DECLARATION

This thesis, with the exception of materials quoted from other scholarly works which had been duly acknowledged, is the original production of research work by me under the supervision of Professors Elizabeth Amoah and Chris Thomas at the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, Legon. Any error in the work is entirely mine.

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DEDICATION

To my dear wife Catherine Okwei and my children – Mrs. Christina Ammah and Mrs. Emma Fawcett for their encouragement and endurance coupled with prayers in the course of my research. May the Lord replenish to you a hundredfold what you endured which cannot be quantified in monetary terms or otherwise during my long absence from you.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“Through all the changing scenes of life, In trouble and in joy. The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ”. The completion of this work was due to a lot of assistance and
encouragement I received from many people which space could not allow me to put all on paper.
All the same, it will be ingratitude on my part to gloss over the names of certain personalities. I
owe a debt of gratitude to my Supervisors for the necessary rapport they created from the
beginning which enabled me to approach them as and when the need arose. These scholars are
Professor Elizabeth Amoah and Professor Chris Thomas of the Department for the Study of
Religions, Legon.
I also wish to place on record the varied contributions I received from other Senior Members of
the Department especially Professor Lawrence Boakye in the form of constructive criticisms and
suggestions during seminar presentations and related issues which encouraged me not to rest on
my oars but to press on in spite of challenges along the way. I unreservedly wish to register my
deepest gratitude to the Rev. Professor D.N.A. Kpobi of Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon
for his encouragement and pieces of advice on this study. I would also be ungrateful if I fail to
register my thanks to all the staff of the Department, and especially those in the library who
provided the needed atmosphere for academic work.
Finally, I wish to say a very big thank you to Mr. Moses Bediako of the Balme Library for his
immense assistance in various ways which went a long way to bring this work to fruition. Thank
you all and may the Lord bless you abundantly.
ABSTRACT

Based on the commission and the highly priestly prayer of Jesus Christ as shown in Matthew 28:18-20 and John 21:17 respectively, the study examined the main contributions of the grassroots ecumenism in the Madina township, Accra, the impact of the activities of the Local Council of Churches and the way forward. Relevant literature and books on the subject have been reviewed. A Questionnaire was administered to 291 participants (10 executives and 281 members) with age range between 15 and 60 years. They were conveniently sampled from 6 churches, namely, Presbyterian, Methodist, Evangelical Presbyterian, Catholic, Lutheran and Baptist Churches respectively), within the area.

On the main contributions of grassroots ecumenism the executive members said implementing of programmes such as Bible Week and Christian Home Week celebrations and socialization, cleaning exercises, fund raising in support of evangelism and recreational activities foster unity and cooperation. On the other hand, the members said the Council contributes a lot to the town through Christian Home Week celebrations, fun games, Bible week celebrations and Easter activities as well as fund raising and clean-up exercises.

On the impact of the Local Council of Churches on the people, all the executive members indicated that the activities foster unity, peace and cooperation among community members. It also promotes spiritual growth, moral sensitization and social harmony among the people. Responses from the Church members corroborated with those of the executive members that the Council helps to promote and foster unity and cooperation among the Churches in the area. They also indicated that the Council helps to encourage education on moral training, parenting and conflict management in the area.

On the way forward, the executive members stated that members and leaders of the various Churches should be more committed and dedicated. The members on the other hand, responded that it is very important for all Churches in the locality to come together to foster unity and cooperation for better development.
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<tr>
<td>BSG</td>
<td>BIBLE SOCIETY OF GHANA</td>
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<td>BWC</td>
<td>BIBLE WEEK CELEBRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCG</td>
<td>CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHWC</td>
<td>CHRISTIAN HOME WEEK CELEBRATION</td>
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<td>EPC</td>
<td>EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH</td>
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<td>GHAMSU</td>
<td>GHANA METHODIST STUDENTS UNION</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPCC</td>
<td>GHANA PENTECOSTAL AND CHRISTIAN COUNCIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL</td>
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<td>MLCC</td>
<td>MADINA LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACCC</td>
<td>NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARISMATIC AND CHRISTIAN CHURCHES</td>
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<td>NUPSG</td>
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<td>PCG</td>
<td>PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA</td>
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<td>WARC</td>
<td>WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look at the overview of ecumenical activities in Madina, Accra, their impact and how this unity in diversity is helping to achieve the overall aim of Christian mission in Madina. Key issues to be looked at are the meaning of ecumenism, general overview of Madina Local Council of Churches, Accra, significance of ecumenism, growth of ecumenism, and Ecumenism in Ghana.

The term ecumenism is derived from the Greek word oikoumene which refers to the inhabited world in contrast to the larger universe (kosmos). Ecumenism is the movement in the Church towards recovery of the unity of all believers in Christ, irrespective of creed, ritual and polity. The modern ecumenical movement is a twentieth century development, arising out of the First World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910 though this itself owed much to earlier movements which prepared the way.

Ecumenism, understood broadly, relates to “the interfaith movement striving for greater mutual respect, toleration, and cooperation among the world religions. Ecumenism as interfaith dialogue between representatives of diverse faiths, does not necessarily intend reconciling their adherents into full, organic unity with one another but simply to promote better relations.

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It promotes toleration, mutual respect and cooperation, whether among Christian denominations, or between Christianity and other faiths.” ³ But understood narrowly, this word has reference to the world-wide Church of the same faith.

Darril Hudson defines Ecumenism as “the Christian international organizations formed to carry the Church’s concern for political, social and economic issues into the international arena.”⁴ Ecumenism could also be defined as the universal assembly of various Christian traditions or denominations. The concern of these various denominations is to forge a unity of the Church despite their confessional differences. It is also described as a movement seeking visible unity of divided Churches/denominations within Christianity. In the opinion of Barry Till, the word ecumenism could be used to describe ‘the Church of the world’ and was therefore virtually synonymous with the other Greek word for the universal church – ‘catholic’.⁵ Till states that the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 was a breakthrough towards reunion. This, it is believed, would enhance the Churches’ core business in taking the message to the whole world. Another school of thought is that the Edinburgh Conference was the starting date of the ecumenical movement.⁶

1.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF MADINA LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Formal ecumenical activities in Madina, Accra began in the mid-70s (about 1975) when four representatives of Christian Council member Churches, namely, Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian, Anglican and Methodist Churches which were later joined by the Catholic

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⁴ Hudson, *The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs*, 4
representative, began meeting in a small chapel called Wilson Memorial Hall\textsuperscript{7} near the present Post Office in Madina, Accra in an attempt to bring together in the new township all the Christian Council of Ghana member Churches with the view to setting up a local council of Churches to do ecumenism. This group had the backing of the Christian Council of Ghana which liaised with them periodically and annually availed them of Christian Home Week literature for celebrating the annual event. The Bible Society of Ghana also linked with this group and subsequently sent them materials for the celebration of Bible Week and assisted them immensely in the facilitation of these programmes. With an insignificant number of five churches that came together around 1975, by 1978 when the Madina Local Council of Churches was formally inaugurated the Council could boast of eight Churches.\textsuperscript{8}

A question that readily comes to mind was why for thirty eight years now, only eight denominations form the Local Council of Churches. This was because Madina was predominantly a Muslim community with predominantly people of northern extraction. The first settlers moved there from over-crowded areas in Nima. These early settlers were later joined by Ga, Akuapem, Ewe, Akim, Krobo, Fante and Kwahu people. Today, the town has no specific ethnic identity but it is a mixture of all the tribes of Ghana.\textsuperscript{9}

The Madina Local Council of Churches was once a budding organization in the Greater Accra Region. The current eight-member Church Council at the local level meets \textit{inter alia} and according to their time table to observe: Christian Home Week, Bible Week, Easter celebration

\textsuperscript{7} This was the old chapel of the current Ebenezer Methodist Church in Madina, Accra.
\textsuperscript{8} Interview granted by the current Chairman of Madina Local Council of Churches, the Rev. E. Serekou-Younge (October 5, 2012).
\textsuperscript{9} Souvenir Brochure, Presbyterian Church of Ghana (Madina) – 40\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary Celebration, 2002 (1962-2002),20.
comprising Seven Words on the Cross, the Emmaus road, which is Easter (Monday) picnic and exchange of pulpit. Other activities include Women’s World Day of Prayer, Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, Widows Might Prayer Meeting, (Inter-Churches Women’s Conference) and Talks/Seminars on Credit Unions/Savings and Loan and any other issues pertinent to the welfare and growth of church members as well as those in the locality. These activities are aimed at whipping up members sensibility at all times.

A local council of Churches is an amalgam of Christian Churches in a local set-up with the object of doing mission in various ways. It therefore, consists of Churches and on some rare occasions inter-faith organizations and it is a kind of expression of the ecumenical movement. A chief characteristic of the Local Council of Churches is Christian witness through service, -Diakonia’. According to R.D.N. Dickinson, the emphasis on diakonia has deep ecumenical roots.10  F.B. Thomas puts it this way: a voluntary organization of Churches within a defined geographical area without compromising the distinctive identity of its members which enables their sharing in common reflection and action on matters of Christian unity, faith, and ethics and in a programme of common Christian witness and service (diakonia).11

In the opinion of Esther Megill, many Christians in Africa saw the need for Christian education and recognized increasingly that the Church must take upon itself the responsibility of education through the local bodies.12 As already stated, the Local Council of Churches in Madina (Accra)

began as a small organization in 1975 when some historic Churches began meeting in the old chapel of the Methodist community. They later moved to the chapel of the Immanuel congregation of the Presbyterian Church and through the instrumentality of the late Mr. S.W.K. Apreku, then Catechist of the EP Church, they, by 1977-78 had moved to a more permanent place at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church premises and this place has remained their meeting place till now. Church leaders and elders who featured prominently in the initial stages were the late Mr. J.B. Anyinsah (Methodist), late Mr. E.A. Gyabaah (Methodist), Mr. Abraham T. Pardie (Methodist), late Mr. S.K. Saforo-Bampoe (Presbyterian), late Mr. Asante Yeboah (Presbyterian), Mr. E.N. Okwei (Presbyterian) late Mr. S.W.K. Apreku (EP Church), late Mr. S.A. Adom (Anglican) Rev. Father Mulders (Catholic), Mr. E.K. Baiden (Methodist) and Rev. (Major) E.O. Woolley (Methodist).

