

*Asbury Theological Seminary*

1.800.2.ASBURY • WWW.ASBURYSEMINARY.EDU

204 N. Lexington Avenue • Wilmore, KY 40390 • 859.858.3581

8401 Valencia College Lane • Orlando, FL 32825 • 407.482.7500

The Copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

**By the using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.**

**© Asbury Theological Seminary 2009**

## ABSTRACT

### THE HOLISTIC MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN NORTHERN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH GHANA

by

Emmanuel K. Asare-Kusi

In the world today, people look for progress in all aspects of life. This study calls the Methodist Church Ghana to plan effective ways of doing mission in the northern part of Ghana. The expansion of the kingdom of God by the church needed for growth can be enhanced and sustained with the commitment of the whole church in many practical ways.

The responses to the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews of key people connected with the holistic mission of the church indicated the need for a more aggressive holistic approach to culturally relevant evangelism and leadership development for future growth. The problems hindering the mission of the church can be overcome when the church no longer ignores or rationalizes the spiritual, social, and physical issues affecting the northern Ghana.


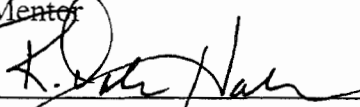
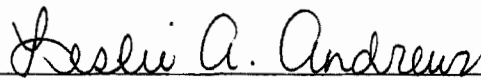
DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled  
THE HOLISTIC MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN NORTHERN GHANA:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH GHANA

presented by

Emmanuel K. Asare-Kusi

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for the  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY degree at  
Asbury Theological Seminary

 _____ Mentor	_____ May 11, 2007 Date
 _____ Internal Reader	_____ May 11, 2007 Date
 _____ Dean, Doctor of Ministry Program	_____ May 11, 2007 Date

THE HOLISTIC MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN NORTHERN GHANA:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH GHANA

A Dissertation  
Presented to the Faculty of  
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirement for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Emmanuel K. Asare-Kusi

May 2007

© 2007

Emmanuel Asare-Kusi

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vii
CHAPTER 1 PROBLEM .....	1
Background .....	1
Context of the Project .....	2
The Problem .....	3
Biblical and Theological Foundations .....	5
Purpose of the Project .....	10
Research Questions .....	10
Research Question #1 .....	10
Research Question #2 .....	10
Definitions of Terms .....	11
Methodology .....	13
Participants .....	13
Population and Sample .....	13
Instrumentation .....	14
Delimitation and Generalizability .....	14
Overview of the Study .....	15
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE .....	16
The Spiritual and Physical Challenges of Mission .....	19
A Theological Discussion of Mission .....	21
Mission Work in the Past .....	23

Mission Work in Northern Ghana.....	24
Political Conditions.....	27
Mission and Culture.....	28
Mission and Islamic Influences in the North.....	32
A Holistic Mission.....	33
Leadership and Mission.....	35
Mission Priority.....	38
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....	42
Purpose of the Study.....	42
Research Questions.....	43
Research Question #1.....	43
Research Question #2.....	43
Methodology.....	44
Population and Sample.....	44
Instrumentation.....	45
Pilot Test.....	46
Data Collection.....	46
Main Variable.....	47
Data Analysis.....	48
CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS.....	50
Profile of Participants.....	50
Method and Process of Data Analysis.....	56
Findings of Research Question #1.....	59

Findings of Research Question #2 .....	65
Participants' Suggestions for Approaches to Effective Mission .....	66
Summary of Interviews of Two Founding Members of the Church in the North .....	68
Summary of Major Findings .....	72
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION.....	74
Major Findings.....	74
Explanations and Discussions.....	75
Weakness of Study.....	81
Contributions to Research Methodology .....	82
Future Studies .....	82
Personal Reflections.....	82
Contribution to Present Ministry and Recommendations.....	83
Conclusion and the Way Forward.....	86
APPENDIXES .....	88
A. Questionnaire of Needs for the Holistic Mission in the North .....	88
B. Semi-Structured Interview Questions .....	90
C. Interview with the Bishop .....	93
D. Interview with a Project Officer .....	95
E. Interview with a Youth Leader.....	97
F. Interview with an Indigene Scholar.....	99
WORKS CITED .....	101
WORKS CONSULTED .....	105



## TABLES

Table	Page
4.1 The Average Church Attendance of Adult Members of Methodist Churches in the Three Regions of Northern Ghana.....	52
4.2 The Number of Methodist Churches in Existence by 1987 and 1992 in Northern Ghana .....	53
4.3 The Population of the Three Northern Regions in 1987 and 1992.....	53
4.4 The Population of Three Southern Regions in 1987 and 1992.....	54
4.5 The Methodist Churches in Three Southern Regions, 1987 and 1992 .....	55
4.6 Statistical Returns of Churches and Active Workers (End of 2004) .....	56
4.7 Statistical Returns of Church Membership (End of 2004).....	57
4.8 Summary of the 100 Responses on Items 6 and 7 of Appendix A .....	61
4.9 Responses of Impact on, Items 8 and 9 of Appendix A.....	63

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

God has used many people to contribute greatly to my completion of this four year doctoral program at the International Beeson Center of Asbury Theological Seminary and this dissertation. I offer my profound appreciation to them.

Dr. David Rambo (Director, Beeson International Leaders), Rev. Mike Mozley (The Mission Society), and Rev. Dr. Symonds Botchey have encouraged and supported me in various ways from the process of admission in Wa to this time. My “Macedonian Church,” the Memphis Christ United Methodist Church, Tennessee, sponsored me and provided the needed assistance for this program. God richly bless you all and make you a blessing to many more.

My mentor, Dr. Tapiwa Mucherera offered many useful suggestions during the proposal stage to this dissertation writing. Dr. Leslie Andrews, the Dean of the Doctor of Ministry Program and her staff, especially Mrs. Judy Seitz, have been patient and supportive during these processes. Please accept my sincere thanks.

The participants involved in the research were past and present hardworking clergy and lay workers of the Northern Ghana Diocese. For the service and sacrifice you are making in the work of God for his people in this difficult area of Ghana and for your assistance and cooperation during my three visits to the North for this data collection, I pray the good Lord will reward your efforts and make you more fruitful in future.

I extend a special appreciation to my classmates from twelve nations of the world who provided excellent friendship, fellowship and practical lessons for the ministry of God. May God continue to bind us together as we reach our world for the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish to thank the professors and staff of the Beeson International Center for their

assistance in many ways during the past four years, which has made the dream to become a reality.

I wish to express my gratitude to my church, the Methodist Church Ghana, who gave me permission for this program. My thanks also go to the staff of the Evangelism, Mission, and Renewal Division especially Miss Doris Otenkorang, Rev. Kirk Sims, and Rev. Mrs. Nicole Sims for their support in various ways.

Finally to my family: my wife, Felicia, and children, Eunice, Samuel, and Jesephine together with my mother, Madame Grace Asare of blessed memory, and my senior brother, Major Charles Adu Kusi and friends; Rev. Dr. J. A. Quashie and Rev. Lawrence Beka, I thank you all very much for your prayer support, sacrifice, and patience for me in the service of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and especially during these past four years of being away from home most of the time. May God richly bless you all for your love and concern for me.

Last but not least, I give thanks to my God for his grace and mercy to me. Without his Holy Spirit's presence to strengthen, direct, and sustain me in difficult times of travels and meeting deadlines, I would not have made it. To him belongs all the glory.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **PROBLEM**

#### **Background**

The Christian religion is relevant and beneficial to all people in the world at all times. God planned since creation to make himself known to all people for true worship. Humanity at various times rejected the ways of God and came under the power and dominion of Satan. In many places the consequences were confusion, hopelessness, and disasters that affected the people concerned in their spiritual and social lives. God prepared a savior in the person of his own son, Jesus Christ, who died to save all who come to him in faith.

Indeed many people have followed Jesus for true salvation since the time of the apostles in the early church in all the continents of the world. About two billion of the world's six billion people are Christians. Christ has sent the Church to reach out to all the other four billion, two billion of which have never heard the good news of free salvation. The primary mission of the Church is the total salvation of all people in all lands of the world. This task demands total commitment and practical action by all Christians who seek to accomplish this mission of God.

The goal of the Church is to fulfill the command of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 28:19: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (NIV). Jesus gave this instruction to the disciples in Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Church of today must continue the mission of these early disciples and reach the world with the gospel message, which will bring salvation and hope to all the people of the world.

### **Context of the Project**

During the past fifteen years of my full-time work as a pastor of the Methodist Church Ghana, I have served seven years at a post in the Northern Ghana Diocese, then called the Northern Ghana District. I have been working since 1991 in this vast deprived area of Ghana and have been concerned with the slow spiritual, social, and physical growth in this area. The mission of the church seemed to be blurred in many respects in this area. Many obstacles seemed to hinder effective holistic mission and growth of the expansion of the kingdom of God among the many ethnic groups in this vast land in Ghana, which has great potential.

My first station was Tamale in the northern mission area of the church in Ghana. I was the youth pastor and evangelism coordinator for three years at this place. I helped, by the grace of God, to mobilize the youth for evangelistic programs in the towns and villages. The Methodist Church Ghana Conference in 1994 transferred me to Kumasi as an assistant pastor of a congregation of about two thousand people. This church is the mother church for all the churches in the north of Ghana planted by the early missionary Thomas Freeman in about 1860. I spent three years there, and in 1997 I had the opportunity to attend further studies in mission at Fuller Theological Seminary at Pasadena, California.

After earning a master of arts in cross-cultural studies, I returned in 1999 for voluntary service again in the missionary area of northwest of Ghana, a traditional and

Muslim area. I was involved in church planting in some of the villages without churches. I was also involved in training the locals as responsible leaders for God's ministry and establishing new schools. In fact, my desire to be more effective in training many leaders for the kingdom of God led me to this course at Asbury Theological Seminary. My goal is to be part of God's holistic mission to the world, which this study seeks to address.

I seek to be part of the expansion of the kingdom of God especially in church planting. I share in this statement by my professor C. Peter Wagner in his book Church Planting for Greater Harvest, "The most effective, evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting of churches" (11). Thus, my interest is the mission in the northern part of Ghana, which has experienced slow progress of church growth, especially of the Methodist tradition.

### **The Problem**

The Portuguese introduced Christianity to Ghana in the fifteenth century. They were Catholic traders who also desired to plant Christian churches in Ghana, then called the Gold Coast. Missionaries from Portugal, France, Holland, and later England followed them. The tasks of these pioneer missionaries were confined at that time to the coastal towns. The Basel Evangelical Missionary Society later sent other missionaries to reach some towns beyond the coast. These early missionaries met hostile conditions from some of the people as well as various diseases, which resulted in death for some of the missionaries who therefore could not make the desired impact (Falk 117-20).

In 1835, the Wesley Missionary Society also sent Joseph Dunwell as its first missionary to promote Methodism in Ghana. Some local believers led by William DeGraft, had been meeting to study the Bible on their own, especially those associated

with the castle school. A request to Captain Porter, a British sea captain, for Bibles from England led to the sending of Joseph Dunwell to establish the Methodist Church Ghana in 1835. Dunwell and the other missionaries, the Wrigleys and Harrops who came after him, did not live beyond six months of their arrivals. Nevertheless, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, a British missionary of African decent, came to water the seed sown by the pioneer missionaries. He was able to penetrate into the interior of the then Gold Coast as far as to Kumasi with the gospel message. Rev. Freeman with the assistance of the local believers expanded the work to many areas in Ghana and beyond to other countries. F. L. Bartels writes, "Freeman was concerned to extend the work of the church not only into the interior of Ghana but even to other parts of West Africa" (53). A local evangelist, Sampson Oppong also helped to win many souls and promoted Methodism especially in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions of Ghana.

In the ensuing years Methodism and other Christian groups made an impact in southern Ghana by planting many churches. On the social front, the church established many health centers and schools to train many people. A product of the first-class secondary school, Mfantshipim founded in Cape Coast by the Methodist Church Ghana, is Kofi Annan, the former United Nation Secretary General. Unfortunately, the mission of the Church to northern Ghana delayed for many years, mainly due to politics. The British colonial rule at that time did not allow the missionaries to work in the perceived Muslim dominated northern Ghana for fear of reprisals. Rev. Remiguis McCoy describes the Roman Catholic Church, which was the first to be established in the North in 1906:

The British officer in charge there was not favorable to the opening of a Catholic Mission in that area because, as in the case of Northern Nigeria, colonial authorities wanted to leave Wa to the Muslims. The pretext was the unsettled state affairs after "The wars." The Military Forces were still

in charge in Wa and they did not want to add to their troubles by admitting the provocative presence of a Christian band of missionaries into a Muslim stronghold. (30)

The mission task to northern Ghana was thus delayed for more than fifty years. Indeed, many missionaries made several attempts during that time to reach out and assist the people of the north in any way possible.

The Methodists made an attempt to reach the northwest in 1913. Bartels reports the sending of two missionaries, Rev. H. G. Martin to Tamale and Rev. W. G. Waterworth to Wa. This effort fizzled out with no positive results (62).

Nevertheless, another attempt by the Church in 1955 helped restart the mission work of the Methodist Church in northwest Ghana. The key person here was a Ghanaian missionary from the south of Ghana, Rev. Paul Adu who brought many people to faith in Christ Jesus and planted many Methodist churches at that time. The momentum was not sustained and many denominations have now overtaken the Methodist Church. I undertook a serious research to provide answers to why the Methodist Church has not been successful and what efforts need to be made now to rectify the situation.

### **Biblical and Theological Foundations**

Many people have been in the mission of God since creation. These people served as God's servants and spokespersons at various times. In the Old Testament for example, God called Moses and prepared him to deliver his people from their captivity in Egypt. Exodus 3:9-10 reads, "And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." Moses obeyed God after initial resistance to this task. God used him to lead the people from Egypt to Canaan.



God called many prophets, such as Amos who warned his people to do the right thing and to stop oppressing their own people. Nevertheless, many people describe Jonah as the “unwilling missionary” who reached out to Nineveh to bring repentance to the people.

In the New Testament, Jesus declared his mission in the synagogue at Nazareth to show the direction of his ministry to all manner of people:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. (Luke 4:18-19)

He also called the apostles and other disciples to make the saving work of Christ beneficial to others. These people served the Church and its people. The apostle Peter, chief minister of the gospel, for example, after giving up his job as a fisherman, went out together with others to fish for people for the kingdom of God. Mark 6:12-13 affirm this mission as follows: “They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.”

As part of the introduction to this study, I wish to dwell on mission as seen in the early church and recorded in the book of Acts. God brought the Church into being after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Ajith Fernando pointed out the following concerning the filling of the 120 believers on the day of Pentecost as follows: “The filling with the Holy Spirit has two aspects in the book of Acts. One is a quality of life that should characterize all Christians. The other is an anointing for special challenges” (32).

Indeed the ministry in the book of Acts is of God in Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit was active and he moved many people to receive Christ Jesus as their

Lord and Savior as they repented from their sins in response to the apostles' preaching.

The mission of the early Church is described vividly in Acts 2:42-47:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to every one as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The Church began its task with the coming of the Holy Spirit and the power given to proclaim the gospel so the others would be part of this new movement. The primary mission was to focus on building the believers in this new faith (Hesselgrave 20).

The early disciples engaged in serious evangelism, backed by the power of God. The unity and service by members to each other led to the quality growth of the Church. The later mission of the apostle Paul further brought a massive expansion of the Church. Paul, Barnabas and Timothy reached many with the gospel especially through their missionary journeys described in Acts 13-20. Paul and his assistants like Barnabas and Timothy suffered a great deal of persecution, yet they pressed on to fulfill the mission God gave to them.

Nevertheless, this mission of God as experienced by the early church was unique in many ways. Michael Green points out concerning the nature of this new movement:

None of the mystery religions demanded a radically different ethic of its members. But Christianity, like Judaism did. It demanded a standard as rigorous as the highest ideals of Stoics, and went on far beyond them in making love for one's neighbor rather than cold duty the norm for behavior. The Apologists are full of the change that comes over the life of a man converted to Christ. (52)

Christianity demands a commitment that can be costly in many ways. The easy and comfortable life of the Christian is challenged especially as he or she makes sacrifices in reaching out to others with gospel.

