

**A History of The Outreach  
Foundation in Ghana:  
1984–2020**



**Jefferson Ritchie**



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# Explanation of Adinkra Symbols

The title page and the first page each chapter of this history include “Adinkra symbols” or other visual representations of the Akan culture of central Ghana which communicate deeply held beliefs about God and the collective wisdom of the Akan peoples passed down from one generation to another.

## Title Page



Sankofa: “Go back to fetch it.” That is, we need to go back and learn our history so that we may plant seeds for the future generations.

## Chapter 1



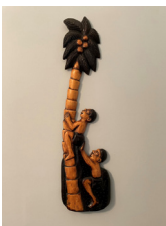
Gye Nyame: “Except God” is the literal rendering of the symbol. “God is sovereign” is a more understandable translation, as Gye Nyame refers to the omnipotence and supremacy of God in all things. It is the most widely known of the Adinkra symbols.

## Chapter 2



Woforo Dua Pa A: “He who climbs a good tree should get a push.”

## Chapter 3



A carving which depicts the same proverb, Woforo Dua Pa A: “He who climbs a good tree should get a push.”

#### Chapter 4



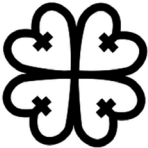
Dwenini Mmen (Ram's horn): "The strength of the ram depends not so much on its horns, but on its heart." This is the Adinkra symbol chosen by the Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture.

#### Chapter 5



Akoma Ntoso (Joined or united hearts): Hearts joined together by God can never be broken apart.

#### Chapter 6



Nyame Dua (God's tree or sacred stump): A symbol depicting God's presence and protection.

#### Addendum



Bi-nka-bi ("No one should bite another," that is, outrage or provoke another): A symbol of justice, fair play, freedom, and avoidance of strife.

## Chapter 1

### American Presbyterian Encounters with the Presbyterians of Ghana, 1957-1983



**GYE NYAME**  
**“God Is Sovereign”**

This volume is the third in a series of histories of The Outreach Foundation in countries for which I was its primary liaison. In this history, I will be emphasizing the collaborative nature of the mission work between the PCUSA and The Outreach Foundation in the early years of our work in Ghana, the personal relationships we developed with key leaders that have driven the work over the years, and above all, the sense that Christianity in Africa, of which Ghana is but one example, is in some sense “representative Christianity.”<sup>1</sup>

This chapter sets the stage for the arrival of The Outreach Foundation in Ghana in the mid-1980s. A brief summary of the origin of the Presbyterian churches in Ghana will be followed by an account of how American Presbyterians became engaged in Ghana.

### **Emergence of the Presbyterian Churches in Ghana**

The Presbyterian communions in Ghana arose out of mission efforts in the first half of the 19th century by the Swiss Basel Mission Society, the German Bremen Mission Society, and Moravian Christians from Jamaica. The work of the Basel Mission and their Jamaican co-workers resulted in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), the majority of whose members speak Twi or Ga, the dominant languages of central and southern Ghana. The Bremen Mission worked among the Ewe-speaking people in what is now eastern Ghana and western Togo. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana (EPC,G)<sup>2</sup> and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo are the fruits of their labors.

The two Ghanaian Presbyterian denominations were independent, self-governing churches by the time of their country’s independence in 1957. They were also early participants in the worldwide ecumenical movement that began in the 20th century. Nationally, both the PCG and the EPC,G belonged to the Christian Council of Ghana. Internationally, both churches participated in the International Missionary Council (IMC) and hosted its 1957-58 Assembly in Ghana.

### **American Presbyterians encounter Ghana**

At the International Missionary Council Assembly, American Presbyterians were present and were quite impressed with the Presbyterian communions in Ghana. The Assembly itself was a significant meeting for the World Christian Movement. Mission terminology used in earlier Protestant mission circles such as “sending and receiving countries” and “older and younger churches” was discarded, and a new IMC theme was chosen: “One Church Sent with the Whole Gospel to the Whole World in Obedience to Christ.”

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<sup>1</sup> See Kwame Bediako, “A New Era in Christian History—African Christianity as Representative Christianity,” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (June 2006:3).

<sup>2</sup> The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana experienced a split during the period that this history covers. The initials used to describe the Evangelical Presbyterian Church with which The Outreach Foundation had its partnership included a comma between the “C” and the “G”—(EPC,G).



The representatives of the two major American Presbyterian denominations saw in Ghana a place where the new mission theme could be put into practice. Up to this point, the United Presbyterian Church in the USA (UPCUSA) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) had engaged in pioneer mission in Africa, planting the first Presbyterian churches in countries such as Congo, Cameroon, and Ethiopia. In Ghana, the work of establishing the church had been accomplished. Ghana's two Presbyterian communions and the Christian Council of Ghana were potential partners with which the UPCUSA and the PCUS could join hands as "one church sent with the whole gospel to the whole world in obedience to Christ."

Initially, the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) sent short-term missionaries to Ghana in the early 1960s to work on specific projects of the Church in Ghana. The Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) appointed a couple for regular (long-term) missionary service in 1968, the Rev. Harry Petersen and Mrs. Martha Jane Petersen. Having previously served in Taiwan, the Petersens were invited to help the Christian Council of Ghana establish the first full-time Protestant Chaplaincy on the campus of the University College of Cape Coast.

After three years in this ministry, the Petersens moved to Accra where they served seven years. In Accra, Harry Petersen pastored an ecumenical church of Methodists, Anglicans, and Presbyterians. He also taught New Testament at Trinity Theological College, an ecumenical seminary serving both Presbyterian denominations and the Methodist and Anglican communions in Ghana. Martha Jane Petersen was a "Communications Missionary." In that role, she contributed articles to Presbyterian Survey, the official PCUS magazine, and to other publications of the denomination. She was also responsible for the Petersens' mission correspondence letters which informed American Presbyterians about Ghana and the Church in Ghana. In addition to their official tasks, the Petersens connected American Presbyterians with the Church in Ghana in a variety of ways. For example, they opened the way for a professor at Columbia Theological Seminary to spend a sabbatical in Ghana.

Following their ministry in Ghana, the Petersens were reassigned to Nigeria where they served three years. They then returned to the United States where Harry, or "Pete," as he was widely known, became the Director of Villa International in Atlanta, Georgia. Martha Jane continued to be a mission advocate for the Church in Africa through her publication, *God's Fire*, a resource for PCUSA churches during a season of mission emphasis on Africa in Winter, 1984.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Martha Jane Petersen, *God's Fire: A Personal Journey* (Atlanta: Office of Interpretation, Presbyterian Church (USA), 1984).

## **Other Presbyterian “Paths” to Ghana--PATH of the Presbytery of Atlanta**

In the early 1970s, the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) established an office dealing with issues of hunger. Over time, the presbyteries of the denomination established their own hunger programs. The Presbytery of Atlanta’s hunger office was PATH, short for “Presbyterian Answers to Hunger.” Local churches were encouraged to have their members collect two cents/ per person for each meal. The penny offerings collected in each home were brought to church on a Sunday which that congregation designated to receive their “2 cents a meal offering.” The PATH Committee of Atlanta Presbytery, later Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, used the money raised to support hunger-related projects, both locally and abroad.

How did the Atlanta Presbytery’s Hunger Program get connected with Ghana? It was partly due to geography. Atlanta was the site of the General Assembly offices of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Sometime in the 1970s, Atlanta Presbyterians involved with PATH attended a conference at the Presbyterian headquarters on the impact of the Volta Dam in Ghana. This dam had been constructed in the 1960s with significant investment from the United States government. While it enabled the production of large amounts of electricity for Ghana, the resulting lake that was formed by the dam displaced thousands of people who then had to find new ways of earning a living. Many of these people were Presbyterians.

The PATH committees of Atlanta Presbytery and neighboring Cherokee Presbytery decided that they would do something to help these displaced people in their transition from being farmers to becoming fishermen. The PCUS staff for Africa connected them with the Christian Council of Ghana, and a partnership in mission began. PATH provided nets for those engaged in fishing and sewing machines for those who had begun cottage industries of sewing.

A group from PATH visited Ghana in 1983 to see the impact of their partnership. One of the participants on that trip, the Rev. Joe Sandifer, related in an interview how the trip inspired him, both in terms of the impact of the mission support provided by PATH to the displaced persons and in terms of the partners whom he met. He mentioned that he still keeps in touch with some of the Ghanaian friends he met on that trip, such as Dr. Bright Mawudor, formerly the Finance Officer of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, and currently the Deputy General Secretary for Finance and Administration of the All Africa Conference of Churches.

These early presbytery international partnerships were the first of several presbytery partnerships American Presbyterians would form with the two Presbyterian communions in Ghana. Presbytery partnerships with the global church were to become a significant component of the Presbyterian world mission over the next forty years.

## Seminary connections with Ghana—Union Presbyterian Seminary

In the early 1980s, two events provided yet another opportunity for American Presbyterians to connect with the Church in Ghana. First of all, the Women of the Church of the Southern Presbyterian Church (PCUS) raised funds for the internationalization of theological education through one of their annual Birthday Offerings. Secondly, the General Assembly of the PCUS in 1982 voted to highlight Presbyterian mission in Africa during its annual “Witness Season” in the winter of 1984. The General Assembly’s Division of International Mission looked for some people who could go to Africa in 1983 and return as mission interpreters to inspire the church with what God was doing in Africa.

One of the people they chose was a young pastor serving in Rome, Georgia, the Rev. Mary Jane Winter. For three weeks in the spring of 1983, she and the other team members visited Ghana, Congo, and Kenya.<sup>4</sup> It was Ghana that caught her mind and heart. “It was a life-changing experience,” Pastor Winter said in an interview in early 2021. “There were no [PCUS] missionaries! Africans led the church!”

After her return, Mary Jane Winter received a call to the staff of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia (now Union Presbyterian Seminary). She was responsible for the seminary’s constituency relations, and one of those “constituents” was the Women of the Church. As a result, Winter joined the seminary’s committee that was dealing with how to use their portion of the Women’s Birthday Offering in support of the internationalization of theological education.

At the time, most of the seminaries were using their Birthday Offering funds to send faculty to seminaries in other countries. Fresh from her experience in Ghana, Mary Jane said, “Let us use these funds for students to experience the global church.” She wrote a project that would provide opportunities for Union students to go to Trinity College in Ghana and provide scholarships for students from the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana to study at Union.

The seminary’s committee concurred with the proposal, but the churches in Ghana requested that, instead of sending their seminary students to the United States, pastors from each of the Ghanaian Presbyterian denominations be sent as an opportunity for continuing education. The seminary agreed, and beginning in 1986, the first group of Union students, along with the Dean of the Faculty, spent a semester in Ghana. That fall, a pastor from the PCG and one from the EPC came to Union.

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<sup>4</sup> The trip coincided with the PATH visit to Ghana, and the two delegations traveled together.

When the funding from the Women’s Birthday Offering ran out, the seminary raised the funds to continue the exchanges. As the years went on, Union added other international exchanges to their program, and the Ghana program became an every-other-year event.

What was the impact of the internationalization of theological education on Union and on the Church in Ghana? Pastor Winter shared the following points:

- At one point, 10% of the pastors in the EPC,G had studied at Union.
- The “bright, gifted, and strong” leaders from the Ghanaian Church who attended Union inspired the students, faculty, and staff of the American seminary through the relationships that developed among Ghanaian and American Presbyterians.
- An alumnus of the first group of Union students to study in Ghana, the Rev. Dr. Ken McFayden, is now Dean of the Seminary and a strong advocate for global theological education.

### **Decentralized mission**

One of the most interesting facets of this early history of the US Presbyterian church and mission connections in Ghana was the decentralized approach the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) took regarding mission in Ghana. The General Assembly’s work in Ghana, the initiative of Union Presbyterian Seminary, and the work of PATH arose out of the common mission theology that had been expressed at the Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council. Yet each initiative had a life of its own, equally valued by the Ghanaian churches. Mrs. Mary Bartholomew, the second director of the PATH ministry of Greater Atlanta Presbytery (1985-1989), told me in an interview that the partners in Ghana considered groups like PATH on the same level as the denominational mission leadership—PATH was their mission partner and friend. In the spirit of the mission slogan of the 1957 International Missionary Council, Presbyterians in the United States at all levels were being mobilized for mission in Ghana.

Meanwhile, another initiative of American Presbyterians in Ghana was about to begin. This initiative was an intentional collaboration among the Division of International Mission of the Presbyterian Church USA, a Presbyterian elder from West Virginia, a couple who had served as Presbyterian missionaries to Zaire in the 1960s and 1970s, and a group of Presbyterian pastors and elders who began a new mission organization, The Outreach Foundation. “Gye Nyame,” the Sovereign God, was calling American Presbyterians to mission in Ghana.

**Missionaries, Church Partners, and Seminarians in the Early Days of American and Ghanaian Presbyterian Encounters**



Martha Jane and Harry (“Pete”) Petersen, first missionaries of the Presbyterian Church (US) to Ghana, 1968-78 (courtesy of Martha Jane Petersen)



Dr. Bright Mawudor, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, one of the partners for Presbyterian Answers to Hunger (PATH) ministries in Ghana of the Greater Atlanta and Cherokee Presbyteries (courtesy of Daystar University)



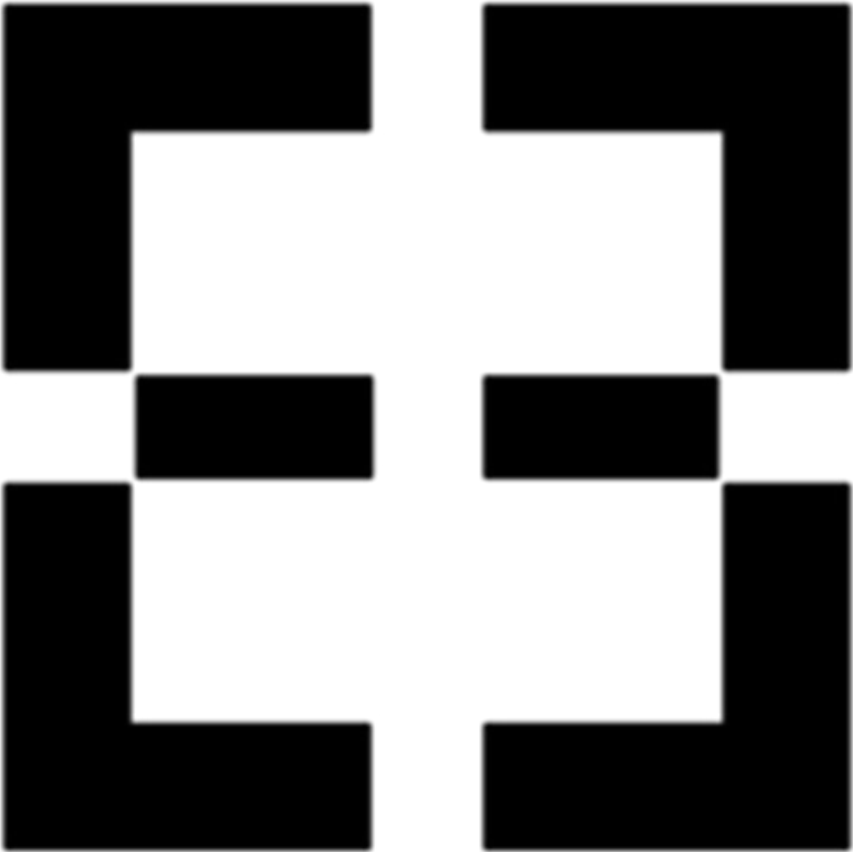
Joint trip of PATH representatives from Atlanta and Cherokee Presbyteries and church-wide mission Interpreters selected by the Division of International Mission of the Presbyterian Church US to visit Ghana, Zaire, and Kenya in 1983; Africa Secretary John Pritchard is seated, 3rd from left; Mary Jane Winter, who developed the Union Seminary Exchange with Ghana, is on 2nd row, third from right.  
(courtesy of Union Presbyterian Seminary and Mary Jane Winter)



Initial cohort of Union Presbyterian Seminary students studying in Ghana, 1986; Ken McFayden, current Academic Dean at Union, is on top row at the far right  
(courtesy of Union Presbyterian Seminary and Mary Jane Winter)

## Chapter 2

### The Outreach Foundation Begins Work in Ghana: The Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa



**Woforo Dua Pa A**

**“The One Who Climbs a Good Tree Should Get a Push”**

## **John Pritchard, PCUS Africa Secretary**

From the 1950s into the 1970s Mr. John Pritchard and his family served as missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) to the Belgian Congo, which became Zaire (and still later, the Democratic Republic of Congo). Afterward, he joined the staff of the Division of International Mission of the PCUS, eventually becoming the Africa Secretary in the 1980s. He loved Africa and was deeply committed to the African Church.