The Madina Local Council of Churches is a fellowship of Churches in Madina which confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seeks to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Churches which are members of the Council remain fully responsible for decisions concerning their own faith, life and witness.

The Madina Local Council of Churches aims at drawing the member Churches represented in the Council into greater understanding and unity and in so doing the Churches are drawn together to enable them bear a more united witness in the community and serve in a more effective manner. With a common front the Churches can, with tenacity of purpose, give such expression to their common faith and devotion as may from time to time be found desirable. Beyond that the Local
Council of Churches tries as much as possible to uphold the principle of closer fellowship among respective Churches by which they direct their energies to the conversion of non-Christians and to the building up of their own members without opposing or undermining the work of other Churches; that is Churches outside the Council.

Konrad Raiser, one time General Secretary of the World Council of Churches gives some characteristics of Ecumenism as a calling of the whole Church to bring the whole gospel to the whole world and as such it is a calling for the involvement of the whole Church in the everyday lives of peoples rather than to be separated from human concerns in society.13 This portrays Ecumenism as not to be confined to the four walls of the Christian community but for the entire human race. This also implies that Ecumenism as a vocation should be about peace-building, conflict resolution and mediation.14

**Christ’s teaching on Church Unity**

Christ calls attention to how He wants his Church to be and His Church must be established upon the life and character of the Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In his priestly prayer, Christ explicitly lays down this principle on the life of the Trinity: “that they all maybe one even as we are one” (John 17:21, 22). Likewise, Paul urged the Ephesians to “keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace” because “there is one body and one Spirit… one Lord, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4:3, 5). Throughout his ministry, the apostle worked to maintain the unity of the church in the face of theological deviation (Galatians and Colossians) and internal

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division (I and II Corinthians). The unity of the Church is also anchored on its headship as it has one shepherd, for “there shall be one flock, one shepherd” (John 10:16). This definition of church unity by Christ is explicit. This is a metaphor that takes the picture of the sheep and the shepherd in order to give us a picture of how Christ sees the Church. Though this flock has many individuals and groups and cultural variations it is defined as one by virtue of its one purpose and goal or destiny which is symbolized by its one shepherd. The oneness of the church is defined by the one head. This unity is not to erase diversity but to embrace the oneness of faith and purpose without tension and animosity. The beauty of the diversity is its unity and the beauty of its unity is its diversity. J.S. Pobee postulates that the concept of unity in the Godhead refers to Christian unity and is not an option but a Biblical and gospel imperative, for it derives its basis from Scripture.  

Paul calls the church the body of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 4:12, 16; 5:23, 30; Col.1:18, 24) by taking the picture off the physical body that has various parts but which all work in unity for the common good of the body. He justifies the diversity of the physical body because all the parts are not identical to each other (I Cor. 12: 14-20). Otherwise the functions of each part would not be appreciated. Yet this diversity finds relevance only in its unity as the various parts agree with each other in supporting one another.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the church to complete the revelation of God in Christ (Acts 1), so that the church is not only liberated from its sin and condemnation, but also leads it in its mission to the world. The Holy Spirit created one fellowship of the Church in love (Gal. 5:5).

5:22). The apostle Peter also stressed this fact urging believers to have “unity of mind” (I Pet.3:8). The whole church is portrayed as a building that is growing to a particular goal, which is oneness, and this is in accordance with the teaching of Christ, that we be one (John 17:21).

The sort of unity being sought was of paramount interest because the church is made up of people of varied background and any step taken must benefit all and sundry; it is against this backdrop that the modern Ecumenical Movement began in Edinburgh in 1910 at the International Conference under the leadership of American Methodist John Mott. At this Conference the thousand delegates who attended caught the vision for mission models of unity and union. As a result three organizations were established to continue the work and realize the promise of the Edinburgh Conference. These were the International Missionary Council (Mohonk, New York, 1921) which attempted to bring about cooperation between Protestant mission agencies; the Conference on Life and Work (Stockholm, 1925) which sought to unify efforts to solve social, economic, and political problems; and the Conference on Faith and Order (Lausanne, 1927) which addressed the theological basis of church unity.¹⁶

At conferences held in Edinburgh and Oxford in 1937, the ‘Faith and Order’ and ‘Life and Work’ movements agreed to join together in a single World Council of Churches, whose constitution was drafted in 1938, but only put into practice in 1948, as part of a popular movement of the revival of Christian values which followed the Second World War.¹⁷

For many years two main concepts have been explored, namely, organic and inorganic union. Organic union is the coming together of previously separate and independent churches to form a new church whereby a new entity emerges with a new identity where the partners give up their previous identities and adopt a new name, a kind of death and rebirth. This is characterized by an organized structure and a coordinated system in which there is a fusion of structures and programmes, where diversity is not frowned upon.\textsuperscript{18} This kind of union is the most favoured because it is the most visible sign of unity that there can be, but at the same time it could be most disliked because it requires giving up some of its demand of a total dissolution of identity. It is therefore perceived as colourless, static and potentially conflict-ridden.\textsuperscript{19}

The other side of the coin is inorganic union which does not demand a complete surrender of identity but rather the partners keep their names and identities and there is no fusion of structures. Here the stakeholders remain institutionally separate whilst contributing to the common cause of the body and the new entity that is created is only a sum total of its individual members. While organic union could be likened to a piece of cake in which the fusion of different ingredients produces something tastier which are no longer separable inorganic union could be said to be like a class in a school in which the various ingredients, whilst forming a new entity, are still identifiable by their individual characteristics.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} Kpobi, \textit{Mission}, 14.
\textsuperscript{19} Kpobi, \textit{Mission}, 15.
\textsuperscript{20} Kpobi, \textit{Mission}, 15.
The Growth of Ecumenism

Though Ecumenism started as a small assembly of churches within the Roman Empire in the first four centuries, with the universal expansion of Christianity it became a global phenomenon and more controversies and church separation continued in the history of the Church. The Western Church was split into Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in the sixteenth century.\(^{21}\) The major point of disagreement and separation between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in the sixteenth century Reformation was on justification. Norman E. Thomas posits that before the Protestant Reformation there was only "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church and at the head of this Church was the papacy whose powers were extensive as ever: the Pope was the Vicar of Christ, the direct link between the terrestrial Church militant and the God it worshipped.\(^{22}\)

The question was: How does one get right with God? Catholicism taught justification by works in addition to the accomplished work of Christ. Catholicism insisted that salvation could be earned by the sacramental means by the work done by the believer as well as the priest’s pronouncement of absolution from sin and guilt.

Martin Luther who championed the Reformation that justification is by faith alone (sola fide). For Luther as for other Reformers such as Ulrich Zwingli, Philip Melanchthon and John Calvin, justification is a judicial declaration of God regarding the status of the sinner before God. Justification has a contrast in condemnation. If condemnation is a judicial declaration on


\(^{22}\) Thomas, Classic Texts in Mission, 32.
account of human sin, so also is justification a judicial declaration on account of righteousness that has come to us from God in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 1:17; I Cor. 1:30). After the Reformation, theological controversies leading to divisions continued to grow and Zwingli sharply disagreed with Luther on the nature of Christ’s presence in the elements of the Eucharist.

As the Reformation spread in different places people freely expressed their theological views and church traditions. Different denominations were formed and in many cases they were associated with nationalities such as the cases with Roman Catholicism, German Lutheranism and the Church of England. The events of local, regional and global wars and tensions in the mission fields were all craving for Ecumenical assemblies to address some of the thorny issues.

The concern of the global church on the events around the world pressed further the necessity for Ecumenism, and also missionaries encountered numerous problems in the field. Some felt the need to have an ecumenical assembly of all denominations who had missionaries in the field to resolve these issues of interest. In 1805, William Carey attempted this move to call for an international concern which met in 1810 in Cape Town. This eventually led to the foundation of several ecumenical organizations that brought the Protestants, Roman Catholics and Orthodox together. Several other fellowships such as Evangelical Alliance, Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), Student Christian Movement and other denominational fellowships were founded in the nineteenth century.

The twentieth century saw the explosion of the ecumenical movement and William G. Rusch exclaimed thus: “The early twentieth century has often been described as the moment of birth of
the ecumenical movement.”

Though this is true, the roots of this explosive ecumenical movement predate the 20th century. Today Ecumenism can be counted in terms of various confessional assemblies converging from time to time to deliberate and take decisions and actions towards global challenges. This development has been very helpful to all nations internationally, regionally and locally.

Churches in America, Africa, Europe and Asia unite in Ecumenism for a common goal which is to glorify God, strengthen missions and reach out in dialogue to people of other faiths. The history of the causes of controversies and divisions and all the ecumenical attempts at narrower to wider levels can be traced from the 2nd century down to the 21st century. This shows tireless commitment of the universal church to see itself as one though with diverse expressions and practices. The vision of Ecumenism, in the opinion of Michael Kinnamon24 does not only focus on overcoming barriers to ecclesial communion but on realizing genuine community among all humans under God and also shows greater awareness of how racism, sexism and other forms of injustice and discrimination divide both the Church and the world. Furthermore, the vision pays as much attention to cultural and confessional differences, showing greater willingness to claim diversity as constitutive of Christian community and it finally speaks not only of communion service to those in need but of the shared struggle or social transformation in response to the gospel”.

