame Presby, interviewed on 10th of August, 2016.

Brother Noah of Blessed Memory.⁸⁵ They initially were commuting to Bohyen to attend church but distance became the major challenge hence the decision by the leadership of the Bohyen Presbyterian church Congregation to plant a church at Ohwim.

A four member committee, made up of Madam Peace Afrifa, Madam Janet O. Abankwah, Mr. Osei Fobi Teddy and Mr. Joseph Frimpong, was put in charge until 20th April, 1992 when Rev. E. B. Afari, assisted by Mr. Fred Darko inaugurated the church.⁸⁶ Mr. Boniface Addai was appointed first care-taker of the congregation together with five (5) other members to assist in the administration of the church as interim Presbyters. Mr. Boniface Addai remained as caretaker from 1992 to 2000. On 1st January, 2001, Mr. Charles Gyamfi took over the mantle of leadership from Mr. Boniface Addai. Before his assumption, he had already been enrolled in a training course at Abetifi Ramseyer Training centre to become a full Catechist. Services were held in Roman Catholic Primary School at Ohwim. In 1997 the congregation built a temporal structure on a piece of land at Ohwim owned by Bantama District BSPG and worshipped in it until 23rd March, 2008 when it moved permanently to their own site at Ohwim and worshipped in its own chapel.

2.8.4.1 Leadership

The church had two previous attached ministers, Rev Lambert Ackampa-gre and Rev Samuel Agyei Frimpong who worked with Catechist Charles Gyamfi. Catechist Gyamfi was transferred and was succeeded by Cat. Stephen Berko who is the current catechist. In September, 2015, the church had its first resident minister, a tent-Minister in the person of Rev. Frederick Osei Bonsu who is still at post. These agents worked with nine (9) Presbyters to constitute the session.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 26.

⁸⁶ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 27.

⁸⁷ Gesethmane Congregation, Ohwim. PCG Church Chronicle, 2011 – 2016 issues.

2.8.4.2 Ministries of the Church

It has been able to pursue all the ministries in the church, children, youth, adult, singing, etc.

The missing link, as can be seen in the previous churches is the pastoral care of the aged which must be given equal attention like the other ministries.

2.8.5 Trinity congregation, Abrepo, Bronikrom.

The next congregation is Trinity congregation at Abrepo, Bronikrom. The evangelism committee of the Star of David congregation, Bohyen in collaboration with the two visiting missionaries, namely Miss Nancy Stillwell and Mr. Jeremiah Brinkman of Global Missions Fellowship, USA⁸⁸ embarked on an evangelistic work in the Abrepo, Bronikrom which yielded a good result of souls. Presbyterians living in this suburb of Kumasi due to distance challenge to attend morning devotion at Bohyen had also started meetings to have their morning devotions. The souls won were then added to the group and the large number of the group necessitated the move to establish a church at Abrepo. The maiden service was held at Abrepo Methodist Primary School on Sunday 27th June, 1999. A total membership number of 132 people attended the church. This was made up of 32 male, 44 Female and 56 children.⁸⁹ On 18th July, 1999, five people including one catechist in the person of Cat. Ampem Darko, (now Rev Ampem Darko) were appointed to run the affairs of the church. The Abrepo Trinity congregation became well nurtured for official inauguration on the 16th of April, 2001.⁹⁰ It then became part of the Bohyen District in 2011 when the new district was created from the Bantama District. Since its inauguration, the various ministries (groups) in the church have also been inaugurated to function for the edification of the church as well as its growth. On the 23rd November, 2003, a solemn ceremony was held for the laying of a foundation stone

⁸⁸PCG Bohyen District Elevation brochure, 24.

⁸⁹PCG, Bohyen District Elevation brochure, 24.

⁹⁰ PCG, Bohyen District Elevation brochure, 24.

for the construction of a chapel.⁹¹ The church initially constructed an understory and held services in it until the super story with two manses and a conference hall, children and Junior Youth basements as well as Agents offices. The church is currently holding services in the bigger chapel which is about 95% complete in terms of construction. Catechist Ampem Darko responding to the conviction of God's call into the ordained ministry was succeeded by Catechist I.K Mensah in 2008 and has since been at post till date. On the 12th September, 2010, Rev. T.K Addo became the first attached minister. Rev. Elizabeth Omenako Berkoe succeeded him as the second attached minister in 2012 and was transferred in 2014. The Trinity Congregation in 2014 was deemed fit by the Presbytery Council to be used as the seat of the clerk for the Presbytery. On the 12th of September, 2014 the Clerk of the Presbytery in the person of Rev. Ahima-Yeboah was inducted into office as the Minister – in - Charge of the Trinity Congregation and has since been at post.⁹² The Trinity Congregation is the second largest congregation in the Bohyen district committed to the various ministries of in the Church. The omitted ministry which is common to all the other congregations is the ministry to the aged. The pastoral care and counseling of the aged to a large extent is not given the necessary prominence it deserves for which reason the researcher with a keen interest wish to investigate so that pragmatic steps are taken to ensure the church's commitment to this ministry to the aged.

2.8.6 Barekese Presbyterian Church.

The last congregation to consider its history is the Barekese Presbyterian church. It was started in 1985 by some staunch Presbyterians accustomed to the order of service and the singing of hymns. They were together eleven in number who embarked on house-to-house visitation after their first Sunday service, and through that they had five (5) members to grow

⁹¹ *PCG, Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 25.

⁹² Trinity congregation, Abrepo, PCG Chronicle, 2014 issues.

up to a total of 16: 10 males and 6 females.⁹³ In the subsequent Sundays they brought their children to the church and they numbered 12: 4 boys and 8 girls increasing to a total of 28 members. They elected their interim Session members who included Mr. Obese, Mr. Oppong and Mr. Nti Ababio who steered the affairs for three (3) years. In 1998, the Session then decided to let known to the Bantama District of the established church at Barekese. Mr. Obese, Mr. Oppong and Mr. Nti were then sent to inform the then District Minister, Rev. A.K. Sah and the his council who immediately entrusted the proper nurturing of the church into the hands of “spirituals”, an evangelism wing of the Bantama local congregation headed by Mr. R.O Asiedu until they become matured for inauguration.⁹⁴ Mr. Patrick Antwi and Mr. Nti. Agyekum were appointed by the “spirituals” to care for the church. They immediately began with what is called “sowers”, an evangelistic programme that yielded 32 souls: 10 males, 15 females and 7 children. This grew the congregation to a membership of sixty (60). After two years of regular visitation, teachings, and evangelizing, the church was ready and matured for inauguration. An impressive inauguration ceremony was held at the Barekese Methodist School Park on Sunday 9th December, 1990 to declare the congregation as a full-fledged congregation into the then Bantama District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.⁹⁵ The officiating Minister was the Rev. A. K Sah, the District Minister and was assisted by the District Council. In attendance was the District Evangelism Committee headed by Mr. Fred Darko. During the Church Service thirty (30) members were baptized into the faith community by the District Minister. The District donated Twenty (20) benches to the church and a cash donation.⁹⁶ Mr. Obese, the caretaker at this time was experiencing some weaknesses which could not make him capable enough to continue with the caretakership. He was then succeeded by Mr. Tabri who worked with the elected Presbyters including Mr. Nti

⁹³ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 33.

⁹⁴ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 33.

⁹⁵ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 34.

⁹⁶ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 34.