The place of the power of the Holy Spirit was evident in the ministry of the early church. God performed many miracles in Jesus Christ by these early Christians. Again, Paul the apostle manifested this power of God during his missionary journeys to expand the kingdom and to open new churches especially in the Gentile lands. "For Paul the crucial issue was the appropriate basis of faith. He wanted one's faith not to depend on human wisdom or persuasiveness. He was convinced that true faith needed to rest on a 'demonstration of the Spirit's power'" (Warner 35).

Mission cannot be effective without the presence and the participation of the Holy Spirit, who indeed empowers and directs God's people in ministry as in the book of Acts. In this mission of the Church, many of the early converts were open to this work of the Holy Spirit, who was in control of the expansion and growth. God is behind missions and in his son Jesus Christ works to accomplish this task to humanity by the power of the Holy Spirit. Many people accept that mission is the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son to the Father through the Holy Spirit on behalf of the Church and the world. The essence of mission is to make people draw closer to God and worship him, especially in the Church as committed Christians even with all of the human faults.

Billy Graham made this observation concerning the mission of the Church, which is imperfect but always relevant:

The rest of us are at best but repentant sinners, try as we may follow His magnificent example, and the church is but turning a blind eye toward itself when it claims infallibility or perfection for itself or any of its members. (181)

Holistic mission also demands the lay participation of the Church. As I pointed out earlier concerning the establishment of Methodist Church in Ghana, the foundation members were lay people. They had to organize and study the Bible as they fellowshiped together before the coming of the first missionary, Joseph Dunwell, from England. R. Paul Stevens rightly makes this observation:

While we observe in the Church today two classes of people separated by education, ordination and intonation, we discover in the New Testament one ministering people with leaders also members of the “laos” serving them to equip the people for the work of the ministry. (30)

The laity of the Church played a significant role in mission in the past and even do so today.

The ordained pastors who are said to be professionals cannot do the work of ministry alone but need the laypeople to move the church forward. The ordained pastors are too few to accomplish all the tasks of ministry whereas members of the laity are many. The church must empower and encourage them for the Church to accomplish its task for the expansion of the kingdom of God. All pastors and the laity should be involved and effectively complement each other in this mission task of northern Ghana.

The holistic mission of the church today demands that Christians must not underestimate the role of the Holy Spirit. Again, that ministry is of God through Jesus and is made possible and relevant by the power of the Holy Spirit. A major reason for the high incidence of burn out in ministry today according to Fernando, is the fact that many are ministering in their own strength rather than in the Spirit’s inexhaustible resources. He therefore concludes, “A key to maintaining the fullness of the spirit and a godly life is having a heart receptive to the Holy Spirit. If we are relying on the Spirit, he will show us when we are moving in dangerous direction” (34).

The Holy Spirit provides direction for the balanced mission. The church must seek new ways of outreach that meet the spiritual, social, and physical needs of these people of northern Ghana. The one-sided approach of mission in northern Ghana falls short of the example of mission indicated in the book of Acts by the early disciples.

### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this study focused on ways to improve the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana in order to achieve the needed growth and impact in the community. In the evaluation of the practical historical developments of mission, I have sought to research both positive and negative influences that affected the church. The study can help the Methodist Church Ghana and indeed the other denominations to revise their mission strategies for effective and holistic impact in this area of Ghana and beyond. Christian A. Schwarz has pointed out that “[t]he Gospel is sometimes rejected because of the message of the cross itself. On the other hand, some obstacles are erected by God’s ‘ground troops’ using faulty methods” (79). The church will have to evaluate its methods for effective mission in the northern Ghana.

### **Research Questions**

In order to fulfill the purposes of this study, I have identified two research questions to help explore the strategies for the holistic growth of the church in northern Ghana.

#### **Research Question # 1**

What are the needs for the holistic mission of the church in northern Ghana?

#### **Research Question # 2**

What are some of the approaches that the Methodist Church Ghana can plan for effective holistic mission in the future?

### **Definitions of Terms**

In considering the topic of “The Holistic Mission of the Church in Northern Ghana: A Case Study of the Methodist Church Ghana,” the key terms that come up are mission and holistic.

Mission is simply seen as the whole task of the Church; however, Darrell L.

Guder et al. rightly make this observation about mission:

We have come to see that mission is not merely an activity of the church. Rather, mission is the result of God’s initiative, rooted in God’s purpose to restore and heal creation. “Mission” means “sending” and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God’s action in human history.

(4)

In effect this study seeks to understand God’s purpose for the people in this area who must be fully restored to him. Again, mission has to do with the church’s desire to be used of God to reach other people in different cultures and lands with the gospel message. Mission, in simple terms, involves the preaching of the gospel message by the Church for decisions in which people convert to the Lord Jesus Christ. Richard Hogg has said of the church: “The Church is sent. It is apostolic. It lives in mission until the end of time (40). Mission demands the obedience to the Lord’s command of reaching out to the world for the salvation of many.

Furthermore, an African professor of World Christianity at McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ogbu U. Kalu describes mission in this way: “Mission is not taking the gospel to the poor of the Third World, however, laudable such an endeavor may be. Mission begins in the individual and reaches out to the community and the wider world” (17). Thus, in mission the individual in the church goes out to places and peoples with the assurance of a better relationship with God.

The term holistic used here has to do with the complete and balanced way in which this mission of God is to be undertaken. In this case the holistic mission has to do with the proclamation of the gospel through many activities and avenues: socially, physically, and spiritually. Many churches are only interested in aspects of the process of God's redemption to the conspicuous neglect of many other important realities of life.

David J. Bosch makes this true observation of the nature of this holistic mission of the Church with Jesus as an example: "What amazes one again and again is the inclusiveness of Jesus' mission. It embraces both the poor and the rich, both the oppressed and the oppressor, both the sinner and the devout" (28). From the above one could say that holistic mission concerns the total development and liberation of individuals in a community. Moreover, Howard Snyder explains this ministry to the poor as part of the church's holistic mission:

Preaching the gospel to the poor, however, does not mean preaching at the poor, but incarnating the Good News among the poor as Jesus Christ did, through healing, teaching, touching, preaching, and forming kingdom communities. In this way the church visibly expresses the key mark of apostolicity. (51)

Snyder thus suggests the need to identify the various issues facing individuals and to reach out in practical ways to God's people in their particular time and situation. Kalu once again affirms in this holistic nature of mission: "Mission, like evangelism, is the gospel set on the wings; it shoots through local context and wider vitas. Mission is the mandate to confront poverty, oppression, powers and dehumanizing forces, with the power of the Holy Spirit" (17). A holistic mission thus transcends the spiritual to the social, economic, political, as well as other areas of human existence.

## **Methodology**

I prepared the questionnaire concerning the mission work in northern Ghana for thirty ordained pastors who have served in this area. I also selected seventy lay leaders who completed the questionnaire that I gave to them. Some of these participants still live in the North and others have been transferred to the south of Ghana. I personally met some of the participants for interviews and clarified some of the responses to the questions. The goal of the questionnaire was to seek information from the primary sources—the people who have worked in the three regions of the North.

### **Participants**

I selected these one hundred participants based on their association with the work in northern Ghana and their willingness to provide the needed information. Many of these pastors and leaders of the church were literate and understood the questions in the questionnaire with little or no explanation.

I further selected twenty ordained pastors and twenty lay leaders out of the one hundred participants for the interviews. They also made useful suggestions for the future mission of the church and this project.

### **Population and Sample**

All members of the Methodist Church Ghana who have lived in northern Ghana and were literate and willing to participate in this study formed the population for this research. They included pastors and lay leaders who have ever worked in this area. I considered only one hundred of these church members, made up of thirty ordained pastors and seventy lay leaders. This sample is from the 120 members that I gave out the questionnaire. These members completed the questionnaire I gave to them.



I selected from this group of one hundred participants, twenty pastors and twenty lay leaders for further interviews which were used to answer the research question number two.

### **Instrumentation**

The first part of this historical research work was extensive reading of books on the subject of the church, mission, and northern Ghana as well as church records.

I developed a researcher-designed questionnaire in order to get the necessary primary information from the one hundred participants. The participants were to identify the needs for holistic mission and to rank them according to their importance.

I also used semi-structured interview alongside the collection of coherent descriptions and evaluation of the holistic mission of the church by these forty key leaders. They were able to make concrete suggestions of ways to improve the holistic task of mission in this area.

### **Delimitation and Generalizability**

The study focused on a convenient sample of one hundred pastors and lay leaders identified from northern Ghana. The findings brought out the collective observations and problems of mission. A larger sample survey could have brought some other important issues not captured in these findings. Nevertheless, findings of the research point to what is to be done by the Methodist Church Ghana and other churches who are engaged in relevant and holistic mission in this area.

Many other church members have insight into the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana. Some members of the church are indeed the indigenous people who have been associated with the church for over fifty years of the

Methodist Church's existence in the northern Ghana. Nevertheless, because many are illiterate, including them as participants of the research would have been difficult.

The pastors and lay leaders selected were quite representative of the church members of the North. In addition, I believe they also sought inputs from those who were not selected to participate. The conclusions are generally a summary of the views of many who shared in the same concerns for the work of mission by the Methodist Church Ghana in this area of northern Ghana.

### **Overview of Study**

Chapter 2 reviews selected literature that concerns the Church's mission in the past and now. This chapter discusses the theological, historical foundation and practical issues of mission as related to the church in northern Ghana.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the project's design, the research questions and methods used, as well as the population and sample considered. It also points out the instrumentation process and the reliability and validity of the research. Chapter 3 also discusses the process of data collection, the use of variables, and data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and reports of the study undertaken in clear terms. Chapter 5 finally provides a summary, interpretations, and conclusions of the research study. It also gives possible direction to future research in that area. I also gave my own personal reflection of this task in the North and how this study has rekindled my vision and commitment to this task in the North.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE

Many scholars give various interpretations of mission and its relation to the Church. The notion of a special task assigned to someone or a group of people is clearly identified in the many definitions of mission. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, refers to the Medieval Latin word mission that indicated “an act or instance of sending.” It further described mission as “a ministry commissioned by a religions organization to propagate its faith or carry on humanitarian work” and finally as “assignment to or work in a field of missionary enterprise.”

Vincent J. Donovan in his classic book Christianity Rediscovered makes this observation: “The word mission is used in different ways, so many different ways today, that it has almost lost its meaning. In times past, the plural use of word ‘Mission’ referred to the foreign mission fields” (100). The old notion is to say if some one spoke about missions then, that person was referring to some one leaving his or her country to other land to preach the gospel message.

In some instances scholars identified mission as the ministry of the Church. In this sense it is the office, duties, or actions of the Church. George G. Hunter, III, for example, makes this positive comment: “Jesus Christ calls his Church to love, believe in, serve, reach out to, welcome, and receive those people and populations that society’s ‘establishment’

regards as unlikely or even hopeless, and to deploy their convert in witness and ministry” (41).

In discussing the need of the Church to take up seriously the apostolic ministry, Hunter again points out that “(t)his Mission involves planting new churches, reaching people of other lands and cultures, and especially reaching ‘way out’ to hopeless or otherwise unlikely” people and peoples” (67).

A. C. Krass, writing about the goal of the Church’s ministry, makes this identification of mission clearer:

Thus the Church, in its ministry, is carrying out God’s will that all creation should know His once-secret plan: that all people in this life should be freed and should come to mature fellowship in union with God, and that in eternity they should share His glory (Col. 1:27). This is the goal of God’s action, in Christ and in the ministry and mission of the Church. The Church exists only for mission. The Church is Mission. If there is no mission, then there is no Church.  
(11)

In explaining the mission and ministry of the Church, Krass quickly brings in the role of the Holy Spirit without whom mission would be impossible. He states that the Holy Spirit is the power behind Christian mission. He builds up the Church so that it may take part in mission. The Church must always be responsive to his working and his leading. Although the Church has no one plan for mission and ministry everywhere and at all times, it does have one spirit who enables people to exercise ministry at all times and in each place (21).

In the book The Mission of an Evangelist, a compilation of reports of the Amsterdam 2000 Conference, the link of mission and evangelism is made with this affirmation:

[T]his term is used both of the father's sending of the Son into the world to become its Savior and of the Son sending the Church into the world to spread the gospel, perform works of love and justice, and seek to disciple everyone to Himself. The Mission of the Church has at its heart world evangelization. We have from our Lord a mandate to proclaim the Good News of God's love and forgiveness to everyone, making disciples, baptizing and teaching all peoples. (450)

The participants of this conference rightly see mission as the heart of evangelism, and thus the people of God must respond positively to this task.

Ralph Winter, the director of World Mission Center in Pasadena, California, suggests the terms E0, E1, E2, and E3 types of evangelism. In E0, evangelism is within the particular church to the unsaved in the congregation. E1 has to do with outreach to neighbors and community. E2 type of evangelism extends to those outside the community with the same culture. When one moves from his or her own culture to a different culture to witness about the good news, then this type of evangelism is known as the E3 type of evangelism that can be termed as mission (108).

Mission moreover is defined in terms of the Church's role in the spiritual and social life of the people it seeks to reach out to, both far

and near. Other people also benefit positively from this mission by its very nature. David Watson explains the meaning of mission further:

A healthy church will always be especially concerned about its missionary work both on its own doorstep and overseas. It will try not to be insular and parochial, but develop steadily a worldwide perspective of the work of God, and encourage everyone to be directly involved in some form of missionary concern. (299)

These foundational theories of the definition of mission serve as a guide in the understanding and evaluation of this task in this study. William Wiersma and Stephen Jurs ask, "How are theories obtained or where do we get theories? Certainly one source is the research literature and conceptual writings in a discipline" (19). The study thus proceeds from here to consider some writings from people on this mission of God.

## The Spiritual and Physical Challenges of Mission

The mission of the church is challenging in many ways. Many obstacles may hinder fruitful ministries which are in the plan of God. Paul in Ephesians 6:12 explains the battle in ministry against spiritual forces: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

The devil is indeed at war with all Christians and especially those in the forefront of mission. He sometimes attacks the physical body with sickness or stress that impedes the work of God to humanity. At other times, he will bring persecution, discouragement, and false accusations through other people who claim to be Christians. The devil may also attack the family and destroy the integrity of the Christian. Stephen Tomkins gives the example of John Wesley's sufferings as the result of his passion for mission: "He had a variety of accidents and frequently suffered various pains and illness" (98). The devil may attack any Christian worker in any part of the world so as to cause ineffectiveness and lack of focus for ministry.

Moreover, other challenges of mission have to do with physical suffering and persecution. The apostle Peter affirms this in his words: "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you" (1 Pet. 4:12). Persecutions may come in various sizes and forms in ministry, but the

Christian must overcome. A subtle thing that may destroy the ministry of a person is the power of unresolved hurts and disappointments that can affect people in diverse ways. Christians are urged in all these things to bring all hurts to the Lord Jesus Christ, to the cross:

As we bring our disappointments to the cross, we too may find ourselves being confronted. The suffering Messiah, the one who was crucified, will reveal our false expectations and uncover our idols. It will be painful and unsettling, another blow to an already disappointed heart. We may be tempted to run from it, instead walk towards the cross. (S. Seamands 72)

The agents of God in mission have experienced personal and external problems in ministry at various places. The Lord Jesus himself had intervened to help and deliver people to overcome such difficult situations.

The ministry brings problems from within and outside of a person. One is expected to identify these challenges big or small and deal with them. Other human, material, and financial resources affect mission work. Many are illiterate, as is the case in northern Ghana, and are not able to put their zeal to good use. On several occasions the needed material and simple equipment necessary for ministry is just not available. Added to these problems is lack of financial support for mission work, especially in many villages. The long distances between towns and villages and the high cost of fuel can hinder ministry travels and makes outreach programs difficult. Many church members are still not gainfully employed and are thus too poor to contribute meaningfully to support God's ministry.



Greg Ogden gives this encouragement to all Christians: “God’s kingdom is an invading force, and we are the ground troops. This kingdom penetrates the darkness” (201). The problems of mission in northern Ghana can be associated with the sentiments of the writers above. The assurance, however, is that the people of God can find a way out even in such difficult situations.

### **A Theological Discussion of Mission**

The mission of the Church is rooted in the Great Commission of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20). The main task of God for mission is converting the peoples and nations. When God called Abram, the purpose was to reach out and bless the nations of the world. In Genesis 12: 3b one reads, "And all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you." In relating to God's mission, Christians have done many things commanded in the Bible and practiced by the early disciples. The Church indeed is commanded to "[b]e committed to making more and better disciples. Anything less won't do" (George 154). The call of God to his people is for them to go into the world to make disciples.