Pritchard was also pragmatic. He knew that African churches had great needs and that the American church had great resources. He saw it as part of his work to connect the needs of the one with the resources of the other, and he was extremely effective. According to Pritchard's successor, the Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell, "There were perhaps twenty tall-steeple pastors John could call on a moment's notice, make a 'big ask,' and they would generally respond quickly and positively."<sup>5</sup>

## **Alex Booth and his call to Africa**

One of the people that John Pritchard met along the way was Alex Booth, a Presbyterian elder from West Virginia. A businessman in the coal industry, he was deeply committed to serve his local church, the Appalachian Region in which he lived most of his life, and Presbyterian mission in Africa.

Alex Booth credited his love for Africa to his great-grandmother, Sara Ferguson. She prayed for him to become a missionary, and her special love was Africa. Although Booth did not become a missionary, his life would greatly bless the people and churches of Africa. He funded the building of a church in Zaire in honor of his great-grandmother and, accompanied by John Pritchard, took his first trip to Africa in 1980 to see that church. In 1983 Pritchard took Booth to Africa again, this time with his wife, Permele Booth. For Alex, it was a life-changing experience: "I fell in love with Africa and its people."<sup>6</sup>

As a result, the Division of International Mission worked with Alex Booth to develop a five-year plan for evangelism, leadership training, and church construction in Zaire, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and Ghana. Booth pledged \$1,000,000 to support this work. He also asked the denomination to appoint a missionary to work with the churches in these countries and submit progress reports. John Pritchard suggested that he meet a possible candidate for this position, the Rev. Bill Warlick, with whom Pritchard had worked decades earlier when both were Presbyterian missionaries in Zaire.

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<sup>5</sup> Email from Hunter Farrell, September 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Katherine Booth, *Walk Faster, Alex!* (Osprey, FL: Snow in Sarasota Publishing, 2016), p. 115



## **Appointment of Bill and Nancy Warlick**

Bill and his wife, Nancy, were evangelistic missionaries in Zaire in the 1960s and early 1970s. Following their service in Zaire, the Warlicks moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee, where they planted a new Presbyterian church. By the time Bill was invited to meet Alex Booth, the congregation had been chartered and a sanctuary had been built. Booth was impressed with Warlick's knowledge of the practical aspects of church construction. "You know how to work with your hands," Bill remembers Alex telling him.

The Warlicks were appointed by the PCUSA to oversee a new "Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa." They were to be based in Kinshasa, Zaire, and travel throughout Zaire where the main work was to be done. Their call also included making periodic visits to Ghana and the other countries included in this first phase of the evangelism initiative that came to be known as "PECGA."

## **The Outreach Foundation, the third partner of PECGA**

The Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa was actually a three-way partnership among the PCUSA, Dr. Alex Booth, and a new mission organization, The Outreach Foundation. Founded in 1979 by pastors and elders of the PCUS, The Outreach Foundation was a grass-roots initiative to renew a passion for both domestic and global mission and evangelism in the denomination. Alex Booth was not a founder of The Outreach Foundation, but he was one of its early Trustees. Another early Trustee, the Rev. Dr. William (Bill) Bryant, developed a friendship with Booth, and Bryant became an enthusiastic supporter of his desire to support the churches in Africa.

Dr. Bryant, representing The Outreach Foundation, flew to Zaire in 1985 for the meeting that officially launched the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa. After the meeting concluded, he and a representative of the PCUSA flew to Ghana to inform the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana of the new project. PECGA was off the ground.

## **The first years of PECGA in Ghana**

Bill and Nancy Warlick moved to Zaire and, over the course of the next nine years, made periodic trips to Ghana to get updates on the work and new requests from leaders at the national and local levels. As they traveled throughout Ghana with pastors and elders of the two Ghanaian Presbyterian denominations, the Warlicks visited churches, schools, and the headquarters of each denomination. Upon their return to Zaire, they faithfully reported their findings to PCUS staff, The Outreach Foundation, Alex Booth, and the supporting churches. The following is an excerpt from their March 25, 1986, report of PECGA's work in 1985.

*Let us share a few of the accomplishments of the Project of Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa (PECGA) during this past year. These statistics, however, do not reflect the real joy and enthusiasm of the Presbyterian churches in Zaire (CPK and CPZa) and in Ghana (PCG and EPC). They tell only part of the story. God has blessed the results, and to Him be the glory! In 1985 the evangelism project:*

- *built or started to build eighteen new churches*
- *bought eighteen pieces of land to begin new churches*
- *provided “matching funds” for four churches to complete their buildings*
- *built walls around three churches to protect the land*
- *bought two manses and repaired two others*
- *put a concrete floor in one church*
- *provided scholarship help for 78 theological students in Zaire and two in the U.S.A.*
- *provided scholarship help for 63 Bible school students in Zaire*
- *supported 14 evangelists working in rural areas*
- *provided the salaries for three professors of Evangelism in Bible schools*
- *did major repairs on student and faculty housing at the theological school at Ndesha*
- *provided books for graduates of Bible Schools*
- *provided books for the libraries of the Bible Schools*

*It’s been an exciting year for us.<sup>7</sup>*

Nancy Warlick kept a journal of two trips to Ghana on behalf of PECGA. One of those trips she made by herself. From this journal, one gets a glimpse of the encouragement that these visits were to the Ghanaian Presbyterian church members and their leaders. One also sees in these accounts the impact that Ghana had on the Warlicks.

Over the past thirty years, dozens of churches have been constructed in Ghana with the support of The Outreach Foundation. The pattern of how church building projects were supported generally followed the same formula in all African countries: the local church members would build a sanctuary up to the level of the roof; then The Outreach Foundation or Alex Booth would supply the funds needed to roof the church.

From the Ghanaian perspective, one of the most significant programs of the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa was training leaders in evangelism. PECGA funds provided scholarships for Ghanaian pastors to go to

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<sup>7</sup> Nancy Warlick, *Adventures in Faith: A Reflection on My Life in Africa* (Tampa, FL: Signalman Publishing, 2021), pp. 60–61.

Zaire and receive evangelism training. Following their training, they became catalysts who “revived the evangelistic spirit in the church,” according to the Rev. Dr. Isaac Fokuo, the Director for Ecumenical and Social Relations of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the late 1980s. Pastors trained through PECGA were the first pastors appointed to coordinate strategies for evangelism work at the regional level. Later a national coordinator for evangelism was appointed. Eventually, each of the presbyteries of the PCG had a coordinator for evangelism.

The Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa was an effective partnership for mission involving denominational leadership in both Africa and in the United States, The Outreach Foundation, Alex Booth, and local churches and presbyteries in Ghana and in the United States. Following the initial five years of the project, Alex Booth committed \$2,000,000 for the second five years. The Warlicks were reappointed as the PECGA coordinators for western Africa, and two other couples were appointed for PECGA to expand to southern and eastern Africa.

Undergirding this partnership was a new spirit of evangelism in the PCUSA in the 1980s. Signs of this new spirit include the following:

- American Presbyterians had welcomed a new ecumenical statement on mission and evangelism in 1982.<sup>8</sup>
- Among the earliest projects of The Outreach Foundation were collaborations with Presbyterian seminaries to fund the teaching of evangelism and mission.<sup>9</sup>
- One of the professors of evangelism whose position had been partially funded by a grant from The Outreach Foundation was the Rev. Dr. John R. (Pete) Hendrick at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Hendrick later became part of a General Assembly Task Force charged with drafting a new statement on evangelism. That statement, “Turn to the Living God: A Call to Evangelism in Jesus Christ’s Way,” was approved by the 1991 PCUSA General Assembly as its official policy on evangelism.<sup>10</sup>
- The Outreach Foundation also funded a colloquium on evangelism in 1989 that included presbyteries and Columbia Theological Seminary.

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<sup>8</sup> “Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation,” a document of the World Council of Churches approved by the PCUSA “as a faithful expression of the basic commitment of the [Presbyterian Church] to mission and evangelism” (Minutes, UPCUSA, 983, Part I, p. 4360).

<sup>9</sup> Seminaries receiving grants to fund the teaching of mission and evangelism included Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and Union Presbyterian Seminary.

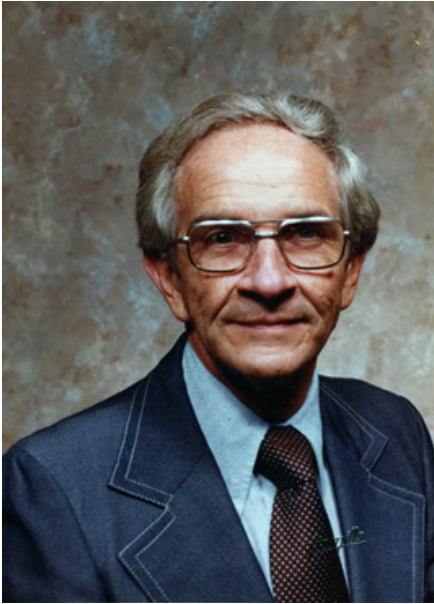
<sup>10</sup> I was part of the Task Force as well. This document continues to be the official policy on evangelism for the PCUSA.

The Outreach Foundation had started as a movement in the Presbyterian Church in the United States to increase support for evangelism and for sending missionaries. The Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa testified to the fact that the PCUSA had heard the voices of those who founded The Outreach Foundation and had responded by enlarging its tent to welcome the new mission organization as a strategic partner.

Except for the first phase of the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa, Ghana was not as high a priority for The Outreach Foundation as it was in the beginning. The PCUSA continued to support evangelism and leadership development in Ghana through PECGA, but when Bill and Nancy Warlick moved to southern Africa in 1994 to coordinate PECGA in that region, the attention of The Outreach Foundation was less focused on West Africa.

Dr. Alex Booth worked with The Outreach Foundation over three decades, constantly refining his vision of how best to build a self-supporting church in each part of Africa. A later version of the collaboration between Booth and The Outreach Foundation, the Booth Leadership Initiative, will be featured in chapter 6 of this history. In the beginning, however, Ghanaian Presbyterians were blessed by the partnership in mission of the PCUSA, Alex Booth, and The Outreach Foundation. Our friends in Ghana attest to the fact that The Outreach Foundation has been the kind of friend envisioned in the Ghanaian proverb, Woforo Dua Pa A: "The one who climbs a good tree should get a push."

## Key Figures in the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa



John Pritchard, PCUSA Africa Secretary  
(courtesy of John Pritchard, Jr.)



Alex Booth, Outreach Foundation  
Trustee (courtesy of The Outreach  
Foundation)



Nancy and Bill Warlick, PCUSA missionaries coordinating  
PECGA (courtesy of Bill and Nancy Warlick)



At left, the Rev. Dr. Isaac Fokuo, Director of Ecumenical and Social Relations for the Presbyterian Church of Ghana at the beginning of PECGA and Mission Partner of the PCUSA in Louisville 1994–1995, Mrs. Cecelia Fokuo, and the Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa.



Outreach Foundation Staff and Trustees Involved in PECGA and Booth Leadership Initiative, 1984–2020: from left, Dr. Bill Bryant, Executive Director 1994–2002; Dr. Alex Booth, Trustee and Founder, Booth Leadership Initiative; Dr. Rob Weingartner, Executive Director 2002–2020; the Rev. Bill Warlick, PCUSA Mission Co-Worker 1984–2002, Outreach Mission Staff 2002–2014.

## PECGA Brochure from Early 1990s

The Presbyterian Church (USA) wholeheartedly shares in this very basic and tremendously vital ministry. Three of our missionary families have been assigned to East Africa, West Africa, and Southern Africa especially to help coordinate an effective and practical PC(USA) involvement in this ministry.

HAND IN HAND we **CAN** directly help others half a world away.

Please direct your extra commitment contribution as an individual, church, or Presbytery payable to:

**“PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)”**

Clearly mark on your check:

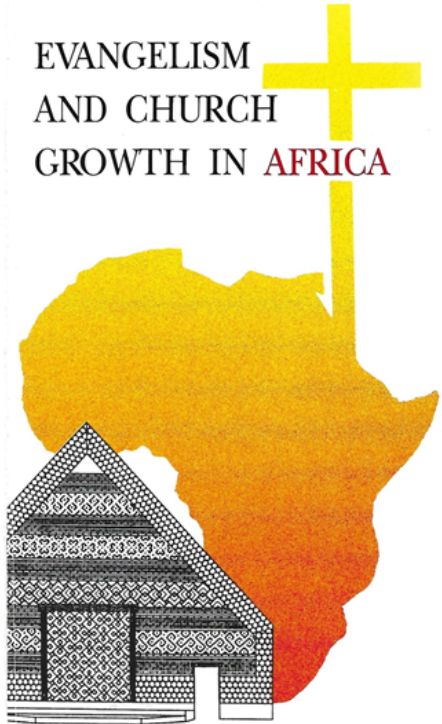
**“ECO # 404902  
Project For Evangelism And  
Church Growth In Africa”**

Central Receiving  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
100 Witherspoon St.  
Louisville, KY 40202

You may also contribute through:

The Outreach Foundation  
P.O. Box 221095  
Charlotte, NC 28222

## EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH IN AFRICA



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

Your contribution **WILL** make a difference.

For more information concerning the project's progress you are welcomed to contact your Africa Office, Office on International Evangelism, or Outreach Foundation representative at the addresses listed above.

DMS # 242-89-001

*SPREADING THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST* remains at the very center of our Presbyterian global mission.

In Africa, this message is visibly alive and vigorously practiced through the

**PROJECT FOR EVANGELISM  
AND CHURCH GROWTH IN AFRICA**

**IN THE 1980's:**

We explored new and exciting ways in which to effectively work with our African sisters and brothers as they sought to:

- **PREACH THE GOSPEL**
- **BUILD SHELTERS AND SANCTUARIES FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP**
- **ERECT BASIC CHURCH SCHOOLS FOR THEIR CHILDREN**
- **TRAIN NEW EVANGELISTS FOR THE MINISTRY**



*A sister church in Zaire recently erected through an African - PC(USA) partnership.*

These inspiring successes seen in the villages and towns of Zaire, Ghana, and Lesotho **challenge** us to expand this work across the continent.

**INTO THE 1990's:**

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

African churches are not looking for hand-outs. Indeed, our African partners contribute according to their ability and beyond. There still remain many obstacles and limits in Africa.

Today, what our African partners urgently need are necessary resources obtainable only with your help.

Your contribution, no matter how modest, can help purchase a bag of cement for a church building, help obtain Christian literature for a Bible class, or help provide a roof for a Christian school.