The Significance of Ecumenism (Church Unity)

From time immemorial disunity has plagued the world and since the Church is a human institution this phenomenon has adversely had a toll on the human race and consequently, Churches living in isolation from one another cannot share in the ecumenical experience. This unity (that is ecumenical) is not a theoretical concept but is expected to have practical value.

By the redemptive work of Christ, “Men [women inclusive] from all nations have been knit together into a community in which God dwells through his Spirit and in which all men are united in one great family”. 25 The unity of the church is the essential characteristic of the body of Christ. If the church is indeed the body of Christ, then all its diverse parts must forge together in complement of one another. The New Delhi statement defines unity in terms of “fully committed fellowship” of “all in each place”.26

Scholars on ecumenism are agreed that the theoretical basis of the concept of ecumenism is unity and among such writers is Geoffrey Wainwright, who avers that the East-West axis threatens the world with a possible destructive war, while North-South axis continues to produce widening inequalities between the rich and the poor.27

26 Kinnamon and Cope, 79.
Ecumenism in Ghana

The vision for organic unity in Ghana was conceived by the Christian Council of Ghana after the nation had attained nationhood in 1957 and the major Churches in Ghana began deliberations towards that goal. A Church Union Committee (CUC) was inaugurated in Accra by four churches, namely, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian and Anglican to plan towards the eventual organic unification of these churches.28 After negotiations for about two decades the idea of the proposed Church Union became a mirage and subsequently it fizzled out. Nevertheless, it is on record that Ghana has been involved since then in ecumenical meetings, having hosted the International Missionary Council meeting in 1957.29

Apart from the recognized churches or denominations and councils which are known to be involved in ecumenism other agencies are also providing vital ecumenical experience. These agencies are the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA and the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) which are an affiliate of the Christian Council of Ghana, founded in Europe in the nineteenth century which aimed at bringing young people together from across the denominations to witness to the Gospel.

Other agencies or church groups that deserve to be mentioned are ecumenical worshipping centres and organizations like the Scripture Union and the various Christian fellowships across the country and the world. The Accra Ridge Church was the first ecumenical Church in Ghana which started in 1935 by a small group of British civil servants then serving in the colonial

government of the Gold Coast with the following congregations evolving with the passage of time: Trinity United Church (Legon) Police Church, Prisons Church, Military Interdenominational Church, Tema Joint Church, Teshie-Nungua Interdenominational Church, the Legon Interdenominational Church, the University Interdenominational Church at Cape Coast University and latterly the Gimpa Interdenominational Church.

These congregations sprang up unrelated to any CCG efforts but they are making ecumenical inroads in the society. They explore how best local level ecumenism can be nurtured and encouraged in the Churches to promote oneness in Christ and to support and promote good values and norms for a stable Church and society. These denominations as at today are found exclusively in the major cities with a concentration of white collar workers from far and near. In spite of apparent occasional internal tensions they are among the greatest exponents of ecumenism in Ghana.

J.S. Pobee opines that, ecumenism weaves its way into the African life system and explains three forms of ecumenism, namely, unstructured or natural ecumenism, enforced ecumenism and finally structured ecumenism. Unstructured or natural ecumenism is the one where the family – both nuclear and extended assemble for a ceremony like rites of passage such as puberty, naming/outdooiring and funerals. This gathering may cut across members of the Christian family, people of the Islamic faith and even adherents of the African Traditional Religion. These different religious affiliations do not lead people to opt out of family obligations and involvements, and lends credence to the dictum of the Akan of Ghana to the effect that “we are

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30 Kpobi, Mission, 136.
31 Kpobi, Mission, 138.
each and every one a child of God and no one is a child of the earth”, that is, in essence, no one should be excluded from the household of God.  

The people of Africa and for that matter Ghana revere very much their annual and seasonal festivals which bring together the whole people of a town and indeed, a whole tribe. Through these festivals, the people remember their past leaders and ask for their help and protection. The festivals which are opportunities for coming together become a platform for cohesion, evaluation of the past years activities, a sober reflection of the present and time for making positive projection into the unknown future, needless to add that they foster entry into the New Year with confidence and hope. 

Enforced ecumenism is the term given to the second one where owing to harsh circumstances, disaster or political interference in the practice of the church, ecumenism is induced and Churches in ecumenism therefore come together to rise to the occasion. For example, in 1978 the government of the Supreme Military Council proposed what came to be known as the Union Government (Unigov) concept of government made up of the Army, the Police and Civilians in equal proportions.

The campaign did not give room for opposing views and it became clear that the idea smacked of dictatorship and so the Christian Council of Ghana and the Catholic Secretariat issued memoranda and statements in which they condemned the one-sidedness of the campaign and

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advised Christians on how to exercise their franchise in the impending referendum to decide on the proposal.\textsuperscript{34} Another case in point was series of seminars organized by the CCG through the Local Councils of Churches nationwide to educate Christians on their responsibility to ensure that their voice was heard and that the prophetic vision of the Church was brought to bear on the discussions. This was followed by the issue of pastoral letters to them encouraging their members to pray and work for political stability as well as to exercise their franchise during an election.\textsuperscript{35}

Another instance was a joint memorandum issued by the Christian Council of Ghana and the Catholic Secretariat which raised grievous issues on human rights violations concerning secret trials and executions of the eight army officers during the regime of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) led by Flt.Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. Both the Christian Council of Ghana and the Bishops’ Conference were not happy about the state of affairs; they therefore cautioned the AFRC not to continue to cling to power but to put in a time table to return the country to a constitutional rule within the shortest possible time.\textsuperscript{36} It is against this backdrop that Paul Gifford attests to the fact that the violations were accompanied by excesses which made life humanly unbearable for some people resulting in the submission of a joint memorandum by the CCG and the NCS to the powers that be concerning the violations.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{36} Anquandah, \textit{Agenda Extraordinaire}, 117.
Also, as the country prepared for the 1979 Parliamentary and Presidential elections, the Christian Council and the Catholic Secretariat jointly issued a message to all congregations to prepare them for the elections, excerpts of which read:

We who profess to be Christians form a majority of the population of Ghana. Therefore if corruption is widespread, if idleness, apathy, and blind selfishness are the common characteristics of our national life, we Christians must take a large share of the blame. Now, Ghanaians have the opportunity, in free and fair elections, to decide who shall lead our national affairs. These elections can bring to Ghana a blessing or a disaster, depending on the type of leaders we choose. We hold in our hands the fate of our beloved nation. With Scripture as our guide, we draw the attention of all churches to their God-given task, and we call on every individual Christian to play his or her part in obedience to the Lord.  

In December 1957 the Convention People’s Party Government made public the party’s intention to introduce the Preventive Detention Bill (PDA), which would empower the government to detain any person for five years, without right of appeal to the courts, for conduct prejudicial to the defence and security of Ghana and its foreign relations. The Bill did place arbitrary and autocratic powers into the hands of state officials and the cabinet became judge as well as accuser. In the spirit of ecumenism the historic Churches made approaches to the government expressing their dislike to the decision in the enactment of the Preventive Detention Act. For years at least the Christian Council and the Catholic Secretariat continued to fight the heinous law. They argued that it was contrary to natural justice which requires that: any accused person should be given an opportunity to defend himself face to face with his accusers.”

The ecumenical move by the Churches concerned did have a positive impact on the lives of the people whose rights were being violated since the churches through their representatives or leaders did not only speak against the human rights violations being meted out to the citizens but

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40 Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 60.
41 Pobee, *Religion and Politics*, 60.
they also tried to visit detainees in the prisons. Individual clergymen like the Rev. F.C.F. Grant, the then President of the Methodist Conference, Ghana and the Very Rev. E.M.L. Odjidja, then Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana were nominated by their respective Churches to visit the detainees in prison.\textsuperscript{42}

The third one called the structured ecumenism related consciously or unconsciously to the convening of the Edinburgh Conference to foster and express the unity of the Church in Africa, particularly Ghana. It also identifies the setting up of other movements such as the Bible Society of Ghana, and the Church and Hospitals Association of Ghana (CHAG). Others include the establishment of ecumenical worshipping centres already mentioned above. Omenyo was apt to narrate incidents of practical ecumenism where members of a Church were readily received and counselled to receive the Lord as their personal Lord and Saviour and where a person of other faith yielded to the dictates of the Holy Spirit in a Christian Church and eventually gained a new birth in Christ.\textsuperscript{43}

Omenyo further posits that at such gatherings not only the Christian community is manifested but others also make their way to the forum. Structured ecumenism opens avenues for member churches to come together in consultation for the common good of not only Church members but also people of a given community in a holistic manner. Still in the opinion of Pobee, the Church must be seen as a force to reckon with which should fight against abuse of any kind of injustice in the African world view.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42} Pobee, 60.
\textsuperscript{44} Pobee, 60.
The Roman Catholic Church and Ecumenism

The Roman Catholic Church believes that ecumenism began after the Reformation but prior to that the Church considered itself a united and self-sufficient one and there was no need for denominational cooperation in mission. The post-Reformation division called for measures to heal the breach and so a number of meetings were organized at keeping the church united, including the Diet of Worms (1521), the Diet of Speier (1526 and 1529) and the Diet of Augsburg (1530). These meetings were not successful and the division rather deepened resulting in the excommunication of Martin Luther and his followers by the Pope and this gave way for the counter-Reformation by the Catholic Church with the view to changing certain things to lure the Protestants to return to the church but this idea also proved futile.