In one of the popular parables of Jesus, he indicates the nature of practical holistic mission in Matthew 25:34-36:

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

God has called all Christians to be his agents and to cooperate with him to make the first step of meeting the spiritual and physical needs of humanity. The call to mission has persisted since the early church to the present time, but Christians have always found a way to accomplish the mission as they accept the nature of this task. Christians must therefore be willing to make the needed sacrifices and totally

depend on God who is more than willing and able to save and use his people for his name sake.

God's mission is for all to reach out to many with the gospel. The Church must train many laypeople to be effective workers in the service of God. These workers will indeed expand the holistic mission as commanded by God in the years to come as they did in time of the apostles. Charles Van Engen points out the nature of this mission:

Acts provides a detailed description of the earliest days of the church. It is made clear that loving "Koinonia" fellowship, a communal life, a "kerygmatic" proclamation that Jesus is Lord, a sharing, with those in need through loving diaconal ministry all brought about a powerful witness to the church's missionary nature. (97)

Holistic mission therefore involves preaching, fellowshiping, concern for social life, and care of the people of God.

Nevertheless, many Christians over the years have not taken their place in this assignment from God to proclaim salvation to all. The mission starts from the home because God has promised to save those who believe and their households (Acts 16:31). Husbands who are Christians must reach out to their wives, and in the same vein wives must reach out to their husbands who may not be Christians. Parents continue the mission of God by reaching out to children with the gospel message, so they can make the decision to receive the free salvation of God in Christ Jesus. The mission then extends to the community and beyond.

Furthermore, the call of God to his people is anchored in the fact that the world is under the grip and power of the devil and thus separated from God. Christians are ambassadors of Christ, reconciling people in all the nations with God:

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:20-21).

All the people of God must seek the lost and hopeless and to bring them to the dominion of God in Christ Jesus.

## Mission Work in the Past

Many organizations and churches have been involved in worldwide missions to reach other lands with the gospel. In Africa and particularly in Ghana, the subject of this study, mission activities were prominent in the nineteenth century. Louise Pirouet reports some Christians living on the west coast of Africa since the late fourteenth century. Roman Catholic priests and Protestant clergy had been attached to trading posts and had converted some Africans as well as serving their own people. An example of such a missionary was Reverend Philip Quaake (1745-1816) who went on to study in Europe. He was subsequently ordained as an Anglican priest. Some of his students later started the Bible Band, which later became the foundation of the Methodist Church in Ghana in 1835. The arrival of the first missionary Joseph Dunwell, helped to consolidate the work already begun by these students who had earlier requested Bibles for their Bible studies.

The Swiss Basel Mission Work in Ghana, then the Gold Coast, began in 1828. This work by the Basel missionaries was followed by a group of freed slaves from Jamaica in 1843, who came in to help with the task of teaching the natives the gospel. The first church was planted at Akropong, from which the mission spread to other parts of Ghana.

Pirouet again reports about the Catholic Church:

Roman Catholic Missionaries soon began to equal Protestants in number, and then to overtake them. Many

new missions were set up specifically to work in Africa, such as the society of African Missions, which began its work in 1856. New Protestant missions dated from a little later, and recruited as missionaries, people who had been influenced by the evangelical revivals of the late nineteenth century in England and American. These missions too were specially funded to work in Africa. (152)

The various mission boards at various times came to Ghana to propagate the gospel message to the people. The many denominations now firmly established in Ghana benefited from the work of these early missionaries.

The missionary task around the world made progress in the ensuing years that positively enhanced mission work in Ghana. The twentieth century has been significant in the mission enterprise in the world and Africa in particular. In 1815, only a few hundred Protestant missionaries throughout the world were found in Africa, and many of these belonged to missionary societies not directly related to a church, but by 1914 the number had grown to an amazing one thousand missionaries all over the world. Both the Catholic and Protestant missionaries were willing and prepared to work in Africa since the nineteenth century, which contributed greatly in the spread of Christianity during this time.

#### Mission Work in Northern Ghana

Northern Ghana is made up of three of the ten regions in Ghana. The Northern Region is the largest of them followed by Upper East and Upper West. These regions are among the deprived areas of Ghana,

and have for many years been declared a mission field. Many of the denominations have at one time or another sent missionaries from abroad or from southern Ghana to reach this area with the gospel. According to Peter Baker, the Catholic Church was the first to do missions in this area:

The Catholic White Fathers entered the then Gold Coast from French Upper Volta in 1906. The British at that time preferred each mission to have exclusive rights in its own area, and left it to the missions to pioneer provision of educational facilities. As a result a Catholic school was open in Navrongo in 1907, and a network of Catholic schools soon spread throughout the district: today the Catholic Church still maintains many of the elementary and secondary schools in the Navrongo area. (224)

The pioneer role of the Catholic Church in the north of Ghana helped other denominations to venture into this area with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Methodist Church made an attempt to reach the North in 1913 without success. The mission work by the Methodist Church Ghana began again in 1952 when the church set up the Evangelism Campaign Committee, with Rev. A. W. Banks as a member. They surveyed the work in the North and visited the Gonja Development Corporation in Damongo. They also had talks with the Baptists and Roman Catholics in that area. The Methodist Synod of 1954 agreed to raise funds for this work in the north beyond the Black Volta. One layman named Emmanuel Kusie from Sunyani in northern Ashanti is

reported to have made a significant cash donation towards this cause of reaching out to the North with the gospel (Bartels 262).

The Methodist Church initially had a joint work with the Presbyterians in Tamale where the church had stationed Rev. Paul Adu from the South of Ghana. The church again transferred him in 1955 to Wa to restart the official mission work of the Methodist Church in Northern Ghana. Peter Falk points out that “[i]n 1955 the church started mission work in the northern territories of Ghana. In a year they established ten church centers” (328). Protestant southern people working in northern Ghana established ecumenical congregations Tamale in the 1950s and 1960s, but as these congregations grew, those from the Methodist background wanted regular worship according to their own tradition, and the result was the founding of separate Methodist churches (Baker 35).

Significant mission work by the Assemblies of God Church began in the North by a missionary couple, the Shirers, who in 1931 started work in Yendi in the North. The mission was later extended to southern Ghana. The Presbyterian Church in Northern Ghana also made its presence known by planting some churches beyond Tamale, the regional capital. Basel Mission was instrumental in this task at Yendi in 1912. Nevertheless, the British colonial governments closed down the station just four years later (Baker 36).



Various denominational churches over the years have tried to convert the inhabitants in this area. The task of making disciples in this area was their goal. Krass points out the task of the Church in northern Ghana at this period:

God's plan for the world is not that the Church will be saved. God's plan is rather to use the Church for the Salvation of the world. When a man is saved, he is saved from the power of evil for the service of God. Mission which does not lead to discipleship is an abortion. Discipleship which does not take the form of mission is stillborn. Mission is the process of making more disciples to participate in mission. (11)

Christians have been engaged in mission to make disciples in all places as they do in this area.

The process of making disciples of the people of northern Ghana sometimes takes a long time, partly due to language barriers, but when it does happen, as in the book of Acts, the whole family or village may convert. Krass recounts this experience: "It was noticeable in our mission in Northern Ghana that those who were baptized always seemed to invite their as yet unevangelized kinsman and neighbors to witness their baptism" (95).

Mission work in the past has always taken place in the midst of problems. In southern Ghana, the unfavorable weather conditions held back the missionaries. The problem of sickness from malaria caused many deaths among the early missionaries. Many of the Basel missionaries died until the Jamaicans came in to help. Many of the Methodist missionaries could not live over six months. Thomas

Freeman, a missionary of African decent, survived to continue the task to the hinterland and beyond the borders of Ghana.

### Political Conditions

In the northern regions, the colonial government hindered, especially the Protestant missionaries whom they prevented from reaching these particular areas. The British colonial governments for many years considered the north of Ghana as a Muslim area and for the sake of "peace" prevented the Protestant missionaries for a long time to establish missions in the North. The colonial commissioner for the northern territories, Cecil Hamilton Armitage, was the man at the center of opposition to missionary work in the north of Ghana.

Furthermore, after gaining independence, the new government was not favorable to the mission enterprise. In Ghana again many conflicts occurred between the church and the government of that time. Pirouet, for example, points out that "one of the first tests for the churches came in President Nkrumah's Ghana. The people did not experience extreme oppression, but there were aspects of Nkrumah's rule which Christians found worrying" (180). The church in Ghana was seen as a threat to Nkrumah's government as it was able to question some negative actions and policies of the time. Some of the missionaries assisted the local churches to stand on their own, to the displeasure of the political rulers. The government made the youth to

show more faith and loyalty to it rather the church and the Christian  
faith.

## Mission and Culture

The culture of a group of people has to do with the various features of life such as food, shelter, transportation, family organizations, religious organization, and language. It also indicates the collective goals, ambitions, value systems, and common behavior of the people in that particular society. Culture is learned behavior and is socially acquired as traits are passed on from generation to generation. Eugene Nida further points out that these traits “are both transmittable and accumulative, and they are cultural in the sense that they are transmitted by the society, not by genes” (28).

Christians cannot ignore the problems of culture in any way as that may be the appropriate vehicle of producing authentic faith for the people of northern Ghana. “Religion in Africa is cultural reality; for centuries, it has been an integral expression of the African cultural background” (Martey 39). The neglect of the people’s culture as has happened in the past in this area made the church unattractive to many who saw Christians as destroying their very existence and identity.

A successful missionary must study, understand, and appreciate the culture of the people he or she is reaching out in a holistic way. For example, many people have a kind of belief in God, the Supreme Being, but their approach to worship may not be adequate. The task of the mission worker is, as it was for the apostle Paul in Athens in Acts 17:16-34, to explain the nature of true relationship and worship of God.

The effective witness with the gospel message among a group of people must begin with their beliefs and hope in life.

Furthermore, the method of conversion in many cultures is personal and individualistic, but for many cultures it is a mass movement of families. This fact of conversion must be recognized in line with the holistic outreach to communities in which Christians wish to serve and proclaim the good news of Christ Jesus to all. Some missionaries may be skeptical about the genuine nature of such conversions, but God in his own way and by the power of the Holy Spirit is able to bring many such souls into true faith. Nida again writes about such mass conversion:

We who lay so much stress upon individual action and decisions find it hard to conceive of people acting as a unit; yet in societies with highly integrated social structure, people do act together in a remarkable manner. The missionary must not underestimate the importance of such socially conditioned decisions nor fail to appreciate the individual's part. (178)

Many stories of these mass movements of people to the Christian faith have proved to be enduring in many cultures, especially in Africa. Many believe the Lord Jesus Christ with their households (Acts 16: 31) and even extended family members.

Moreover, some elements of culture can be used to promote effective outreach programs in many places. Cultural festivals, for example, can be a theological challenge and opportunity for mission. Professor Kwame Bediako, founder director of the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Center for Mission and Applied Theology in Akropong, Ghana makes this observation about traditional festivals:

They present us with the opportunity to embrace a people's world-view and sense of identity, and to explore how the gospel of the incarnation also finds a home in the lives, hopes, fears, and aspirations of people who are, like us, made in the image of God, and who are therefore called to the same obedience that comes from faith in the gospel (Rom. 1:15). (6)

Bediako thus affirms the fact of using this important element in all culture as a means of transformation of the people in the community. The individual can express his or her faith in that celebration to the praise and glory of God, the Creator of all things.

Nevertheless, all cultures have some negative aspects within them, and Christians must address them for this holistic mission in any area of the world, including northern Ghana. Many cultural practices may sometimes conflict with the Holy Scriptures in terms of promoting human freedom and dignity. In the north such cultural practices include the marriage of many wives including relatives of deceased family members and inhuman widowhood rites. Moreover, the fear of death and evil powers may lead many in that society to seek protection from false gods and *jujumen* at great cost. The people may have the problem in a culture of not working hard but rather engaging in excessive celebrations. As a result of these practices, many people will depend on others for assistance for survival and development.

The church can use the culture of a people positively to enhance their lives and promote respect among them once the church refines the negative aspects. Missionaries can use the knowledge about God of the people in that culture to explain how they can relate to the Lord Jesus. Lois Fuller suggests an effective way to use the culture of a people:

A missionary should discuss with the new believers to find out what they think would be the Christian way of doing things like having special prayers for pregnant women, conducting naming ceremonies for the children of Christians or dedicating babies to God. Then the missionary can encourage the believers themselves to organize such events. Parents want to place their children under spiritual protection, and it should be the protection of the true God. If Christianity neglects these things, the parents will be tempted to use the traditional methods which involve traditional beliefs. (110)

The church must involve the people in using aspects of culture for the growth of Christians in a particular area. Having a consensus for adaptations and changes of aspects of the culture by the people themselves brings positive results and progress.

Effective communication and proper language use promotes cultural harmony for effective mission. The problem of effective communication was a hindrance to the work of these missionaries. Many foreign and local missionaries had to rely on interpreters, some of whom were poor communicators. The language barriers aside, they also experienced conflicts with the cultural practices of the indigenous people in these areas.

Nida records an incident:

One Mission in West Africa had the misfortune of erecting a station on the hill which was regarded as taboo, that is, too sacred to be approached. It was not strange that even after many years, the Africans hesitated and some utterly refused to visit the Mission. (20)

The cultural barriers indeed led to the mistrust between the people and the missionaries.

Moreover, some of these inhabitants develop a sense of inferiority as they lived and interacted with the missionaries. They could not appreciate their way of living and this misunderstanding and mistrust created problems related to local social life of the people and these early missionaries.

Nida makes this observation concerning the perceived strange way of living of the missionaries:

The fact that missionaries frequently live in what to the foreigner's eyes is nothing less than a mission, wear clothes incomparably superior to what those around them can afford, and eat only strange but expensive, imported food might seem to constitute a major obstacle to the missionaries contact with the people. (257)

An important ingredient in the mission task has always been the effort missionaries have to make to be at the level of those they wish to reach. The effective way of mission is to live among the people and to work within the culture as in the case of northern Ghana. The process of discipleship is always effective when the new converts have easy access to those who preach the message of salvation to them.

### **Mission and Islamic Influences in the North**

At the heart of all cultures is the religion of that people. Islam has had an influence on the mission work of the church in northern Ghana. As previously mentioned, the colonial government prevented the early Christian missionaries from reaching out from the south of Ghana to the north due to perceived Muslim domination of this area. Indeed, Islam is growing in this place but largely at the expense of the traditional religion dominant in the past in this area.

The Hausa people and other traders from the Sahelian countries introduced Islam into the northern Ghana. Some of the people who embraced the religion did so with their entire family. They chose Arabic names and also adopted some customs from these Muslims. In the north the various sects of Islam including the Orthodox (Sunni), Shi'ites, Tijaniyya, and Ahmadiyya are prominent in many places and engage in many projects and outreach to old and new communities.

Nevertheless, many people from the north move to work in the south of Ghana. They settle in the northern communities called Zongos in the southern Ghana where most of them become converted to Islam as their relatives and friends welcome and assist them. The prominent ethnic groups in the North that have a large percentage of Muslims include Dogombas, Gonjas, Walas, and Mamprusis. The daily lives of these people, from



chieftaincy to family matters have Islamic influences. Other prominent ethnic groups in the north who were traditionalists included, Dagaabas, Frafras, Kusasis, Konkonbas, Chokosis, Bimobas and Bulsas.

Islam was growing in northern Ghana in 1960's in many areas. Baker reports that, the Muslim population for the whole of Ghana was 12 percent in 1960 and rose to 15 percent in 1970 and then to 17 percent in 1984(59). The current population of Muslims according to the Bureau of African Affairs—U.S. Department of State, however puts the population of Muslims in Ghana as 15.6 percent, Christians 69 percent, and traditional and indigenous beliefs at 8.5% (“People of Ghana”). On the national level, Islam seems to have declined, but the situation on the ground in the major towns and villages of northern Ghana is different. Baker makes this observation concerning the growth of Islam:

Islam in the northern Ghana is not standing still. If the Christian churches imagine they are dealing with a religion of aged white-bearded laborers and watchman, they should know that a new generation of Muslims has risen which is intent on capturing the vast pagan majority of the north for Muhammad and the Quran. (61)

The people of Ghana hear and see massive support from Saudi Arabia and Iran in supporting Muslim projects in northern Ghana and the active work of Muslim missionaries. The donations and social work are meant to win many to the Islamic faith and to spread their influence to all areas of the community.