*A Presbyterian congregation celebrates after collecting enough local funds to complete their church's steeple.*

**THE CHALLENGE IS BEFORE US. . .**

- **BUILD A CHURCH**
- **ERECT A SCHOOL**
- **TRAIN A CHURCH LEADER**
- **SPREAD THE GOSPEL**



## Chapter 3

### The Northern Outreach Program of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and Its Impact on the PCUSA



**“When You See Someone Climbing a Good Tree....”**

## The beginning of the Northern Outreach Program

On several of their trips to Ghana in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Bill and Nancy Warlick met two dedicated young Presbyterian pastors, John Azumah and Solomon Sule-Saa. They were leaders of a specialized evangelistic outreach of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to people from northern Ghana who had moved to southern Ghana in search of work. This initiative, the “Northern Outreach Program,” caught Bill Warlick’s attention, and he included it under the umbrella of the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa. This chapter will chronicle the history of the Northern Outreach Program and its impact on several evangelistic initiatives that were emerging within and beyond the PCUSA.

We have seen in this short history that the testimonies of American Presbyterians regarding the Presbyterian churches in Ghana have been universally positive. It was a well-organized church with effective leadership. The churches were lively in worship and had a variety of mission projects including evangelism, education, health, and development work. Among themselves, Ghanaians saw a different picture. Like established churches in any culture, a cycle of decline had set in among the churches of Ghana. Although Ghana as a whole was considered 60% Christian in the 1980s, mainline churches, including the Presbyterians, had begun to drop in membership. A study revealed that less than 11% of the population attended church of any kind.

To address this situation a group called the Ghana Evangelism Committee was formed as a joint venture among Ghanaian church leaders and foreign mission organizations. The Rev. Dr. Isaac Fokuo, PCG Director for Ecumenical and Social Relations in the late 1980s, described the Ghana Evangelism Committee as a “child of the churches” that played a catalytic role in calling them to more faithful evangelism and mission.<sup>11</sup>

The Ghana Evangelism Committee made a survey of Ghana’s churches in the mid-1980s and discovered that 15,000 towns and villages were without any churches. Its research also unearthed a “hidden mission field” of people from northern Ghana who had moved to southern Ghana in search of jobs and a better life. These internal migrants had been largely neglected by many churches in the south for several reasons. Ghanaian Christians in the south generally assumed that all people from northern Ghana were Muslim and, therefore, did not consider evangelizing them. In fact, however, many northern people were not devout Muslims. Rather, they were adherents to traditional religions, and a few were Christians. Second, although over sixty languages were spoken in Ghana, the churches of the two Presbyterian communions worshiped primarily in four of them. Simply by virtue of language, northerners, who had moved to the south but who could not speak Twi, Ga, Ewe, or English, were excluded from

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<sup>11</sup> From an interview in Spring 2021.

participating in worship in most of the 22,000 churches all around them. In short, the churches in southern Ghana were surrounded by a mission field they did not see.

When this research was presented by the Ghana Evangelism Committee to a gathering of over 550 national and regional heads of churches and parachurch ministries in June 1989, the representatives of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana responded. They decided to reach out to northerners living in the south and appointed two new graduates of Trinity Theological College, Solomon Sule-Saa and John Azumah, to initiate this work.

Solomon Sule-Saa grew up in a Muslim family in northern Ghana. When it was time for him to go to secondary school, he moved from his village to the city of Tamale and lived with an uncle, a Christian, who worked for the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's Agriculture Station in Tamale. One of the Christian staff of the Agriculture Station took an interest in him and sponsored Solomon to attend a Christian youth camp. Although Solomon considered himself a devout Muslim, he went to the camp and there he became a follower of Jesus.

"That was the turning point in my life," Solomon shared in a testimony to some American Presbyterians visiting Africa in 1995. Solomon now desired to share the good news of Jesus with Muslims in northern Ghana. His pastor at the time, the Rev. Dr. Isaac Fokuo, advised Solomon to finish school, get a profession, and further equip himself for the mission that was on his heart. Following training as a teacher, Solomon went to Accra in 1986 and enrolled in Trinity Theological College. Upon graduation, he was appointed to begin the new Northern Outreach Program of the Ga Presbytery in Accra in September 1989.

John Azumah was also raised in a Muslim family in northern Ghana. He left his village for secondary school. There he became a follower of Jesus Christ and was mentored by Pastor Isaac Fokuo during a three-year program in Tamale where he trained to become an evangelist. John then went to Trinity to study for the ministry. Although he was now a Christian, an uncle who was a Muslim paid for his theological education. When John finished his studies, he too was selected to be one of the leaders of the Northern Outreach Program. In November 1990, he was sent to Kumasi where large numbers of northern peoples had also migrated.

### **Mission strategy of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana**

How did these young pastors go about their work in Accra and Kumasi? They developed a three-fold ministry to reach the northern peoples who had come to the south: literacy in the mother tongues of the northern groups, vocational training and job creation, and worship in the mother tongue of each people group or tribe. They found Presbyterian congregations who were willing to be part of the new Northern Outreach Program. These churches provided space for fellowships of northerners to worship. Their members taught the literacy classes

and helped with vocational training. They also provided material donations to aid the new congregations that arose from the ministry.

The work was hard, but by 1995 almost thirty churches had been established among the Frafra, Bulsa, Talensi, Kasena, Kusasi, Gurima, Mamprusi, and other northern people groups in Greater Accra and Kumasi. The work expanded to other presbyteries in southern Ghana and by 2014, after twenty-five years of sustained effort, sixty northern congregations representing nine language groups had been formed in eight presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

The converts from among the northern people wanted to share this good news they had received in the south with their fellow tribespeople in northern Ghana. They began organizing evangelistic missions which they termed “Operation Go Back Home and Tell,” (see Luke 8:39 and 10:1–24). Working in cooperation with Presbyterians and other Christian groups in northern Ghana, they visited homes, prayed for the sick and for those needing deliverance from demonic forces, held preaching missions, and met with traditional chiefs. During these missions, they also distributed clothing they had collected from church members in southern Ghana. The fruit of these missions included planting new churches, growth in the number of disciples of Jesus, and strengthening the faith of those who took part in the work.

Bill and Nancy Warlick were inspired by this initiative of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and spent time with the new congregations of northern people on their visits to Ghana in the early 1990s. The following is a report of one of those encounters in 1993.

*One of the most compassionate ministries [of the Northern Outreach Program] is among the Frafra at the Kantamanto Market in the heart of Accra. During the day it is a thriving market area with the entrances lined with stalls that sell all types of fowl. Most of the Frafra are engaged in this work, i.e., selling chickens, turkeys, pigeons, etc. . . . At night some fifty young men and women gather twice a week to learn to read and write. Eight elders from the Kaneshie Presbyterian Church lead the classes. The Kaneshie Church also bought and installed three fluorescent lights in that section of the market as well as benches for the students to sit on.*

*Just outside this thin wooden wall, nightlife goes on, sometimes loudly, for this is also home for most of these people who sleep on the ground or on a bench near their fowl. They have to pay for water to drink, for a shower, and to use the toilet. They are a people living on the edge.*

*It is impressive not only to see the enthusiasm of the literacy classes but also the worship of the people before and after the class begins. Worship is led by a northern convert, Michael Aniah. Michael, who sells turkeys*

*and sleeps in the market, was crippled from an improper injection when he was a child. As he leads the singing, leaning on his crutches, it is not despair that one sees in his face, but rather joy and hope that has come to him through the love of God in Jesus Christ.*

*The same enthusiasm is carried over to the 50–75 people who worship in these same stalls on Sunday morning, singing and praising God in their own Frafra language. Having been ministered unto, this group of people is reaching out to start another cell in a nearby market. Michael and his northern brothers and sisters have virtually nothing, but through the compassionate, loving outreach of Solomon Sule-Saa and the Kaneshie Presbyterian Church, they have become rich in Jesus Christ.*

*The PCUSA shares in this ministry through the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa and the Frontier Mission Fellowship.*

The Warlicks spoke and wrote of the Northern Outreach Program of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the spirit of Woforo Dua Pa A: their Ghanaian brothers and sisters in Christ were doing a good thing, and they gave them a push of encouragement by advocating support for it through PECGA. In 1992 they went another step by inviting the Rev. Solomon Sule-Saa to the United States under the “Mission to the USA” program of the PCUSA.

### **Solomon Sule-Saa and the “Mission to the USA” Program**

To understand the context of this invitation to Sule-Saa, one must look back at Bill and Nancy Warlick’s history. In 1991 civil unrest in Zaire forced American Presbyterian mission co-workers, including the Warlicks, to evacuate from the country. Bill and Nancy were temporarily assigned to the PCUSA General Assembly as “Missionaries in Residence.” From the G.A.’s Office of International Evangelism in Louisville, Bill continued to administer the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa for western and central Africa, and his responsibilities were expanded to include correspondence with the coordinators for PECGA in southern and eastern Africa.<sup>12</sup>

The PCUSA had a program whereby a congregation or presbytery could invite someone from one of the global mission partners of the PCUSA to spend up to six weeks among them as a mission partner. Bill saw this program as an opportunity to bring the Northern Outreach Program to the attention of mission-minded congregations, so he arranged a six-week trip for the Rev. Sule-Saa to come and tell the story of what God was doing in Ghana through this initiative of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

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<sup>12</sup> Nancy Warlick’s role in Presbyterian World Mission was as advocate for justice and human rights in Africa. She once spoke before the African Affairs Sub-Committee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in opposition to the continuing U.S. support for President Mobutu of Zaire.

Solomon spent the first two weeks of his “Mission to the USA” assignment as a missionary to the Evangelism staff of the PCUSA, then moved to churches in Kansas, Washington, and elsewhere. Sometimes the Warlicks accompanied him; sometimes he was on his own. Wherever he went, Solomon inspired people with his winsome, infectious faith and his deep love for God and the people he was serving.

The timing of Solomon Sule-Saa’s visit was significant. At the 1991 General Assembly, two evangelism resolutions were passed. One was the policy statement on evangelism, “Turn to the Living God,” cited in the previous chapter. The other resolution was the report of the Task Force on Church Membership Growth, which had set forth recommendations for the PCUSA to develop a national strategy for new church development and an overall plan for church development among minority peoples within the United States. Research had shown that the PCUSA was 93% white and only 7% non-white at the time.

The impact of the testimony from a Presbyterian Church of Ghana pastor telling how they had responded to their blindness of the mission field among them added energy and urgency to the recommendations for action that had been approved by the PCUSA’s General Assembly. Within a few years, the PCUSA had set an aspirational goal for the denomination to be 20% non-white by the year 2010.

Solomon’s testimony about the cross-cultural outreach of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana within its own country added impetus to another initiative of the PCUSA, the Frontier Mission Program. This program came about through the efforts of Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship, a new Presbyterian mission organization launched in 1981 as part of the UPCUSA. Its founders, the Rev. Harold Kurtz and the Rev. Dr. Ralph Winter, were former missionaries who had been sent by Presbyterian churches in the northern U.S. They looked at the state of Christianity in the world and saw that many people and language groups still had no church. They became an advocacy organization within the UPCUSA and built relationships with those at the General Assembly level who were responsible for evangelism. By the late 1980s, the now-united Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) approved Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship as a “Validated Mission Support Group.”<sup>13</sup> It also set up an Extra Commitment Project in support of evangelistic mission among the least-evangelized peoples of the world, and it appointed mission co-workers for work among hitherto unreached people groups, such as Kurds living in Berlin, Germany, and the Suri people of Southwest Ethiopia.

As Solomon Sule-Saa itinerated among churches and spent time with General Assembly staff, excitement about the PCUSA’s Frontier Mission Program increased, and commitment to it deepened. What the PCUSA was seeing in the Northern

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<sup>13</sup> The Outreach Foundation and Medical Benevolence Foundation were also approved as Validated Mission Support groups.

Outreach Program of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana was an example of a worldwide movement of the Holy Spirit to reach the least-evangelized peoples of the world. This movement began in the late 1980s and took the name “AD 2000 Movement.” Its slogan was “A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person by the Year 2000.” Presbyterian Ralph Winter was one of those who inspired the movement, and the International Director was the Rev. Luis Bush, a native of Argentina. The Rev. Morton Taylor, on staff in the International Evangelism Office in the former UPCUSA and later the PCUSA, was involved in the AD 2000 Movement almost from the beginning, and he introduced me to the movement when I joined the International Evangelism Office as Missionary in Residence in 1989.

During his visit, Solomon Sule-Saa shared with us newsletters of the Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) that showed how deeply it was committed to the same AD 2000 Movement. The GEC set aspirational goals for the churches of Ghana. One of those goals was a challenge to all the churches in Ghana to plant 2000 new churches among “northern and alien [non-Ghanaian] groups in southern Ghana by the year 2000.”<sup>14</sup>

Seeing audacious goals like these emboldened the PCUSA to set its own aspirational goals for mission among the least-evangelized peoples of the world. The Rev. Tom Theriault, who was part of another advocacy group for Frontier Mission, the Presbyterian Center for Mission Studies, suggested in the early 1990s that the PCUSA set a goal of being involved in mission among 200 unreached people groups by the year 2000. His challenge was presented through General Assembly staff to the appropriate church councils and was finally approved as a goal of the PCUSA at the 1996 General Assembly.

There was one more ripple effect of the 1992 Mission to the USA visit of the Rev. Solomon Sule-Saa. When I left the Office of International Evangelism at the end of 1997 to join The Outreach Foundation, I had internalized the commitment of the PCUSA to grow from being a church that was 7% non-white to 20% non-white by the year 2010. This was a new challenge for The Outreach Foundation. Although in its early years The Outreach Foundation had included projects and programs that stimulated evangelism and church development in the United States as well as overseas, by the late 1990s its emphasis was primarily on mission and evangelism outside the United States.

The report of the Task Force on Church Growth had revealed that the 93% white PCUSA was not a church that “looked like America,” to use a phrase popular at the end of the 20th century. I encouraged The Outreach Foundation to support a new church development among Brazilians in northern New Jersey in the late-1990s as a part of a new commitment to evangelistic outreach in the U.S.

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<sup>14</sup> “The Task: Mobilizing the Churches of Ghana to Disciple a Whole Nation and Beyond,” Ghana Evangelism Committee, April–June 1992, p. 1.

Raising funds for this initiative proved a challenge, however, and The Outreach Foundation's participation in this church plant ended after two years. Thankfully, that Brazilian church continues to this day.

A new way for The Outreach Foundation to engage in Portuguese-language new church development arose in the early 2000s when a former missionary to Brazil, the Rev. Frank Arnold, introduced me to the Rev. Jose Carlos Pezini, a Brazilian Presbyterian pastor who had come to the United States in 1996. Pezini had planted two churches among Brazilians in the Atlanta area and was sensing a call to do this work full-time in and beyond Georgia. The PCUSA had a staff for church development among Spanish-speaking people, but it had no work among Brazilians in the USA at the time. They were happy for The Outreach Foundation to take up this initiative, and so was Pezini's presbytery, Cherokee Presbytery. In January 2002 the Rev. Pezini began his work as Coordinator for Ministries among Portuguese-speaking people in the United States. The Outreach Foundation raised Pezini's salary and travel expenses, and the new fellowships that he organized were given start-up funds by the General Assembly and by the presbyteries in which they were located.

Over a period of ten years, Pezini worked with presbyteries to organize upwards of two dozen Portuguese-speaking fellowships and established programs to train lay leaders for these churches. Then he was sent by The Outreach Foundation to Brazil where he began a new ministry of mentoring pastors who were involved in new church developments in Brazil.

It would be too much to say that these evangelistic initiatives of the PCUSA and The Outreach Foundation were a direct result of the 1992 six-week visit of a young Ghanaian pastor to the U.S. However, Solomon Sule-Saa's time with Presbyterian staff at the General Assembly, especially with Bill and Nancy Warlick and me, greatly encouraged us and impacted my future work with the denomination and with The Outreach Foundation. The Akan proverb, *Woforo Dua Pa A*, which described the way the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa encouraged church growth and evangelism in Ghana, also captures how Solomon Sule-Saa inspired us to greater and more intentional evangelistic outreach at home and abroad. Thank you for giving us an encouraging boost through your "Mission to the USA" service, dear brother Solomon!