Ababio (Senior Presbyter), Mrs. G. Mensah (the Clerk) and Mad. Rose Sarfo (the Treasurer), Mad. Awusi, Mr. Obese and Mad. Abigail Dzibodzi to make up the Session. The church after inauguration experienced a steady growth until the time most able people were transferred. This had a negative turn on the membership and it reduced drastically to twenty-five members. However during the vibrancy time of the church, it acquired 2 ½ acres of land from Madam Nyarko for teak tree plantation and again acquired another four (4) building plots of land for the chapel in 2002.⁹⁷ The construction of the chapel is underway. The caretaker, Mr. Tabiri in 2005 tendered in his resignation letter to the district minister and the standing committee for personal reasons. The District Minister, Rev. Emmanuel Agyem-Frimpong in consultation with the standing committee charged Mr. R.O. Aseidu, the leader of the Bantama “Spirituals” to steer the affairs of the church till September, 2005. Mr. Joseph Kwasi Aning was subsequently sent to the Barekese church as a catechist and started work on 11th September, 2005. The resignation of the caretaker, Mr. Tabiri further impacted negatively on the church’s membership and so Catechist. Aning took over the church with a total membership of seventeen, 17.⁹⁸ By dint of hard work, church attendance started to boost again. Fortunately for the church, it was able to host Presbyterians Students in Church Evangelism dubbed P-SICE in 2006. This exercise increased membership from 17 to 143. In 2008, the Catechist, Mr. Aning responded to the call of God into the ordained ministry and was succeeded by Catechist Agyen Abunyewa Kusi who held the fort till 2013 and handed the leadership mantle to the incumbent catechist in the person of Mr. Alexander Boakye Yiadom who has been at post till date. The church is not different from the rest in terms of committing resources to pastoral care and counseling of the aged.

⁹⁷PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 34.

⁹⁸ PCG, *Bohyen District Elevation brochure*, 35.

2.9 Conclusion

The aged being integral part of the church need to be given equal attention like the other groups, taken into consideration their needs, aspirations and challenges with regard to spiritual, social economic and psychological. Critically analyzing their conditions as a church and developing implementable policy to ensure that they live meaningfully and fulfilled in these ages is worth considering.

The researcher is of the view that once old age is common to all unless the unexpected happens to cut short one's years, a good pastoral care and counseling package, if adopted and implemented shall be enjoyed by all as we draw closer into this age brackets.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONCEPT OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING OF THE AGED

3.1 Introduction

Aging is a subject of concern and thus a subject for discussion, research and social policy in many developed and developing countries. In Ghana as well as in many African countries, the realization of the challenges of aging is emerging as a result of the social changes that have weakened the traditional support systems and plunged the once respected, venerated and cared – for elderly people into difficulties relating to their status, potential value and well - being within the new Ghanaian society.⁹⁹

3.2 Defining Aging

Aging is generally determined by external appearance. The physical features that give indication of a person's age include grey hair, wrinkles, slowness in movement and age – related illnesses and disabilities.¹⁰⁰ In his book *The Psychology of Aging*, Ian Stuart – Hamilton describes the various ways by which ageing could be defined using characteristics which are found in the elderly subjects and is cited by Ayete – Nyampong as follows:

- i. Universal aging features – are those common to all elderly people such as wrinkled skin.
- ii. Probabilistic ageing features – are conditions which are likely to occur in individuals but not universal in all (e.g. arthritis)
- iii. Primary ageing – these are age related changes that occur in the body
- iv. Secondary ageing - these are changes which occur with greater frequency in old age
- v. Tertiary ageing – this refers to rapid physical deterioration immediately before death

⁹⁹Samuel Ayete–Nyampong, *Introduction to A study of Pastoral care of the elderly in Africa: An interdisciplinary Approach with focus in Ghana* (UK: AuthorHouse, 2014), xiii.

¹⁰⁰Ayete – Nyampong, *Ageing in contemporary Ghana*, 14.

- vi. Chronological age – is usually the defining line used to determine a person's age based on his or her date of birth. This does not always tell much about the features of the person since a 70 year old may look younger (agerasia) whilst a younger may look older or may in some rare instances suffer from progeria, a disease condition in which a patient appear to age at an abnormally fast rate and die in his or her early teens.¹⁰¹

Ageing can also be defined as both physical and mental which could be referred to as biological and psychological ages respectively. Some researchers divide the age into two main divisions:

- i. The third age which refers to active and independent older adults who are over 65 years of age.
- ii. The fourth age which also refers to the over 65 years who are dependent on others for basic welfare needs in old age.¹⁰²

It is interesting to note that most gerontologist believe that people in early centuries were not normally living to a ripe old age and were dying either young or become old at an early age between 45 and 60 and even that the description of physical deterioration and senescence were inevitable. This is indeed contrary to the Biblical concept of old age. Ageing in old age were seen as a blessing and the old was accorded every respect and dignity. The Adamic genealogy saw people living for hundreds of years on average with Methuselah living to the age of nine hundred and sixty-nine.¹⁰³ Some Biblical texts thus speak admiringly of old age and some include: "Those who do what right will grow like palm tree. They will grow strong like a cedar tree in Labenon. Their roots will be firm in the house of the Lord. They will grow strong and healthy in the courtyards of our God. When they get old they will still bear fruit.

¹⁰¹ Ayete – Nyampong, *Ageing in contemporary Ghana*, 15.

¹⁰² Ayete – Nyampong, *Ageing in contemporary Ghana*, 16.

¹⁰³ Ayete – Nyampong, *Ageing in contemporary Ghana*, 16.

Like young trees they will stay fresh and strong” (Psalm 92:12–14, NIRV), “In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble” (1Peter 5:5 NIV). Growing old was thus a blessing, and honouring old age was an obligation on the generation of the religious people as enjoined in the Old and New Testament quotations.¹⁰⁴

3.3 The Problem of the Elderly in Africa

In Africa the care of the elderly has generally been the responsibility of the family who deem it as a divine charge. The aged who were once venerated have become vulnerable to the social change of modernization, migration and the subsequent partial breakdown of family values which have negatively impacted on their general well-being.¹⁰⁵ They have become dependent on the generosity of the society and are characterized four major problems:

- i. The elderly appear to lack family support and care
- ii. As the number of the elderly population increases, the dependency ratio also increase
- iii. There is pressure on Africa states to expend their limited financial resources to provide health care and other welfare services for the elderly
- iv. There is an inter-generational gap caused by the imaginary boundary drawn to separate the pre-modern tradition and the post-modern generation.¹⁰⁶

The once dignified, venerated and productive elderly people who were cared for by the extended family, supported and protected by the social structures for the traditional society, now seem to be aliens in the new world of modernization.¹⁰⁷ The questions that quickly need to be considered include the following: What can be done to help and care for the elderly people in Africa society? How can we encourage the aged to utilize the potential within them

¹⁰⁴Ayete–Nyampong, *Ageing in contemporary Ghana*.19.

¹⁰⁵Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 4.

¹⁰⁶Ayete –Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 4-5.

¹⁰⁷Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 5.

to contribute to society and thereby assert their usefulness and functionality? Can the Church which have pioneered many development programmes in Africa since the missionary period initiate this attempt address the problems of the ageing on the continent?¹⁰⁸

3.4 Pastoral care and counselling: Jesus as Model for Care and Counselling

Jesus Christ, the founder of the Church is seen to be demonstrating in his personal life and in his entire ministry, the importance of caring for and liberating humanity from its entangled sins and crisis.¹⁰⁹ Jesus was seen in a number of his encounters with disciples, crowds and individuals drawing attention to the divine imperative of doing ‘good’ and caring for one another. The parable in Mathew 25:31-46 and the Luke chapter 10:25-35 which are concerned with the sheep and the goats, and the good Samaritan respectively clearly show the need for a universal care of people irrespective of their colour, culture, country, character and chronological age.¹¹⁰

The provision of food for the hungry, the healing of the sick, the preaching of the tender gospel message of hope and restoration to the lost; his willingness and readiness to visit and reach out to the neglect in society and to restore dignity to life among others characterized Jesus ministry of the provision of pastoral care which is worth emulating by the church in whose charge he entrusted the continuity of his ministry. Restoring wholeness, wellness and dignity to all categories of people in the church including the aged should therefore be of prime concern to the church.

¹⁰⁸Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 6–7.

¹⁰⁹Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 9.

¹¹⁰Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 9.