At the time when the World Council of Churches came into being in Amsterdam the ecumenical movement and the Roman Catholic Church were poles apart but after the pontificate of Pope John Paul XXIII and the Second Vatican Council the pendulum shifted and the church became increasingly influenced by the movement.

The next important step in ecumenism for the Roman Catholic Church was the Council of Trent (1545-1563) known as the 19th Ecumenical Council which was convened to settle the dispute between the Catholic Church and the followers of Luther. After meeting in three Sessions in 1563 the rival parties had not moved any closer than they were from the beginning. The Council failed because they insisted, without any pre-condition that the “rebels” (that is, the

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Lutherans/Protestants had to come back but the Lutherans/Protestants were of the view that if they would come back, then there should be a middle way.

In 1869-70 another Council was called known as Vatican I which also failed; and this was the first Ecumenical Council since the Council of Trent ended in 1563 and this was attended by about 800 bishops and other church men from throughout the world. Vatican I took a stand against many of the secular (non-religious) trends of the age promoting a centralized church extending beyond national boundaries with supreme authority residing in the Pope.

In 1928 Pope Pius XI issued the *Mortalium Animos* (Fostering True Religious Union) which categorically made it unlawful for Catholics to mix with Protestants to talk of unity – the reason being that the Roman Catholic Church is the one true church, not one among many. A Catholic/Protestant meeting was therefore like a meeting between believers and unbelievers and unity can be achieved only if Protestants decide to return to the Catholic Church. A number of Catholic theologians were known to have disagreed with the Pope’s decision and to have spoken or written against it. Thereafter the ecumenical movement grew understandably frustrated by the attitude of the Church but always left the door open for a breakthrough, and rays of hope had always appeared from the growing number of Catholics which had a positive leaning towards the movement.

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In 1937 there was a major breakthrough when in spite of official rejection of an invitation to the Vatican, four Catholic priests and one layman attended the Faith and Order Conference of the World Council of Churches in Edinburgh as observers, raising hopes that the Catholic Church would eventually become positively inclined to the ecumenical overtures. Unfortunately, however, efforts to get the Church represented at the inaugural assembly of the World Council of Churches were thwarted by a last minute warning reminding Catholics of the law banning ‘mixed meetings’. But the inauguration of the WCC started to have effect on the Catholic Church.

So Pope John XXIII in 1960 established the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity and in 1961 sent observers to the general assembly of the W.C.C. in New Delhi. In 1962 the Pope decided to convene a meeting of the whole Catholic Church to talk about ecumenism which was called Vatican II. Deliberations which began on October 12, 1962 attracted about 2,500 bishops and many non-Catholic observers and it was the largest church Council in history, far surpassing the approximately 800 church men who attended Vatican I.

**Work of the Council**

Commissions directed by the *Roman Curiae*, the pope’s administrative arm, prepared draft documents on a variety of subjects for council consideration. However, many bishops in the Council found the drafts insufficiently pastoral and too conservative in tone. The Council

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52 Kpobi, *Mission*, 36  
rejected the drafts and began, with the support of the pope, to chart its own course, which led to many progressive and reforming actions.

John XXIII died on June 3, 1963, and he was succeeded by Pope Paul VI. Pope Paul had been a leading progressive in the first session of the Council. He reconvened the Council and guided it to its conclusion. Vatican II issued 16 documents – four constitutions, three declarations and nine decrees. The most important were the Constitutions, which dealt with the liturgy, divine revelation, and the church. These are as follows:

The Constitution on the Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium), which started a number of reforms and this led to the celebration of the Mass in the vernacular – a congregation’s native language instead of in the traditional Latin. This constitution was one of the council’s most far-reaching accomplishments. It brought the central act of Catholic worship closer to the people and made it clear that the celebration was one in which the entire Catholic community played a part.

Secondly, the Constitution of Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum) which restored the Bible to a central place in Catholic thought and practice. This Constitution insisted that the church’s teaching authority must always be submissive to the word of God. The constitution also stressed that revelation itself is not found primarily in verbal statements, but in the person of Jesus Christ who is the fullness of revelation.

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54 The World Book Encyclopedia, 289.
However, the whole community, under the leadership of its bishops, lives out the revelation it has received and transmits it from generation to generation. For centuries, Catholic theologians had treated revelation in a philosophical and abstract fashion. In contrast, Vatican Council II adopted a more Biblical language and perspective. It presented revelation as the concrete personal encounter of men and women in history with the living God who calls them to salvation.

The third was the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium) which described the Church as the visible sign or sacrament of humanity’s union with God and with one another. This constitution’s favourite image of the church was that of ‘the people of God’. By emphasizing this image, the council underscored the church’s involvement in human history and its close spiritual ties with the people of Israel. This focus on the church as the whole people of God enabled the council to break with the one-sided emphasis of preceding centuries on the power of the clergy. The constitution gave lay people specific responsibilities and rights within the church.\(^{56}\)

One outstanding feature of this constitution was its teaching on the “collegiality of bishops.”; in that the bishops and the pope form one body. This teaching complemented Vatican Council I’s teaching on papal primacy and infallibility. It also supported the view of the church as a communion of local churches with the pope as its head. The constitution thus returned to the bishops some of the authority the papacy had absorbed over the centuries.\(^{57}\)

\(^{56}\) Kpobi, Mission in Ghana, 38.
\(^{57}\) Kpobi, Mission in Ghana, 38.
The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudiumet Spes) was the fourth Constitution which promoted a dialogue between the Catholic Church and the modern world. Since the French Revolution (1789-1799), much of the church opposed modern attitudes in non-Catholic society, some of which were considered hostile to Christianity. The constitution recognized that the church exists in the world and must proclaim its message in terms the world can understand.

The Constitution also acknowledged that the church has much to learn from the authentic values of modern life. The constitution altered the isolation from the non-Catholic world that had characterized previous church councils. In the document, John’s aggiornamento (modernization) found practical expression in establishing a new relationship with non-Catholics.

The Council issued two especially notable declarations. One, called Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate), which celebrated the special spiritual ties binding Christians and Jews. It denounced all forms of anti-Semitism and laid the basis for a new understanding and respect between Christians and Jews. The Declaration on Religious Liberty (Dignitatis Humanae) owed much to the efforts of bishops and theologians in the United States, especially the Jesuit theologian John Courtney Murray. The declaration broke with the idea that “error has no rights.” It stressed that individual conscience demands respect, especially in matters of religious faith and observance.

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The Influence of the Council

Vatican II started the most far-reaching reforms within the Catholic Church in one thousand years. Probably few participants in the council fully realized the magnitude of the changes they had set in motion. The council helped transform the church from a European-centred institution into a more genuinely worldwide church.\(^{59}\)

These striking transformations created tensions, in that from the beginning of the council, there were conflicts between conservative and progressive views. Some Catholics believed the council’s actions resulted in too much change. They opposed Catholic reformers who wanted to vigorously update worship, doctrine, and the church’s view of its place in the world. As one legacy of the council, Catholics have tried to emphasize the importance of the local or regional church united around its own bishop. They have also attempted to affirm a common faith while encouraging different cultural expressions of that faith.

In Ghana, during the decade of 1953-63 the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) initiated a dialogue with the Catholic Bishop of Cape Coast, William T. Porter and Archbishop John Kodwo Amissah regarding ways and means of achieving closer cooperation on educational, religious and social matters of Ghana.\(^{60}\) To this end, the CCG and the Roman Catholic Church set up a Joint Committee of cooperation which comprised five representatives and a secretary from each side. Being dynamic in its operations it sent numerous joint memoranda to the

\(^{59}\) The World Book Encyclopedia, 290.
government of the day bordering on issues affecting the country, including education, health, social welfare, the economy and media frequency allocation and so on and so forth.  

In June 1975, the Joint Committee of Co-operation finally agreed that mutual recognition of one baptism is the basis of church unity. In a paper – Brief history of the Joint Meeting of the Christian Council of Ghana and the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Ghana, the then Archbishop of Kumasi, Peter Akwasi Sarpong, wrote:

The committee of co-operation was able to get five churches to agree on mutual recognition of their baptisms among themselves, namely, the Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Methodist Church Ghana, the Anglican Church and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana … we also agreed to adopt a common Sunday Lectionary, to produce jointly Christian Home Week booklet and to celebrate the week together … we were also very much behind and instrumental in the establishment of the Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG).

It goes without saying that even though at the national level the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the CCG it features prominently at the local level and almost across the country the Catholic Church belongs to the local councils of churches which are engaged in the two ecumenical programmes championed by the Christian Council of Ghana in concert with the National Catholic Secretariat and the Bible Society of Ghana.

The Catholic Church has a Department of Ecumenical Relations and Inter-Religious Dialogue aimed at formalizing good relations between the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and its member churches. This goes a long way in contributing to the realization of the aims of ecumenism to foster union among believers in Christ.

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\(^\text{62}\) Anquandah, *Agenda Extraordinaire*, 20
In the same vein the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) has an outfit called the Directorate of the Ecumenical and Social Relations. The Church, as part of the Reformed tradition of the church universal, acknowledges the lordship of Jesus Christ and is committed to working in concert with other churches and mission organizations at home and abroad to fulfill the mission of our Lord in making all nations His disciples. In the life of the PCG, the year 1956 was significant as far as ecumenical relations are concerned. It established relations with many other churches in Europe; all along, the relationships had been between the Basel Mission Society (BMS) and the Church of Scotland (CoS). With the promulgation of a new Constitution of the PCG the Church recognized Ecumenism as a Department with additional responsibility for relations with society and people of other faiths.