Solomon Sule-Saa, Mission to the USA trip in 1992, with Jeff Ritchie, Associate for International Evangelism, PCUSA General Assembly



Northern Outreach Program evangelist Michael Aniah (in the middle) among Frafra people in Kantamanto Market, Accra, 1993 (courtesy of Bill Warlick)



Ralph Winter and Harold Kurtz, “founding fathers” of Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship. (courtesy of Frontier Fellowship)



José Carlos Pezini, Coordinator for Portuguese Language Ministries of The Outreach Foundation

## Chapter 4

### The Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission and Culture: Experiencing African Christianity as Representative Christianity



**Dwenini Mmen**

**“The Strength of the Ram Depends  
Not So Much on Its Horns, But on Its Heart”**

## Africa as resource for mission and theology

We have seen in the preceding two chapters that by the middle of the 1990s, African Christians had inspired American Presbyterians to a renewed engagement in mission and evangelism at home and abroad. Over the next ten years, another side of the Christian movement in Africa would begin to impact Presbyterians in America--theology. More American Christians began reading works by African Christians that offered fresh understandings of the Good News of Jesus Christ for faith and practice. The impact was like seeing new facets of a diamond, the "gospel diamond."

On one of his early trips to Ghana during his time as Coordinator of PECGA in West Africa, Bill Warlick became acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Kwame Bediako, founder of the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Center for Research and Applied Theology (later to become the Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture). He was greatly impressed with Bediako as a theologian and missiologist. Several Presbyterian mission co-workers were reading Bediako's works. One of them, the Rev. Gar Kelley, studied for a Th.M. at Akrofi-Christaller Institute during his service in Ghana.

I was still on the staff of Presbyterian World Mission when I read my first article by Kwame Bediako, "Theological Reflections." It was part of a compendium of the addresses given at a conference in 1995 whose theme was "Serving with the Poor in Africa."<sup>15</sup> Reading it inspired me to write to this emerging missiologist in hopes of meeting him.

On my last trip to Africa while on the staff of Presbyterian World Mission (1997), I visited the Akrofi-Christaller Institute and learned that it was embarking on an ambitious building phase. As I left World Mission to join The Outreach Foundation in 1998, I passed that information to my successor in the Office of International Evangelism, the Rev. Bill Young. Young had been a mission co-worker in Ghana and had read Bediako while he was doing graduate study at Fuller Seminary. He was very enthusiastic in his support for Akrofi, as was Mr. Doug Welch, the PCUSA Coordinator for Africa. Over the next several years, those two offices of Presbyterian World Mission would send more than \$200,000 to Akrofi-Christaller Institute for the construction of new faculty housing.

Through the close relationship that The Outreach Foundation maintained with Presbyterian World Mission, I learned that Kwame Bediako and his wife, Dr. Gillian Mary Bediako (also a professor at Akrofi-Christaller Institute), would be visiting the PCUSA General Assembly in 2001. I drove from Tennessee, where The Outreach Foundation was located, to Louisville to meet them. When I told them I hoped to learn more about mission and mission thought in Africa, the Bediakos

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<sup>15</sup> "Theological Reflections," in *Serving with the Poor in Africa*, Tetsunao Yamamori, et al, eds. (Monrovia, Liberia: MARC, 1996), pp. 181–192.

suggested that I subscribe to the Institute's *Journal of African Christian Thought*. Through its articles, I began to see mission and theology through the eyes of African Christians, and I longed for more people to get to know this amazing resource for mission and theology that God had planted in Ghana.

### **The seeds of the 2006 Trip to Ghana**

The seed of a stronger link between The Outreach Foundation and the Akrofi-Christaller Institute germinated in 2005 when The Outreach Foundation and Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship co-sponsored a global mission conference, "From Everywhere to Everyone: The New Global Mission." The conference highlighted the fact that the center of gravity of Christianity had moved from North America and Europe to the "Global South." Our plenary speakers included Kwame Bediako, and many of the workshop leaders were from the non-Western world.<sup>16</sup> Dr. Bediako's speech had a profound impact on many of us who attended the 2005 conference. I decided that the next step for The Outreach Foundation in Ghana would be to take a group to the Akrofi-Christaller Institute and spend several days with Dr. Bediako.

Several young scholars had joined the Institute, including Solomon Sule-Saa and John Azumah. Solomon Sule-Saa was serving as the Institute's chaplain while working on his Ph.D. John Azumah had earned a doctorate in Islamic Studies in the United Kingdom and had recently returned to Ghana from a three-year teaching assignment in India. In addition to teaching on Islam at Akrofi-Christaller Institute, Professor Azumah was setting up a separate Centre for Interfaith Research and Resources.

The primary focus of the trip would be to learn from African missiologists and theologians at Akrofi, but the trip also would be an opportunity to renew the relationship of The Outreach Foundation with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana. Our hope was to re-engage with the mission projects described in chapters 2 and 3 of this history.<sup>17</sup> We also looked forward to meeting the new PCUSA Regional Liaison for West Africa, the Rev. Glen Hallead.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Another of those speakers, Mr. Ramez Atallah, of the Bible Society in Egypt, was mentioned in chapter 7 of my *History of The Outreach Foundation in Egypt: 1998–2020*, available in digital format from the author, jeff.ritchie49@gmail.com.

<sup>17</sup> Both denominations were part of the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa (Chapter 2), and the PCG had inspired us through its Northern Outreach Program (Chapter 3).

<sup>18</sup> In the late 1990s, the PCUSA decentralized its mission by appointing mission co-workers for the various regions of the world where it had mission relationships. The Rev. Gar Kelley, mentioned earlier, was the first of these "Regional Liaisons" for West Africa. He was succeeded by Ms. Caryl Weinberg. Glen Hallead was her successor and arrived in Ghana just before our visit.

## **Engaging with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana**

Five people joined me on this trip to Ghana in March 2006. Solomon Sule-Saa and John Azumah were our hosts and took care of all the logistical details. The trip started off with a warm welcome at the airport by Solomon who offered prayers of thanksgiving and petitions for our time together. Glen Hallead was also present as the official PCUSA liaison, and we were glad to meet him.

The next day John Azumah joined us for a tour of Trinity Theological Seminary, where Presbyterians, Methodists, and other Protestants are trained for ministry. Over lunch, we had our first spirited discussion of a subject that we would continue to raise throughout the trip, “doing theology in the mother tongue.” Professor Kwame Bediako and the Akrofi-Christaller Institute had as one of their main emphases the need for people to do biblical studies and theological reflection in their native language. It was not a subject that American Christians normally talked about. For Ghanaians, however, with ethnic and people groups who speak more than seventy languages, and for whom the national language, English, is not necessarily their first language, this is a vital topic. Can I study God’s Word in my heart language, or do I have to think about God in English? The professors at Trinity who joined us during lunch were delighted to field our questions and share their perceptions.

We were off to a good start, which we were to call a “reverse mission experience.” We had come to learn from Ghanaians about theology and mission, and we were already being introduced to new facets of what it means to follow Jesus faithfully in one’s context.

Our next stop was the Presbyterian Church of Ghana headquarters where we were warmly welcomed by the Principal Clerk (Stated Clerk) of the PCG, the Rev. Herbert Opong. He briefed us on the state of the church and its mission challenges. The highest priority for the church, he said, was leadership training, especially for lay leaders working in rural areas. He also referred to a need for adequately trained lay leaders who could serve fellowships of Ghanaians living in the United States. The Outreach Foundation was already at work among Portuguese-speaking immigrants in the United States (see chapter 3), and the Rev. Opong’s comments about ministry among the Ghana Diaspora in the U.S. made me wonder if we could connect with this group as well.

The following day we worshiped at Kaneshie Presbyterian Church whose pastor was the Rev. Dr. Isaac Fokuo, previously mentioned in Chapter 2.<sup>19</sup> After his service as Director of the Ecumenical and Social Relations Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Dr. Fokuo became a Mission Partner in

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<sup>19</sup> The photo of Isaac and Cecelia Fokuo in Chapter 2 was taken in 2006 during our visit to the Kaneshie congregation.

the Africa Office of the Worldwide Ministry Division of the PCUSA during the PCUSA's "Year with Africa" (1994–1995). The Rev. Dr. Dianne Shields, one of our trip participants, had become acquainted with the Rev. Fokuo, and she hoped her congregation in Illinois could establish a sister-church relationship with the Kaneshie church.

Over 1000 worshippers were at church that day. The service lasted five hours, including communion and three periods of lengthy prayer—one for confession, another for thanksgiving, and the final one for intercession. For those who had not been to Ghana before, not only was the service long, but it was also their introduction to "dancing the offering," one of the liturgical features of Ghanaian Christian worship in which congregants bring their offerings forward in a rhythmical, dancing style.

Afterward, over lunch with Isaac and Cecelia Fokuo, we learned about some of the missions in which Kaneshie Church was involved. They were enthusiastic supporters of the Northern Outreach Program mentioned in Chapter 3, and they were planning two major mission projects as part of their Jubilee celebration: a new church in a non-churched region and a dormitory for a church-related college in Akropong, near the Akrofi-Christaller Institute.

Our journey of discovery in Ghana continued the next day as we visited the "slave castle" at Elmina, on the southern coast of Ghana. This was one of the places where slaves were housed before embarking for the Americas. It was sobering and depressing to come face to face with the heritage of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Solomon Sule-Saa accompanied us this day. He told us that it was not only Europeans who engaged in the slave trade; certain African tribes had also participated in this evil by capturing people from other tribes and selling them to the Europeans. Later, John Azumah added a further detail than most of us had not known about: There was also an Arab slave trade that sent Africans eastward to the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. I made a note from the experience of this day that all future trips to Ghana should include a day at the Elmina Slave Castle.

The next two days were spent with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church which is located primarily in the Volta Region of eastern Ghana where Ewe is the predominant language. John Azumah and Glen Hallead accompanied us as we got to know the leadership of this denomination. Smaller than the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the EPC,G had an impressive range of programs: evangelism, development, women's work, and a new ministry of deliverance from evil spirits led by the men's organization. We also visited the EPC,G seminary in Peki and were fascinated to learn that its curriculum included drumming and dancing. Our group was impressed with the leadership of the EPC,G and its seminary. For me, it was a chance to renew the original commitment of The Outreach Foundation to support the evangelistic work of both the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana.

One final observation of our time with the leadership of each of the Presbyterian communions in Ghana was that both denominations continued a strong commitment to the global church through their participation in the meeting of the World Council of Churches, held in Brazil earlier in 2006, and through their joint hosting of a meeting of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (now World Communion of Reformed Churches) in Accra two years earlier. The ecumenical commitment that caught the attention of American Presbyterians in 1957–58<sup>20</sup> was still present in our Ghanaian partners.

### **The heart of the trip: the Akrofi-Christaller Institute**

We were now oriented to the ministry and mission of the two Presbyterian denominations in Ghana, and we were eager to experience the Akrofi-Christaller Institute and its rector, the Rev. Dr. Kwame Bediako. It proved to be an unforgettable, transformative two days.

Akrofi-Christaller is a community of spiritual, theological, and missional formation. We first experienced the community at worship. Hymns were sung in English and in Twi, one of the major languages of southern Ghana. Multi-lingual worship was the norm at Akrofi as part of the Institute's commitment to the use of the mother tongue for worship and theology.

Following the morning devotions, we had the first of several sessions with Dr. Bediako, who told us about the history of the Institute. It was named for Johannes Gottlieb Christaller, a European missionary, and Clement Anderson Akrofi, a Ghanaian Christian. Akrofi and Christaller translated the Bible into the Twi language and compiled a Twi dictionary. Akrofi-Christaller Institute builds its commitment to “mother tongue theology” upon this legacy of two Christians who honored the mother tongue of one of the significant people groups of southern Ghana.

From other staff, we learned that the Akrofi-Christaller Institute offers several degree programs and serves the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in several ways: providing continuing education for PCG graduates of Trinity Theological College who are “probationers” for a couple of years before they are permitted to be ordained; offering continuing education for pastors, catechists, and evangelists in the northern part of Ghana, which at the time was a “mission field” of the church without an organized presbytery; and holding mission conferences for pastors of the PCG.

Our discussion of the use of the mother tongue for theology, worship, and mission continued in the afternoon with John Azumah, Solomon Sule-Saa, and two other Akrofi staff, Dr. Philip Laryea and the Rev. Ernestina Afriyie who, like

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<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 1.



Solomon, was working on her Ph.D. Dr. Laryea's doctoral work had been on Omo, an Evangelical Presbyterian Church catechist and musician who lived in Peki, where the EPC,G seminary was located. Omo was a great example of what might be called "mother tongue musicology," as he expressed his Christian faith through hymns and songs in the Ewe language. The Rev. Afriyie had a different mission context for her ministry, that of youth who speak only English. She questioned the heavy emphasis of Akrofi on doing theology in an African "mother tongue" in light of the emerging mission field of young people in the cities of Africa, young people who have left the language of their parents behind and belong to a new culture, the urban youth culture of Africa. If they are to be reached, she said, it will be in English.

Charles Wiley, the theologian in our group, asked our hosts a question that would become our subject when we next spoke with Dr. Bediako: "What is the justification for this emphasis on the "mother tongue?" Is it simply an evangelistic strategy to reach people with the gospel, or is there a theological rationale for pursuing theology in one's mother tongue? For example, are there theological and biblical insights to be gleaned from texts written in the Twi language, or any other native language in Africa, that would not be available simply from English texts?"

That night after supper in the home of Solomon and Beatrice Sule-Saa, Dr. Bediako answered Charles Wiley's question. He showed in several passages of scripture how the Twi version yields insights for the gospel in the Akan culture that would not have been available simply from the English texts. His conclusion: "We do 'mother-tongue theology' for our own theological formation."

The next morning, I was asked to lead the morning devotions, and I attempted to put Dr. Bediako's insights from the night before in my talk on Ephesians 3:7–12 and 4:14–16. Using the lens of "mother-tongue theology," I shared that Paul was telling us that the church must be planted in each culture to reveal the "wisdom of God in its rich variety" (3:10) for the spiritual formation of us all (4:15–16). My testimony that morning was that by coming to Ghana, and specifically to Akrofi-Christaller Institute, we had been privileged to see some "new facets of the gospel."

In addition to our interaction with faculty and staff, we spent time with some students on campus. Two were from Ghana, and the rest were from other parts of Africa and North America. All saw Akrofi as a place where they could wrestle with church-and-mission issues they were facing in their home countries.

We concluded our time in Akrofi with a time of fellowship and prayer at the home of Kwame and Gillian Bediako. On this evening we were blessed to experience the Bediakos as more than missiologists. First and foremost, they were fellow disciples of Jesus. It was a holy time.

## Experiencing the Northern Outreach Program of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

During our remaining time in Ghana, we worshiped with two congregations of “Northern Peoples.” We saw first-hand the unique drumming and dancing style of two different people groups. Our hosts kindly translated the words of the songs that the worshipers were singing and thus enabled us to understand that these new believers from non-Christian backgrounds had internalized the faith in their mother tongues.

Through our visit to Ghana, we saw a demonstration of commitment by the Presbyterians of Ghana to engage in intentional new church developments among people of cultures different from the majority of the members of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The people in these new congregations were able to use their heart language as they lived out their faith in worship, theology, and mission. At Akrofi-Christaller Institute we saw the missiological justification for this mission strategy and discovered a deeper reason for Christians to live out their faith in their heart language: Each culture has insights into the Gospel that are worth sharing with the wider Church.

In short, our time in Ghana underscored the importance of the Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture, not only as a resource for African Christianity but for World Christianity. I returned to the U.S. with plans to bring new teams to Ghana and experience Christianity through African eyes at Akrofi-Christaller Institute.