3.5 Brief History of the Pastoral Care and Counselling: Pre and Post–Reformation era

The tradition of pastoral care and counselling before the reformation emphasized penitential discipline and public penance.¹¹¹ This has been reshaped by the reformers and succeeding generations of the Christian church. According to John T. McNeil in his book entitled *A History of the Cure of Souls*, Martin Luther who was the ‘architect’ of the Reformation “had in view the integral liberation, health and the enrichment of souls”¹¹² and thus providing a paradigm shift from the emphasis in penitential discipline to genuine pastoral care of the individual in need and his community. This move by Luther, according to Ayete–Nyampong presupposes the integration of psychological, spiritual, socio-cultural, economic and political dimensions in an effort to find a solution to human problems.¹¹³ This step is also in consonance with the New Testament models of care which reflects the original holistic approach depicted in Jesus ‘life and ministry. Christian churches in the 21st century share the same basic concern for the care of the individuals with the goal of fulfilling the commandment of Jesus to love and care for one another.

3.6 Conclusion

The concept of pastoral care and counselling presented so far indicate the real need for care and counselling to all manner of people including the aged in the society and in the church. The modern day church therefore has no option than to follow the ministry of Jesus, the head of the church to provide holistic ministry to address the pastoral care and counselling needs to all people in the church. In this direction the aged must also be given the prime attention so as to restore wholeness meaningfully to their lives. This can be achieved by providing pastoral care and counselling.

¹¹¹Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 10.

¹¹²Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 10.

¹¹³Ayete–Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the Elderly in Africa*, 10.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is designated for the presentation, analyses and discussion of the data obtained from the study. It basically considers the presentation of the outcome of the questionnaires administered. The questionnaire seeks to address four main themes:

- background of the respondent
- spiritual aspect of the respondent
- economic condition of the respondent and the
- social aspect of the respondent

With these four main themes, the researcher administered questionnaires to six different local Presbyterian congregations in the Bohyen District and each congregation had ten questionnaires to be answered by ten selected people and the outcome is presented in the tables and figures below and subsequently discussed

4.1 Background of the Respondents

In order to make the study credible, the researcher made enquiries about the background of the respondents and the results are shown in Table 4.1.1 – 4.1.3 and figure 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.

Table 4.1.1 Respondents' Sex

Sex	Respondents' background					Total (%)
	Abrepo Ohwim	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	
Male (63%)	6	6	5	4	6	33
Female (37%)	2	4	3	4	4	19
Total (100%)	8	10	8	8	10	52

Source: Author's field survey

Table 4.1.2 Age group of Respondents

Age group	Respondents background (age group)						Total (%)
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	Ohwim	
40 – 49	-	-	-	-	-	-	0 (0%)
50 – 59	-	2	-	-	-	3	5 (10%)
60 – 69	8	5	3	7	7	3	33 (63%)
70 – 79	2	1	4	1	2	-	10 (19%)
80 – 89	-	2	1	-	1	-	4 (8%)
Total	10	10	8	8	10	6	52 (100%)

(Source: Author's field survey)

According to table 4.1.1, 63 percent of the respondents are males while 37 percent of the remaining is females. With regards to age group of the respondents, 63 percent of the respondents are within the age category of 60 – 69 years, 19 percent of them are also within 70 – 79 years, 10 percent of the respondents are within 50 – 59 years while only 8 percent of them are within the category of 80 – 89. With 40 – 49 age category, none of the respondents was within that range as it had 0% (table 4.1.2). Thus the targeted age bracket of 60 – 65 and above formed 90 percent of the respondents and their opinion on the issues discussed could fully represent the real situation on the ground with respect to the personal care and counseling of the aged in the congregation.

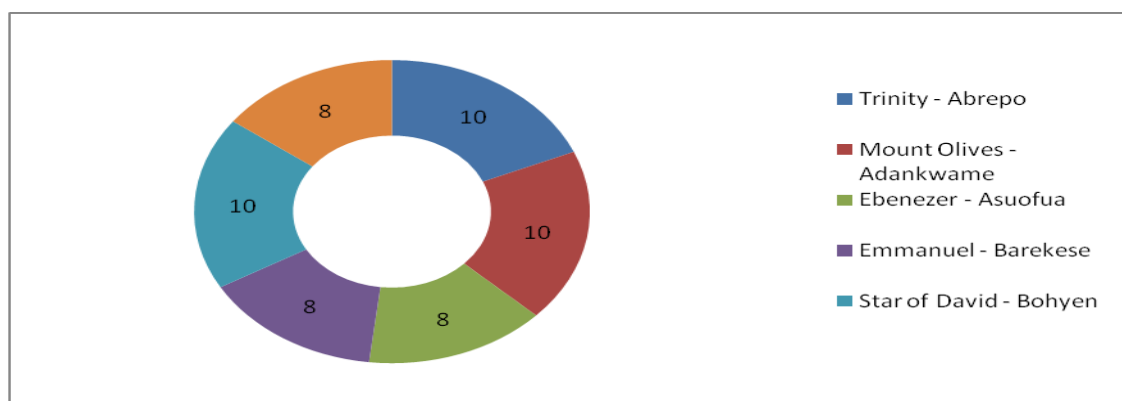


Figure 4.1.1: Frequency of Respondents on selected Congregation. *Source: Author's field survey*

Figure 4.1.1 exhibits the respondents' congregation and the number of questionnaires respondents were willing and able to answer. From the chat, Trinity Congregation (Abrepo), Mount Olives Congregation (Adankwame) and Star of David Congregation (Bohyen) were willing and able to respond back with all the questionnaires administered to them while Ebenezer Congregation (Asuofua), Emmanuel Congregation (Barekese) and Gethsemane Congregation (Ohwim) could only submit 8 of the 10 questionnaires administered to them each.

Table 4.1.3 Respondents' Number of Years Spent in a Congregation

Year group	Respondents background (Years)						Total (%)
	AbrepoA	dankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	Ohwim	
1 – 5	-	1	2	1	2	2	8 (15%)
6 – 10 (11%)	2	2	-	1	-	1	6
11 – 15 (17%)	4	1	1	-	-	3	9
16 – 20 (32%)	4	4	4	3	1	1	17
21 – 25	-	-	-	1	3	1	5 (9%)
26 – 30	-	1	1	-	1	-	3 (6%)
31 and above	-	1	-	2	2	-	5 (9%)

Source: Author's field survey

Touching on the respondents' years of staying with a particular congregation, 32 percent of the respondents seem to have been with a particular congregation for almost 16 – 20 years, 17 percent of them have been with their respective congregation for about 11 – 15 years. 15 percent of them were within 1 – 5 years, 11 percent of the respondents have served in their respective congregations for 6 – 10 years. With 21 – 25 years and 26 – 30 years, 9 percent and 6 percent respectively. 9 percent of the respondents have stayed in the congregation for 31 years and above. The years of stay with the congregation gives the respondents the opportunity to critically examine the pastoral care and counseling experiences they have been going through (table 4.1.3).

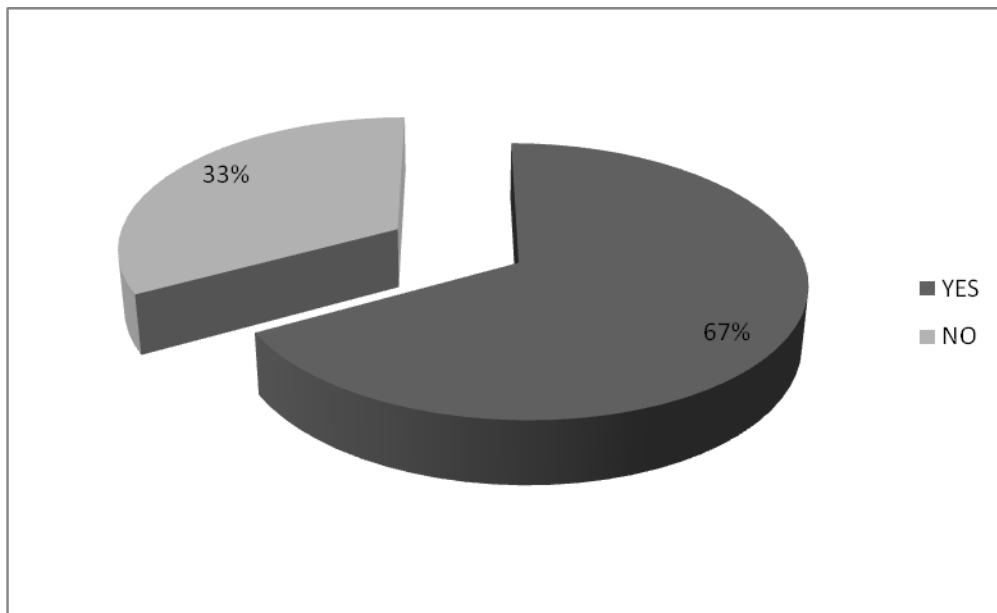


Figure 4.1.2: Holding a Position in the Congregation or Not *Source: Author's field survey*

The researcher still wanted to find out among the respondents who responded to the questionnaires whether they were holding positions in their respective congregation and it turned out that most of the respondents (63 percent) were holding positions in their respective congregation and minority of the respondents (33 percent) do not hold any position in the congregation (figure 4.1.2). 63 percent of the respondents in various positions in the congregation mean that the congregation was benefiting from the rich experience and contribution from the aged hence their care must be paramount.