The Methodist Church Ghana and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

The Methodist Church, like any denomination of the Christian Council of Ghana has relations with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on several fronts. The two churches relate through the CCG where until recently leadership was somehow on rotational basis. In Ghana and in the diaspora, joint Methodist/Presbyterian churches established by Ghanaians abound.

Two examples of the joint church are the Methodist/Presbyterian Church in Burma Camp in Accra and one in Frankfurt, Germany. Other examples can be found in Italy and Austria where the Ghanaian Methodists and the Presbyterians meet to worship together. In schools and University campuses in Ghana there used to be Methodist/Presbyterian Union, a congregation of

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65 Ayete-Nyampong, *Ecumenical and Social Relations*, 211.
the two churches. The joint church has been separated to be the Ghana Methodist Students Union (GHAMSU) and the National Union of Presbyterian Students Ghana (NUPSG). In the spirit of ecumenism the two denominations periodically come together to fellowship and share ideas and are also involved in evangelistic and voluntary activities.\textsuperscript{66}

\textbf{The Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church}

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EP) and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) are the only members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) in Ghana. The relationship between the two churches dates back to missionary times when Bremen missionaries worked in the Volta Region whilst Basel Missionaries worked outside the Volta Region. Since that period, the two sisters have been working together on many fronts. For example the two churches are among the sponsoring churches of the Trinity Theological Seminary.

In the Christian Council of Ghana, the E.P. Church and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana are active member churches. The two sister churches also share common partnership with some overseas churches such as the United Reformed Church in the U.K., and the Presbyterian Church (USA). The EPC and PCG are members of the U.S-based Ghana Mission Network which is a network of Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations and mission organizations which relate with the two Presbyterian Churches in Ghana.\textsuperscript{67}

Also the London chaplaincy is a ministry to Ghanaians resident in the UK and ministers from the two churches serve on rotational basis for a period of five years in London. The two churches

\textsuperscript{66} Ayete-Nyampong, \textit{Ecumenical and Social Relations}, 211.

\textsuperscript{67} Ayete-Nyampong, \textit{Ecumenical and Social Relations}, 209.
are the West African members of the African Continental Partnership which is currently being chaired and coordinated by the Director of the Ecumenical and Social Relations of the PCG.  

1.2 Problem Statement

According to the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) data on Local Councils of Churches (LCC) in 2012 there were not less than 174 Local Councils of Churches in Ghana and Greater Accra alone had thirty six including Madina. This study aims at trying to find out how the LCC operates in Madina – Accra. It also seeks to find out its impact on church members and the immediate community as well as how the activities could be enhanced meaningfully. The success of this exercise, it is believed would help to add to knowledge and also go a long way to satisfy the problem of a lack of historical records of ecumenical activities in the local area. Against the above it will also be prudent to assess the methods used and evaluate the success or otherwise of the impact on Church members and society as a whole. It goes without saying that churches see ecumenism only as a ‘necessary evil’ in times of crisis. That is the time they come together to address an urgent issue. Pobee sees this as of a limited value because the basic differences would continue to remain untouched after a crisis since the separate groups resort to their various denominations after a problem had been addressed.

A case in point was the joint effort by the Christian Council of Ghana, Catholic Bishops Conference and other religious leaders who rose to condemn a law which sought to stop the operations of the Jehovah Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints to the

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effect that the action was an affront to religious freedom in Ghana.\footnote{M. Oquaye, *Politics in Ghana (1982-1992)*, (Accra: Tornado Publications, 2004), 416.} The action above connotes that they can go further than that. The coming together in consonance with the high priestly prayer of Jesus in Jn. 17:21-23 is a clear indication that ecumenism can be brokered. Also the roles played by the Christian Council of Ghana and the Bible Society of Ghana are worth looking at with regard to how they enhance ecumenism in the country. It is also worth examining whether activities of Local Councils of Churches are impacting meaningfully on the Church members in particular and the wider community in general.

1.3 **Research Questions**

1. What are the main contributions of the grassroots ecumenism in the township of Madina, Accra?

2. What impact do the activities of the Local Council of Churches have on the people of the area?

3. What is the way forward?

1.4 **Objectives**

1. To examine the beginning and enhancement of local level ecumenism in Madina, Accra.

2. To identify the various grassroots or local level ecumenical activities undertaken in Madina (Accra).

3. To examine impact of some of the ecumenical programmes such as the Christian Home Week and Bible Week Celebrations on the Church and society as a whole.
1.5 Scope of Study

This work covered a period of twelve years (2001-2012) of the Madina Local Council of Churches’ existence by compiling information on the formation and activities of the LCC during the period under consideration. This was because of the ease at which literature and material during the period 2001 – 2012 could be procured. The programmes consisted of the Christian Home Week celebrations, the Bible Week celebrations as well as other programmes and activities organized locally to bring about affinity and ecumenical spirit among the member Churches in the Madina Township. Another reason was that despite the fact that Local Councils of Churches could be located in almost every locality in Accra, Madina was chosen because of proximity and familiarity with the town and people which could easily create the necessary rapport to enable the researcher access the necessary information for the work.

Research Methodology

The research design employed for the present study was the qualitative approaches of participant observation and interviews which proved very useful to examine the ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN MADINA, ACCRA. The approaches enabled me to interact with the participants who provided the information for the study. Interviews granted me by the heads of churches helped greatly in informing my work. With a membership of 8 denominations from both Catholic and reformed traditions engaging in isolated fashions, the denominations joined forces under the Madina Local Council of Churches as an ecumenical body to take advantage of the strengths of ecumenism. They held the view that it would help them to bring together the churches and attract others in the Madina locality.
According to Emmanuel Asante collecting data in qualitative research involves the gathering of information that is presented primarily in text form through narratives, verbatim quotes, descriptions, lists and case studies or in pictures.\textsuperscript{71}

**Population**

The target population of this study was, in essence, the entire membership of Churches forming the local Council of Churches in Madina township. According to I. Epsteil, a population is a complete set of elements (individuals and objects) with some common observable characteristics on the basis of which they are included in a study.\textsuperscript{72} Going by the records the estimated total number of members in Madina Churches at the time of data collection was 7184 made up of Lutheran (95), Anglican (305), Evangelical Presbyterian (258), Presbyterian Church of Ghana (1453), Roman Catholic (3535), Methodist (1,402) and 116 for the Baptist church. Out of this number about 700 are engaged in participation of Local Council of Churches activities.

Five (500) hundred questionnaires were conveniently served out of which two hundred and ninety one (291) returned them answered. It is worthy of note that not all the five hundred could read and write and I took it upon myself to read and explain the Questions to them to facilitate their understanding.


\textsuperscript{72} I. Epsteil, *Research technics for programme planning, monitoring and evaluation*, (New York: Columbia University, 1997).
Sample size and sampling technique

I succeeded in sampling 500 participants who took part in the programmes and activities of the Madina Local Council of Churches. In conducting research, it is difficult to study all members of a group of that population. J.C. Enon defines sampling as the deliberate process of selecting a part of a population for research with the intention of generalizing the findings to the whole population and Bell posits that there are different types of sampling – these are random, non-random, and a mixture of both.

There is also convenience sampling where questionnaires are given to respondents as and when they could be found. The researcher employed the convenience type of sampling because even though membership of the MLCC appears dense only few people could be reached owing to a variety of issues. For example, church members who responded to filling the Questionnaires were not easily available. Even though about 500 Questionnaires were distributed, the researcher received 291 completed Questionnaires. These Questionnaires were distributed to the leaders of the churches involved for subsequent dissemination to their parishioners for completion and return for processing.

Some availed themselves only on Sundays and even not all the time that they attend service. Still others do not participate fully during the week of the two ecumenical programmes of the Local Council of Churches. It is to be noted that some of the early settlers who registered with the respective Churches had moved residence to areas a little far away from the township itself. These people find it difficult to sever their relationship with the Churches because their names

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73 J.C. Enon, *Education Research: Statistics and measurement* (Kampala: Makerere University, 1998)

continue to be in the register. They therefore decide to attend Church and other activities and programmes as and when they feel convenient.

Also few unstructured interviews were held with leaders of the various congregations which numbered 11. The researcher also observed and took part in some of the activities and programmes, for example, the CHWC and BWC.

Secondary sources of the data utilized by the researcher such as books, journal articles and newspapers were acknowledged accordingly. Others included anniversary brochures of the Churches forming the Local Council of Churches which were found useful to the study.

**Data collection Instruments**

Questionnaires, interviews (unstructured), personal and participant observations were the instruments employed for the research.

**Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. Some have open ended or close ended questions. Close-ended questions limit the respondent to the set of alternatives being offered, while open-ended questions allow the respondent to express an opinion without being influenced by the researcher.
The advantages of the open-ended questions include the possibility of discovering the responses that individuals give spontaneously, and thus avoiding the bias that may result from suggesting responses to individuals, a bias which may occur in the case of close-ended questions. However, open-ended questions also have disadvantages in comparison to close ended, such as the need for extensive coding and larger item non-response, thus a questionnaire with both close ended and open ended items were used for the data collection.

**Interviews**

N.K. Denzin and Y. Lincoln posit that Interviewing is any situation where a person-to-person interaction between two or more individuals takes place with a specific purpose in mind. This offers the opportunity to access in-depth information for the work. However, Bell explains an interview as a dialogue between interviewer and respondents with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondents. There are different types of interviews, namely, structured, semi-structured, unstructured, and non-directive interviews, respectively. I used unstructured interview, a type which is non-directed and flexible in nature. With this interview approach, each interview is different and does not follow a restricted format at all. Interviewees are encouraged to express themselves openly, and to give as much information as possible, and usually there is no prior preparation for this kind of interview.