Sadly, Kwame Bediako died from liver cancer in June 2008, but he left a powerful legacy upon which the Akrofi-Christaller Institute has built over the years.<sup>21</sup> It has added new study centers that further enhance its importance as a resource for the Global Church: Primal and Christian Spirituality, Early African Christianity, Interfaith Studies and Engagement with Africa, and Gospel and Culture Engagement.

Mr. Don Brown, a Trustee of The Outreach Foundation, shared this testimony after his first mission trip with The Outreach Foundation:

*The trip to Ghana was a radically different experience for me, much like my year in Vietnam. It truly changed the course of my life and deepened my faith significantly. Our evening in the Bediako home was one of the high points of my life. Another was looking out my window early one morning of our visit and watching Dr. Bediako so wonderfully working*

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<sup>21</sup> A documentary on the life of Dr. Bediako, produced by Dr. James Ault, is available online from Akrofi-Christaller Institute: <https://aci.edu.gh/>. Two books on the legacy of Kwame Bediako for mission and theology are *Seeing New Facets of the Diamond*, previously cited in footnote 1, a testimony to Kwame Bediako’s legacy, and a newly-published work by Dr. Tim Hartman, *Kwame Bediako: African Theology for World Christianity*.

*with the street children, showing them about picking up trash and caring for God's creation. Every moment of being with him was rewarding.*

Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture continues to be a place for spiritual and theological transformation. My hope is that more people from around the world will journey to West Africa and “come and see what God has done.” (Psalm 66:5)



Drumming class at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Seminary in Peki



2006 Outreach Foundation team in Ghana with Akrofi-Christaller Institute leadership: from left, Owen Stepp, John Azumah, Dianne Shields, Kwame Bediako, Charles Wiley, Solomon Sule-Saa, Glen Hallead, Gayle Walker, Don Brown, Jeff Ritchie



2001 visit of Kwame and Gillian Mary Bediako to the PCUSA General Assembly, Louisville, Kentucky:

Front row: Donna Moros, Kwame Bediako, Gillian Mary Bediako, Jean Cutler

Second row: Wyc Rountree, Bill Young, Jon Chapman, Doug Welch, Jeff Ritchie



Gillian Mary Bediako with Theo and Emelia Darko, Ghanaian-American friends of the Ritchie family, fall 2008 (courtesy of Theo Darko)



## **Chapter 5**

### **The 2008 South-South Mission Consultation on Lay Ministry**



**AKOMA NTOSO**  
**“Hearts Joined Together by God**  
**Can Never Be Broken Apart”**

## Results of the 2006 trip to Ghana

Following their return to the United States, several members of the 2006 Ghana trip went to work, connecting their respective churches with Ghana. The Rev. Dr. Dianne Shields, Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Arlington, Illinois, developed a church-church relationship between First Presbyterian and the Kaneshie Presbyterian Church in Ghana. The Rev. Gayle Walker, Associate Pastor at Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee, involved her congregation in a project in Ghana through Living Waters for the World, a Presbyterian mission organization that installs clean water systems. Idlewild's Living Waters team installed a clean water system for a women's retreat center we had visited in Ghana. Elder Don Brown began his service as a Trustee of The Outreach Foundation and developed a particular passion for God's work in Madagascar, Egypt, and Ghana.

The other two participants also deepened their connection to the global church through the trip. The Rev. Dr. Charles Wiley, Associate Director of the Theology and Worship Division of the PCUSA, was already involved in global theological exchanges, and this trip highlighted for him the importance of continuing to "do theology" in conversation with the world church. The Rev. Owen Stepp, a young mission pastor at Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church in Tennessee, had also been on a trip to Egypt with me in 2002. The impact of these trips early in his pastoral career planted seeds that informed his future ministry: "It seemed that the Holy Spirit was sealing our relationship with brothers and sister in Christ as only the Holy Spirit can."<sup>22</sup>

My immediate trip follow-up led me in several directions. That fall I attended the Ghana Mission Network and met congregations and presbyteries who had years of involvement with presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana. I was impressed with the leadership in the network that included both Americans and Ghanaians and was encouraged by the presence of Dianne Shields and her husband, Jerry, at the meeting.

A second avenue of engagement with the Church in Ghana was to work with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana in their ongoing project of constructing rural churches. Church construction through PECGA, the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa, was our original mission in Ghana. However, since 1994 no appreciable support from The Outreach Foundation had gone to Ghana. Its Africa focus had shifted to central, eastern, and southern Africa.

The PCUSA, however, had continued their commitment to church development in Ghana, and the Regional Liaison was the key person tasked with this mission. The Rev. Gar Kelley and Ms. Caryl Weinberg, earlier Regional Liaisons for Western

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<sup>22</sup> From *A History of The Outreach Foundation in Egypt: 1998–2020*, chapter 5, page 20. Available from the author upon request.



Africa, had built relationships with the Project Coordinators of both the PCG and the EPC,G, and received requests for construction of churches. The original pattern of support was still followed: the local congregation would build a church up to the level of the roof, and then they would petition for international partner help with the chapel roof.

The current PCUSA Regional Liaison, the Rev. Glen Hallead, working with Mr. Prosper Attakey, Presbytery Executive in charge of development for the EPC,G, provided us with a list of fifty churches needing roofs. Providentially, The Outreach Foundation received a gift of \$30,000 from an individual for church construction in Africa. With that gift, we were able to fund roofs for thirteen churches. About this time, we received an inquiry from a congregation in Gaithersburg, Maryland. This congregation had a large number of people from Ghana and other West African countries among its membership. It had conducted a capital campaign and wanted to spend a tithe of the funds raised for a mission project in West Africa. The chapel construction project in Ghana was just the kind of project they were looking for! From the \$50,000 we received from Gaithersburg, we were able to roof another fifteen churches. God was good!

### **The development of South-South mission relationships**

The 2006 trip to Ghana was a response to the impact of the Global Mission Conference of 2005: “From Everywhere to Everyone: The New Global Mission.” The conference had affirmed that the Church in the non-Western (or Majority) World was not only a mission field that needed the support and assistance of the Western Church; it was also a resource for the Western Church to assist us in theology and mission in our own culture. We had gone to Ghana to receive that kind of encouragement and challenge for our own faith and ministry.

There was another part of the conference theme that had implications for our mission relationship with Ghana. The phrase, “From Everywhere to Everyone,” also affirmed that the call to participate in global mission was a call to the Church in every place; it was not an exclusive call to the Church in the West. The following excerpt from The History of The Outreach Foundation in Egypt: 1998–2020 summarizes how The Outreach Foundation began to live into this “new global mission.”

*As I reflected on our trip [the 2006 trip to Ghana], I realized that we American Christians were privileged to have these kinds of global connections. We could go to Ghana or Egypt, to China or Brazil, and learn from our friends how to be more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and participants in his mission. Our friends in these countries for the most part did not have the same opportunity to learn from each other unless they were connected through ecumenical mission structures such as the World Council of Churches or the Lausanne Movement. Could The Outreach Foundation connect our global partners with each other?*

*Out of that trip, The Outreach Foundation developed a new mission initiative, “Developing South-South Mission Relationships” (now called “Collaborative Mission Initiatives”). The initiative envisioned bringing together mission leaders from the Global South around common mission challenges. We hoped that as they shared their experiences and best practices in mission, they would develop long-term mission relationships with each other.*

The first expression of this new initiative was our 2007 trip to Egypt which focused on the Lay Pastor Initiative that the Egyptian Church had just launched.<sup>23</sup> Among the trip participants, we included the Rev. Jonas Furtado do Nascimento, a mission leader in the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil; the Rev. Dr. John Azumah from the Presbyterian Church of Ghana; and Mr. Alcenir Oliveira, a lay leader in a Brazilian Presbyterian Church in the U.S.<sup>24</sup> Each of these persons had experience in training lay leaders for ministry and mission, and they were able to see the newly trained lay pastors at work in rural Egypt through the lens of their respective ministries.

The Egyptian, Brazilian, and Ghanaian participants developed relationships in Egypt and wanted to continue their conversations on ministry and mission. Dr. Azumah offered to host a consultation among the three church communions in Ghana in 2008 on the topic “The Role of Lay Training in the Mission of the Church.” This time they hoped that at least two representatives from each church would be able to come.

### **Planning for the second “South-South” mission encounter**

Planning for the second “South-South” mission encounter began in the fall of 2007. Many ideas for how to develop the consultation theme were shared among potential participants from Brazil, Egypt, the United States, and Ghana. Providentially, John Azumah and Jonas Furtado do Nascimento had been invited to a PCUSA “Celebration of World Mission” in Louisville, Kentucky in fall 2007. There they met and exchanged ideas on the 2008 Consultation. Glen Hallead and I were at the mission event as well and joined the discussion. The Planning Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana took all the ideas that had been generated and created the program for the March Consultation. The Rev. Kofi Amfo-Akonnor, Director of the Ramseyer Training Centre in Abetifi, was selected as Coordinator for the event. Dr. John Azumah was responsible for all the logistical arrangements for the international participants.

Through the planning process, I learned about the extensive commitment of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) to train their lay leaders effectively.

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<sup>23</sup> See *The History of The Outreach Foundation in Egypt: 1998-2020*, chapters 11 and 12.

<sup>24</sup> Alcenir Oliveira was part of the ministry of the Rev. Jose Carlos Pezini, the Portuguese-Language Ministries Coordinator of The Outreach Foundation, previously mentioned in Chapter 3.

They were revising their training modules and one of their needs was help with publishing the revised curriculum. The Outreach Foundation was already supporting lay pastor training in Brazil and Egypt, and we added the PCG lay training curriculum to our project list for 2008.

### **Advent Presbyterian Church and Eastminster Presbyterian Church**

Although the purpose of the consultation was to bring together mission leaders from the Global South, God providentially brought two congregations from the U.S. to the Consultation. Eastminster Presbyterian Church of Wichita, Kansas, had been a strong supporter of our work in China and Egypt.<sup>25</sup> It was involved with The Urban Ministry Institute in Wichita, whose training program had points in common with the lay ministry training initiatives in the three “Global South” countries. It was also an enthusiastic supporter of our vision to connect our global partners with each other and to encourage those partners in their own global outreach. Eastminster’s Mission Committee Chair, Walter Lewis, an Outreach Foundation Trustee, and the Rev. Kermit Opprieht, Associate Pastor for Mission, committed to be at the 2008 Consultation in Ghana and to provide partial support for the costs for the event.

The other American congregation that both supported and attended the Consultation was Advent Presbyterian Church of Cordova, Tennessee. Advent’s pastor, the Rev. Dr. Chris Scruggs, was on the Board of Trustees of The Outreach Foundation, but the church was involved in Ghana through a different Presbyterian mission, Living Waters for the World.<sup>26</sup> Some leaders in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana had been sponsored by Advent to be trained by Living Waters for the World. Advent took the opportunity presented by this consultation to bring a team to install a new water system. They were welcomed to participate in the “South-South” event as well.

### **The “Consultation on the Role of Lay Training in the Mission of the Church”**

The participants from outside Ghana began arriving in late February 2008. The Brazilian delegation included the Rev. Jonas Furtado, the Rev. Paulo Damião, and the Rev. Dr. Tim Carriker. Jonas Furtado, who had been on the previous “South-South” trip to Egypt, headed the Evangelism Department of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB). Paulo Damião was a local church pastor as well as the current Vice President of the IPIB denomination. Tim Carriker had been a PCUSA mission co-worker in Brazil for thirty years and was added as a trip participant in case there was a need for translation during the conference.

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<sup>25</sup> See *The Church in China and The Outreach Foundation: 1993–2018*, chapters 4–5, and *A History of The Outreach Foundation in Egypt*, chapters 6, 9, 12.

<sup>26</sup> The story of how Advent got involved in this mission in Ghana is told in the appendix to this chapter.

From Egypt came the Rev. Dr. Emil Zaki, Secretary of the Synod of the Nile (the highest administrative and ecclesiastical position of the Evangelical Church of Egypt). Emile Zaki had been a key person in launching the Lay Pastor Initiative of the Egyptian Church.<sup>27</sup> Also representing the Church in Egypt was the Rev. Dr. Tharwat Wahba, Professor in the Mission Department of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, where the Egyptian lay pastors were trained.

I joined Advent's Living Waters installation team and the two mission leaders from Eastminster Presbyterian Church as the American participants at the consultation. All of us were warmly welcomed by Dr. John Azumah, who oriented us to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana at the grassroots level by giving us the opportunity to worship in a Twi- and Ewe-speaking congregation. He also arranged for the Brazilian participants to visit the Elmina Slave Castle.

The consultation began on March 3 at the Ramseyer Training Centre in Abetifi, the highest inhabited point in Ghana. The format was intentionally designed to share leadership among the churches that were represented. Each session was chaired by a participant from one country while a presentation on lay ministry was made by a participant from another country. Discussion followed each presentation.

One day was set aside for a field trip to the nearby Afram Plains, where the Presbyterian Church of Ghana had three congregations led by lay pastors (catechists) or elders. This field trip was an important part of the consultation, for it underscored the challenges that the PCG was facing in their formation of lay leaders for ministry in areas of poverty. The planning committee had already alerted us to those challenges as they laid out their objectives for the consultation in the introductory materials we received ahead of time: As one of the four objectives of this consultation, they wanted "to discuss the possibility of mainstreaming Community Development or Church and Society programs into the Lay Ministries Training" and expressed the desire to learn how their Egyptian, Brazilian, and North American friends were doing this in their lay ministry formation.

Early in the consultation, the Principal Clerk of the PCG, the Rev. Herbert Opong, met with the Brazilian and Egyptian participants, John Azumah, and me to discuss the possibility of scheduling another consultation in 2009. The Brazilians agreed to host the event, and the theme chosen was "Trans-Cultural Mission" ("Cross-Cultural Mission"). The fact that this decision was made on the first full day of the consultation showed the eagerness of our friends to resource each other for mission and evangelism in their own contexts.

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<sup>27</sup> See *A History of The Outreach Foundation in Egypt*, chapter 11.

During the consultation, the team from Advent Presbyterian had been busy installing a water purification system nearby. That system was dedicated on the final day as part of the closing ceremonies. It was a fitting conclusion to an event focused on training lay leaders for mission and ministry.

I left the second “South-South” event with a number of impressions:

- *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana has made a significant commitment to develop a coordinated program of lay ministry formation through its Ramseyer Training Centre and through its completion of 28 of the projected 53 modules.*
- *The Evangelical Church of Egypt has the potential of being a helpful resource for its Brazilian and Ghanaian friends as they witness among Muslims in and beyond their own countries. The Egyptian Church also has a rich 2000-year history of Christianity in their country to share.*
- *The enthusiasm for mission among the participants from the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil was contagious and felt by the other participants who looked forward to the 2009 gathering in Brazil.*

The Rev. Paulo Damião shared some of his impressions of this event with me in an email written more than a decade after the consultation:

- *It was a great experience to participate in the “Consultation on Lay Training” in Ghana in 2008. First of all, it was my first time in an African country, and I was grateful to get to know and spend time with the brothers and sisters from the other countries.*
- *I was glad to have had the opportunity to learn the history and customs of Ghana and to eat typical Ghanaian dishes such as “fufu” (boiled and ground cassava rolled into a ball and dipped into soup or a spicy sauce). Although it was sad, the visit to the Elmina Slave Castle was important. Many of the slaves that were sent across the Atlantic Ocean from Elmina went to Brazil in addition to the United States.*
- *Participating in worship in the churches, I was especially impressed with how the Ghanaian brothers and sisters danced and praised the Lord, worshipping him through their bodies.*
- *It was truly marvelous to get to know the Ramseyer Training Centre where lay ministers are trained for the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. At the Consultation, I was impressed with the mission of providing clean water that the Advent Presbyterian Church demonstrated. It is a marvelous way to show God’s love in a practical way.*

- *I was pleased that we were able to host our friends from Ghana, Egypt, and The Outreach Foundation in 2009.*
- *Finally, I was grateful to become acquainted with The Outreach Foundation and enjoy their hospitality in the United States during a sabbatical year in 2010.*

The Rev. Dr. Tharwat Wahba caught the attention of Dr. Tim Carriker, who invited him to speak on Islam and ministry among Muslims at the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil's seminary in Fortaleza in 2009 when he came to Brazil for the "South-South Consultation on Trans-Cultural Mission."