### **A Holistic Mission**

The task of mission in the North, by the very nature of the conditions here, demands that it must be holistic in its outlook. Nida made this important observation concerning mission: “Successful missionary work should not be judged simply as a

question of the number of converts but on integrated self-propagating Church, adjusted to problems and needs of the surrounding culture” (25).

Mission work in the north of Ghana has sought in the past to provide holistic provision for the people. The churches have built schools, hospitals, and agricultural stations for the communities. Krass again in his work among people in the North writes:

I found this to be true in Chereponi where we become involved in many sorts of ministry. We saw that all our different ministries, health, agricultural work, literacy, preaching and pastoring congregations were part of God’s work for bringing new life to the Chokosi people. (162)

Many people have come to receive the love of God through these ministries of the church and have eventually made a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Further, for a holistic mission to bring real growth to a church, it must address the needs of the community in a balanced way and with patience as described by Carlos F. Cardoza-Orlandi: “Participating in cross-cultural mission requires mutual patience and compassion” (23). The church in the north must develop this attitude of patience and compassion for the people it seeks to reach with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rick Warren rightly observes that “there is no single key to Church health and Church growth, there are many keys. The Church is not called to do one thing it is called to do many things. That’s why balance is so important” (128). The church must have a purpose-driven vision for the mission. Warren makes this suggestion: “A purpose driven church must go a step further and rigorously apply its purposes to every part of the church, programming, scheduling, budgeting, staffing, preaching and so forth” (137).

Holistic mission demands the further care and building of the community and people the church reaches out to, as should be the case in northern Ghana. J. S. Pobee gives this admonition:

Mission can be most fruitfully done in a context of humility and love which excludes fear and eschews hatred of those who are not with us. In short mission becomes also community building in a plural world. Mission is about creating a people of God as well as the building and renewal of human community. (25)

The holistic vision for mission demands that everybody in the mission be involved. Such a mission task cannot be left for the professional missionaries. The apostle Peter affirms the priesthood of all believers in 1 Peter 2:9. Lay participation is essential to move the mission forward: “The Church is clear that effective grassroots Christianity is a lay movement, that all true-born Christians are ‘gifted’ for ministry, that most churches need to loose the laity for their ministries and mission” (Hunter 167). I hope that in this critical study of mission work in the northern Ghana, the church will resolve to involve everyone and consider all areas of ministry.

### **Leadership and Mission**

Leadership has always been a key issue in the mission task of the Church. The place of leaders in the growth of the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in Northern Ghana is crucial. Max De Pree writes, “Leadership may be good work, but it’s also a tough job. There is always more to do than time seems to allow” (16). This quotation rightly underscores the serious nature of the work of leaders in various organizations who are in God’s mission.

Leadership involves the influence one has on other people who follow him or her. It is the ability to rally people together for a common cause. John C. Maxwell, who is involved in training leaders, names the five levels of leadership as position, emission, production, people development, and personhood (32). Caring for and indeed solving the problems of people must be paramount for the leader.

The people who lead must have a definite reason to lead as Dale Galloway points out in Leading with Vision:

The real motivation must be for one's life and service to make a significant impact for Christ; Christian leaders must aspire to multiply and maximize the results of their service by accomplishing more through leading others than they could ever accomplish by themselves. Authentic kingdom leaders, more than anything else, must desire a satisfying life of service filled with optimum usefulness to the cause for Christ. (56)

A leader in mission must be a person who is always ready to serve the people he or she tries to reach with the gospel message. The leader must also possess a vision leading to positive results: "The way a visionary leader gains followers is by calling people to kingdom causes that have worthy goals and eternal results built into them" (57).

In the mission work of northern Ghana, both clergy and the lay leaders need to build the church in a holistic manner. This mission of the church is seen by the many physical, social, and spiritual projects undertaken in this area of Ghana since the beginning of the mission by the forefathers. In discussing this holistic mission and the task of leaders, the foundation for a future healthy church is always crucial:

If you want to build a healthy, strong, and growing Church you must spend time laying a solid foundation. This is done by clarifying in the minds of every one involved exactly why the church exists and what it is supposed to do. There is incredible power in having a clearly defined purpose statement. (Warren 86)

Leaders must always be clear about the main purpose of the church in mission. To the leaders, Warren gives this exhortation: "Restate your purposes on a regular basis. Teach them over and over" (118). A leader who must lead the way must also pull the people along in the set purpose of the mission of the church. The leader in the mission of the church has the great task of identifying and harnessing resources that can bring progress and balanced growth.

Finally, good and effective leaders are able to mobilize more leaders to continue the mission of God. Henry and Richard Blackaby say: “Leaders lead followers. Great leaders lead leaders” (134). The mission of God since creation and the redemption of humanity by the Lord Jesus Christ have been made possible with leaders who have followed the plan and will of God to reach out to the world:

The challenge, therefore, is how to produce and train competent and capable leaders for the church, leaders who inspire the confidence of their people because they have the calling of God, have a sense of purpose, can cast compelling vision, and are able to lead a church to grow. (Deegbe 46)

The leader must identify, mobilize and train to produce more leaders to continue the task, an urgent goal of leader of a church in the northern Ghana. The leader must be directed by the Holy Spirit to recruit others whom he or she will train by biblical instruction and example.

The process will lead to the multiplication of leaders to serve the church in its holistic mission in the north of Ghana. These good leaders may not be born but can be nurtured (Lim 59). A new leader for the mission of the church can grow to produce a positive influence on others with the needed support and encouragement. These motivated leaders will continue to mobilize others to be part of mission of God through the Methodist Church in the north of Ghana.

Moreover, the development of Christian leaders who positively influence others demands a high level of morality in all their undertakings. Kwame Gyekye has a clear view on the nature of morality and leadership:

Moral leadership, then, is having the moral capacity or standing to guide and influence others in matters of conduct. The presupposition here is that the leader already exemplifies those moral values or virtues in his or her behavior; his or her moral life is, thus, such that many others look to him/her for inspiration and direction. (350)

Unfortunately, many leaders have become obstacles to others by the way they live.

Positive moral values can enhance the work of a person and may also promote any mission enterprise in any place in the world.

### **Mission Priority**

The Church worldwide has over the years been involved in many worthwhile enterprises globally. It has been involved in political, social, and economic issues which have brought relief and improvement of life for many poor and oppressed people in the world. Nevertheless, the main task and calling of the church must be high on the agenda of the Church. The task of God's mission must be the top priority in all that the church does. Guder et al. point out that "[a] missional ecclesiology takes seriously, the organizational life of the Church in both its expression of the local missional congregations in a para local missional structures" (75).

In the mission of God, the church makes an effort to locate the many people groups who have never been reached by the true gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Globally about one-third of the world's six billion people have still not heard the good news of Jesus Christ that brings salvation to all. Furthermore, the other one third who have heard the gospel message and have not responded positively must be given the opportunity to be confronted again. The example of the apostles and the early missionaries is the example for the church to follow today. The church must make disciples of all nations as commanded by the Lord Jesus (Matt. 28:19).

Ruth A. Tucker makes this strong assertion of what the church is to do today in the mission God has ordained for it:

The world today—not just the Christian church—would be very different if the zeal to evangelize had not been at the very heart of the Christian faith. Christianity and missions are inseparably linked. It is impossible to imagine Christianity as a living religion today without the vibrant missionary outreach that sprang forth after Pentecost. This missionary vision was part and parcel of the life of the church. (21)

The early Church's mission was to be in God's mission, which was to evangelize the known world at all cost. The church must teach, encourage, and equip all its members around the world to reach out to their neighbors and beyond with the gospel. Samuel Escobar rightly affirms that: "Christian mission in the twenty-first century has become the responsibility of the global church" (12). The whole church in the whole world must take the whole gospel to the whole world to hasten the return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:14).

The church grows in maturity and in numbers when it is fulfilling its mission and when it impacts the world in other areas of human need. A good description of growth is "genuine worship, fearless outreach, consistent spiritual growth, wise investment of resources, opportunistic servant hood and meaningful spiritual relationship" (Barna 99). As the church experiences these characteristics, then it is poised to be a blessing to the community in many ways.

The church in many places tries to make the people literate by teaching the people to read their own language and later other languages. In many places the church continues to train professionals to serve the community. The holistic mission then becomes practical, and the people benefit spiritually, socially, and economically. David Yonggi Cho has said, "The churches we build should be places where people get their solutions from the Lord, receive miracles for their lives, and can gain not just a knowledge about God, but to know Him in a vital way" (80). People who come to God through Jesus must be taught to trust him in the daily issues of life. The physical and social benefits become the added blessings of mission to God's people.



Indeed the church has an important responsibility to the nation in which it lives to reach out with the gospel. God has called the church to assist the state in its developmental tasks. J. N. Kudadjie and R. K. Aboagye-Mensah have explained this relationship:

The task of both the church and state will be found to be inter-related. They are all for the building up of sound human person and societies. In performing these basic tasks, both the church and state would need the help and support of the other. (40)

As the church goes about its mission work, it must not neglect its social responsibility to the community. Nevertheless, the main task of the church must be central and this task is mission, preaching to make people disciples of Jesus Christ.

The mission of the church must receive appropriate human and material resources. The best of human resources for any church should make themselves available to be part of this mission task. Here commitment and a life of sacrifice is demanded of such a missionary, local or foreign. Moreover, financial resources are a key to any successful mission task. Indeed mission is money, and the church must plan in its budget to commit enough financial resources for this task. The church must make the mission of God a priority above all other activities it has to undertake especially in saving souls and serving the people.

In making mission a priority, the Church and individuals must respond to the call of God to be part of his mission. Furthermore, on the issue of sacrifice in mission, the Apostle James exhorts all to be patient as Christians focus on the mission of God: “[B]e patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains” (Jas. 5:7). A priority of making sacrifices in mission must be the goal of the body of Christ today.

Making sacrifices for the sake of the mission of God makes one to yield completely to him. Whatever is lost based human standards is gained by the joy and satisfaction the church will receive as the result of total obedience to God. The church will grow in quality and quantity when Christians follow this model of the early Church founded in Jerusalem whose priority was mission, and as Wagner points out in his book Leading Your Church to Growth: “This was a healthy church. And one characteristic of healthy churches is that they grow” (22).

The Methodist Church Ghana can learn from the message of this literature and resolve to review its mission work in northern Ghana critically, prepare to be balanced in its theology and to confront the physical and spiritual challenges.

Finally, for the church to make mission a priority, Christians must make the preaching of the gospel the main tool used in making disciples of Jesus. The Methodist Church Ghana will indeed rise to the occasion and make mission a priority in northern Ghana for the future.

### CHAPTER 3

#### METHODOLOGY

The Church has, over the years, been part of God's mission to his world in many ways. It has made progress at some levels, but more is yet to be accomplished. The Methodist Church Ghana has a role to play in this expansion business of the kingdom. The task must not only concentrate in the south of Ghana but to the north as well. All areas of this call of God must be explored for effective and positive influence on the people who must be served:

Christianity has become a truly worldwide movement, with churches established on every continent and major cultural group. The great modern missionary movement has been, despite all the controversy and debate, a truly successful enterprise. (Guder et al. 1)

The shortcomings of the church in the past in northern Ghana cannot be part of this general success of the Church in many places.

This study focused on what the Methodist Church Ghana has been able to do in the north of Ghana since 1955, when it began serious mission work and the way forward. I formed a Research Reflection Team (RRT) to assist me with this research and study.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to help refocus the holistic mission of the Methodist Church Ghana in order to achieve the needed growth and impact in the community of northern Ghana. I have evaluated by the literature review the practical development of mission in this area of Ghana in order to identify the positive and negative influences that have affected the church. The study can also help other sister churches to revise their mission strategies for effective and holistic impact in this area of Ghana and beyond.

## **Research Questions**

This study included historical research that sought to evaluate this holistic mission in the northern Ghana. William Wiersma and Stephen Jurs explain that “[h]istorical research is a systematic process of searching for facts and then using the information to describe, analyze and interpret the past” (223). The purpose of this study and the related literature brought out two clear questions to help evaluate this holistic mission of the church in the northern Ghana and possible new strategies.

### **Research Question #1**

What are the needs for the holistic mission of the church in northern Ghana?

The study sought to identify the needs for this holistic mission as they have been identified by the people in this area. I asked ministers and leaders who have ever worked in this area to indicate these needs. I requested them to show the importance of those needs by ranking them. As part of this question, I also asked these participants what actual activities that the church implemented during the past fifty years. Here again I asked them to show the importance of the activities by ranking them in order of importance. These questions were also meant to see the level of impact to each of these needs on the people and community.

### **Research Question #2**

What are some of the approaches that the Methodist Church Ghana can plan for effective holistic mission in the future?

The study, a historical evaluation of the past, also offered a way forward for the church and its holistic mission. The selected participants answered the survey questions which were guided by the semi structured interviews on video and audio recordings. I

asked the participants to review and make practical suggestions for the holistic mission work of the church in northern Ghana. The survey gave participants the opportunity to make an assessment of this mission task and where the church need to refine the goal to overcome future pitfalls and mistakes so as to enhance the balanced growth of the church (see Appendix B).

### **Methodology**

This project was an evaluative study of the urgent needs affecting the mission work of the Methodist Church in the northern Ghana. It dealt with how much each of these needs has enhanced the progress of the task of mission in this area. I read many secondary sources that discussed the mission work of the church in the northern Ghana as background information. I also read past journals and minutes of the conferences and synods of the church. My primary sources were the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews conducted as I met with research participants personally. I collected these responses, which I analyzed later.

In a case study, Robert K. Yin affirms: “An investigator will ‘infer’ that a particular event resulted from earlier occurrences, based on interview and documentation evidence collected as part of the study” (43). In this way all the responses helped in shaping the results of the study. The expectations of the study were to let the people speak to confirm what is known already and to discover new issues of great importance now.

### **Population and Sample**

I considered the population of all members of the Methodist Church Ghana who were literate to the level of reading and writing and had stayed in the north in the past

fifty years. Nevertheless, I selected a sample of one hundred members from the 107 questionnaires completed for this study. The number of ordained pastors who completed the questionnaire stood at thirty and the number for the lay leaders were seventy.

I furthermore, selected twenty pastors and twenty lay leaders for the interviews to help me answer the research question two on the evaluation and approaches for effective holistic mission.

### **Instrumentation**

I developed a researcher-design questionnaire to collect information from the participants of the research. The questions solicited value judgment responses about how these participants viewed the holistic needs identified and to what extent they have helped or hindered the mission of the church in the northern Ghana. I also used semi-structured interviews in order to obtain from the forty selected participants who could provide more explanations and concrete suggestions. I gave the questionnaire to the participants and later collected them for analysis.

In the Research Question 1, I asked participants to identify the needs of this holistic mission. I asked them to rank, on a scale of one to five, how they viewed each need to have affected this holistic mission in the northern Ghana. The score of one on the scale indicated that the need least is seen as important to this mission. The score of five indicated that need is seen as very important to this mission task. The score of three suggested that, the need is partly seen as important to this mission task.

I then compiled the scores from the one hundred participants to see the needs with the most influence on the holistic mission of the church in northern Ghana. The responses for the various needs for the holistic mission varied.

An effective way to describe and evaluate a concern or an activity is to collect quantifiable data that can describe the influence of other variables on the main variable, as indicated by Wiersma and Jurs: “Descriptive statistics quite commonly appear in historical research studies. These statistics may be percentages, proportions, or means simply describing the distributions of some variables” (235).

For the Research Question #2, which was the main focus of this study, I prepared semi-structured survey questions that sought the views of the participants of the holistic mission in the past and ways to do effective work in the future, thus improving the mission of the Methodist Church Ghana in this area with new approaches.

### **Pilot Test**

I designed a questionnaire that was generally acceptable but that the intended participants could understand. I used a pilot test with the help of my Research Reflective Team on ten people who have lived in the north. These initial participants responded to the questionnaire and made suggestions on how to make the study relevant. Furthermore, the responses helped me to see the face validity of the responses with regards to the ranking of the needs using a Likert-type scale. The pilot test also encouraged me to see the keen interest of many people concerning this holistic mission of the Methodist Church in the northern Ghana.

### **Data Collection**

I went to the church offices in Tamale and Accra, the local and national headquarters of the Methodist Church Ghana to look through the records of the journals and minutes of the church synods and conferences held annually across the country. I

wrote down some of the important issues that had affected the mission of the church in general since 1835 and in particular in northern Ghana since 1955.