The findings above indicate that the males are dominating in most of the offices of the congregation and also majority of them (males) are within ages of category of 60 – 69 years. This also reaffirms scriptures; “for a husband is the head of his wife..... so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything” (Ephesians 5: 23-24, NLT). This male dominance in the congregation leadership is a reflection of biblical, societal and governmental leadership. More effort should be put in to encourage and motivate females to their calling in the church.

4.2 Spiritual Aspect of Respondents

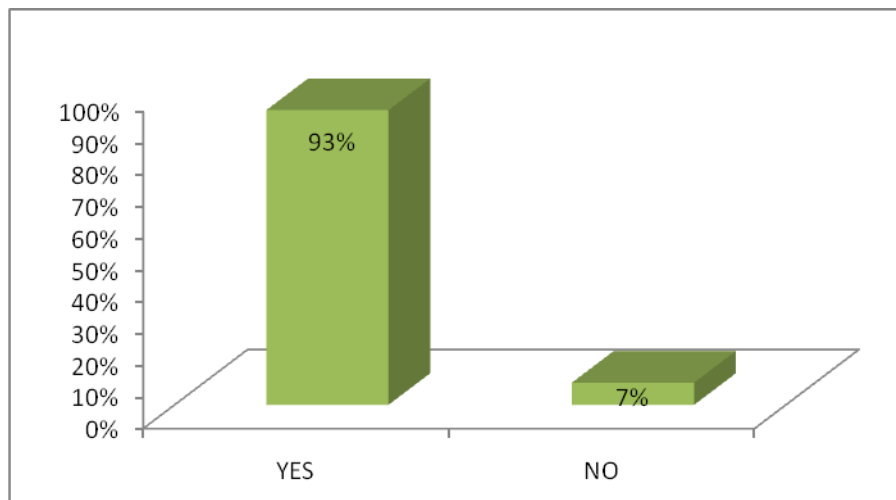


Figure 4.2.1: Regularity of Respondents in Attending Congregational Programmes. *Source: Author's field survey*

Ayete–Nyampong, in his book “Aging in Contemporary Ghana” stated that “Spirituality is seen as an inner resource that animates drives and motivates a person.”¹¹⁴ The spiritual aspect of a Christian is paramount in the service of God. In fact, it is the main reason why most people go to various congregational houses or meetings, to be inspired, motivated and be taught of how one can practically live his/her life for Christ alone. There are various ways of determining the ‘spirituality’ of a Christian and one of it is how well the person is able to make it to congregation services and meetings. For this reason, the researcher conducted a survey into how regular the people are able to make it up to church. Figure 4.2.1 illustrates the congregation attendance of respondents. From the figure, it appeared that 93 percent of the respondents are able to make it to church every Sunday while seven (7) percent are unable to make it due to some causes beyond their control. This indicates that older people are very much desirous to commune with their God for spiritual fulfilment. The congregation should therefore strategize to meet their need.

¹¹⁴ Ayete – Nyampong, *Ageing in Contemporary Ghana*, 129.

Table 4.2.1 Impact of Congregation Service on Respondents

Yes/No	Congregation Service Impact on Respondents					
	Abrepo Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Ohwim	
Yes	9 (90%)	9 (90%)	8 (100%)	8 (100%)	10 (100%)	7 (88%)
No	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	- (0%)	- (0%)	- (0%)	1 (12%)
Total	10 (100%)	10 (100%)	8 (100%)	8 (100%)	10 (100%)	8 (100%)

Source: Author's field survey

Now, it is difficult for some of them to go to congregation and to be actively involved in the activities of the congregation and to be impacted by the sermon delivered at congregation. For this reason the researcher went further on to determine how well the congregations are imparted with word of God; how they enjoy every bit of the activity performed in serving the Most High God. The result turned out that 90 percent of the respondents in Trinity (Abrepo) and that of Mount Olives (Adankwame) Congregation said they enjoy the content of the normal service while 10 percent said they do not enjoy the content of the service. Coming to Ebenezer Congregation (Asuofua), Emmanuel Congregation (Barekese) and Star of David Congregation (Bohyen), all the respondents said they enjoy the content of the service. And with Gethsemane Congregation (Ohwim), 88 percent of the respondents said they enjoy the content of the service while 12 percent do not enjoy the content of the sermon (Table 4.2.1). 94 percent of the overall respondents attest to the fact that the content of the service at the congregations are always on point while 6 percent said they do not enjoy the content of the service with the reason being that the time schedule for each activity in the congregation are not carefully followed. The findings above reveal that the minority of the members who are unable to attend congregational Services regularly could be attributed to the fact that Presbyters or Congregation leaders are not time conscious; they close from congregational Services late and that makes members to feel bored. The congregation must take into consideration the age compositions of the congregants and work hard to meet their spiritual needs. The reason by this minority aged group should not be taken for granted.

Table 4.2.2 Visitation to the Aged by Pastor

Within Year	How Often are you Visited by your Pastor					Ohwim
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	
Once	1	3	-	1	-	2
Twice	1	1	2	-	1	2
Thrice or more	1	2	3	5	2	2
Not at all	7	4	3	2	4	2
Total	10	10	8	8	7	8

Source: Author's field survey

Table 4.2.3: Visitation to the Aged by the Presbyters in Congregation

Within Year	How Often are you Visited by your Presbyters					Ohwim
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	
Once	-	1	2	1	2	4
Twice	2	-	1	1	-	1
Thrice or more	3	1	2	5	1	2
Not at all	5	8	3	1	3	1
Total	10	10	8	8	10	8

Source: Author's field survey

Tables 4.2.4: Visitation to the Aged by other Members in the Congregation

Within Year	How Often are you Visited by other Congregation Members					Ohwim
	Abrepo a Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese		
Once	-	1	-	1	-	2
Twice	2	-	1	-	-	-
Thrice or more	3	6	3	6	2	3
Not at all	5	3	4	1	4	3
Total	10	10	8	8	6	8

Source: Author's field survey

In his book, *A study of pastoral care of the elderly in Africa*, Ayete- Nyampong defines pastoral visit as the taking of Christ love by a representative of the Christian community to another person in his or her experiential and situational context so that the response elicited by this reception will promote the well-being of the receiver and enrich that of the giver.¹¹⁵ One aspect of Christianity that matters most is visitation. To visit someone or to be visited by any member of your congregation just to see how well one is doing can turn the life of person around. It gives hope and reliance unto the person. It is because of this and other reasons that the researcher inquired how often the respondents are visited by first of all the pastor, followed by the presbyters and also the members. The finding is illustrated in Table 4.2.2 to Table 4.2.4.