Before leaving Ghana, I spent some time with John Azumah at the Interfaith Research and Resource Centre, which he had been developing since 2005. Some Outreach Foundation-related congregations, notably First Presbyterian Church of Evanston, Illinois, were strong supporters of this work.

I also spent a day at the Akrofi-Christaller Institute after the Consultation. The staff gave a good update on the programs and dreams of the Institute, but the atmosphere was somber, as Dr. Kwame Bediako was too ill to join our meeting. Upon returning to the United States, we were grateful to have had one more visit with Dr. Bediako before his untimely death in June 2008. The just-concluded "South-South" Consultation reminded us once more of our debt to this theological and missiological giant who helped lift the vision of what The Outreach Foundation was being called to do. Thanks to Bediako and other Global Church leaders, we had expanded our original mission, to connect U.S. churches with God's mission in the world. Now we were also connecting our global friends with each other for mission and ministry. Mission indeed was from "everywhere to everyone," and we were discovering the truth of the Adinkra proverb, AKOMA NTOSO: "Hearts joined together by God can never be broken apart."



Paulo Damião (Brazil) and Jeff Ritchie (USA) “dancing the offering” in Ghana



Praying in three languages. From left Emil Zaki (Egypt), Christopher Scruggs (USA), Paulo Damião (Brazil)



Consultation Participants



John Azumah and Jonas Furtado do Nascimento, part of first “South-South Encounter,” reunited in Ghana (Photographs courtesy of Walter Lewis, Paulo Damião, Tim Carriker, and Chris Scruggs)



## Testimony: The Ghana Mission of Advent Presbyterian Church The Rev. Dr. G. Christopher Scruggs

In order to understand the mission of Advent Presbyterian Church to Ghana, there are several pieces of background information that are important, some beginning many years before that mission began. Before attending seminary, I was an attorney in Houston, Texas, and an elder at First Presbyterian Church of Houston, which was then pastored by John William Lancaster, a founding Trustee of The Outreach Foundation. While in seminary, I had some relationship with Outreach via Donald Marsden and Dr. Bill Long, a former Trustee who was my pastor at Third Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA during those years. Shortly after seminary, Kathy and I went to First Presbyterian Church of Brownsville, Tennessee, where I was the pastor. During those years I visited Russia with Don Marsden, thanks to the generosity of a member of Third Presbyterian in Richmond. In addition, Bill Bryant, who was by that time the Executive Director of The Outreach Foundation, came to speak at First Brownsville at a renewal weekend and on other occasions. Our congregation began to support Outreach.

Because of our familiarity with The Outreach Foundation, I helped a nearby congregation, Germantown Presbyterian Church, become involved in a ministry of The Outreach Foundation in Russia that was led by Don Marsden, whom I had known while in seminary. Over the years, Germantown Presbyterian has been involved, not only in Russia, but also in Mexico, Brazil, and Ghana through The Outreach Foundation.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Rev. Bob Crumpton and his wife, Nancy, served as missionaries in Ghana. Bob was an evangelist and agricultural missionary, while Nancy worked as a nurse. When they returned, Bob became one of the pastors at Advent Presbyterian Church in Cordova, Tennessee. By the time I came to Advent in 1999, Bob was retired but continued to work at Advent a few hours a week in the areas of evangelism and visitation.



Bob Crumpton with the Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete Nyampong, Principal Clerk of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

One of the ministries of Advent was a spiritual renewal weekend called “The Great Banquet.” At a reunion of people in our congregation who had attended these “Great Banquets,” I was praying with Dr. Andy Jordan, an agricultural engineer with the Cotton Council in Memphis. Our prayer was that God would provide him with the ability to use his engineering and other expertise in mission. We thought it would be agricultural in nature—but God had other plans.

During this time, the Synod of Living Waters, of which we were a part, created a ministry known as Living Waters for the World (LWW). Our congregation became involved, eventually making or assisting in the installations of water treatment facilities in Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Ghana, and the Philippines. Andy went on Living Water missions in Honduras and the Philippines, but he made his biggest impact in Ghana working with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Andy was the major force in the Ghanaian ministry of Advent.

### **Advent’s Ghana Mission**

At first, we made an exploratory trip to Ghana to determine what, if any, ministry Advent could do in that place. Andy went on that trip, as did Bob Crumpton. It was decided that an installation might be made in a hospital. That installation never occurred, but what did occur was instrumental in Advent’s role in Ghana. During that trip, we visited the Mission School and Retreat Center of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana at the Ramseyer Training Facility in Abetifi, near the highest point in the country and, therefore, a climate that was easier for the early missionaries, who came to Ghana from Switzerland, to tolerate. There we met Kofi Amfo-Akonnor, who was then the head of the Ramseyer facility. Kofi would continue to play a big role in Advent’s ministry even after he left Ramseyer. We also met a young man, Michael Asmaiah, a local plumber, who also became a major force in the installation and maintenance of our projects in Ghana.

In mid to late March 2006, Advent made the first of its installations in Abetifi, the first full team installation we made in Ghana. I believe a total of nine Advent members spent nearly a week in Abetifi installing that first treatment facility and looking at potential sites. Andy Jordan would become the leader of the Ghanaian ministry of Advent and Harlon Mills a leader of the Honduran mission. Andy’s wife, Susan, led the health and hygiene training for the community recipients. She eventually served on the Living Waters Board of Directors, was a teacher at its training programs, and went on many mission trips to Ghana and other places.

In March 2008, we returned to Abetifi to install a treatment facility in an adjacent Presbytery facility. This trip was marked by our first joint venture



Brazilian, Egyptian, and American friends touring Accra before the Consultation

with The Outreach Foundation, a conference on South-South Mission relationships held at Abetifi and attended by myself, Andy Jordan, Jeff Ritchie, and others. This event solidified a relationship with Abetifi that continued during the entire time of our mission. In addition, this trip resulted in Advent giving some funds to the Akrofi-Cristaller Institute in Ghana. For some years, we hoped to install a treatment facility there, but it never actually took place. Nevertheless, our interest in Akrofi-

Cristaller and support for its mission dates from this moment.

Although I made a few more trips to Ghana, the remainder of the important mission in Ghana was done by Andy Jordan. My involvement was mostly to raise funds and assist Andy in his ministry there. However, I was privileged to make one more significant mission to Ghana.

In 2009 Advent completed its largest water project in Abetifi. With Andy Jordan's expertise and the assistance of Engineers without Borders, we installed a large water-treatment system capable of meeting a major portion of the water needs of the Abetifi community. The installation involved reworking an old well and creating a new treatment facility. A significant amount of money had to be raised to bring the project to completion. This was a very important project, and fun! Its completion was marked by a trip Andy and I took to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, where it was dedicated. Unfortunately, this was my last trip to Ghana.

By this time Advent had an additional partner in Ghana, Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee. Advent helped this congregation begin its mission in Ghana by assisting with a treatment facility in the Women's Retreat Center in Abokobi, Ghana. Andy was deeply involved in assisting them, and I came along on one of the initial mission trips involving that installation and follow-up. Idlewild continued to have its own independent mission program in Ghana during my time at Advent, and we coordinated and cooperated with them in meeting needs for clean water in Ghana.

Advent subsequently installed four additional Living Waters installations with its Ghanaian partners, rehabilitated a rainwater collection and storage system at the Women's Vocational School in Begora, provided repairs to the collection system at a rural Presbyterian women's health center, drilled a well at the Women's Secondary School in Kumasi, and developed a centralized pumping

and storage system and provided distribution systems for the fifty-acre campus of a Presbyterian Church of Ghana vocational school in Kumasi. One major accomplishment was to help a mostly native Ghanaian team install a treatment facility in Tamale, in northern Ghana. Andy and I were privileged to visit that installation during one of our trips.

## **Conclusion**

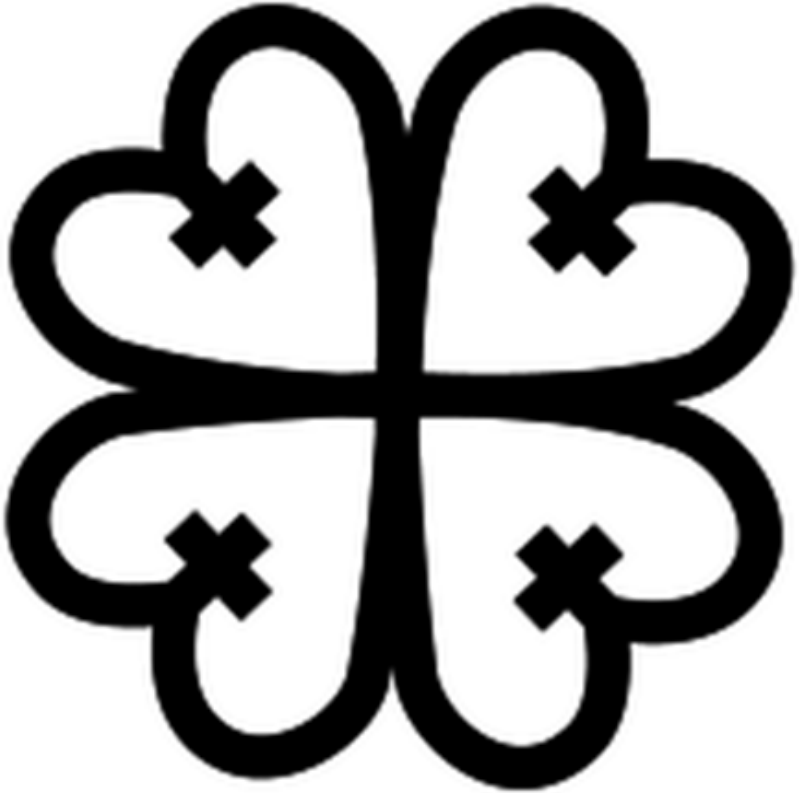
Having helped train and equip its local partners in Ghana on water installation, Andy Jordan's emphasis pivoted to supplying transportation for local pastors and catechists who had to travel long distances between the numerous congregations they each served. Five motorcycles have been placed, with a goal of raising money for an additional fifteen by the end of 2021. Andy also assisted one of our mission partners in creating a business in Abetifi. His involvement in Ghana continues to this day.

The Advent Ghanaian mission was an important part of the mission of the congregation from 1999 through 2017 (when I retired) and beyond. As a congregation, we were able to host visitors from the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, so that they might be trained at the LWW training center at Camp Hopewell in Mississippi. We made many friends in Ghana, including some in the leadership of the denomination. Everyone who traveled to Ghana, without exception, was struck by the hospitality and kindness of our hosts.

The Outreach Foundation was an integral part of the ministry and mission of Advent during this time, giving the congregation guidance and assistance. In return, the congregation gave significant gifts to Outreach that were used in Africa and elsewhere. Rob Weingartner, the former Executive Director, speaks of The Outreach Foundation as a catalyst for developing mission capacity. With respect to Advent, Outreach certainly made an important contribution to increasing our mission capacity. In some ways, the partnership between Advent and Outreach is a model for what other congregations might consider. I am personally thankful for our "partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now" (Philippians 1:5).

## Chapter 6

### Mission Initiatives in Northern Ghana: 2013–2020



**NYAME DUA**

**“God’s Tree”: God’s Presence and Protection**

## **Continuing the spirit of the “South-South Initiative”**

The 2008 South-South Mission Consultation in Ghana was followed by a 2009 Consultation on Cross-Cultural Mission, graciously hosted by the leadership of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB). Egypt and Ghana each sent three participants. Following the meeting, the Rev. Assir Pereira, Moderator of the IPIB, wrote to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Church of Egypt asking each if they would be interested in a church-to-church relationship with them. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana responded favorably, and the following year the Rev. Assir went to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to sign the partnership agreement.

Over the next several years, The Outreach Foundation continued working in the spirit of the 2005 Mission Conference, “The New Global Mission: From Everywhere to Everyone.” We invited Brazilian mission partners to accompany us on trips to Egypt and to Mozambique. We began working with Egyptian mission partners on joint projects in other Middle Eastern countries. In 2011 when Dr. John Azumah was called to teach World Christianity and Islam at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, we invited him to join our Board of Trustees.<sup>28</sup>

## **Booth Leadership Initiative expands to West Africa**

While The Outreach Foundation, with strong support from Alex Booth, continued to fund church planting, church construction, and training evangelists throughout Africa during the years 2008–2013, we did not support this work in Ghana the way we had in the early years of the Project for Evangelism and Church Growth in Africa and in the brief period of 2006–2007. This was about to change by the second decade of the 21st century.

Alex Booth, working with former Executive Director, Bill Bryant, developed what they termed the “Booth Leadership Initiative,” or BLI. The principles underlying this vision were:

- African Christians, not missionaries, are the best people to support in starting new churches.
- Non-ordained evangelists, rather than pastors, should have higher priority for training as church planters.
- These evangelists should be taught vocational skills alongside their theological training and given funding to start a business that could support them and their families while they are planting a church.
- When churches started by these evangelists have grown to the point where they need a building, BLI will fund the construction of a modest chapel.

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<sup>28</sup> While John Azumah was our first international Trustee, The Outreach Foundation already had an international staff with colleagues from Brazil, Canada, Rwanda, Singapore, and Iran. We later added Trustees from Egypt and Brazil and staff from Venezuela.

Initially, the BLI was implemented in countries that Alex Booth was most familiar with: Ethiopia, Kenya, Congo, and Zambia. The resulting growth in the number of churches planted by self-supporting evangelists was encouraging, and Booth was ready to expand through The Outreach Foundation to other countries in Africa, including West Africa.

In November 2010 Outreach Executive Director Rob Weingartner visited Niger with several PCUSA staff, including Josh Heikkila, the West Africa Regional Liaison for the PCUSA. Ghana became a possibility for a partnership with BLI a few years later. Ghana's northern region had great needs for evangelism and development, and it had the resources of the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre in Tamale for training evangelists or "catechists." The building blocks were in place for a Booth Leadership Initiative in northern Ghana.

### **2013 trip to northern Ghana**

With encouragement from Outreach Foundation leadership, I contacted Joshua Heikkila to set up a visit to northern Ghana. Charles Wiley, who participated in the 2006 Outreach trip to Ghana, joined Joshua and me on this trip.<sup>29</sup> We spent two days in the Upper Presbytery of the PCG and two days in the PCG's Northern Presbytery where the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre was located. We also met one pastor from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana (EPC,G).

In both presbyteries of the PCG, we connected with visionary leaders, worshiped with congregations that met under trees, saw churches that needed to be roofed, visited the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre, and learned about the work of the Development and Social Services arm of the PCG, especially the "Agric" (Agricultural) programs in northern Ghana. The Agric Station had the staff needed to teach the vocational training components of the BLI curriculum. I reported my findings to Bill Bryant, and Alex Booth gave the go-ahead to extend BLI into northern Ghana. He also gave an advance gift of support for church construction in the Northern and Upper Presbyteries.

Over the next year, the Northern and Upper Presbyteries worked on a plan for a Booth Leadership Initiative appropriate to their understanding and practice of mission. The team of leaders that put together the initial proposal included:

- The Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa, now the Chairperson (Presbytery Executive) of Northern Presbytery
- The Rev. Esmond Nagba, Chairperson of the Upper Presbytery
- The Rev. Peter Ziame, Director of the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre in Tamale

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<sup>29</sup>Charles and I were also in Ghana to attend a "North-South Consultation on Sexuality." The consultation was organized by Outreach Trustee John Azumah and jointly sponsored by Columbia Theological Seminary and the Akrofi-Christaller Institute.