Concerning the data from the participants, I prepared the questions for the questionnaire with suggestions from my Research Reflective Team. After the initial test to ten people, I reproduced about 150 copies. I distributed about 120 of the questionnaires to get my sample of one hundred completed responses. I sent some of the questionnaires to the people who were identified as participants of this study due to their association with the work in this area. I personally gave out many of the questionnaires to the participants during my three visits to the North. I also met a few people whom I interviewed with the structured questionnaire. In these particular cases I personally helped the participants to complete the questionnaire with their responses. I was able to interview two people on video tape and three others on an audio recorder. These were people who were very old but whom I considered key players in the mission in the north as far as the Methodist Church Ghana is concerned.

The Research Reflection Team assisted in the distribution of the questionnaire forms and also helped in sorting out all the answers to the questionnaire. They assisted in the compilation of the responses to the questionnaire as well as the tabulations of the needs identified for the holistic mission and the rankings of their importance. They also helped to interpret the responses to the interviews and surveys in order to answer the second response question as to what to do to improve this task in the north.

### **Main Variable**

The main variable for this study was the level of impact on the identified holistic needs influencing the qualitative and quantitative growth of the church. In this historical



qualitative study, the church could see a clear picture in the responses of the participants about the nature and the way forward of this holistic mission.

### **Data Analysis**

The Research Reflection Team helped to analyze the information received. I consulted a professional statistician among the team to help interpret the results of the observations of the one hundred participants. We calculated the rankings for the various needs and the average for each.

The Research Reflective Team helped to analyze the contents of the semi-structured interviews. In the analysis we were able to identify further the extent of the growth of the church now as compared to the past with reference to hindrances to this holistic mission. The team assessed the level of physical impact on church members and the community and effective solutions for improvement enumerated.

The Research Reflection Team helped in analyzing the responses for the second research question, which was also the main goal of this research. The professional statistician once again helped in the compilation of suggestions for this holistic growth.

Nevertheless, in all these we tried to avoid errors as much as possible: “The general way of approaching the reliability problem is to make as many steps as possible as operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone was always looking over your shoulder” (Yin 45). In this study I have tried with the help of the Research Reflection Team to be simple and sensitive from the formulation of the research questions to the collection of data and their analysis. The conclusions are as valid as possible and will enhance the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana in the years ahead.

I based the recommendations on the summaries of the answers to the questionnaire from the one hundred participants who identified holistic needs and evaluated their importance. The same participants identified again those holistic needs actually in practice and their impact in the northern region.

The written or recorded interviews based on the semi-structured questions provided answers from forty selected participants. They made concrete suggestions for the entire Methodist family, especially for the hierarchy of the church to consider and implement for this holistic mission in the next fifty years.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was focused on ways to improve the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana in order to achieve the needed growth and impact in the community. A careful reading of some church documents, particularly the minutes of conferences and synods, indeed reveals some impact as far as the education component of mission is concerned. In the Methodist Times, Rev. J. M. Y. Edusa-Eyison writes the following about the results of mission work in the North in the 170 years of Methodism in Ghana: “[I]t was a great joy for the conference that in 1967 a Northern candidate has been enrolled into the Ministry, an indication that the work in the North had not been wasted” (4).

Descriptive analysis of the results for the one hundred participants of the questionnaire indicated the expectations of the needs for this holistic mission. As expected, the results showed that the preaching of the gospel message should go with education, health services, agriculture, physical projects, and environmental care, which were all considered relevant to the holistic mission in the North.

The responses about what actually happens showed that some of the needs mentioned above for mission have not been pursued; hence, they were not mentioned again. These needs included employment skills, relief services, sports ministry, and environmental care.

#### **Profile of Participants**

I chose one hundred Methodists from about 120 people who were given the questionnaire. Thirteen people never returned their questionnaire, and about seven

answered only one or two of the questions for this study. These subjects and their questionnaires were therefore not considered as participants to this study. Thirty of these participants were ministers and seventy were lay leaders who are still serving in northern Ghana or have worked before in this area. They included men and women and comprised members as young as eighteen years and as old as about eighty five years. About eighty participants were fully literate, and twenty were semiliterate members of the church who had only completed junior secondary school. I was able to collect my data from participants who were living or had lived in the three regions of northern Ghana (Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions). Of these participants, sixty-five were men, and thirty-five were women.

The detailed age distribution for the sixty-five male participants were as follows: twenty-three were between 18 and 35 years, thirty-five were between 36 and 60 years and seven were above 60 years. For the female participants, sixteen were between 18 and 35 years and nineteen were between 36 and 60 years. The female participants had no one above the age of 60.

Furthermore, the participants were of various vocations. The number of the clergy was thirty among the one hundred participants considered for the first research question. Sixteen of the participants were unemployed and were mostly students. The largest group was thirty-three who were government employees, made up of mostly teachers and civil servants. The last group of participants were twenty-one self-employed people made up of mostly artisans and traders.

I considered data from the Ghana Evangelism Committee's National Survey of Churches with particular reference to the Methodist Church in northern Ghana. This data

served as a base and guide to the state of affairs and the church's growth. The data had to do with the population of the three northern regions and three southern regions and the number of Methodist churches in 1987 and 1992. The data also showed the number of churches and the average attendance of members of the Methodist churches in the north. The average church attendance is always lower than the full membership of a church, but it serves as a guide to the strength of a local church. The details are indicated in Table 4.1. The total average of church attendance increased marginally from 1244 in 1987 to 1566 in 1992, an increase of 322 members for the entire region of northern Ghana.

**Table 4.1. The Average Church Attendance of Adult Members of Methodist Churches in the Three Regions of Northern Ghana**

Region	1987	1992
Northern (Tamale Circuit)	567	629
Upper West (Wa Circuit)	505	561
Upper East (Bolga Circuit)	172	367
<b>Total</b>	<b>1244</b>	<b>1566</b>

Source: National Church Survey.

The regional capitals served as the offices of the circuits during this time. In 2000 and 2002, these mother circuits in the Northern Ghana Diocese gave birth to five more smaller circuits: Bole, Yendi, Lawra, Bawku, and Tumu in that order.

Moreover, as indicated in Table 4.2, in the five year period from 1987 to 1992, Tamale decreased from thirteen to twelve, indicating the collapse of one church. Wa Circuit planted six more churches during the same period, and Bolga also added three more. The total number of churches by the Methodist Church Ghana in northern Ghana increased from thirty-four to forty-two.

The problem of adequate and committed church workers could have accounted for this marginal growth and collapse of that church in Tamale circuit.

**Table 4.2. The Number of Methodist Churches in Existence by 1987 and 1992 in Northern Ghana**

Region	Churches in 1987	Churches in 1992
Northern (Tamale Circuit)	13	12
Upper West (Wa Circuit)	16	22
Upper East (Bolga Circuit)	5	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>42</b>

Source: National Church Survey.

Furthermore, the population status of these three regions is indicated in Table 4.3 to show the growth in numbers of the people who reside in this area. It also indicates that the whole of the three northern regions had a total population of 2,735,500 in 1987, which increased to 3,235,600 in 1992, an average increase of 17.36 percent.

**Table 4.3. The Population of the Three Northern Regions in 1987 and 1992**

Region	Population 1987	Population 1992	% Increase
Northern	1,367,800	1,649,200	20.57
Upper West	491,200	564,800	14.98
Upper East	876,500	1,021,600	16.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,735,500</b>	<b>3,235,600</b>	

Source: National Church Survey.

The population here is now compared with three selected regions from the south and the churches established by the Methodist Church Ghana by 1987 and 1992. The

selected regions are the Ashanti, Eastern, and Greater Accra regions. Table 4.4 for this area shows the population distribution, and Table 4.5 indicates the number of Methodist churches in the three southern regions of Ghana.

**Table 4.4. The Population of Three Southern Regions in 1987 and 1992**

Region	Population 1987	Population 1992	% Increase
Ashanti	2,371,060	2,762,400	16.51
Eastern	1,892,600	2,189,000	15.66
Greater Accra	1,677,500	2,016,500	20.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,941,160</b>	<b>6,967,900</b>	

Source: National Church Survey.

These three southern regions were densely populated areas in Ghana. The total population of the Ashanti region is 2,371,060, just a little below that of the whole north, which has a total population of 2,7355,500. Greater Accra and the northern regions have similar growth rates of about 20 percent. Again, the average population growth for the three selected regions from the south and the three regions from the north were 17.46 percent and 17.36 percent respectively. The strength of the various population of the regions show an almost equal potential for church growth in these areas, all things being equal. Table 4.5 indicates the churches established by the Methodist Church Ghana in 1987 and 1992.

**Table 4.5. The Methodist Churches in Three Southern Regions, 1987 and 1992**

Region	Churches in 1987	Churches in 1992
Ashanti	677	689
Eastern	260	266
Greater Accra	98	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>1,066</b>

Source: National Church Survey.

The churches in the three southern regions increased from 1,035 in 1987 to 1,066 in 1992; this area which had a concentration of churches. The north as indicated above with all the vast potential of unreached people recorded an increase only from thirty-four to forty-two churches, a marginal addition of eight churches over the same period.

Furthermore, the Ghana Evangelism Committee's National Survey indicated in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 an average church attendance from 1,244 in 1987 to 1,566 in 1992. The growth rate here is about 20 percent. The practice of evangelism by the Methodist Church indeed produced some marginal fruit in northern Ghana.

In trying to answer the second research question with the semi-structured interviews, I selected forty people from the one hundred participants who completed their questionnaire. They were made up of twenty clergy including bishops, superintendent ministers, and circuit ministers, as well as twenty lay leaders. These people have all worked in northern Ghana for more than five years. The participants here were all fully literate and knew much about the Methodist mission work in the north for the past fifty years. In fact, four of these people have been closely associated with the work in the north since 1955.



### Method and Process of Data Analysis

I read and refreshed my knowledge of this task of the church in the north for the past fifty years. I also read through some of the church records about the work in northern Ghana. The summary of the performance of the Methodist Church—Northern Ghana Diocese shows, as indicated in Table 4.6, had eight circuits at the end of the year 2004. The Wa Circuit had twenty-five churches, followed by Yendi Circuit, which had twenty-one churches, and Tamale, which had seventeen churches. The new circuits Bawku and Tumu have the least number of churches, seven and five respectively.

Seventeen ministers are working in this vast diocese, which covers about a third of the land mass of Ghana. The number of available lay workers who are caretakers and local preachers is 321. These lay workers have been trained to assist the clergy in the towns and villages. The summary of churches, ministers, and lay workers is shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6. Statistical Returns of Methodist Churches and Active Workers (End of 2004)**

Circuits	No. of Churches	Ministers	Available Lay Workers
Bawku	7	1	17
Bole	12	2	26
Bolga	11	3	41
Lawra	9	1	25
Tamale	17	4	112
Tumu	5	1	18
Wa	25	3	48
Yendi	21	2	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>321</b>

Source: 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod.

These records of churches by the Methodist Church Ghana during the past fifty years included eighty-three old ones and twenty-four that were recently established. The figures presented here is an evaluation of a synod report of the Northern Ghana Diocese in 2005, which indicated that only twenty-four of these were new churches, which confirms the slow progress of work.

Furthermore, the total membership in the circuits showed that the Tamale circuit has the largest Christian community with 1,970 members. They include full members who have been baptized and confirmed in the church and are, therefore, qualified to partake in communion. The junior members were the children and youth below the age of fifteen. The “others” refers to new converts who were yet to be baptized and confirmed into the church; a few of these were also under the discipline of the church.

The new circuit at Tumu has a total Christian community of only 193. The detail returns of the membership as at December 2004 are found in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7. Statistical Returns of Methodist Church Membership (End of 2004)**

Circuits	Full Members	Junior Members	Others	Total Christian Community
Bawku	125	179	160	464
Bole	251	166	293	710
Bolga	180	490	355	1,025
Lawra	74	153	331	558
Tamale	1,043	802	125	1,970
Tumu	41	45	107	193
Wa	910	650	207	1,767
Yendi	146	806	548	1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,770</b>	<b>3,291</b>	<b>1,991</b>	<b>8,187</b>

Source: 44<sup>th</sup> Synod Agenda.

The ministry work was too much for the few workers in this area as they proclaim the gospel message to new converts and teach the children and new members to become mature disciples. In addition to these tasks, the clergy and their supporting lay workers provided for the social and economic well-being of the people through the health center in Lawra and the agricultural station in Wa. These projects provided training and employment for many people in the north.

I proceeded to obtain the primary information from the one hundred participants who have lived in this area. The responses to the questionnaire concerning this holistic mission of the church enabled me to know the members' views of the needed ingredients of this mission in the north. The questionnaire also sought to reveal the importance attached to these components of mission. It also sought to solicit what the participants agree has actually happened with the mission of the Church and the order of importance of the needs.

Furthermore, I also designed a simple, semi-structured survey form meant for the forty participants for the interviews. These interviews were meant to discover the detailed genesis and progress of the church concerning this task of holistic mission. The participants evaluated the past and made definite suggestions for the future work of the Methodist Church Ghana.

I distributed some of the questionnaires and survey forms to ministers and lay leaders during the conference of the Methodist Church Ghana in August 2006. I collected the completed questionnaire for study at a latter time. I also traveled on three occasions in June, September, and December of 2006 to the Northern, Upper West, and Upper East

regions in that order. I had arranged to meet the ministers and leaders during my visits to these areas. I combined the visit to this area with special leaders' seminars and church planting. At each place I distributed the questionnaire to the participants after explaining the issues involved in this holistic study.

I personally contacted and interviewed the forty participants in the survey at convenient times. After the discussions, I gave them time to complete the semi-structured, open-ended interview. On three occasions, I recorded the interviews on audio tape. On two occasions, I videotaped the participants and a practical ongoing mission task in the north

### **Findings of Research Question #1**

What are the needs for the holistic mission of the church in northern Ghana?

I selected one hundred completed questionnaires from the 107 and took time to study all of them. My target sample was one hundred. Some of the participants could not complete half of the questions on the questionnaire, and thus I could not use them. I tabulated the various needs for holistic mission. The results were formal and informal education, evangelism/discipleship, agricultural services, health/nutrition center, employable skills, leadership training of indigenes, relief services, prayer ministry/revival and camp meetings, holy living, physical projects, chapels/manses and vehicles, environmental care, media ministry, sports ministry, women's ministry, and youth and children's ministries.

I also considered how they were ranked in order of urgency. I found the average for each item in their rankings by using a calculator. I compiled by tabulation the number

of times each item was mentioned by the one hundred participants. I thereby tabulated the responses of each item by the participants.

Table 4.8 shows the results of the responses of the participants as to what they considered as the urgent needs for this holistic mission in the north. I used a Likert Scale to indicate the level of importance of each item. The average ranking for education was as high as 4.9 on the scale of 1 being the lowest to 5 being the highest rating in order of importance of this holistic need. Evangelism and discipleship had eighty two responses to place second. In this case, the average ranking was 4.8, just a little lower than education. Clearly, many people (about eighty-seven of the one hundred participants) mentioned education, either formal or informal as the most urgent need.

The other needs considered important by the participants included health and nutrition with sixty-five responses ranking 4.0, leadership development of the indigenes with sixty four responses ranking 4.2, prayer and camp meetings with sixty responses ranking 4.2, and employable skills with fifty-four responses.

Moreover, the participants indicated the youth and children ministries (thirty-four responses with 4.1 ranking) and sports ministry (fifteen responses with 3.2 ranking) as important needs for this holistic mission.

Interestingly, even though about ten people mentioned holy living as a need for this holistic task, it was the least of the sixteen urgent needs for holistic mission. The ranking here was 3.4, the same as environmental care, which had twelve responses as indicated in Table 4.8. The score for this item may be due to the fact that holy living is assumed to be the ultimate goal of holistic mission.