Now with the visitation by the agent of the church, it was shown that 22 out 51 of the respondents in the district said they have never been visited by the pastor; 15 out 51 of the

¹¹⁵ Ayete- Nyampong, *A study of the pastoral care of the elderly in Africa*, 188.

respondents also said they have been visited by the pastor thrice within the year; whilst 7 out of the 51 said they have been visited twice within the year by the pastor; and another 7 out of 51 mentioned that the pastor had visited them once within the year (Table 4.2.2). This outcome shows the neglect of pastoral visitation to the aged. This is the stage where they spend most time in the home and need the care of the pastor most. When it came to presbyters' visitation, 21 out of 54 of the respondents said none of the presbyters have been to their house before to visit, not even his/her co-presbyter. 14 out of the 54 also said few of the presbyters have been to their house thrice while 10 of the respondents also said they have been visited by their respective presbyters once within the year and 5 out of the 54 said they have been visited within the year twice by their respective presbyters (Table 4.2.3). This shows a gross neglect of pastoral care and counseling to the aged to some extent by the leadership of the congregation. The researcher touched down to the members to find out about how often the respondents have been visited by the other members of their respective congregation. Table 4.2.4 shows that of the 50 respondents who answered that particular question, 23 of them had been visited by the members thrice and more, 20 had never been visited before while 6 had been visited twice and 4 had been visited once.

The findings above show that majority of the entire people in the district are being ignored in one way or the other by way of visitation. This is against the wish of God as the Word of God says "For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me" (Matthew 25:42–43, NLT).

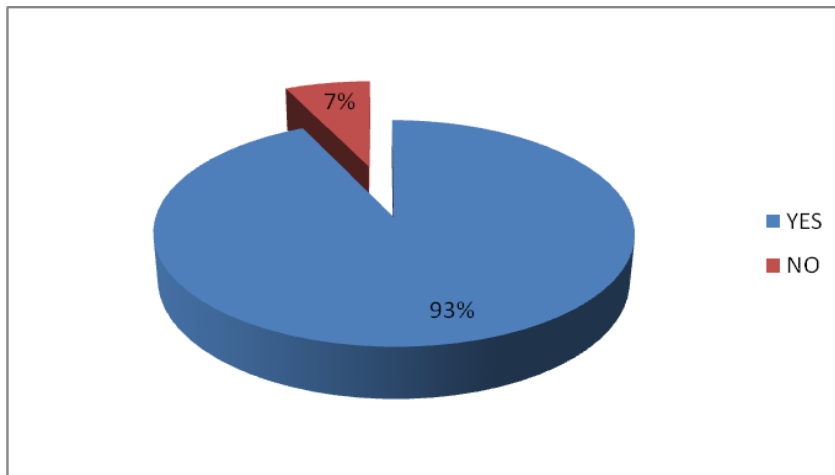


Figure 4.2.2: Communion Attendance

Source: Author's field survey

The apostle Paul, having an insight into the essence of the Holy Communion in the Christian faith has this to say regarding the practice and the conduct of those who wish to partake in it.

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you,
that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:
And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat:
this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.
After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying,
this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye
drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink
this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever
shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty
of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so
let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh
damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body”
(1Corinthians 11: 23 – 29, KJV).

For this reason, the researcher wanted to find out the percentage of the all the respondents who are able to attend communion service each month and it turned out that 93 percent of the total respondent are communicants and go for the communion each month whilst 7 percent are unable to go for the communion service (Figure 3.2.2). The finding above shows that the pastors and the congregation leaders are doing well to keep the congregation as pure as they should because without sanctification the congregation would not have such a larger number of the congregation attending communion service since the bible says a man must examine

himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. It further reveals how respondents attach importance to the sacrament of communion and the desire to dine with the Lord and have fellowship with other members in the faith community. This practice and attitude is highly commendable and leadership must be praised and encouraged to sustain it to help the aged.

4.3 Economic Situation of Respondents

Table 4.3.1: Source of Income of Respondents

Source	Income Source					Ohwim
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	
Pensions	1	3	1	1	9	3
Family	-	-	1	-	-	-
Children	4	5	1	2	-	1
Self	3	1	4	4	1	4
Others	1	1	1	-	-	-

Source: Author's field survey

Not only does the aged in the congregation need the spiritual aspect of life to be fulfilled but the financial aspect too; as such each aged must be of importance to the leaders of the congregation. For this reason, the researcher wanted to find out the source of income of the respondents. Table 4.3.1 shows that majority of the respondents (18 out of 52) depend solely on their pension allowance; 17 of the respondents are being taken care of by themselves (through farming and small trading); 13 out of the 52 rely solely on their children for survival; 3 out of the 52 respondents depend on arms given by outsiders; only 1 is being taken care of by the family and none of these respondents is being taken care of by the congregation. The findings above show that the congregations do not have any aged fund that takes care the economic needs of the aged in the congregations and the families too seem not

to care about the relatives who are aged among them. This confirms the statement by Samuel Ayete-Nyampong that “it is evident that the reliance on the extended family to cater for older population is becoming less tenable due to the rapid social change being experienced in Ghanaian society”¹¹⁶. This puts the aged in a very serious condition which requires immediate intervention by all stakeholders to alleviate this plight of the aged in the congregation as well as in the society.

Table 4.3.2: Welfare Incentive/Package for the Aged

Yes/No	Incentive/Package for the Aged					
	Abrepo Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Ohwim	
Yes (0%)	2 (20%)	3 (30%)	1 (13%)	0 (0%)	6 (60%)	0
No (100%)	8 (80%)	7 (70%)	7 (87%)	8 (100%)	4 (40%)	7
Total (100%)	10 (100%)	10 (100%)	8 (100%)	8 (100%)	10 (100%)	7

Source: Author's field survey

With respect to any package or incentive for the aged from the congregation, almost all the respondents said there is no such in the congregation as shown in Table 4.3.2. From the table, 80 percent of the respondents in the Trinity Congregation (Abrepo) said the congregation has no such package for the aged whilst 20 percent said they do but on only during Christmas. Whilst 70 percent of the respondents in Mount Olives (Adankwame) Congregation also said such incentive is not common in the congregation and the rest of 30 percent said they do sometimes receive some kind of incentives from the congregation. 87 percent of the total respondents in Ebenezer

Congregation (Asuofua) made it clear that there is not such incentive for the aged in the congregation whilst 13 percent of them said they do receive some packages from the congregation. When the researcher got to Emmanuel (Barekese) congregation with the same

¹¹⁶Ayetey – Nyampong, *Ageing in contemporary Ghana*, 45.

question to find out if the Congregation has an incentive or package for the aged, they all also responded in the negative that such incentive or package has never been seen in the congregation. Whilst in the Star of David (Bohyen) Congregation 60 percent of the respondents said they have an incentive for the aged, 40 percent said the congregation does not have any such incentive. Touching down on Gethsemane (Ohwim) Congregation, all the respondents indicated that the congregation has no such package for the aged.

The findings above reveal that the aged in the Bohyen District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana have been denied one of the core values of Christianity which is caring for the needy and the aged. It also indicates that the spiritual aspect of the congregation is not balanced with the other socio-economic aspect of life such as providing food for the needy, at least budgeting to provide some food items and clothing for the aged especially on Christmas would be much appreciated, for it is said that “let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart. So then as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith”(Galatians 6:9-10,RSV).This is an under performance and the congregations must wake up to her calling. The occasional welfare packages must be reviewed to have the necessary impact on the lives of the aged.

Table 4.3.3 Health Challenges Facing Aged in the Congregation

Yes/No	Health Issue					Ohwim
	Abrepo Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese		
Yes	90%	30%	63%	63%	60%	0%
No	10%	70%	37%	37%	40%	100%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Author's field survey

Old age is normally associated with some kind of illness or health challenge including bodily pains, eye problems, asthma, hypertension, diabetes, cataract, anemia, skin diseases, etc. The researcher probed further to find out if any of the respondents was having an illness in one way or the other. It was revealed that 90 percent of the respondents in the Trinity (Abrepo) Congregation have health challenges while 10 percent said they do not have any health problem. 70 percent of the Mount Olive (Adankwame) Congregation said they don't have any health issues whilst 30 percent of them said they do. 63 percent of the respondents in the Ebenezer (Asuofua) Congregation have health problems whilst 37 percent said they do not have any health issue. Whilst 60 percent of the respondents in Star of David Congregation complained of health issue, 40 percent said they do not have any health issue and with Gethsemane (Ohwim) Congregation, all the respondents -100 percent- said they do not have any health challenge (Table 4.3.3). The findings above reveal that Christians are of no exception to the health challenges associated with old age. This affirms the findings of Lena et al that "old age had health problems, the most common being hypertension, osteoarthritis, diabetes, asthma, cataract, anemia and skin problems."¹¹⁷ From the study it was found out that the predominant health challenge among respondents was hypertension followed by diabetes and then asthma. Other health problems such as skin diseases, cataract and anemia were also prevalent among the respondents. Old age comes with body weakness; the person becomes restricted in terms of mobility. This affects the productivity of the individual and the country as a whole. The finances and other sources of livelihood are then shifted to other individuals such as the children, family members and philanthropists as well as the congregation where the person worships.