**Participant observation**

I also used participant and personal observation methods to facilitate my data collection. In participant observation, the field worker at times involves him/herself in the day-to-day activities

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of the people he or she is studying in order to know his respondents well. From that point, he/she starts to observe the situation with the view to finding answers to his research questions. He/she participates in some of the activities to enable him get relevant insight into his problem. After understanding the matrix of the social setting, he/she begins to collect the data. The researcher therefore becomes part of the situation and part of the data-gathering process. This method gives him an inside look. I was privileged to be in a discussion on Explaining the Christian Marriage Vows, a sub-topic of the main topic Broken marriage and its impact on the family and beyond-the Christian Home Week topic for 2011, I also had the opportunity to dedicate the offertory at the end of the service. In this discourse, it was realized that there were different traditions within the different Christian faith with regard to taking vows in marriage but in spite of different traditions they all appear to be loaded with meaningful words and concepts which should be taken cautiously because it is the most crucial aspect of the marriage celebration.76

**Personal observation**

In personal observation the researcher also acquaints himself with the goings-on but does not necessarily take part in the activities. He/she watches with a keen eye what transpires to enable him/her get a good insight of the happening to facilitate the writing of a good research data and this is exactly what I employed. I interacted with some church members/leaders about what was happening.

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76 Broken Marriage and its Impact on the Family and Beyond – Christian Home Week 2011. Published by the Programmes Department of the CCG and the Dept. of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, 21
1.7 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Solution and Services (SPSS) was used to analyze the close ended items in the questionnaire in order to enable the researcher know the percentage of Church members who participated in the programmes and activities in the area and to assess their relevance for ecumenical activities. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the respondents’ experiences. The open ended questions were generated into themes that were related to the research questions. The responses from the open ended and close ended questions gave an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study.

1.8 Literature Review

According to the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, edited by F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, Ecumenical activities involve the movement in the Church towards recovery of the unity of all believers in Christ, irrespective of their creed, ritual and polity. Ecumenism, therefore as a concept in theology has the basic assumption that it involves the unity of all Christian traditions and is biblically based since Christians hold the perception of unity and cohesion as noted in John 17:21 – “that they all may be one”. In the course of Church history five different meanings have been given to the word “ecumenical” and all of them have even as of today fundamental significance for theology and its special role in the preaching of the Church.

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Ecumenical means first and foremost belonging to, or representing the whole (inhabited) world (originally applied to the Roman Empire); that is belonging to or representing the Empire); secondly belonging to the Church universal or representing it; thirdly, possessing universal validity in the Church (the ancient Councils); fourthly, having to do with relationships between several Churches or Christians of various denominations (the sense which the word took on in the modern ecumenical movement) and finally implying knowledge of Christian unity and the desire to attain it (the ecumenical movement). It is therefore incumbent on the researcher to review the following works of scholars pertinent to the research under study.

One cannot effectively do ecumenical studies without tracing the history of the Churches involved in the enterprise and J.K. Agbeti’s work *West African Church History* is noteworthy. Describing the history of the Christian Church in four epochs, namely, the apostolic age, early age, middle ages and later middle ages, Agbeti gives a chronology of successive missionary societies in the sub region describing in detail the motivating factor which ‘pushed’ them to make Christian expedition to West Africa even at the peril of their lives. He makes allusions to challenges faced by the missionaries and being undaunted they deemed it obligatory to save ‘lost souls’ on the continent. In spite of the efforts they see the African as one living in a double world which they attest was due to the strengths of African Traditional Religion.

The above work by Agbeti, in tracing the history of the Churches in the West African sub-region has a bearing on how Churches came to Madina in trickles vis-à-vis their various activities which helped to inform the religious ethos in the area. Even though the Churches in Madina initially

came in fragments as described by Nkansa-Kyeremateng\textsuperscript{79}, having settled down by the passage of time they united, albeit in diversity to do mission to affect the life and thought of the people in both the churches and the community in general.

*Agenda Extraordinaire – 80 Years of the Christian Council of Ghana (1929-2009)*, written by James Anquandah is a sequel to an earlier work by the same author – *Together We Sow and Reap*. This book is an updated work of the Christian Council of Ghana during eighty years of its existence (1929 -2009) where the author makes allusion to Matt.7:16-20 saying that the founding of the CCG was consequent to a good seed planted which had yielded good harvest.\textsuperscript{80}

The Christian Council, established to promote dialogue among Churches and especially with the Roman Catholic Church, Anquandah notes that it was rather unfortunate that efforts made towards the setting up of a Church of Christ in Ghana did not see the light of day but added quickly that grassroots or local level unity was started by the creation of Local Councils of Churches. The Local Councils of Churches which numbered 85 in 1995 rose to 219 in 2012 which means that even though the organic unity idea envisaged was not embraced, unity in diversity was accepted. Efforts to promote ecumenism were made to help women and children and so programmes like World Day of Prayer and annual inter-Church Women’s Conferences were organized which had become annual programmes in August and March.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{80} James Anquandah, *Agenda Extraordinaire*, 1.
\end{thebibliography}
Anquandah was excited to mention that the celebration of these events meaningfully coupled with the establishment of socio-economic ventures like technical/vocational Centre to equip Church members for requisite skills for life was a step in the right direction. According to the author this raises the image of the members, especially those who were hitherto unskilled professionally and for that matter could not be gainfully employed. It is noteworthy that efforts to equip a community with skills for life becomes an avenue for unity and co-operation so the idea of capacity building among the people of Madina will likewise go a long way to enhance the needed cohesion among the Church members which may dovetail to the wider community.

D.N.A. Kpobi’s work *Mission in Ghana – The Ecumenical Heritage* is a study of Mission and Ecumenism in Ghana, Africa and beyond. Kpobi sees the Church as a divided entity affecting the lives of people globally and makes reference to the first division of the Church (Acts 6:1ff), a clear case of a misunderstanding between Jews and Hellenists over food distribution. According to Kpobi, Jesus’ call that they all may be one (Jn. 17:21) and His Great Commission was a mission to get the whole world united.

Universally, Kpobi sees the sixteenth century Reformation as the originator of widespread division which took a long time to heal, but changes began to occur in the seventeenth century, which was initiated by the German Protestant Churches. This impetus was given by the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 which paved the way to a new movement in ecumenism and it went on until Vatican II (1962-65) when the Roman Catholic Church relaxed its dogma on ecumenism and decided to become a member of the ecumenical movement. The Catholic
Church, in concert with other Churches initiated a series of actions with their presence at the World Council of Churches in 1965.

According to the author, within the spirit of ecumenism the nineteenth century saw the emergence of African missions of the world missionary movement in 1900 which led to the formation of groups like the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), the Student Christian Movement and the World Student Christian Federation, and at the end of the nineteenth century Bible Societies collaborated to form the United Bible Society. Kpobi mentions how missionary Churches came by different parent bodies overseas with different modus operandi and even though he did not directly treat issues on the local council of Churches some antecedents of his work gave birth to the Christian Council of Ghana culminating in the formation of the various LCCs in Ghana.

The work of Kpobi, by and large, gives credence to ecumenism which connotes unity in diversity, the very ingredient of the Local Councils of Churches in Ghana being championed by the Madina Local Council of Churches among others.

The book – *Celebrating the Jubilee of the World Council of Churches* by J.S. Pobee is a contribution by the author in commemoration of the celebration of the World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting in Harare, and he notes with joy and nostalgia the vivacity of the African Churches since the formation of the world ecumenical body in fulfilling the mission of the ecumenical movement.  

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Pobee opines further that ecumenism should not be confined to the four walls of Christendom because the word has something to do with the inhabited world and subsequently the way we run our lives in every sphere of endeavour. Identifying with Psalm 24 as the starting point of the ecumenical vision, the writer stresses the importance of rites of passage like marriage which does not only involve the two families but the whole community.

Pobee sees the church as a mobilizing force and notes that the WCC is defined as “fellowship of churches”\(^{82}\), because this impression sees the search for unity in terms of institutions. To him if the images of the church as “body of Christ”, or “people of God” should have any relevance at all, then Christians ought to see also the individualistic nature of the unity since just as the communities stand the chance of promoting unity, individuals should, in turn be seen as “guardians of unity”. He also appreciates the Roman Catholic involvement in ecumenical movements, which is a rare significant development in relations of ecumenism.

Participants in the celebration are further urged to reexamine their rhetoric of God’s creation in the universe. Generally, dealing with the ecumenical structure of the African continent J.S. Pobee offers very important insights on the matter.

Another work worth mentioning in this research exercise is Paul Gifford’s book - *African Christianity: Its Public Role*. In this book the writer makes an assessment of the population of various Christian denominations especially in Ghana and the major role they tend to play in the public domain. He makes an acknowledgement of the act of ecumenical functions by both the

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82 Pobee, *Celebrating the Jubilee of the WCC*, 14.
Christian Council of Ghana and the National Catholic Secretariat vis-à-vis many others which are of great value to the work under consideration.