**Table 4.8. Summary of the 100 responses to Items 6 and 7 of Appendix A**

<b>Needs for Holistic Mission</b>	<b>Average Ranking</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
<b>Education, Formal and Informal</b>	4.9	87
<b>Health/Nutrition Center</b>	4.0	65
<b>Evangelism/Discipleship</b>	4.8	82
<b>Agriculture Services</b>	4.1	60
<b>Leadership Training of Indigenes</b>	4.2	64
<b>Employable Skills</b>	3.5	54
<b>Welfare of Workers/Members</b>	3.2	52
<b>Relief Services</b>	3.7	70
<b>Prayer Ministry/Revivals and Camp Meetings</b>	4.2	60
<b>Holy Living</b>	3.4	10
<b>Physical Projects/Chapels, Manses, and Vehicles</b>	4.7	80
<b>Environmental Care</b>	3.4	12
<b>Media Ministry</b>	3.8	20
<b>Sports Ministry</b>	3.2	15
<b>Women's Ministry</b>	3.8	25
<b>Children and Youth Ministries</b>	4.1	34

Table 4.8 shows the expectations of the one hundred participants of sixteen items considered as the needs for this holistic mission. The eighty-seven responses to education, eighty-two for evangelism/discipleship, and eighty responses to physical projects such as the provision of manses, chapels, and vehicles have always been the foremost needs for holistic mission for these people.

The next data compilation has to do with Items 8 9 of the same questionnaire in which I asked participants to mention the ingredients of holistic mission that were in actual practice in the north and their relevance according to their ranking. Interestingly some of the needs identified in Table 4.8 were this time absent.

A careful look at the tabulated summary of the actual needs for the holistic mission shows that education received eighty responses with 3.2 as the average ranking for impact, evangelism had sixty-nine responses with 2.9 as the ranking, health had sixty-two responses with 2.7 as the ranking, prayer ministry had fifty-five responses with 2.5 as the ranking, and agricultural programs had fifty-three responses with 2.5 as the ranking. The other needs for this holistic mission, which the participants further identified as indicated above, were leadership training with forty responses with 1.8 as the ranking, children and youth ministries with thirty-two responses with 2.4 as the ranking, and women's ministry with thirty-one responses with 2.7 as the ranking, and the lowest-ranking one for manse/chapel buildings, receiving only twenty-five responses ranking 1.2.

The participants identified the programs and projects, after which they ranked each item according to the impact on mission of the church during the past fifty years of continuous ministry in this area of the north. The summary of the impact of these projects and programs on this holistic mission are shown in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9. Responses to the Impact of Projects and Programs, Items 8 and 9 of Appendix A**

Projects and Programs	Ranking According to Impact	No. of Responses
Education	3.2	80
Health	2.7	62
Evangelism	2.9	69
Agricultural Programs	2.5	53
Leadership Training	1.8	40
Prayer/ Revival Ministries	2.5	55
Women's Ministry	2.7	31
Manse/Chapel Building/Vehicles	1.2	25
Children and Youth Ministries	2.4	32

I can safely conclude that the participants who represent the people in this area have visibly identified these nine items as shown on Table 4.9 as the activities that were still making an impact in work of northern Ghana. Education, which had as many as eighty, responses was ranked with an average of 3.2, the highest of the programs undertaken by the church. The benefits of educating the people as part of this mission enable many indigenes to reach their God-given potential. Some church members have thus become prominent people who are serving the church and state at various levels in both the south and north of Ghana and beyond the borders.

Many prominent people mentioned in this research benefited from the impact of education in this area. The Wa School for the Blind for example has produced two doctoral graduates. The other formal schools, as well as the informal ones in the area, have trained many other responsible church leaders and professionals who work in positions both in the south and north of the country. Some of the names mentioned



included the following clergy; Peter Bankpala, Edision Tinsare, Dr. Nathan Samwini, Iddi Musa, James Salia, Job Chemogo, Lawrence Beka, and other lay leaders such as Emmanuel Wuri and Majorie Niritori who now head the Methodist Agric Project in Wa and the Methodist Nutrition Center in Lawra, respectively.

The participants appreciated the important role of evangelism that involved the preaching of the gospel for converts. Of the participants, sixty nine ranked this program of the church as 2.9, which is above average. The churches planted over the years were due to these evangelistic activities, which were led by the ministers and leaders working in the area. The steady increase in numbers of church members is confirmed when one compares the 1,750 members quoted in 1986 by Baker, including 1,630 communicants (34), to the 2004 figure of 2,770 members (see Table 4.4), which reveals about a 36 percent growth rate.

Furthermore, the participants recognized the positive impact and value of health in this holistic mission in the north. The only Methodist health center, which operated a mobile clinic and now serves as a nutrition center for children in Upper West, especially Lawra district, provided the health needs of the people. The health workers at this center have been engaged in preventive health care for adults and children through their outreach programs in the villages.

Nevertheless, the provision of chapels and manses as well as vehicles for mission was ranked at just 1.2 by the participants. This ranking for chapels, manses, and vehicles indicated that the church failed to provide for these urgent needs for holistic growth in northern Ghana. Many churches do not have buildings for worship and meet in any convenient place in all kinds of the weather. The Diocese had only twelve manses for the

seventeen ministers serving this area. The other five ministers live in rented houses with all the attendant problems. The Diocese also had no strong vehicles in most of the stations. This made the movement of church workers to the villages to be very difficult.

### **Findings of Research Question #2**

What are some of the approaches that the Methodist Church Ghana can plan for effective holistic mission in the future?

The forty selected participants interviewed for this survey gave in-depth background, problems, and progress of the holistic mission in the north. The participants to this research tried to respond to how the Methodist Church should plan for effective holistic mission in future. They traced the beginning of the Methodist Church from the 1954 association with the Presbyterian Church in Tamale to the present time. Their own active involvement in the mission task helped them to make an honest and reliable account of the progress of the church over these years. Four of the key participants have their completed responses to the semi-structured interview included in Appendixes C, D, E, and F.

I obtained a general consensus from the interviews of how the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in Ghana has been undertaken in the past. The highlights of the participants views included the following critical areas, which flow from the needs identified for the holistic mission as mentioned earlier. The participants pointed out the slow progress of this holistic mission due to the lack of full-time workers and aggressive evangelism of the church, limited financial resources, unfavorable geographical conditions, high illiteracy, inadequate support from the church, the influences of Islam, and negative cultural practices.

The participants again made many suggestions as to how to plan this holistic mission in future, and I present excerpts from the written and oral answers of the interviews with semi-structured questions to the survey.

### **Participants' Suggestions for Approaches to Effective Holistic Mission**

1. The ministers posted here must be mobile (provision of cars, motorcycles, etc.) so as to visit the surrounding villages for regular teaching and encouragement of new converts.

2. Indigenous people who are literate and committed Christians must be trained and commissioned to serve this vast area in proclamation of the gospel.

3. The youth of the church must be identified and trained to assist in rural evangelism.

4. The church must establish secondary, technical, and vocational schools in all the regions of the north as in the south.

5. The church must go into business ventures to support the poor and unemployed.

6. The building of infrastructure such as chapel and school buildings must be pursued in this area of Ghana.

7. The Methodist Church Ghana must collaborate with other sister denominations, and nongovernmental organizations working in this place.

8. Godly leaders must be identified and trained in all churches; these leaders will set good examples of service, love, and sacrifice for the people.

9. The use of the local language especially during worship services must be promoted, especially in the villages of the north.

10. The church should provide logistics for effective evangelism.
11. The prayer ministry of the church must be intensified for the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit.
12. The church must balance the spiritual, physical, and social needs of the people in this area.
13. Pair local churches in the north with southern churches for mutual support.
14. The church must plant more indigenous churches in the villages and develop effective follow-up of converts.
15. The church must be actively engaged in promoting peace and reconciliation in the various ethnic communities in the north.
16. The church must also organize more adult literacy courses for members.
17. The church must intensify its social work of agricultural extension and health facilities in all the three regions of the north
18. The church must reintroduce the catechists or employ full-time evangelists in the north.
19. The church should promote prayer, healing, and deliverance ministry in the north to counter the persistent fear of external evil forces which are perceived to cause pain to many.
20. Special programs must be put in place to support those from the Muslim background who usually suffer persecution from family members when they are converted to become Christians.
21. The church must motivate its workers by providing decent accommodation and effective transport.

22. The north have many different cultural beliefs and customs; therefore, consideration must be made in reaching out to the many ethnic groups.

23. The best qualified of the church members should volunteer to work in the north for at least three years and must be supported by the Head Office of the Church.

24. Aggressive evangelism through gospel crusades, retreats, revivals, and camp meetings must be permanent features of the church in the north.

25. Churches must no longer pay lip service to the good proposals and discussions of the work in northern Ghana.

26. The church must set up a viable and functional endowment fund to seek financial support from the people in the north and south of Ghana as well as from foreign friends who are committed to missions.

These suggestions from the participants flowed from their personal involvement and experiences in this holistic mission in the north. They indicated what can be done to advance this task in the future. The participants directed many of these suggestions to the Methodist Church Ghana in general but more so to the church leaders. I realized the indigenes also have a greater part to play by showing more commitment and sacrifice for the advancement of the work in this important area of Ghana.

### **Summary of Interviews of Two Founding Members of the Church in the North**

These interviews given by the two prominent men gave a feel of the nature of the task during the past fifty years. Their own personal concerns and contributions are the clear indications of what the church accomplished in the past and what were the potential for future holistic growth of the Methodist Church in this area.

**Duloglana Ebenezer Adam.** He is a native of the north and a traditional chief of Diare, a town near Tamale. He is the previous lay chairman of the Northern Ghana Diocese and was the first regional minister in the Nkrumah Government. He has stayed and worked in the North since the beginning of the church in the north. He converted to Methodism when he attended school in the south of Ghana. He reports in the interview that he is about 85 years old and has worked with more than twenty ministers of the Methodist Church who have served in Tamale in the past fifty years.

Chief Adam recalls that before 1954 the Methodists and Presbyterians met to worship together in Tamale. The congregation members were mostly government workers and traders residing in Tamale. The Methodist group later met separately for worship as the joint church grew with its attendant problems. The church posted Rev. Paul Adu to take care of this new Methodist congregation at Tamale. The Methodist Church at this time decided to restart and consolidate the mission task in the north and, therefore, posted the Rev. Paul Adu to Wa in the Upper West Region. Rev. Adu Badu replaced him in Tamale. At this time the Methodist Church Ghana had a “gentleman’s agreement” with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on how to reach the North with the gospel. The Methodists were to concentrate and work more in the northwest and the Presbyterians to pursue the mission task in the northeast.

The church at that time established a united primary school to serve the community of Tamale and to be a means to reach out to the people in this area, most of whom were Muslims. In the 1970s the Methodist church established primary and later a junior secondary school of their own, to educate the youth for the future. The church has

since established more schools in the other villages beyond Tamale as a means to reach out to the people.

Chief Adam mentioned people like Stella Iddrisu, who became a national president of the Women's Fellowship, as a native who contributed so much to the Methodist Church in the North. Many other people from the south, including the traders and government workers, continued to contribute to the development of the church in many ways. The church in Tamale had no other social services apart from the schools to positively make people see the love of God at work in their community. This lack of social service to Chief Adam did not advance the mission of the church in this area. He also mentioned the lack of resources in the form of adequate full-time workers, vehicles, and evangelical equipment as major obstacles to the progress of this task.

Chief Adam finally makes these suggestions that; the church must post more full-time workers to this area of northern Ghana. Moreover, the church must support these workers, well enough to enable them to effectively reach out to the many villages that have no churches. The training of local workers to him is still essential to fill the gap left by the early catechists who are no longer in service. Moreover, the provision of the urgently needed infrastructures such as chapels and manses was his great concern as well as strong vehicles for effective evangelism.

**Nana Timothy K. Serbe.** He is from southern Ghana but had gone to stay with an uncle, a Methodist who was working in Wa in the early 1950s. He was able to understand and communicate well in the local dialect, Wala. According to Nana Serbe, his late uncle Opanin Abraham Dame helped to gather some southern Methodists who were meeting to worship in Wa. They requested the church hierarchy for a minister to

take charge of the mission work, which the church had re-launched in the North. The Methodist Church Ghana thus sent Rev. Paul Adu to Wa as the first missionary to this area. Nana Serbe's uncle asked him to help in translating the messages of the minister to the indigenes since he understood and spoke the Wala dialect. Nana advised Rev. Paul Adu to move outside Wa town to the villages and by that reached out to places such as Mangu, Boro, Viere, and many others during his ten year pioneer missionary work in this area.

He mentioned other ministers who worked with Rev. Paul Adu and others who came after him such as Rev. Twum Baah and Rev. E. Dadson who contributed greatly in the mission task of the Methodist Church Ghana in this place. They, together with some local leaders who were catechists, gospel messengers, and local preachers, followed up the converts who were won in the villages where they planted these new churches.

Nana Serbe also reported of the starting of informal education called the Night Schools in some of the villages. Many young people enrolled and were educated in reading and writing as well as the Methodist faith. One of the products of this school is Rev. James Salia who is the superintendent at Lawra Circuit in the North. This method of education brought in many new converts to the Church. Moreover, some young, blind children were also gathered and taught in an informal way. The church established the Methodist School for the Blind in this area to cater for the many blind children in this area. The school had produced two people with doctorate degrees.

The church also established a mobile clinic at Lawra, which later became a nutrition center caring for children in this community. Furthermore, the Methodist Church Ghana established an agricultural project to offer advice on modern methods of



farming in Wa and the surrounding villages and to establish demonstration farms and animal ranches in towns and villages. This project has helped to offer employment to many people in the villages and has enhanced their livelihood.

Nana Serbe explained that these projects together with aggressive church planting by Rev. Paul Adu and his assistants helped to expand the mission of the Church in this area. Nevertheless, according to him the lack of support from the south and of other resources slowed down the mission task and collapse of some churches. In the view of Nana the use of all the old means of reaching out with the support of the Head Office will speed and enlarge the steady progress now underway.

A careful study of the responses and explanations by the other participants revealed a low level of impact of the holistic impact of the Methodist Church in the North. The past fifty years have seen progress and stagnation at various times. Major problems highlighted included lack of committed workers, finance, and continuity of projects and programs over the years. The solution in the view of these senior citizens is for a new way of active involvement of all Christians that will again mobilize financial support for this task.

### **Summary of Major Findings**

The results of the questionnaire and the survey clearly indicated the need for many activities and projects in addition to education and preaching to make the holistic mission effective and complete. The Methodist Church for the past fifty years indeed has made attempts to reach out holistically in some ways, but it must develop new approaches in many areas. The results furthermore indicate that holy living for members,

as well as media and sports outreach in addition to the major needs or items for holistic growth, will enhance this task of the church in the years ahead.

Moreover, the focus of this holistic mission has to do with both clergy and lay workers who will need much training to be able to reach out in a culturally relevant way to the people. The Christians, who work here, irrespective of whether they are from the south of Ghana or indigenes, must be willing to work in this difficult area with joy. The entire body of the Methodist Church Ghana must support and encourage these workers in this area. The provision of accommodation for church workers, vehicles, chapels, and school buildings will further enhance the holistic mission task of the church in this area.

Furthermore, the study confirms the assertion that no major mission can be possible without adequate human and financial resources. The lack of money was indicated as a main cause of the church's inability to put in place many of the needs of this holistic mission. The findings confirmed that the mobilization of financial resources from the people in this area through teachings on Christian giving may have fallen short of the expected target. Many Christians in the south have not also continued in their financial support for the north.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Major Findings**

The goal of the Church is growth in quantity and quality. This study sought to find the extent of the growth of the Methodist Church Ghana in this part of Ghana during the past fifty years. Indeed the church has achieved some growth over the years. Nevertheless, the growth had been slow and marginal as compared to the south of Ghana. The Methodist Church Ghana had planted 107 churches with about 8,187 members made up of both adults and children out of the total population of about 3,317,420 in the North at the end of 2004. The three selected southern regions have 1066 churches, and about 101,171 members with the total population of 6,967,900 even as at 1992.

The participants in the study identified sixteen needs as urgent for this holistic mission, but I realized that only nine at various times and levels were actually put into practice in this area. This study confirmed that education through informal and formal means and evangelism, the preaching of the gospel for converts, were the bedrock of that steady growth in the past.

The second research question brought out the fact that the Methodist Church Ghana must refocus and intensify the evangelism and school programs and above all develop new approaches such as the social services to provide the needed support for accelerated and holistic growth of the church in this area.

The purpose of this study was to focus on ways to improve the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in the northern Ghana. By way of emphasis, the holistic mission involves the proclamation of the gospel for decisions for Christ supported by means of

physical and social services. A renowned evangelist T. L. Osborn affirms the mission of every Christian:

Christ can only show His love to people through Christians who believe in his love enough to tell about it. Remember that each believer is Christ's body in action today and that He can only reach the lost through those who will allow him to speak and touch and see and hear and embrace through them. (116)

In this respect, the Church had used avenues during the past fifty years to reach out in love to the people of his area who are mostly Muslims and traditionalists. The lack of focus and commitment to pursuing these needs as indicated in the last chapter has contributed to this slow growth of the Church in this area.