¹¹⁷ Lena et al, "Health and Social Problems of the Elderly" *Indian Journal of community Medicine* Vol 34 issue 2 (2009), accessed April 4, 2017, medind.nic.in.iaj.

Table 4.3.4 Financial Sources for Support in Health Issues

Source	Source of Finance					
	Abrepo Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Ohwim	
Self	2	-	5	-	3	-
Children	3	3	2	2	2	-
Family	-	-	-	-	-	-
Congregation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	4	-	-	2	1	6
Total	9	3	7	4	6	6

Source: Author's field survey

The researcher then wanted to find out the respondents sources of finance to pay for treatment this health issues discussed above. Table 4.3.4 reveals that 13 of the respondents representing 37.1 percent draw their source of finance from philanthropists in the community; 12 representing 34.3 percent have their financial support from their children; and 10 of the respondents representing 28.6 percent have a self-supported business they derive their finance; farming and the petty trading. When it came to the family and the congregation as a source of finance to their health issues, all the respondents said they do not get any financial aid from them.

The findings above support Lena et al that “the aged in South India feel they are not consulted by the family members for making decisions.”¹¹⁸ They feel ignored by family members because of their physical illness and economic dependency. With respect to the congregation, it is showing a faith without deeds as it is stated in the Bible “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are

¹¹⁸Lena et al, *Community Medicine*, April 2009.

needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2: 14-17, NKJV).

4.4 Social Condition of Respondents

Table 4.4.1: Participation in Social Group in the Society

Yes/No	Social Group Membership in the Society					Ohwim
	Abrepo Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese		
Yes	-	1	3	-	2	-
No	10	7	4	8	6	5
Total	10	8	7	8	8	5

Source: Author's field survey

One core point of the mission statement of the Presbyterian Congregation of Ghana is “To uphold the centrality of the Word of God and through the enablement of the Holy Spirit, pursue a holistic ministry so as to bring all creation to the glory of God by promoting socio-economic development through advocacy and effective delivery of social services.”¹¹⁹ For this reason, the researcher sort to find out if the aged in the district join any social group in the society. The response from the respondents is tabulated in the table 4.4.1. From the Table, 40 of the total respondents indicating about 87 percent do not join any social group in the society while only 6 of the respondents who answered that particular question indicating only 13 percent said they are part of a social group in the society. From the findings above, it reveals that the society has even ignored the aged who were once a member of the active labor force and have really contributed to the its development since there are no proper social intervention or social security for the aged and the congregation as the body of Christ has also not instituted any proper measures to curb this canker in the society. The Presbyterian

¹¹⁹*Presbyterian Church of Ghana Constitution*, Revised Edition, (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 2016), 2 – 3.

Congregations are not any different from the other Christian bodies. They seem to be diverting or losing focus of PCG mission statement.

Table 4.4.2 Marital Status of the Aged in the Congregation

Yes/No	Marital Status						Total (%)
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	Ohwim	
Yes	5	6	6	5	8	7	37 (69%)
No	5	4	2	3	2	1	17 (31%)
Total	10	10	8	8	10	8	54
(100%)							

Source: Author's field survey

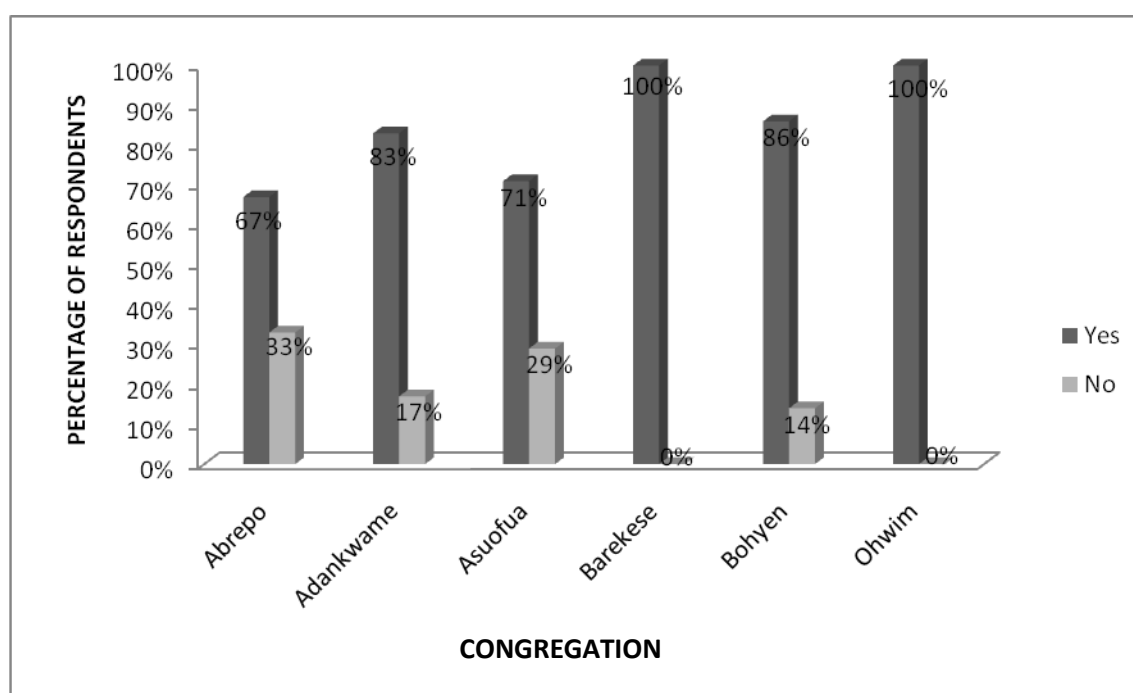


Figure 4.4.1: Percentage of Respondents Staying with the Spouse. *Source: Author's field survey*

Table 4.4.2 shows the marital status of the respondents. From the Table, 69 percent of the respondents said they were married while 31 percent said they were not married. Now the

researcher went further to inquire from those that are married to find out if they were staying with each spouses and the results is illustrated in Figure 4.4.1. With respect to Trinity Congregation (Abrepo), 67 percent are staying with their spouses as against 33 percent. 83 percent of the respondents in the Mount Olives Congregation (Adankwame) are staying with their spouses while 17 percent are staying alone. At Ebenezer Congregation (Asuofua) 71 percent of the respondents are staying with their spouses and 29 percent are staying alone. When the researcher got to Emmanuel Congregation (Barekese), all the respondents; 100 percent said that they are with their respective spouses. With that of Star of David Congregation (Bohyen), 86 percent of the respondents are with spouses while 14 percent are not staying with the spouse; and with Gethsemane Congregation (Ohwim), all the respondents; 100 percent said they are with their spouses in the same house. The findings above reveal that when things are not going on well, in terms of finance or health wise, the aged have at least one person to depend on and that is the spouse. At least marital comfort from a spouse is worthwhile.

The researcher was not so sure of the answers that some of the respondents gave him on why they were married but not staying with the respective spouses because the Bible says “The man exclaimed, this is bone from my bone and flesh from my flesh. She will be called woman because she was taken from man. This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one” (Genesis 2:23-24, NLT). Therefore the researcher posed further questions to know the reason why they were not with their respective spouses and the results are further shown in Figure 4.4.2. It was revealed in all the congregations except Ebenezer congregation (Asuofua), that the major cause was the demise of the respective spouses of the respondents. At the Ebenezer Congregation, divorce was the main reason.