- The Rev. Jasper Maas, a Dutch ecumenical worker at the Lay Training Center
- Mr. Dan Kolbilla, Director of the Development and Social Services Office of the PCG in northern Ghana.

### **A role in northern Ghana for the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil?**

While the BLI program in northern Ghana was in process of development, I sent a report of the 2013 visit to northern Ghana to the leadership of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil. Since the signing of a formal church-to-church relationship between the IPIB and the PCG in 2010, not much had been done to flesh out ways the two Presbyterian communions would relate to each other. I knew of the passion for mission in both churches and hoped that the report, which detailed mission challenges and opportunities in northern Ghana, would encourage my friends in the IPIB to reach out to their brothers and sisters in Ghana.

I did this knowing several realities about both the IPIB and the Protestant churches in Brazil as a whole. The IPIB was a small denomination with mostly part-time national staff. Its Office of Evangelism was administered by pastors who volunteered their service at the General Assembly while serving a congregation full-time. Although staff such as the Rev. Jonas Furtado had traveled on Outreach Foundation trips as part of our “South-South Initiative,” they were not able, as part-time workers, to oversee a robust program of global mission for the IPIB.

At the same time, the Protestant churches in Brazil, including many congregations in the IPIB, were deeply involved in global mission, ordinarily expressed through parachurch mission agencies. Hundreds of Brazilians were involved in mission throughout the world, making Brazil one of the largest missionary-sending countries. Thus, I looked for a way appropriate to the Brazilian context to connect our Brazilian friends with mission in Ghana. That way seemed to be through mission-minded congregations, and I asked the Rev. Dr. José Carlos Pezini, Coordinator for Portuguese-Language Ministries of The Outreach Foundation, for help.

The Rev. Pezini had returned to his native Brazil in 2012 to continue his ministry of mentoring, coaching, and encouraging pastors. With two other Brazilian pastors Pezini started a new ministry, SARA, which worked alongside the IPIB and other denominations as a means of refreshing and restoring the souls of pastors in their relationship with God and in their practice of ministry. Pezini’s colleagues, the Rev. Mário Gois and the Rev. Casso Vieira, were well-known to The Outreach Foundation.

As Director of the IPIB’s Office of Evangelism from 2008–2011, the Rev. Mário helped shape the principles of mission partnership between the IPIB and The Outreach Foundation. He also served a congregation in the city of São José do Rio Preto that was supporting a Brazilian missionary working with an international



mission organization in Tunisia. I participated in one of their mission conferences during the summer of 2011 and was moved by their passion and commitment.

The Rev. Casso Vieira had been a missionary of the IPIB in a project in southern Brazil, supported by The Outreach Foundation for a number of years. He then became pastor of a congregation in Campinas, near São Paulo, and served part-time in the Office of Evangelism with the responsibility of coordinating the Missionary Training Centers for the IPIB.<sup>30</sup> The Rev. Casso's congregation also was deeply interested in global mission, and I invited him to join me on my next visit to Ghana to see the evangelistic and lay training ministries in northern Ghana. Long-term friend and colleague in mission, Dr. Tim Carriker, also joined us on the September 2014 trip to Ghana. Tim was part of the "South-South" consultations in 2008 and 2009. He was well-acquainted with the global mission activity of Brazilian Christians and served as a consultant for mission strategy in the IPIB Office of Evangelism.

### **2014 trip to northern Ghana**

I wrote to the PCG's Director for Ecumenical and Social Relations, the Rev. Samuel Odjelua, about our intentions and asked for his help in coordinating our visit. He welcomed us to Ghana and asked the Rev. Joshua Heikkila to help us with the details of the trip. Joshua, who had been so helpful in 2013, was glad to arrange our itinerary in the north. We planned to include visits to the national leadership in the PCG and the EPC,G, but the bulk of our time would be spent in northern Ghana. There we would visit the two presbyteries of the PCG and the one northern presbytery of the EPC,G. My hopes for this trip were to see the Booth Leadership Initiative begin in northern Ghana and for a concrete expression of the Ghanaian-Brazilian mission partnership to emerge.

We arrived in Ghana in early September 2014. During our initial days in Accra, we met with the Principal Clerk (Stated Clerk) of the PCG, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong. He expressed his desire to revive the church-church partnership between the PCG and the IPIB, for he had been one of the drafters of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2010 when he was the PCG's Director of Ecumenical and Social Relations. We also met with the Moderator of the EPC,G, the Rev. Seth Agidi. A close friend of Solomon Sule-Saa and John Azumah since their seminary days, the Moderator expressed his hope that the EPC,G could be part of a potential Booth Leadership Initiative in northern Ghana.

We left Accra for Tamale where we met PCG leaders in the Northern and Upper Presbyteries, the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre, and the regional office of the Presbyterian Development and Social Services Department. After introductions,

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<sup>30</sup> These Missionary Training Centers were similar to the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre in Tamale, in that they trained evangelists (non-ordained pastoral workers) to plant new churches or serve small rural and urban congregations.

they gave an overview of their joint proposal to the Booth Leadership Initiative. It was evident that they were making a serious commitment to the principles and programmatic work of the BLI, even as they adapted BLI to their context in northern Ghana.

Spending three days in each presbytery, we heard and saw the mission-vision of the Northern and Upper Presbyteries and met leaders involved in the development work that would be key to providing vocational training for BLI-trained evangelists. One day in the eastern part of the Northern Presbytery, we met a pastor of the EPC,G, and spoke to him about the BLI initiative.

As we saw the great needs that churches were trying to address in northern Ghana, we met deeply committed servant leaders of the church at the grass-roots level:

- Daniel Awine Akurugo, a catechist whose congregation was worshipping under a tree when we visited in 2013. Following that trip, a Booth grant had helped it build a chapel. It was there that we worshiped during our visit.
- The Rev. Joshua Nabua, a pastor of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, in the Yendi area of northeastern Ghana. He hoped that BLI in northern Ghana would include the EPC,G in its program of training self-supporting church planters.
- The Rev. Esmond Nagba, the Chairperson of the Upper Presbytery, tirelessly drove us around to visit ministries of the presbytery. He was full of ideas and energy for a Brazilian and Ghanaian mission partnership.
- The Rev. Gladys Lariba, a pastor who had spent many years ministering to women who had been accused of witchcraft and banished from their villages. They were given refuge in a safe village under the protection of a traditional chief in northern Ghana. There, the Revs. Nagba and Lariba and others in Upper Presbytery cared for the women and efforts were made to restore them to their families and communities.
- The Rev. James Nagumsi, a local pastor who taught himself to read his mother tongue, then English. Eventually, he was ordained. His wife, Ruth, supplemented her husband's salary through her business, processing shea nuts into shea butter and peanuts into a paste used in many Ghanaian stews and soups. Her marketing enterprise illustrated the kind of possibilities available for those who were to be trained through BLI.

A serendipity during this trip was the opportunity to visit the Rev. Dr. Dianne Shields, who had been on the 2006 Outreach trip to Ghana. After Dianne retired from pastoral ministry, she and her husband, Jerry, spent some time at Akrofi-Christaller Institute as advocates for the work of ACI. In 2014 they, along with another retired pastor, the Rev. Rose Taul, volunteered to spend six months at the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre in Tamale. They taught classes, visited churches and ministries in the rural areas, and shared life with their Ghanaian brothers and sisters in northern Ghana.

On our last evening in northern Ghana, the Brazilian delegation met separately with our Ghanaian hosts and declared that the partnership between the IPIB and the PCG had “moved off the paper” and would find concrete form. During their meeting, I discussed the next steps in the implementation of the BLI with Dan Kolbilla in the Social Service Department.

We returned to Accra and spent time with the PCG’s Director of Ecumenical and Social Relations, the Rev. Samuel Odjelua, who had returned from Germany. He received the Brazilian delegation warmly and expressed great hope that the partnership would develop further. He also thanked Joshua Heikkila for hosting the Brazilian and U.S. visitors.

After the departure of Casso Vieira and Tim Carriker, I stayed a few extra days to see a project at Akrofi-Christaller Institute we were supporting<sup>31</sup> and to participate in the 25th anniversary celebration of the Northern Outreach Program, one of the earliest programs supported by The Outreach Foundation and Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship.

### **Results of the trip: Booth Leadership Initiatives**

My September trip was followed by a visit to northern Ghana by a visit from the Rev. Steve Bryant, the new Outreach Liaison to the Booth Leadership Initiative in Africa. Bryant was enthusiastically supportive of the initiative and developed a provisional five-year budget for BLI in northern Ghana. Jasper Maas and Dan Kolbilla from the BLI Steering Committee went to Zambia in January 2015 where they observed a Booth training program at Justo Mwale University. They brought their report back to Ghana, and the first cohort of twelve evangelists from the Northern and Upper Presbyteries began their training that summer. A second cohort of nineteen evangelists from both PCG presbyteries and a presbytery of the EPC,G began in 2017.

Over the duration of the BLI work in Ghana, twenty-six chapels were roofed with BLI funds, and thirty-one evangelists were trained and given start-up funds for a self-supporting business. Some examples of the self-support component of BLI were two catechists (evangelists) from the EPC,G who successfully enlarged their businesses of yam production while they were planting churches, and an evangelist from the PCG who began a pig-raising enterprise following his graduation from the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre.

The Booth Leadership Initiative in Ghana continued for five years. In their final report, the BLI leaders in Ghana spoke briefly of the factors that caused BLI not

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<sup>31</sup> The project to provide housing for faculty and visiting scholars, supported by the PCUSA and Outreach since the late 1990s, was still going on. The house that Outreach was helping to build was close to completion. I also saw good progress on a major expansion of the library at Akrofi-Christaller Institute.

to continue after 2019, but they emphasized the positive impact of BLI: “In spite of the challenges in the execution of the project, the BLI project in Ghana has been successful to the extent that thirty-one Catechists have been trained and empowered and twenty-six chapels have been roofed. As a result, congregations have been strengthened and new churches planted. Part of the concept of the BLI training, that is, empowering catechists in mission and business, has been sustained in the Youth for Work project of the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre which is executed in the two presbyteries. In this way we see some of the legacy of the Booth Leadership Initiative continue in this new model. The Northern and Upper Presbyteries are grateful for the collaboration with the Booth Leadership Initiative, the Booth family, and The Outreach Foundation and pray for fruitful partnership in the future.”

### **Results of the trip: Brazilian mission initiatives**

Casso Vieira and Tim Carriker returned to Brazil, excited about what they had seen. They sent a report to the leadership of the IBIP and Casso began to mobilize his congregation to support the construction of some chapels in the Northern and Upper Presbyteries. While the IPIB at the General Assembly level was unable to continue to support the mission in northern Ghana, the First Independent Presbyterian Church of Campinas enthusiastically launched a fund-raising drive in early 2015. By the summer of 2015, they had raised over \$15,000 for church construction in northern Ghana. They invited me to their annual mission conference to celebrate with them and to speak on “The Call to Mission.” I was as inspired by the passion for mission at this local IPIB congregation as I had been four years earlier at the mission conference of the First Independent Presbyterian Church of São José do Rio Preto.

The Brazilians faced a practical problem: how would they get their funds to Ghana? Banks in Brazil were not permitted to wire funds to Ghana in the way that United States and European banks could wire them. The Outreach Foundation provided a solution: we had project funds designated for Brazil which had been donated by U.S. congregations. With the agreement of all parties, the Brazilians sent an amount to the projects in Brazil that would have come from the U.S. congregations, and The Outreach Foundation sent the same dollar amount of funds to Ghana for church construction in the Northern and Upper Presbyteries.

### **Cultivating U.S. congregations for mission partnerships in northern Ghana**

While working with the Northern and Upper Presbyteries to inaugurate the Booth Leadership Initiative in Ghana and communicating with mission partners in Brazil about their Ghana mission, I was also advocating for the Ghanaian church in the U.S.A. Immediately following my 2014 trip I spoke to the Mid-Tennessee Ghana Association, a community of Ghanaian Americans living in our area. The leaders who invited me to speak, Theo and Emelia Darko, were members of the

congregation my wife had served.<sup>32</sup> The Ghanaian diaspora in the United States kept in close touch with their homeland, and they were eager to hear any news from those who had returned from visits to Ghana.

The Ghanaian Association in Mid-Tennessee did not engage with Outreach in our work in Ghana, but a church in the Memphis area did. Germantown Presbyterian Church had partnered with The Outreach Foundation for years in mission work in Mexico, Russia, and Brazil. Thanks to its neighbor, Advent Presbyterian Church, which advocated enthusiastically for mission in Ghana, Germantown signaled to us that they were ready to look at Ghana for a mission partnership. I visited them often, met in person and by Skype with their mission committee, and highlighted Ghana in a sermon at Germantown on World Communion Sunday. When I retired, my successor at Outreach, the Rev. Juan Sarmiento, finalized the new relationship between Germantown and the PCG in northern Ghana. Former Trustee John Azumah was a key person in connecting Germantown with Ghana. In 2017 he arranged a visit and accompanied Juan Sarmiento and the first group from Germantown to northern Ghana. He was subsequently invited by Germantown to speak at its 2017 World Communion Service.

After its initial visit to the Northern and Upper Presbyteries, Germantown decided to focus on the Upper Presbytery, a partnership that has continued to this day. Germantown has built a close relationship with the leaders of the presbytery through a second visit in 2019, email correspondence, Zoom meetings, and visits to the US by two successive chairpersons of the Upper Presbytery to celebrate World Communion Sunday with them.

While the Germantown Church was grateful to The Outreach Foundation for connecting it with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, it has maintained the relationship apart from Outreach. It participates in the Ghana Mission Network of the PCUSA and appreciates the role of Regional Liaison Joshua Heikkila as a resource for the Network.

### **The Outreach Foundation and mission in Ghana, 2017–2020**

In addition to Juan Sarmiento's liaison role between U.S. mission partners and the churches and mission institutions in Ghana, Pezini, our Outreach staff in Brazil, became an advocate for a continuing Brazil-Ghana connection in northern Ghana. Pezini organized a visit to northern Ghana in 2018 to investigate how SARA's ministry of mentoring church leaders could partner with the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre in Tamale and with the churches of northern Ghana. On this trip, he was accompanied by his SARA ministry colleague, the Rev. Mário Gois, and

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<sup>32</sup> The Darkos are shown in a photo in Chapter 4 with Dr. Gillian Mary Bediako. Their ancestral home is in Akropong, the town where the Akrofi-Christaller Institute is located.

laypersons from several churches, including the First Independent Presbyterian Church of São José do Rio Preto, which Pastor Mário served in addition to his work with SARA.

Because the dates available to the Brazilians for the trip happened to be at a time when the Director of the Lay Training Centre, the Rev. Dr. Solomon Sule-Saa, was out of the country, the Centre's Deputy Director, the Rev. Daniel Bediako, hosted the group on behalf of the Lay Training Centre and the two presbyteries. Bediako and the Brazilian team developed a good rapport while in Ghana, and they invited him to speak at a SARA conference in Brazil in 2019. After the conference, they planned to have the Rev. Bediako speak at their churches and further develop the mission relationship.

Unfortunately, the Brazilian team extended its invitation to Daniel Bediako without going through the proper protocol for issuing such invitations in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. A cultural conflict ensued between the more informal Brazilian para-church ministry (SARA) and the more formal Ghanaian Church, and the result was that Daniel Bediako did not go to Brazil. It was a learning experience for all.<sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, John Azumah, who had been so helpful to Juan Sarmiento in facilitating the Outreach work in Ghana after my retirement, returned to his native land in 2019 to initiate a new interfaith study center named in honor of the famous West African scholar for Christian-Muslim relationships, Lamin Sanneh.<sup>34</sup> Just before he left the U.S., the congregation I was attending in retirement invited Azumah to speak on Islam. The congregation received him well, and a few of us from Palms Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville Beach, Florida, went to Ghana in early 2020 on an Outreach-sponsored trip to attend the inauguration of The Sanneh Institute. While in Ghana, we also visited friends in northern Ghana and spent a day at the Akrofi-Christaller Institute.