The latest annual report in the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod Agenda(2006) of the church indicated the present position of the church: "The Northern Ghana now has Eight Circuits, 86 societies, 27 preaching post" (18). This synod report thus indicates the current total number of churches as 113. The reports truly show the lack of accelerated growth of the church. Many practical problems have hindered the earlier progress involved in such a holistic enterprise for the sake of the kingdom and its expansion in this area. Thus Alistair Brown points out concerning the ultimate goal of mission:

Mission is as comprehensive as that. It's not only plucking a few brands from fire. It's working towards an answer to the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to ask that the Father's kingdom should come that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (76)

The kingdom of God indeed brings hope and salvation to the people of God here on earth and beyond.

### **Explanation and Discussions**

The study provides a clear direction for what the church could have done since 1955 to enhance conversions and growth. The church could not sustain its educational

programs which were rated the highest by the participants as key to the holistic growth. The night schools, which were organized for the new converts in the villages as well as the formal schools like the Wa School for the Blind and Mangu Primary School helped to some extent at the initial stages to lay the needed foundation for this mission task. Clearly the responses by the participants indicated that, as has been confirmed by the May 2006 Synod report, the church had no single second cycle school that is solely owned by the Methodists in this area. Nevertheless, in December 2006, the Methodist Church Ghana opened the first high school in Buipe, a district capital in the Northern Region.

Evangelism and the making of disciples followed in the ranking as the key to bringing many into the kingdom of God. Here also the study showed a good beginning and intermittent slackness over the years. The results from the participant indicated a lack of aggressive outreach programs to win people to Christ during some periods of the life of the Church in this area. The ineffective discipleship training of members has also led to the low ranking of members of holy living.

Many Christians have underestimated the relevant role of the power of the Holy Spirit this holistic mission task in northern Ghana. Robert E. Coleman affirms this fact:

A Church full of the Holy Spirit lives in this devotion. Christian witness has many aspects, of course, but evangelism is the cutting edge. Indeed, it brings the church into existence, for apart from introducing sinners to the savior there will be fellowship of believers. That is why Wesley's charge to his preachers rings so true to the priorities of the kingdom. (16)

I agree with this contribution by Coleman that the church can make a progressive impact only when the Holy Spirit is allowed to work with the people of God in effective witness in word and deed among the people. The responses from the participants did not mention

the impact of the work of the Holy Spirit amongst the people of the area in this task in many periods of the Methodist Church Ghana's mission in this area.

In addition to the role of evangelism and the power of the Holy Spirit to intervene in situations, the only health facility has not always been the best as portrayed in the questionnaire and research survey. The mobile clinic collapsed many years ago, and the Lawra Nutrition Center has been struggling to cater for the children in their area of the Upper West Region. The health personnel here are inadequate for their vast area of operation.

Furthermore, the agricultural extension service provided training in modern methods of farming. Indeed, the program empowered many people economically by offering them employment through the project. Here again the participants of the study agreed to the limited scope of this activity and the impact on the community. Hogg points out that “[t]he Church has been set in the world to bring every area of man's life under Christ's Lordship” (153).

The Methodist Church Ghana has a mandate to influence all the areas of life of the people in northern Ghana and by that bring many into the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Once again the comments on the survey indicated that the children and youth ministries as well as revival programs such as camp meetings have produced some positive results and must be pursued.

Nevertheless, many of the participants agreed that the last decade has again seen some further improvement in these ministries towards the holistic growth of the church. The participants mentioned the giving of the scholarships by the Christian Education Division of the church, which has helped many children to complete their basic

education. They further mentioned revivals and open air gospel campaigns as some of the activities being promoted by the Methodist Church in northern Ghana. The church will be able to plant more churches in this area as the result of such programs.

Moreover, the participants mentioned the element of physical infrastructure and logistic support over and over again as a major hindrance in this holistic task. New churches that meet under the shade of trees are seen as disincentive to new converts who desire to worship in a chapel. Clearly the study shows the extent to which the lack of this infrastructure may have accounted for the slow growth of the church in this area. Indeed some members join other denominations or became Muslims because they feel uncomfortable worshipping under trees and open places as most of the Methodist churches did not have chapels.

The goal of the church in reaching out to this area was clear from the initial stages as indicated in the 1953 synod report by Bartels:

It decided that the work in the north should begin at once with the extension of activities of the North Ashanti Mission beyond the Black Volta north-westward to Bole, where a catechist should be stationed, and north-eastward to the Gonja Development Area around Damongo. It appointed a Northern Region Missionary Committee to study and advice on the question of further advance northward beyond Bole to Wa and Tumu. (261)

The Methodist Church Ghana indeed followed this plan at that time with zeal, and because the whole church supported this task most of the set goals were attained. Methodist churches can now be found in all the areas that were targeted at that time and beyond to some remote villages.

Furthermore, with reference to the review of the other literature in this research, many of the assertions about holistic mission have proved relevant in this area. Krass has

a strong view that in mission God's plan is to use the church to bring salvation to the world. The church as the agent of God seeks to reach out to people who need the saving message of the Lord Jesus Christ. This salvation is holistic in the spirit, body, and soul of the people. The Methodist Synod of 1953 followed up in a systematic way the proposed plan by sending missionaries to work in this area.

The holistic nature of this mission demands the church involvement in many needs of the North. The results from the participants clearly mentioned many of these activities as the proclamation of the word, education, health, agricultural services, and involvement in the many activities in a community. Warren has rightly commented elsewhere that God has called the church to do many things for the community. (128). The proclamation of the gospel in the initial stages of the holistic mission was a real priority before the addition of other activities as mentioned by the participants.

Moreover, the place of culture in this task is very important for the needed impact on the lives of the people. Bediako points out the effect of culture on the conversion and transformation of a people and their economic habits through the positive celebrations of festivals (6). These celebrations can be explored in northern Ghana as means for outreach. The expectations and suggestions of the participants show the way forward for the proper utilization of the culture of the people for real social and economic emancipation. Many people see religion as a cultural reality in which the communal faith of the people becomes an asset to the church. The proclamation of the gospel which is backed by social action can bring whole families and villages to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



Leadership issues were of great concern to the participants of this study. Shirley Lim had explained that leaders may not be born but can be nurtured (59). An important area of the holistic mission is leadership development, in which many participants requested the church be more intentional, especially in training the indigenous people in this area. These new leaders must have vision and courage to solve problems that may come their way in ministry. Blackaby and Blackaby have affirmed that great leaders will lead leaders for the future generations to be inspired to continue. (134). Leadership development again produces in people the ability to withstand the spiritual and physical stress of ministry and for that matter the fruitful result as in some areas of the north in the past.

The church must not ignore the Islamic influences on the holistic work as Muslims become more aggressive in an attempt to make Islam a dominant religion in the north. The Muslims are using the money from Saudi Arabia and Iran, as indicated by Baker, to reach out. (61). The Muslims are also now providing social services such as schools and hospitals in many of the communities in the north. Some of the participants indeed mentioned the need to provide security in terms physical and financial support for the Muslim converts. The parents of some of these converts persecute and even throw them out of their houses in many places.

Furthermore, the participants also confirmed other kinds of physical persecution as mentioned in the literature during the interviews, where other ethnic groups have attacked and caused physical harm to Christians in the service of God. I remember in 1993, I and some members of then Methodist Youth Fellowship had just planted a new church at Salaga in the Northern Region. That church collapsed due to an ethnic conflict,

and the Presbyterian minister there who had assisted us during the program, Rev. Coffie, was killed during the conflict. In all these we were encouraged in our sufferings by the words of the apostle Peter: "But rejoice that you participate in the suffering of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed" (1 Pet. 4:13). Persecutions and problems did not stop the holistic work in the North but only managed to slow the progress as indicated in this research.

### **Weakness of Study**

This study was an attempt to evaluate the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in the whole of northern Ghana. As a matter of fact, the one hundred responses to the questionnaire and the forty selected people for the survey interviews were mainly from the towns and cities in the north. Even though some of the participants hail from the rural remote areas of the north, they have settled in the urban areas of the north or even in the south of Ghana. While participants know and feel what has happened with the mission of the church during the last fifty years, they may not have appreciated the current state of the work of the church in these rural areas. A few did not understand the concept of holistic mission as a way of growing the church in this area.

Of the participants 80 percent were literate and 20 percent were semiliterate members of the church. The many other illiterate rural members of the church could have added some dimensions to the positive impact of the church on their lives. Nevertheless, my personal involvement with the people who are living in these rural areas of the North affirms most of views of these participants in the town and cities.

### **Contributions to Research Methodology**

I designed this evaluative historical study through the researcher-designed questionnaire in order to seek primary information from all the people concerned with this task in the north. The additional semi-structured interviews provided deep insights of the issue of holistic mission as it affects northern Ghana. Now future researchers have a base to seek further information through a new questionnaire as well as interviews of the new generation of Christian workers in the north.

This methodology brings out clearly views of the people who are closely connected to the history of the holistic work here in the north. It also provided an avenue for participants to contribute to the debate on the possible approaches for success.

### **Future Studies**

A new study can continue from this one with special emphasis on the villages in the north. Some oral method of interviewing the women, youth, and children with the help of a translator will balance the views of the participants.

Furthermore, the new study could also concentrate only on the physical benefits for the people as a result of the church interventions through its mission on the level of poverty or child care. The church may then learn strategies for the future work in these areas of the North. The holistic mission task by other denominations working in northern Ghana may also be worth studying in order to compare their activities with the efforts of the Methodist Church Ghana.

### **Personal Reflections**

The study revealed many new ways of doing mission I had never really considered. Indeed the holistic mission of the Church is wide and varied. Thus for an

effective holistic mission, the Methodist Church Ghana should not ignore nor relegate to the background any area of the church's mission to a people.

Many people in the church in every place have great expectations for the church, and this hope was the case of northern Ghana. Indeed because of the peculiar problems of poverty, adverse climate, physical infrastructure, and constant migration of the youth to the south, any mission enterprise must address these constraints.

The issue of leadership development of the indigene mentioned by some of the participants of the study is crucial in the growth of the church. The church must support more school children and train them in the Christian faith to reach their own people.

D. A. Carson explains the importance of this training of the people that the church reaches out to others: "African Christians, and indeed all Christians must begin 'tabula rasa'. Missionaries should provide working tools and building materials to believers not yet able to train their own people, and then leave them to get on with the task" (227).

Leadership training can be formal or informal but must be found at all levels of the church's holistic mission. Members who are young or old can avail themselves to be taught in theory and practical ministry work. The church must provide avenues for these trained leaders to use their gifts in the service of the church and the community in which they live.

### **Contribution to Present Ministry and Recommendations**

I have been associated with the work of this place for the past sixteen years first as a junior pastor in the 1990s then as a missionary and superintendent minister from 1999 to 2003. Now as the director of evangelism, mission, and renewal division of the

Methodist Church Ghana, I am still actively involved in outreach programs in this area, especially church planting and leadership development.

I always have joy in seeing many come to the light of Jesus from the dark life of pain and hopelessness that is the case for many in this area. Many villages are calling for churches to be established in their places. The harvest for the kingdom is ripe, and the Methodist Church Ghana must respond positively to the challenge. The survey of Ghana Evangelism Committee estimated that over three thousand towns and villages in the three northern regions do not have churches (National Church Survey 97).

My recommendation from this study and my personal association with this holistic mission task in this area to the Conference of the Methodist Church Ghana and to the entire Methodist community of “faithfuls” in the north and south of Ghana is to show more concern. This new attitude, I believe will bring a new focus and effective ways of putting into the practice the task of reaching northern Ghana as part of the general vision of the Church.

First, I propose the immediate planting of churches in the remaining district capitals of Northern, Upper East, and West Regions. These towns are Salaga, Saboba, Zabzugu, Gushiegu, Tolon, Gambaga, Zebila, Bongo, Fumsi, and Wuchiaw. The church can use these places as bases to launch out to the many villages without churches in future. The church must post ministers as soon as possible to the churches planted in the district capitals to help accelerate the task of this holistic mission.

Moreover, the Methodist Church must implement the proposal for a missionary movement. It must begin to recruit volunteers to willingly serve this area. These people

can be ministers, evangelists, or trained leaders who have the zeal and are prepared to sacrifice for the total evangelization of this great potential area in Ghana.

Furthermore, the church should review its social work in the north. The existing schools must be provided with the needed human and material resources so that they can perform better. Currently the Bawku, Lawra, and Bole Junior Secondary Schools are the best in their districts. The church must build more junior high schools in the villages in order to stop the migration of the youth to the south for non existing jobs. The church must also help raise the standard of the new senior high school at Buipe, and the plans for an agricultural high school in Wa must become a reality in the near future. The church must also upgrade the only health institution at Lawra and the agricultural station in Wa for the benefit of the people.

Moreover, the proposed endowment fund for the north must not be a concern for only the people of the north but the entire church. Many people must be encouraged to contribute to this fund so that many of the identified needs of holistic mission can be undertaken without further delay.

An important issue in my view concerns the power of the Holy Spirit, which must be evident to break all the strongholds of the devil in relation to Islam and negative cultural practices in this area. The church must give prayer a central place in its task and as have been suggested earlier more revival and camp meetings will be essential in the mission of the church.

My last recommendation based on the many suggestions to refocus the task of holistic mission is for the church to be mission minded in such a way that issues of the north will take center stage. The Methodist Church Ghana can then continue its mission

to the neighboring countries of Burkina Faso, Togo, La Cote D'Ivoire, and beyond. John.

T. Seamands points out the extent of this mission:

The whole world has reversed to a mission field. The Christian Church every where is set in the midst of a pagan environment. The confrontation between the world religions and between faith and unfaith is found on every continent. (39)

God has called to reach out to difficult environment as Seamands affirms here. The task of the church today must then focus to such places in need as the north of Ghana.

The lessons here for the Methodist Church Ghana can be of help to many other Christians denominations.

### **Conclusion and Way Forward**

The church must recognized her calling to mission, and this mission must be holistic. It must relate to all areas of human existence: physical, social, and spiritual. It must affect the whole development of a person and the community. The biblical preaching of the gospel message must be a priority for real conversion and commitment to the Lord Jesus. In this process many avenues like education, health care, agriculture services, and occasional relief assistance can be used as effective means of outreach.

The Methodist Church Ghana has now produced a Strategic Plan for 2006 to 2015, which has the main goal of doubling the membership of members. Some of the strategic and operational objectives include the rekindling of the Wesleyan zeal of holiness, evangelism, and mission towards significant church growth as well as initiating policies and programs that will lead to significant reduction of poverty and promotion of effective youth development and gender mainstreaming in the church.

The effectiveness of this holistic mission by the Methodist Church in northern Ghana must rediscover these methods of evangelism for continual growth. The study

indeed has confirmed that the church must refocus and provide all the necessary human and material resource for the needed progress. I hope that by this means of holistic mission the Church will grow and impact this area of Ghana in the next fifty years and the other countries in the sub region.

Finally, by this study I have personally been renewed for greater passion and commitment to this holistic mission in the north of Ghana. I plan to devote more time, energy, and resources to assist in any way possible to reach the whole of northern Ghana for the Lord. Moreover, I hope to encourage many young professionals to go to this area and help the many social services available in this area.

The Methodist Church Ghana now can learn from the past achievements and failures of the holistic mission in this part of Ghana and indeed refocus its mission as a clear priority. The plans and programs must be put into place now. Jesus said, "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work" (John 9:4). Indeed the great harvest is ripe, and the Church must not fail in this urgent call and task from God to all Christians.



**APPENDIX A**

**Questionnaire of Needs for the Holistic Mission in the North**

Please take a few moments of your precious time to answer these questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. Age: .....
2. Gender: .....
3. Vocation: .....
4. Position in church: .....
5. How long have you stayed in northern Ghana? .....
6. What do you consider as urgent needs for the holistic mission of the Church in Ghana?
  - a.....
  - b.....
  - c.....
  - d.....
  - e.....
  - f.....
7. On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest, 3 as medium, and 5 as highest indicate the level of urgency.
  - a.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
  - b.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
  - c.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
  - d.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
  - e.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
  - f.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
8. Mention as many of the many popular programs and projects of the

Methodist Church in northern Ghana as you can:

- a.....
- b.....
- c.....
- d.....
- e.....
- f.....