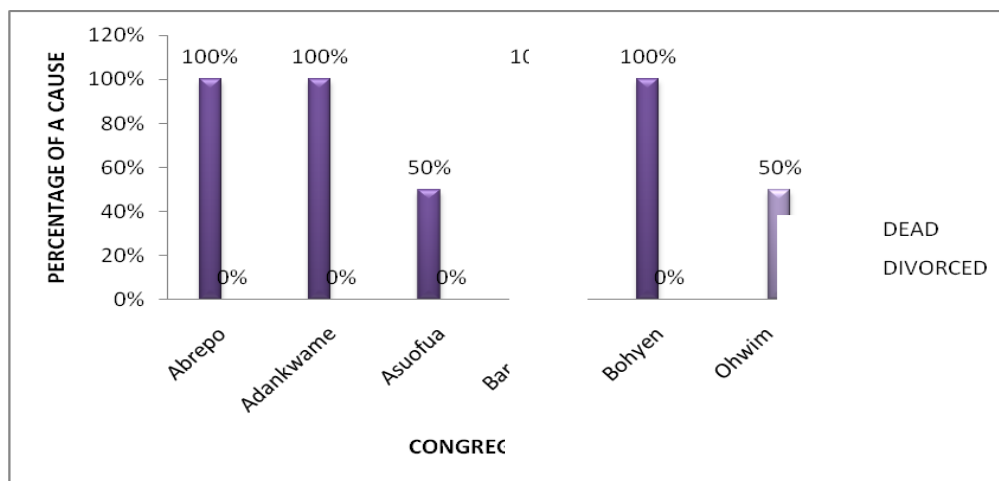


Figure 4.4.2: Respondents not staying with the Spouse *Source: Author's field survey*

Table 4.4.3 Respondents Staying with Children

Yes/No	Respondents Staying with Children						Total (%)
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	Ohwim	
Yes	2	2	3	5	6	4	22
(42%)							
No	8	8	5	3	4	2	30
(58%)							
Total	10	10	8	8	10	6	62
52(100%)							

(Source: Author's field survey)

One of the amazing gifts God showers on couples is the gift of the fruit of the womb (children). In fact, the Bible instructs man to procreate. The researcher then wanted to find out if the respondents are staying with their children and it was revealed that out of the 52 (100 percent) respondents, 58 percent are not staying with their children while 42 percent are staying with their children (Table 4.4.3). This shows that in terms of providing care (cooking, washing, conveyance to hospital etc.), majority of this chores is shifted on the aged women/man who stay with the spouse or on only the aged spouse who stay alone. The

migration of the children to urban cities in search of jobs or the marital attachment to spouses creating a lonely atmosphere for the aged were given as the cause. A researcher conducted by Lena et al indicated that most of the elderly aging 60 years and above are being ignored by their respective family members in South India due to their physical illness and economic dependence.

Table 4.4.4 Visitation by Respondents' Relative

Yes/No	Relatives' Visitation						Total (%)
	Abrepo Ohwim	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen		
Yes	8	9	5	6	10	7	45 (87%)
No	2	-	3	2	-	-	7 (13%)
Total	10	9	8	8	10	7	52(100%)

Source: Author's field survey

This touched the heart of the researcher to find out from the respondents if they have been visited by their relatives often and it was shown that 87 percent of the respondents' relatives have been visiting them in their respective residence while 13 percent are being ignored by their relatives (Table 4.4.4). This, when compared with the South Indian situation as stated by Lena et al is different.

Table 4.4.5 Assessment of Societal Attitude toward the Aged

Attitude	Societal Attitude toward Aged						Total (%)
	Abrepo	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese	Bohyen	Ohwim	
Very Warmly (25%)	2	2	3	4	1	-	12
Warmly (50%)	5	5	3	3	6	2	24
Not Warmly (25%)	3	2	1	1	1	4	12
Total (100%)	10	9	7	8	8	6	48

Source: Author's field survey

My eyes nearly became a waterfall when I watched a five-minute video shared by a friend on facebook in which about five suspected witches and wizards (elderly men and women) were set ablaze in Kenya. Shockingly, tiny pieces of firewood, maize stalks, withered and dry leaves, and things of that sort were thrown on the victims to keep the raging fire burning. The poor souls were screaming in pain for help and mercy but to no avail. They were burnt alive in broad daylight by fellow human beings. Surprisingly, almost all the onlookers were behaving as if that which was being witnessed was normal and not a big deal. None of them was showing any sign of disapproval let alone trying to stop the barbaric killing. Could humankind be that wicked? Could this justify the assertion of Shakespeare's character, Timon of Athens, that it is better to go into the woods and live with animals because 'the unkindest beast [is] ... kinder than mankind'? These were the questions that I repeatedly posed to myself. If the footage was real, then Timon is probably right; the cruelest beast is kinder than many human beings. Sure, the footage was not a section of a fictional movie or drama, it was real – the five elderly people were burnt alive. Their “crime” was that they had cast spells that lowered the intelligence of the children in their village, and had also caused the death of one child.

It may be recalled that in November 2010 a 72 year old woman was also burnt alive in Ghana's port city of Tema after being accused of witchcraft. She was allegedly set on fire by a group of five adults including a so-called pastor after she was tortured into confessing to being a witch. The accused ridiculously claimed that they poured anointing oil on the woman to expel the “demon” from her and that the oil caught fire in the process of exorcizing her. When did anointing oil start catching fire by itself?¹²⁰

People have weird attitude toward the aged therefore the researcher wanted to assess the attitude of the society towards them. Table 4.4.5 illustrates that 50 percent of the respondents

¹²⁰Emmanuel Sarpong Owusu Ansah, “Africa’s Diabolical Entrapment,” *Exploring the negative impact of Christianity, Superstition and witchcraft on psychological, structural and scientific growth in Black Africa*, January 28, 2013, accessed April 4, 2017, [https:// books.google.com.gh](https://books.google.com.gh) > books.

assess the attitude of the society warmly, 25 percent said is very warmly while another set of 25 percent said the attitude of the society is not warmly acceptable. The findings above partially reaffirms the publication made by Owusu-Ansah that portion of the society's behaviour is inhuman and totally unacceptable.

Table 4.4.6 Abuse from the Congregation or Society

Yes/No	Societal/Congregation Abuse (%)					Ohwim
	Abrepo Bohyen	Adankwame	Asuofua	Barekese		
Yes	0%	0%	25%	0%	14%	17%
No	100%	100%	75%	100%	86%	83%

Source: Author's field survey

With regards to the above finding from Table 4.4.5, the researcher sought to find out if the respondents are really abused by the society and the church. It was found out from Table 4.4.6 that some of the members in the congregations have a lukewarm attitude toward the aged, they

abuse the aged one way or the other as 25 percent of the respondents in the Ebenezer congregation (Asuofua) made mention that they are being abused by the society and even by the congregation, 17 percent in Gethsemane congregation (Ohwim) also said they go through some sort of abuse in the congregation and the society they live and 14 percent in Star of David (Bohyen) said they receive some abusive actions from the congregation and the society. Areas of abuse include being tagged as witches, being insulted, showing disrespect and isolation among others.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter sought to discuss and analyse the various concerns raised by the respondents. These analysed with SPSS were presented in Tables and Figures. The discussions so far

made, will help the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the pastoral care and counselling of the aged in the Presbyterian Congregation of Ghana in the Bohyen District.

The next chapter shall focus on the summary of the whole discussion and make some recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher puts together the significance of the research findings, drawing from the analysis made in the previous chapters. The chapter consists of three main components: summary of the outcomes of the research, conclusion and the recommendations that could be adopted when considering pastoral care and counseling of the aged in the church.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The research focused on identifying the economic, spiritual and social challenges facing the aged in the Bohyen District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and how pastoral care and counseling could be effectively employed to help address these challenges. A purposive sampling technique was used to sample 60 respondents to represent the target population of the aged in the Bohyen District. Data collected from respondents were analyzed and presented in the statistical frequency tables and subsequently discussed.