As we were leaving Ghana, the Covid pandemic broke out, impacting churches and missions in every part of the world. Keeping global mission partnerships alive and thriving proved to be a challenge for The Outreach Foundation, and our relationship with Ghana was no exception. Outreach developed a special project to provide "Covid relief" to mission partners around the world, including the Northern and Upper Presbyteries. Shortly after this grant was sent to Ghana, Juan Sarmiento left The Outreach Foundation to become the Executive Presbyter of San Fernando Presbytery in California.

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<sup>33</sup> The Brazilian team continued their relationship with the Rev. Daniel Bediako after he finished his term at the Presbyterian Lay Training Centre and became a pastor in a congregation in another presbytery.

<sup>34</sup> For information about The Sanneh Institute, see <https://tsinet.org>.

The remaining staff at Outreach had some hard choices to make. Which of our long-term international relationships would Outreach be able to continue given the commitments that have marked The Outreach Foundation's approach to mission for more than forty years? Those commitments are:

- Nurturing long-term international friendships, primarily with partners who have a historic connection to the missionary work of American Presbyterians
- Introducing U.S. congregations to these global friends
- Raising funds for projects of the global partners
- Facilitating transformative experiences for the U.S. partners through mission trips where they, too, could develop long-term relationships with another part of the body of Christ

When Juan Sarmiento was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Tom Boone, Boone was charged with overseeing Outreach Foundation work in China and Pakistan, and he was asked to explore new mission possibilities in Europe. The Outreach Foundation no longer had a person on its staff assigned to Ghana. As a result, the decades-long mission collaboration between The Outreach Foundation and churches and mission organizations in Ghana would no longer be able to continue as it once did.

The Adinkra symbol at the beginning of this chapter, "Nyame Dua," which stands for God's presence and protection, provides hope and comfort for all who have been touched by the Outreach-Ghana connection. The Presbyterian communions in Ghana came into being and developed into strong, independent churches long before American Presbyterians began working with them. God continues to be alive and at work among the churches and Christian institutions of Ghana. The Outreach Foundation will continue to receive and distribute funds for mission in Ghana, and American Presbyterians may continue to connect with brothers and sisters in Ghana for our mutual growth and for our shared participation in the mission of God. Here are some of the contacts for those who wish to be companions in mission with God's people in Ghana:

- The Rev. Joshua Heikkila, PCUSA Regional Liaison for West Africa, joshua.heikkila@pcusa.org. Joshua can facilitate engagement for congregations with the PCG and the EPC,G.
- Mrs. Donna Cammarata, the Communications Coordinator for the Ghana Mission Network of the PCUSA, donna.camm@gmail.com. The Ghana Mission Network brings together churches, presbyteries, and ministries with long-term relationships with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, or the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Representatives of the EPC,G, and PCG are present at every meeting.
- Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission and Culture, the Rev. Dr. B.Y. Quarshie, rector@aci.edu.gh.
- The Sanneh Institute, the Rev. Dr. John Azumah, Director, azumahj@tsinet.org.

## People and Projects in Northern Ghana



Joshua Heikkila, PCUSA Regional Liaison for West Africa  
(courtesy of Charles Wiley)



Pastor Esmond Nagba, Chairperson of Upper Presbytery with Catechist  
(Evangelist) Daniel Awine Akurugo serving Amanga Presbyterian Church, built  
with BLI support





Brazilian visiting team in 2014 meeting with Principal Clerk of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana: from left, the Revs. Casso Vieira, Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, and Dr. Tim Carriker



Chapel roofed by First Independent Presbyterian Church of Campinas, Brazil, following 2014 visit by the Rev. Casso Vieira (courtesy of the Northern Presbytery of the PCG)



The Rev. and Mrs. James Nagumsi, self-supporting family in Northern Presbytery, a model for future BLI work



Youth for Work Program of Presbyterian Lay Training Centre in Tamale, part of the legacy of the Booth Leadership Initiative in northern Ghana (courtesy of Presbyterian Lay Training Centre)

## **Addendum: A Mission Beyond the Mission**



**Bi-Nka-Bi**

**“No One Should Bite Another”**

The primary work of The Outreach Foundation has always been supporting the evangelism and mission work of Presbyterians and our global partners. This mission has been interpreted holistically and has included leadership development, education, health, community development, and relief efforts.

Occasionally, however, The Outreach Foundation has supported programs or projects beyond our primary mission, but which are consistent with our larger aim of building the capacity of our global partners for the missions to which God has called them. One of those programs involved Columbia Theological Seminary and Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture: the “Global North-South Consultation on Human Sexuality” in Ghana from July 22-26, 2013. The event was a project of our long-term friend and Trustee, Dr. John Azumah, who had come to Columbia Seminary in the fall of 2011 as Professor of World Christianity and Islam.

When Professor Azumah arrived at Columbia Seminary, he found the seminary embroiled in a controversy over whether same-sex couples could live in student housing. As he observed the way American Christians spoke and acted regarding the issue of same-sex relationships, he saw a huge difference in how American and African Christians talked and acted about the same subject. He engaged in a series of conversations with the faculty and staff of Columbia Seminary to see if there could be a wider conversation on the topic of human sexuality that would bring together thoughtful Christians from the Global North and the Global South. Columbia agreed with Azumah’s proposal, and he began to put together an international symposium on the subject that would bring representatives from Africa, Asia, North America, and Europe to Ghana. Columbia Seminary and Akrofi-Christaller Institute for Theology, Mission, and Culture agreed to be co-sponsors.

When additional funding was needed to enable some of the international delegates to attend the event, John reached out to his friends at Outreach for help and asked that we participate in the consultation. With the approval of Executive Director, Rob Weingartner, I attended this meeting and gave a “response” to a talk by the Rev. Dr. Philip Laryea, a professor at Akrofi-Christaller. I felt greatly out of my comfort zone in participating in this consultation, but I did it out of respect and love for my friend, John Azumah, who hoped that the event would give African Christians a voice to share perspectives that are rarely heard in European and North American circles.

The importance of this event for American Presbyterian mission organizations, including The Outreach Foundation, was underscored by the fact that in the years prior to the consultation, the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico had cut off relations with the PCUSA. Other PCUSA partners in Latin America and Africa were re-examining their long-term relationship with it, including the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

Over thirty participants, two-thirds of whom were from the Global South, gathered in Akropong, Ghana for the consultation. Over one-third were women, including a Christian who was a self-affirming lesbian. The participants shared their widely varying perspectives in a spirit of love and respect. It fulfilled the sponsoring organizations' hopes that African voices would have equal weight as European and North American voices. Personally, it was an honor to have participated in the event.

Akrofi-Christaller Institute included most of the talks given at the consultation in its December 2013 issue of *Journal of African Christian Thought*. I end this addendum with an article included in the issue: "Global North-South Consultation on Human Sexuality, 22-26 July 2013: Acknowledgements and Reflections," by John Azumah. It was not a talk given at the consultation; rather, it reflected on the spirit of the gathering and asked questions from a West African perspective on how we deal with conversations on difficult issues within and across the cultures. Re-reading John's words years after the consultation reminds me how much we need our global friends as we continue our discipleship to Jesus in seeking first the kingdom of God.

I am grateful to Dr. Gillian Mary Bediako, editor of *Journal of African Christian Thought*, for permission to include this article in *The History of The Outreach Foundation* in Ghana. The Adinkra symbol at the beginning of this Addendum also appeared at the beginning and end of John Azumah's article. It communicates the value of "harmonious relating in community, the dynamics of achieving which have always been a major concern of traditional African societies."<sup>35</sup>

## **Global North-South Consultation on Human Sexuality, 22-26 July 2013: Acknowledgements and Reflections**<sup>36</sup>

**John Azumah**

**Principal Convener and Facilitator of the Consultation on Human Sexuality  
Associate Professor for World Christianity & Islam, Director for International  
Programs, Columbia Theological Seminary, USA**

The global North-South Consultation on Human Sexuality was jointly convened in Ghana by Columbia Theological Seminary, USA, and the Akrofi-Christaller Institute, Ghana, as a forum for bringing together persons from the Reformed family in the global North and South to dialogue on this controversial topic. As the principal convener, I express my heartfelt thanks to the following for their encouragement and support in diverse ways, which made the consultation possible: Deborah Mullen, Dean, Columbia Theological Seminary; Steve Hayner, President, Columbia Theological Seminary; Benhardt Quarshie, Rector, Akrofi-Christaller Institute, and

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<sup>35</sup> *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (December 2013:3).

<sup>36</sup> *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (December 2013:4-5).

Ben Asiedu, Registrar, Akrofi-Christaller Institute; Jeff Ritchie and Rob Weingartner, The Outreach Foundation. Mary Bediako deserves thanks for working hard to publish these papers in this issue of the *Journal of African Christian Thought*.

As a Ghanaian now living and working in the USA, I found the presentations and discussions stimulating and challenging, and our time together very productive. Participants from the global North and South did not shy away from the difficult questions around human sexuality, especially homosexuality, but tackled them with honesty, humility, and civility. The consultation was truly a model conversation on difficult, emotive, politically charged, and divisive issues.

As I reflect on our time together in Ghana, several things come to mind. The eleventh-hour withdrawals by some partners, mainly from the global North, were indicative of the nervousness and anxiety surrounding conversations on human sexuality, especially homosexuality. I consider all who attended the consultation as women and men of faith and courage! The commitment to come to the table and to engage on such a difficult subject is itself a mark of Christian maturity. As Nigel Uden reminded us, if we fail or refuse to talk and engage, many vulnerable lives will be put at risk. It is my prayer and hope that we will commit to remaining at the table, despite the risks, for the sake of the more vulnerable members of the Body of Christ.

Most participants may have left the consultation still convinced that those they disagree with are wrong, but as David Kpobi eloquently reminded us during the devotions, we are still obliged to imitate Christ by showing love and respect to one another. Whilst participants were not of one mind on the hermeneutical and theological questions surrounding human sexuality, there was still a consensus on standing against violence and on extending unconditional pastoral care to all God's people. Judith Krotze's graphic video presentation on the high level of violence allegedly perpetrated against gays and lesbians in South Africa was a powerful catalyst for this common ground!

It was clear throughout the conversations, evidenced in the papers here published, that neither the global North nor the global South is univocal on the subject. Despite the general stereotypes, there remains a very sizable proportion of the population in the West strongly opposed to same-sex relations. Ironically, as gays and lesbians 'come out' daily in the West, many Westerners opposed to same-sex relations are retreating into the closet, scared at making their disapproval public. Similarly, a growing minority in the global South are supporters of same-sex relations and are also scared at voicing their support publicly. This intolerance on both sides should be of deep concern to all freedom-loving people.

An important outcome for me was the realization that our reading and interpretation of Scripture are markedly divergent owing to the very different worldviews and cultural lenses through which we refract the text of Scripture.

These different and even conflicting positions have to be respected for the sake of the 'ndaba,' the conversation. The suspicion, fear, and resentment of cultural imperialism and exploitation of the South by the North were also very strongly expressed. It was clear that Africans, in particular, are no longer content to mimic the West or tell our Northern brethren what we think they want to hear. Indeed, history (slavery, colonialism, apartheid) continues to be the mistress of our relations and we cannot wish it away. But we cannot also allow history to stand in the way of honest and mutually beneficial conversations and sharing.

Africans view as condescending and patronizing the dismissal of their disapproval of same-sex relations by the mainstream media and the left in the West as the work of Western evangelical groups. Many Africans also resent the campaign and pressure from gay lobby groups in the West that have the strong backing of Western media and governments. They view the pressure as pure bullying and blackmail of weak and economically vulnerable African states. For instance, many view as hypocritical the recent pressure that Western governments and media are mounting on Uganda and Nigeria in the face of their anti-gay legislation. They raise the query as to why Western media houses and governments are not mounting the same level of pressure on oil-rich Islamic states, where women are banned by law from driving and where there is the death penalty for homosexual activities.

The frustration is that if the West is truly democratic, it should not only respect the opinion polls of its population and democratic processes of its institutions; it should also accord the same respect to African states. After all, the opinion polls of the populations of African states are overwhelmingly against same-sex relations, and it is the elected representatives of Uganda and Nigeria who passed the laws, following due democratic processes. The perception that what is right in the West must be right for the rest, and what is wrong in the West must be wrong for the rest is viewed and resented by many in the global South as imperialistic. Indeed, much of the anti-gay sentiment across Africa is fueled by this sense of imperialistic pressure.

The conversation on homosexuality also continues to be highly polarising in the church, fracturing historic denominations in the West and putting pressure on relations with the church in the global South. What was obvious from the presentations at the consultation is that context and culture matter in this conversation as in many other issues. In his presentation on the PC(USA) journey on same-sex relations, Charles Wiley highlighted the role played by leading celebrities and public figures in changing attitudes in favour of same-sex relations in the USA. The presentation of Ernestina Afriyie and others from Africa highlighted the cultural factors at play in African attitudes and views.

The question is: should Christian thought in both the global North and South simply follow the dictates of prevailing culture in order to be 'relevant' and contextual? It is well known that in Africa the traditional and primal worldview plays a vital role in shaping culture and forming attitudes. Similarly, it can be said that Hollywood and

secular forces are at the forefront in shaping culture and attitudes in American, in particular, and in the West generally. The question that the cultural factor raises for me, therefore, is whether biblical hermeneutics and theological reflection should be put on auto-pilot to surf on cultural waves and opinion polls, or should they aim at interrogating the forces and factors that combine to form and shape culture and attitudes? It appears that from the mid-twentieth century onwards, the church in the West has conceded the role of leading and shaping culture to largely non-religious and even anti-Christian forces and factors.

One of the challenges in all this is how to remain in fellowship and communion with people who believe and think differently from ourselves, especially on such emotive issues. The conversation is not going to be easy, and the challenges cannot be overcome through one consultation or the publication of one special issue of a journal, important as these are. Nevertheless, the consultation and these papers are unanimous in affirming that there is no alternative to continuing with the conversation. When we cease to talk to one another, prejudice and suspicion will fill the vacuum and undermine our shared mission. IT is therefore my prayer that we will not give up on one another too easily or too quickly; rather, that we will remain committed to working at strengthening and enhancing our historic relations for the sake of the mission of the Kingdom of God.

### **Conference participants and presenters**

Ernestina Afriyie, Ghana  
Seth Senyo Agidi, Ghana  
Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar, India  
MacWilson Atakro, Ghana  
John Azumah, Ghana  
Bridget Ben-Naimah, Ghana  
Brennan W. Breed, USA  
Felicia Nmecha Dimgba, Nigeria  
Hunter Farrell, USA  
Cyril G. Fayose, Ghana  
Benebo Fubara-Manuel, Nigeria  
Joshua Heikkila, USA  
David Kpobi, Ghana  
Judith Krotze, South Africa  
Philip Laryea, Ghana  
Marjorie Lewis, West Indies  
Esther Mombo, Kenya

Deborah F. Mullen, USA  
Patrick Thegu Mutahi, Kenya  
Aboseh Ngwana, Cameroon  
Benjamin Abotchie Ntreh, Ghana  
Ulari Emmanuel Ogbonna, Nigeria  
Andrew David Omona, Uganda  
Gideon Puplampu, Ghana  
Benhardt Y. Quarshie, Ghana  
Jeff Ritchie, USA  
Effat Shawky, Egypt  
Scott W. Sunquist, USA  
Christian J. Thrasher, USA  
Sando E. Townsend, Liberia  
Nigel Uden, United Kingdom  
Ralph C. Watkins, USA  
Charles Wiley, USA  
Glynis Williams, Canada



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**Sankofa: Go Back and Fetch It**