9. Please rank again in your view the level of impact for each of the above mentioned programs and projects of the holistic mission.

- a.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
- b.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
- c.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
- d.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
- e.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
- f.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

**APPENDIX B**

**Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

1. Please recount briefly the story of the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana and your association with this task.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. How do you see the progress of the holistic mission of the Church in the past years?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3. Why is the Church in the North using many methods to reach out?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. What will be the most effective strategies for the Church to progress in Ghana?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5. What practical suggestions do you think the church needs to implement for a successful holistic mission?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

6. Please give any further comments you have about the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in the northern Ghana:.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## APPENDIX C

### Interview with the Bishop

1. Please recount briefly the story of the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana and your association with this task:

*The Mission work of the Methodist Church started in the North in 1955 and it started with the opening of schools for formal education and Sunday school for non-formal. Then the need arose for the opening of clinic at Lawra and followed with the establishment of the Wa Agric. Program. As a Bishop, I am the chairman of the Boards of Management of three institutions including the Wa school for the Blind.*

2. How do you see the progress of the holistic mission of the Church in the past years?

*The progress had been very slow in the past due to lack of the much needed logistics, funds, vehicles, chapels for places of worship and personal*

3. Why is the Church in the north using many methods to reach out?

*The three regions of the north are ranked as being the poorest regions in Ghana, apart from the Central Region. The poverty level is so high and illiteracy is also very high. The church to be able to make the gospel message relevant to the people, is using all these methods to reach out to them.*

4. What will be the most effective strategies for the church to progress in Ghana?

*The most effective strategies to make progress will be to plant more churches and effectively witness the love of God in Christ to win them from Islam, which has almost*

*become part of their culture. There must be more church workers, ministers, and caretakers stationed in the area to witness and win souls for Christ.*

5. What practical suggestions do you think the church needs to implement for a successful holistic mission?

*Regular crusades to be held in the rural communities for Church planting backed by the provision of Social service like opening of schools and clinics, as well as programs to help them in the farming activities to enable them earn a living. ministers and caretakers must be paid regularly and also be provided with means of transport.*

6. Please give any further comments on the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana.

*The first African (Ghanaian) missionary to the north was able to win many souls through the opening of schools and health care which he started by dressing of their wounds. But unfortunately, because the needed logistics were not supplied in support of his mission work, many of the converts left the Methodist Church back to their Islam religion. Many of the schools also collapsed. The church must focus her attention to the Mission work in the North because of the domination of Islam religion.*

## APPENDIX D

### Interview with a Project Officer

1. Please recount briefly the story of the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana and your association with this task:

*The Church began with adult educational programs (Night Schools) to reach out to the indigenes. Having opened societies, I supported as a gospel messenger, teaching biblical stories and songs.*

2. How do you see the progress of the holistic mission of the Church in the past years:

*Not very impressive. Why? Some societies have collapsed. Membership (indigenes) is not steady. Infrastructure is weak.*

3. Why is the Church in the North using many methods to reach out?

*So as to christen more and sustain the existing ones*

4. What will be the most effective strategies for the Church to progress in Ghana?

*The church began through education; this to be intensified. It should also revisit the provision of social needs which work churches and even Islamic sects are practicing.*

5. What practical suggestions do you think the Church needs to implement for a successful holistic mission?

*More schools with emphasis on religion programs; Sunday Schools are to be improved. The provision of social infrastructure is paramount.*

6. Please do you have any further comments on this holistic task of the Methodist Church Ghana in northern Ghana?

*It appears, the Church needs to evolve strategies with sharper tools in order to double its*



*membership as envisaged. a simple SWOT analysis of the church to my mind comes out with more weaknesses than strengths*

**For example:**

1. *Its financial base is weak, thus the establishment of*
  - a. *Chapels are a problem*
  - b. *Schools are very few*
  - c. *Social economic infrastructures are frustrating*
  - d. *Staff welfare matters are insufficiently placed.*
  
2. *The Institutional capacity is weak, i.e., administrative structures are inadequate—few workers and little or no logistics to work with.*

*Much time devoted for planning (Meetings) with little time for implementation. Simply put, the Church should be more proactive.*

**Specific Suggestions**

*The church should consider building the capacity of the indigenes to handle the affairs of the church, e.g.*

- *The issue of catechists should be looked at*
- *The good old days of using gospel messengers should be looked at*
- *The use of local languages should be encouraged*
- *School worship is dead in many. It must be made compulsory in all Methodist schools. To enhance these Methodists must be posted to Methodist Schools.*

## APPENDIX E

### Interview with a Youth Leader

1. Please recount briefly the story of the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana and your association with this task:

*Rev. Paul Adu was the first missionary to Wa and he has changed many lives, Mr. T. K. Serbe is also one of the people who is also helping to implement and help spread the gospel.*

2. How do you see the progress of the holistic mission of the church in the past years:

*From the past four years ago there is improvement in many areas.*

3. Why is the Church in the north using many methods to reach out?

*They are using many methods because they want to get new members into the church, and it is that they want methods that will torched the hearts of the worldly people and they will come and join the church.*

4. What will be the most effective strategies for the Church to progress in this Ghana?

*Preaching/Witnessing the word of God effectively and leading an exemplary life for the people to see.*

5. What practical suggestions do you think the church needs to implement for a successful holistic mission?

*Loving one another, helping each other, visiting each other, preaching the gospel praying for others, forming prayer groups. Sharing of Church activities to most of the members. Some people feel they are not part of the church and they don't have any importance in the church when programs are kept given to some particular people all the time.*

6. Please do you have any further comments with the holistic task of the Methodist Church Ghana in northern Ghana?

*Many Children in the High schools must be given scholarship to complete their education .The Methodist University and Training Colleges must offer admission to these students from the north.*

## APPENDIX F

### Interview with an Indigene Scholar

1. Please recount briefly the story of the holistic mission of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana and your association with this task:

*The Methodist Church began in the north with the preaching of the Gospel and establishment of schools in the late 1950s. Many churches were planted by the first missionary, Rev Paul Adu in some of the villages in the Upper West Region.*

2. How do you see the progress of the holistic mission of the Church in the past years:

*It Progressed well in early years but went down in the 1970s and 1980s. However, it is coming up again since late 1990s.*

3. Why is the Church in the north using many methods to reach out?

*The Church has not really made the north a target for aggressive evangelism, the church is not fully committed to the North*

4. What will be the most effective strategies for the Church to progress in this part of Ghana?

- *Commitment*
- *Church workers to the north must not be ignored*
- *More emphasis must be placed on Evangelism*

5. What practical suggestions do you think the church needs to implement for a successful holistic mission?

- *Eradicate and disabuse people's minds that stationing in the north is a punishment*

*Church workers who are posted to the north should have free medical care and free education for their children.*

6. Please do you have any further comments on the holistic task of the Methodist Church in northern Ghana?

*No minister should spend more than four years at the time in the north.*

- *The Church needs to train more indigenes in leadership positions (preacher, lay leaders in basic evangelism Christianity) such persons should first demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of Christ in their lives.*
- *Must revisit the issue of placing catechists in the northern villages as was the case in the 1960s and 1970s (for—Vieri, Dorimon, Bole, etc.)*
- *Opportunities should be created often for indigenous and Akan societies of the north to interact as one people for learning and growth of the indigenous areas.*
- *Methodist Church in the north should promote closer ecumenical The relationships with other church bodies so that we can learn from them how they are making it in that geographical area—Catholics, Church of Pentecost, Assemblies of God, Baptist, etc., have all made it big in the north.*
- *The Church as a body needs an attitudinal change towards the North, not to see it as an appendix of its work but an area which the church's success can be measured in Ghana.*

*Every political district should have a Methodist minister whose initial (5 years?) stipends, allowances, society's development transport, etc., should be borne by a well endowed-circuit either in the south of Ghana or abroad.*

### WORKS CITED

- Baker, Peter. Peoples, Languages, and Religion in Northern Ghana. Accra: GEC/Asempa, 1986.
- Barna, George. Revolution: Finding Vibrant Faith beyond the Walls of the Sanctuary. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2005.
- Bartels, F. L. The Root of Ghana Methodism. London: Cambridge, 1965.
- Bediako, Kwame. "Festivals as Religious Events and Their Tehological Significance." Traditional Festivals as a Means to Cultural Transformation. Tamale, Ghana: GILLBT, 2004. 3-7.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Richard Blackaby. Spiritual Leadership. Nashville: Broadman, 2001.
- Bosch, David J. Transforming Mission. Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis, 2002.
- Brown, Alistair. I Believe in Mission. London: Hodder, 1997.
- Cardoza-Orlandi, Carols F. "Cross-Cultural Mission in Congregations." Circuit Rider. May-June 2004: 23-25.
- Carson, D. A., ed. The Church in the Bible and World. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Cho, Yonggi David. The Fourth Dimension. Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 1979.
- Coleman, Robert E. Nothing to Do But to Save Souls. Wilmore, KY: Wesley Heritage, 1990.
- Deegbe, Fred P. "Mentoring: The Key to the Growth of Calvary Baptist Church, Accra, Ghana." Diss. Asbury Theological Seminary, 2003.
- De Pree, Max. Leadership Jazz. New York: Dell, 1992.
- Donavan, Vincent J. Christianity Rediscovered. Marynoll, NY: Orbis, 1998.

- Edusa-Eyison, J. M. Y. "170 Years of Methodism in Ghana." Methodist Times 19.6 (Nov. 2005): 4-8.
- Escobar, Samuel. The New Global Mission. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.
- Falk, Peter. The Growth of the Church in Africa. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.
- Fernando, Ajith. Jesus Driven Ministry. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002.
- 45th Annual Synod Agenda of Northern Ghana Diocese. Tamale, Ghana: Methodist Church Ghana, 2006.
- 44th Annual Synod Agenda of Northern Ghana Diocese. Tamale, Ghana: Methodist Church Ghana, 2005.
- Fuller, Lois. A Missionary Handbook on African Traditional Religion. Tamale, Ghana: Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation, 2002.
- Galloway, Dale. Leading with Vision. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1999.
- George, Carl F. Prepare Your Church for the Future. Grand Rapids: Revell, 1992.
- Graham, Billy. Peace with God. Minneapolis: World Wide, 1984.
- Green, Michael. Evangelism in the Early Church. Glasgow: Harper, 1970.
- Guder, Darrel L., et al. Missional Church. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Gyekye, Kwame. "Spiritual and Moral Leadership: The Role of Theological Institutions." Trinity Journal of Church and Theology. 15 (Jan. 2005): 34-40.
- Hesselgrave, David J. Planting Churches Cross-Culturally. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.
- Hogg, Richard. One World, One Mission. New York: Friendship, 1960.
- Hunter, George G., III. Radical Outreach. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
- Kalu, Ogbu U. "Shape, Flow and Identity in African Church Historiography." Trinity Journal of Church and Theology. 12 (July/Dec. 2002): 14-20.

- Krass, A. C. Go and Make Disciples. London: SPCK, 1974.
- Kudadjie, J. N., and R. K. Aboagye-Mensah. Christianity and National Politics. Accra: Asempa, 1991
- Lim, Shirley. Leading People. Singapore: Research Communication International, 2004.
- Martey, Emmanuel. African Theology. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996.
- Maxwell, John C. Developing the Leader within You. Nashville: Nelson, 1993.
- McCoy, Remiguis. Great Things Happen. Phoenix, AZ: North American Liturgy, 1973.
- “Mission.” Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Online. 29 Mar. 2006 <<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>>.
- National Church Survey 1993 Update: Facing the Unfinished task of the Church in Ghana. Accra,: Ghana Evangelism Committee, 1993.
- Nida, Eugene. Customs and Cultures. Eugene, OR: Wipf, 2001.
- Ogden, Greg. The New Reformation. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.
- Osborn, T. L. Soul Winning. Tulsa, OK: Osborn, 1963.
- “People of Ghana.” Bureau of African Affairs—U.S. Department of State. May 2007. <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2860.htm>>.
- Pirouet, Louise. Christianity Worldwide. London: SPCK, 1989.
- Pobee, J. S. AD 2000 and After: The Future of God’s Mission in Africa. Accra, Asempa, 1991.
- Schwarz, Christian A. Natural Church Development. St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart, 1996.
- Seamands, John T. Tell It Well: Communicating the Gospel across Cultures. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1981.
- Seamands, Stephen. Wounds That Heal. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.



- Snyder, Howard. Decoding the Church. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Stevens, R. Paul. The Other Six Days. Vancouver: Regent College, 1999.
- The Mission of an Evangelist. Amsterdam 2000 Conference. Minneapolis: Worldwide, 2001.
- Tomkins, Stephen. John Wesley: A Biography. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Tucker, Ruth A. From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Mission. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
- Van Engen, Charles. God's Missionary People. Grand Rapids; Baker, 1997.
- Wagner, C. Peter. Church Planting for Greater Harvest. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990.
- . Leading Your Church to Growth. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1984
- Warner, Rob. Prepare for Revival. London: Hodder, 1995.
- Warren, Rick. The Purpose Driven Church. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.
- Watson, David. I Believe in the Church. London: Hodder, 1978.
- Wiersma, William, and Stephen Jurs. Research Methods in Education. 8th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2005.
- Winter, Ralph D. "The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism." Crucial Dimensions in World Evangelization. Ed. Arthur F. Glasser, Paul G. Hiebert, C. Peter Wagner, and Ralph D. Winter. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1976. 105-31.
- Yin, Robert K. Case Study Research: Designs and Methods. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 1989.

## WORKS CONSULTED

- Aboagye-Mensah, Robert. John Wesley and the Methodists. Accra, Ghana: Advocate, 2006.
- Asamoah-Gyedu, Kwabena J., ed. Trinity Journal of Church and Theology 15.1 (Jan. 2005).
- Asare-Kusi, Emmanuel K. The Practice of the Means of Grace in the Church Today. Kumasi, Ghana: Wilas, 1994
- Burnett, David. Clash of Worlds. Grand Rapids: Monarch, 2002.
- Clinton, J. Robert. The Making of Disciples. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1988.
- Elliot, Rebecca. Painless Grammar. Hauppauge, NY: Baron's, 2006.
- Galloway, Dale. Building Teams in Ministry. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 2000.
- . Making Church Relevant. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1999.
- Gilliland, Dean S., ed. The World among Us. Waco, TX: Word, 1989.
- Hidebrant, Jonathan. History of the Church in Africa. Achimota, Ghana: A.C.P., 1990.
- Hiebert, Paul. Cultural Anthropology. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983.
- Katter, Calvin. Ye Shall Receive Power. Minneapolis: Evangelism Associate, 1978.
- Mana, Ka. Christians and Churches of Africa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004.
- Mangalwadi, Vishal, and Ruth, Mangalwadi. The Legacy of William Carey. Wheaton, IL: Good News, 1999.
- “The Minutes of Representative Session of Conference.” Methodist Church Ghana. Akyem Oda, Ghana. 2006.
- “The Minutes of Representative Session of Conference.” Methodist Church Ghana. Cape Coast, Ghana. 1997.

“The Minutes of Representative Session of Conference.” Methodist Church Ghana.

Koforidua, Ghana. 1999.

“The Minutes of Representative Session of Conference.” Methodist Church Ghana.

Sekondi, Ghana. 2004.

“The Minutes of the Representative Session of Synod.” Methodist Church Northern

Ghana Diocese. Tamale, Ghana. 2005.

“The Minutes of the Representative Session of Synod.” Methodist Church Northern

Ghana Diocese. Tamale, Ghana. 2003.

Oden, Thomas. Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry. New York: Harper, 1983.

Osborn, T. L. The Message that Works. Tulsa, OK: Osborn, 2004.

Poling, David. The Last Days of the Church. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969.

Porter, William, et al. Igniting Leadership. Derbys, UK: Moorley's, 2005.

Samwini, Nathan Iddrisu. “Aggressive Work and Evangelism in Northern Ghana.” A

Paper Presented to the Methodist Church Ghana. Accra, Ghana. Mar. 2004.

Slade, Carole. Form and Style. Boston: Houghton, 2000.

“Strategic Plan: 2006-2015.” Accra: Methodist Church Ghana, 2006.

Walls, Andrew F. The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History. Mary Knoll, NY:

Orbis, 2005.