The first set of questions sought to inquire into the background of the respondents with respect to their age, how long they have stayed in the church and whether they have held positions in the church. This provided a firm support to the information gathered for analysis. The age bracket for the study was 60 – 65 years and above; this covered about 90 percent of the respondents. The respondent years of staying in their respective churches ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of thirty years. It was also gathered that 63 percent of the respondents have held one or more positions in the church.

The second sets of research questions sought to identify how the spiritual needs of the aged in the church were being met. The study showed that 93 percent of the respondents are able to attend church services regularly and 94 percent responded positively that they enjoy the content of church service activities and that it partially meets their spiritual thirst. The subsequent questions focused on visitations by the pastor, the presbyters (elders), individual church members as well as any other group in the church within a year. The study found out that there is a low or a poor frequency of visitation to the aged by all the stakeholders in the church showing a great deal of neglect to the aged as shown by the following statistics:

Number of Visitation	Three times	Two times	once	No visitation
Pastor	22	15	7	7
Presbyters	21	23	6	4
Other members	23	4	4	20

Communion (The Lord Supper) has a great deal of influence on the one's spirituality where the individual after personal examination resolves to partake in the Lord Supper. The research revealed that 93 percent of the respondents are able to attend communion on monthly basis showing how much they attached importance to their spirituality. The church must therefore ensure its continuity.

The third set of questions focused on the economic life of the aged in the church. The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents are taking care of themselves through farming, trading or pension. That is 35 out of 52 respondents constituting 62%. 25% are dependent on their children; 5% on alms by outsiders and only one representing 2% had family support. With the exception of Bohyen Star of David Congregation where 60% of respondents admitted to some welfare incentive package for the aged by the church, all the others had a very high percentage of respondents denying the presence of any economic

intervention to support the economic life of the aged as shown by the following statistics: Abrepo (80%), Adankwame (70%), Asuofua (87%), Barekese (100%), Ohwim (100%). Those with the lower percentages than 100% admitted that occasionally and especially at Christmas, they do receive some welfare packages. It also became visible that old age is indeed associated with myriads of health challenges as majority of respondents agreed to the fact that they have some health issues involving hypertension, diabetes, asthma, cataract, and anemia as well as skin diseases among others. On the question of having any financial support to take care of their health conditions, it was revealed that majority depended on philanthropists, their children, and their pension, petty trading and farming. The extended family and the church did not surface at all in this regard. The last set of questions sought to look into the social conditions of the respondents. 87% of the respondents did not have any social group except the church. Majority of the respondents were married and were staying with their spouses. A few who were alone gave the major cause being the demise of their respective partners with the exception of Gethsemane congregation (Ohwim) whose main cause was divorce. It became clear that majority of the respondents (58%) were not staying with their children but were however enjoying visitations from their relatives to which 87% of respondents affirmed. On the issue of abuse of the aged by the society and the church, the research revealed that to some extent some aged in the church do go through some kind of abuses including insult, lukewarm attitude, some kind of rejection and some 'names' to which they are tagged.

5.3 Conclusion

Conclusion can therefore be made from the afore discussions that the aged in the Bohyen District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana have pastoral care and counselling challenges with regards to spiritual, economic and social issues. Spiritual pastoral care and counseling

challenge were partly met as respondents were able to attend church on regular basis, enjoy the content of the service and partaking in the Lord's Supper. Respondents were however missing the regular visitations from all stakeholders in the church to share their inner world with them and to enjoy a closer relationship. It is therefore worthwhile that the Church becomes aware of the above challenges of the aged and work out activities to help solve them so that the aged become fully integrated into the Church and the society.

5.4 Recommendations

The following are some recommendations given by the researcher to the Church and hopes that, if adhered to will in no small measure make the pastoral care and counselling in the Church very effective, impacting positively on the total lives of the aged:

- i. Leadership of the Church, during the aged week should roll out programmes to address the issue of abuses of the aged in the Church and society.
- ii. Leadership should have separate programmes organized in the church for the aged alone to share with them their experiences and challenges, through that broad perspectives of their challenge become visible.
- iii. Church leadership in meeting this pastoral need of the church must roll out a policy on visitation with the entire church so that regular visitation to the aged and other church members are embarked on to find out from them individually their respective needs and challenges. This will help leadership to address needs on individual basis since some challenges may be specific and peculiar to certain individuals.
- iv. In the face of many health challenges facing the aged, the church can set up a medical board that shall be tasked to organize health programmes for the aged on regular basis so that the aged will be encouraged to embark of regular medical checks and exercises

and to educate them on healthy life style and nutritional needs among others to ensure good health and longevity among them.

- v. It is recommended that aged welfare scheme be instituted in all the churches so that the church does not wait for conditions to aggravate before looking for support from church members. This aged welfare initiative could support the medical board and the medical bills of the aged.
- vi. The high patronage by majority of the aged regarding communion shows how the aged attach importance to this sacrament. It means that the few who could not attend were not at peace with themselves at all and it is recommended that those who are invalid be also visited and given the chance to partake in Holy Communion.
- vii. The Church can set up a recreational center for the aged so that they could meet and interact with each other and with other members of the church. This could help solve the problem of boredom and rejection.
- viii. Families of the aged, children, spouses and relatives could occasionally be gathered by the Church and educated on how to successfully cater for the aged. This to a large extent will breed peace among families and patience to deal with the aged.

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APPENDIX

PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING OF THE AGED, RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

IN SELECTED CONGREGATIONS IN THE BOHYEN DISTRICT OF ASANTE

PRESBYTERY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA.

The researcher is a Masters' student of Christian Service University College pursuing Master of Arts in Christian Ministry with Management. He is a reverend minister and conducting a research on the pastoral care and counseling of the aged in the churches within the district. He promises to keep all information confidential and to respect all views that will be presented.

Name: -----

Sex: -----

Age: -----

Congregation. -----

How many years have you been in this congregation? -----

Did you hold any position in the church? Yes or No. If yes, indicate the position(s)

SPIRITUAL;

Are you able to attend church regularly? Yes or No. If yes how many times in a month.-----

If no, give reason(s).-----

Do you enjoy the content of the normal church services? Yes or No. If yes, how or to what extent? -----

----- If no, state the reason(s) ----

Do your congregation have any group called 'aged group' or elderly group? Yes or No.

Are there any special and separate programmes often organized for the aged in your congregation? If yes, state them -----

How often are you visited within the year by the pastor? -----

How often are you visited within the year by the presbyters? -----

How often are you visited within the year by any church member(s) -----

How often are you visited within the year by any other group in the church -----

Are you a communicant? Yes or No. If yes how regular do you attend communion? -----

If No, any special reason(s) for not partaking in the Lords' supper? -----

ECONOMICS:

What is/are the sources of your income? -----

Does your congregation have any welfare incentive or package for the aged? Yes or No. If yes, explain. -----

How many times do you eat in a day? Once, Twice or Thrice. Any special reason(s) for your answer? -----

Do you have any health challenges? Yes or No. If yes, can you state any health challenge(s)

you have?

How is/are the health challenge(s) above taken care of financially? -----

Do you have any financially supporting system in the society in which you live being provided by an individual, an NGO or the government for the aged? Yes or No. If yes, state the name(s) of the supporting system(s) -----

Are you a beneficiary of such supporting system? Yes or No. If yes, how? If no, why? -----

SOCIAL:

Have you joined any social group in the society? If yes, what benefit do you get?-----

Are you married? Yes or No. If no, state the reason -----

How is your marital life? -----

If married, is your wife staying with you? Yes or No. If no, give reason(s)-----

Are your children staying with you? Yes or No. If no, give reason(s)-----

If no to the above question, how often do you children visit you within a week, a month or a year? -----

Do you have any other relatives visiting you? Yes or No. If yes, indicate it -----

How do you assess societal attitude toward the aged in your society? -----

Do you go through any abuse in the church or in the society in which you live? If yes, what are they?

Are there any more challenges you which to share? Yes or No. If yes indicate it/ them.-----