Gifford recounts the concerted action championed by the two bodies, namely, a memorandum which was jointly issued by them to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in June 1979 reacting to the issue of violence in Ghana. Nor is that all; he recounts a move by the two ecumenical bodies when they refused an order by the government of the day for the registration of churches in 1989 as enshrined in PNDCL 221 because to them it was an infringement of the fundamental human rights of freedom of worship. Also in the year 1995 the two bodies jointly issued a Communiqué on “Ghana’s Economy – which way forward” at the end of a two-day seminar on Ghana’s Economy by the Catholic Bishops Conference. Paul Gifford sees the two bodies as readily co-operating in various activities and genuinely enjoying a good and in-depth working relationship”, which is an ecumenical imperative. By and large Paul Gifford’s book depicts in detail the work of the churches in public life in Ghana, but he fails to make mention of activities which bring the churches together at the grassroots level.

*The Catholic Church in Modern Africa*, written by Joseph Mullin is also pertinent to my work. Mullin’s focus was on the Christian Council and contributed tremendously to the realization of the aims of ecumenism which goes a long way in fostering the desired union and cohesion among those who believe in Christ. In his discussion of ecumenism and its relation to the church he criticizes the Roman Catholic Church’s tradition and how it relates with the non-Catholics.

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Mullin sees the churches’ perspective as being enlarged by historical events, not seeing the conquest of soul and making of converts as her exclusive aim but the recognition that the church plays the role of servant-hood and custodian of truth with an obligation, by and large to serve and witness to the universal world, be they Catholic and non-Catholic.\(^{86}\)

Cephas Narh Omenyo’s work *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism – A Study of the development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* features distinctively the practical application of the concept of Ecumenism within the Pentecostal milieu. He gives an insight into the practical application of the concept in the field of Pentecostalism. In his submission of reports of activities of the renewal movements in the mainline (historic) Churches, Omenyo observed the involvement of churches and denominations during such activities like prayer meetings, healing and deliverance sessions and at crusade grounds. He claims that there is a high degree of cooperation among the churches in Ghana, particularly at the grassroots.\(^{87}\)

In his assessment on the turn-out at such events, he reported that “one sees a clear representation of not only Christian denominations but also different religious affiliations which include Muslims and adherents of the indigenous religions”.\(^{88}\) Accordingly, the rise and active expression of Charismatic renewal which has been with the mainline churches for close to six decades has been and continues to influence the mode of operation of the historic Churches in Ghana.


\(^{88}\) Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 270.
Omenyo calls attention for the need to do some critical assessment of their activities through participation and observation and see the turnout at their gatherings - only to conclude that the clients are not only practitioners of the Charismatic and Pentecostal Churches, but the attendance and involvement cut across almost all Christian denominations, including adherents of other faiths who are craving for ‘salvation’ in one way or the other. This, in itself, is a clear case of Ecumenism which Christian Churches have embraced albeit in diversity.

It is worthy of note that the focus of the above reviews was both national and international in nature, for example, it brings to the fore the involvement of the World Council of Churches and other international movements such as the YMCA, YWCA, SCM and the World Student Christian Foundation, not to mention the United Bible Society under which Christian Churches find some form of solace. This study focuses on the Local Council of Churches which deals with ecumenism at the local level.

J.S. Pobee looks at three forms of ecumenism, one of which is natural ecumenism and this phenomenon appears to be more secular, but within the concept which embraces all members of the inhabited world. Omenyo goes down to the grassroots, looking at the way he handled his work *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* which calls on all Christians to unite for a good cause; however, he declines to critique and provide a historical and theoretical basis for Ecumenism. Kpobi deals with Mission in Ghana, Africa and beyond. He brings home to his readers the need to get united with the view to translating the commission of the Lord into reality.
Agbeti on the history on the mainline (historic) Churches tells his readers how they came at different times to do mission in spite of set-backs and hindrances, an obligation they deem necessary to undertake. Anquandah’s contribution on the Christian Council of Ghana from its inception to date informs the readers of the beginning of ecumenism, challenges of the Christian Church as well as the co-operation between the Church and the State.

1.9 Relevance of Study

From time immemorial society has been dynamic and so the need for a positive impact by church members is paramount. Against this backdrop it is necessary to constantly review work in this direction with the view to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of ecumenical activities which cannot be overemphasized, taking cognizance of the fact that their unity of purpose will go a long way in finding lasting solutions to myriad of problems facing members of the local churches – be they social, moral, marital, educational or economic. With one voice through dialogue, peace and harmony could be brokered to both members of the Christian church and adherents as well as people of other faiths. Society perceives the Church as a means of achieving stability and cohesion through the teaching of morals and good values. It is only through unity that the Church will be able to achieve these virtues. It is also believed that this study will provoke and stimulate further discussion on how effective ecumenical activities can be promoted and enhanced.

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89 Christian Home Week, 2010 – Social Change – A Challenge to the Church and Society, published by the Programmes Department of the Christian Council of Ghana and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat – 42
The successful completion of this work coupled with the pursuit of the suggestions and recommendations offered, it is believed, will educate both members and leadership of other Churches in the township about the existence of ecumenical activities in the area, give room for the promotion of the Christian faith and unity of believers through tolerance thereby welcoming all persons of all denominations as brothers and sisters and recognizing the oneness of the body of Christ. Also it will enable scholars in the discipline to get background information on ecumenical activities for their further studies and research.

It is also believed that despite the limitations in the form of lack of some historical materials, funds and time constraints which might have inhibited the quality and interpretations of the study the study would stimulate others to look further at church unity or ecumenism at the grassroots to transform the prospect of its investigation.

1.10 Limitations of Study

Given the limited time coupled with financial constraints and other factors to complete this work, Madina was chosen for the research to avoid travelling to very far places to collect data; nevertheless, materials from the archives of the Christian Council of Ghana and also the Bible Society of Ghana could not cover the whole area as envisaged. Also since the inauguration of the Council about thirty six years ago, it was expected that other denominations within the area would join the local Council of Churches but that has not been the case.
Another factor was the lukewarm attitude of some Church leaders which has in no small way led to the low attendance of church members, especially the youth or the young people during the two main ecumenical celebrations and other locally organized programmes and activities. It will be advisable therefore to whip up enthusiasm of members of other churches in the community to enable them join the Council for fuller ecumenical endeavour. It is worthy of note that even though the Madina Local Council of Churches came into being around 1975 and subsequently got inaugurated in 1978 it had been difficult to access certain pieces of information from that time. That is because most of the people who initiated the beginning of the Council are no more and it is also extremely difficult to lay hands on all available material relevant to the Council.

Page 3 of this work reports that the Madina Local Council of Churches was from the beginning a budding council; that was the time when clergy/leadership and almost all members of a particular congregation got fully involved in activities but at the time of this research and even now it was apparent that congregational groups are detailed to represent a whole congregation and that is a short-fall in participation of programmes and activities.

1.11 Structure of Study

This research work consists of five chapters namely:

Chapter One which gives a general overview of the Madina Local Council of Churches, Christ’s teaching on Church Unity, the Growth of Ecumenism, the Significance of Unity, Ecumenism in Ghana, Problem Statement, Research Questions, Objectives of Study and Scope of Study.
Chapter Two deals with A short Historical sketch of some mainline Churches in Ghana, Impact of Church Activities on life in Ghana, some Church Councils in Ghana for example, The Christian Council of Ghana, Ghana Pentecostal and Christian Council, the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches, Bible Society of Ghana, and National Catholic Secretariat.

Chapter Three looks at the programmes and activities of the Madina Local Council of Churches Christian Home Week and Bible Week Celebrations, Easter activities, other locally organized programmes, and evaluation pertaining to activities organized during the period under review and related issues.

Chapter Four presents the research findings and data analysis assessing the challenges and examining the socio-religious and political impact of ecumenical activities on members of the Madina Local Council of Churches, the Church as an institution and the society at large.

Chapter Five has to do with the Summary, Recommendation and Conclusion. It is a composition of the theme and assessment of the Madina Local Council of Churches’ ecumenical activities offering suggestions and recommendations and fully setting out recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER TWO

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH OF SOME MAINLINE CHURCHES AND CHURCH COUNCILS IN GHANA,

2.0  INTRODUCTION

This Chapter will focus on the coming of Christianity on to the Slave and the Gold Coasts, and their impact on the people of the Gold Coast, now Ghana. It will also look at the formation of some Church Councils under which the Churches operate and the birth of local councils of Churches, the main topic of this research. Church Councils to be discussed include the Christian Council of Ghana, Ghana Pentecostal and Christian Council, and the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches. This chapter will also look at the Bible Society of Ghana, and the National Catholic Secretariat – stakeholders in Ecumenism in Ghana.

The five mainline Churches to be dealt with are the core members of the Christian Council of Ghana at its inception in 1929 which to date continue to be members of the Council among other Churches or denominations. Apart from the Christian Council and the Catholic Secretariat the other Councils or Association join hands with Christian Council member Churches in the participation of ecumenical activities such as Christian Home Week and Bible Week celebrations at the local level. The Bible Society, aside its role in distributing Bibles at affordable and available rates is one of the two main ecumenical bodies in the country.

The sacrificial efforts of the pioneer missions from Western Europe and later from the United States of America coupled with contributions of African missionaries resulted in a number of established church denominations in Ghana. These are denominations, which, besides being
national in character that is, found virtually throughout the country are very orthodox in their operation. Referred to variously as “mainline”, “mission”, “orthodox” and “established”, these churches differ from the others such as Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in many ways; and a majority of them have operated in the country for well over a century. They include the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (187 years), the Methodist Church (180 years), the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (168 years), the Roman Catholic Church (135 years), the A.M.E. Zion Church (119 years), the Seventh Day Adventist Church (116 years) and the Anglican Church (110 years).  

The Christian Church has been in Ghana since the fifteenth century, though serious evangelism began in the early part of the nineteenth century. That presence has been associated with the European drive into Africa and the colonial history. Thus for example, the first Roman Catholic missionaries came to the Gold Coast on the 20th January 1482 as part of Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal’s Explorations into West Africa. This was corroborated by Emmanuel Asante who remarked that although Christianity was first introduced to the African religio-cultural milieu long before the Reformation in the 16th century, AD, it was not until the nineteenth century AD that Christianity really gained a foothold in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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The Roman Catholic Church

The missionary thrust of the Roman Catholic Church on the Slave and Gold Coasts was initially under the command of Don Diego d’Azambuja who suspended the banner of Portugal from the bough of a lofty tree, erected an altar, and the first mass was celebrated in Guinea, praying for the conversion of the natives from idolatry, and the perpetual prosperity of the Church they intended to erect upon the spot. Their work, however, ended when the Portuguese were driven away in 1642 by the Dutch.

In 1897 the apostolic prefecture of the Gold Coast was begun and entrusted to the Society of African Missions (SMA) whose first two priests, Father Eugene Morat and Augustus Moreau arrived and settled in Elmina in 1880. They started work at a time when the Protestant missionaries had already begun work around Accra, Akropong-Akwapim, Cape Coast, and Keta. Sir James Marshall, then Governor of the Gold Coast upon whose invitation they came to the country freely allowed them to evangelize in the colony, probably because he himself was a Catholic.

The White Fathers, another Roman Catholic missionary society established a station at Navrongo in the North in 1906. The third Roman Catholic Missionary Society, the Society of the Divine

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Word, had begun work at Lome, the capital of German Togoland in 1892. Its first station in territories now belonging to Ghana was at Kpandu in 1904.  

The Anglican Church in Ghana

The year 1752 saw the arrival of a representative (missionary) group called the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) which was led by the Rev. Thomas Thompson. It was this group which gave birth to the Anglican Church in Ghana in 1834. The purpose of this group like its sister group the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) was missionary; but their main concern was not the evangelization of Africans but the spiritual well-being of the European traders abroad. The proposed Anglican Church in Ghana grew out of the Church of England and as such, belongs to the Anglican Communion, a family and fellowship of Churches in the same but not necessarily identical in uniform and ethos. With determination, the Rev. Thomas Thompson elected ‘to make a trial with the natives, and see what hopes there would be of introducing among them the Christian Religion.’

Rev. Thompson worked until 1756 when he took three young boys including Philip Quaque to England for training at the end of which he was ordained a priest on 1st January, 1765 and was subsequently designated “Missionary, school master and Catechist to the Negroes on the Gold Coast in 1766. Philip Quaque opened a school and trained many children there for almost fifty

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years whilst also taking services in the Castle chapel in Cape Coast. Like other Church workers, Philip Quaque was disillusioned for working hard for many years without any good result.\textsuperscript{101} He died in 1816 after which the SPG was quite inactive in Ghana for more than 40 years. There was then a long break until the year 1906.\textsuperscript{102}

\textbf{The Presbyterian Church of Ghana}

The Basel Missionary Evangelical Society (Basel Mission for short) came to the Gold Coast in 1828, with the aim of promoting missionary work outside the European continent. Even though the Basel Mission operated from Basel, Switzerland, the members included Germans, Danes and Swiss nationals. The mission drew its support from Churches of both Lutheran and Reformed Confessions.\textsuperscript{103} This pietistic group insisted on “simple and pious brethren with a deep sense of humility and knowledge of various handicrafts. It was from this training programme that the first missionaries were sent out to bring the gospel once again to the Gold Coast.\textsuperscript{104}

The missionaries were to open schools and in general live in brotherly love with the Africans.\textsuperscript{105} The first four missionaries, namely, Karl F. Salbach, Gottlieb Holzwarth and Johannes Henke all German and Johannes Schmidt, a Swiss citizen\textsuperscript{106} arrived at Osu on 18\textsuperscript{th} December, 1828 but within a short time three had died with malaria without any meaningful

\textsuperscript{102} Mate, \textit{A Visual History of Ghana}, 26.
\textsuperscript{103} Brochure on Presbyterian University College – First Anniversary Lectures on the theme \textit{The Impact of the Traditions of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on the Development of the Contemporary Ghanaian Society}. 2006 (Accra: Qualitytype Limited, Accra), 16.
\textsuperscript{106} Amanor. \textit{Pentecostalism in Ghana}. 5.
impact on the people. Three others arrived in 1832, two of who also died after a short stay, leaving Riis who moved to the Akwapim ridge in Akropong because of favourable weather conditions there.\textsuperscript{107} He was granted permission by Nana Adow Dankwa I, the Omanhene to open a mission station and all needed assistance was given him to make his work successful.\textsuperscript{108}

At the outbreak of the first World War which saw the deportation of the German missionaries from the Gold Coast, the United Free Church of Scotland headed by Rev. Dr. A.W. Wilkie was invited to the Gold Coast and they held the fort for thirty years until the Basel Missionaries were asked to come back to join the Scottish and the Ghanaian leadership in championing the cause of mission on the Gold Coast.\textsuperscript{109} At this time a Technical (Industrial) School which was opened by the Basel Mission was put under the Basel Mission Company Factory.\textsuperscript{110} The Presbyterian Church was holistic; consequently, they contributed immensely to the agricultural, medical, commercial and educational development of the country, for as far back as 1917 the Acting Governor of the country paid the following compliments to the Rev. Dr. Wilkie which speaks volumes: “the government regards the work of the Basel Mission as incomparably the best in the Gold Coast… it is no exaggeration to say that the Basel Mission makes the Gold Coast”.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{111} K. Nkansa-Kyeremateng, History, Mission and Achievements, 35
The missionaries also reduced several of the vernaculars to writing. For example, while the Rev. Johannes Zimmermann worked on the Ga language Rev. J.G. Christaller devoted his time and energy on the Twi language. Of the literary work by the latter, Noel Smith wrote that it is: “a veritable encyclopedia of Akan life, thought, and custom, still authoritative after a lapse of eighty years”.112 Of the same volume J.B. Danquah wrote in 1944: “But for Christaller’s foresight in recording in permanent form the scattered elements of the beliefs, hopes, and fears of the Akan people at that particular juncture in the fifteenth century . . . the Akan people of the Gold Coast in West Africa would today have failed to bring their indigenous contribution to the spiritual achievements of mankind”.113

The Methodist Church Ghana

The introduction of Methodism was the second most serious attempt at evangelizing the natives of the Gold Coast, the first one being the efforts of the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society. The Roman Catholic had made an unsuccessful attempt earlier while the Bremen effort began sometime after the Methodists had begun work in earnest.

In 1835 the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society sent the Reverend Joseph Dunwell to the Gold Coast as a pioneer missionary. Arriving in Cape Coast on 1st January, 1835 the Rev. Thompson lived only for six months and died on 24th June, 1835.114 After that two other missionaries and their wives were also dispatched to the Gold Coast but they died before they could make any missionary impact on the people. Still undaunted the overseas sponsors

recruited the Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, son of an African father and an English mother. In spite of the death of his wife soon on arrival he did not slumber in his faith but continued with the work.

With the assistance of Sir Charles McCarthy, Governor of Sierra Leone with an oversight of British forts in the Gold Coast a school was opened at Cape Coast to train brilliant African boys for employment in the colonial administration apart from inculcating into them Christian ethics and Bible reading. At the time of his retirement Freeman had laid a strong foundation for the missionary work of the Methodist Church in the Gold Coast. Aside the enormous assistance offered by local Christians particularly products of the castle school, Freeman’s successors took concrete initiatives such as starting worship services at places the missionaries had not entered yet. A classic example was James Hayford, a keen Fanti Methodist, who served the British administration in Kumasi and was a friend of the then Asantehene, Nana Osei Yaw (1824-1838).

The Methodists lay much emphasis on the English language and they left no stone unturned in making inroads in study of local dialects. For instance the Rev. John Shipman, a Principal of a theological seminary in Cape Coast in 1842 compiled a Fanti word book with the help of his students. He also translated the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and part of the Catechism into Fanti.

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115 Agbeti, *West African Church History*, 56.
Other mission workers and educationists also championed the cause of the Fanti language in various ways including D. Carr and J.P. Brown who produced a Fanti grammar book in 1868.\textsuperscript{118} By 1919 Methodist congregations had been established down south, the north, Asante and the Brong States. In spite of opposition from the Chief Commissioner, Wesleyan expansion was given a great boost by the evangelistic preaching of two African Evangelists namely, William Harris, from Liberia and Samson Opon in Asante and Brong Ahafo.\textsuperscript{119}

**The Evangelical Presbyterian Church**

At the initiative of the British Colonial Government the Bremen Mission, founded in April 1836 sent missionaries to the Gold Coast in 1847.\textsuperscript{120} The Colonial government gave educational grant of Four hundred and seventy five pounds to the three missionary bodies namely the Basel Mission, the Wesleyan Mission and the Bremen Mission to help them in their educational programmes in the country.\textsuperscript{121} The Bremen Mission led by Lorenz Wolf initially went to Cape Coast and later to Christiansborg where the Basel missionaries had already settled for missionary activity and so they turned to Ewe land, arriving there on November 14, 1847 and built a congregation and school at Peki. But his five years’ progress was disturbed by political instability when the people of Keta refused to pay the poll tax imposed on them by the British administration at Christiansborg.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{118} F.L. Bartels, *The Roots of Methodism*, 96.
\textsuperscript{120} Kpobi, *Mission*, 82.
\textsuperscript{121} F. Agyemang, *We Presbyterians*, 71.
Consequently, Wolf had to move his mission back to Keta. During the uncertain years of 1851 and 1852, Wolf applied to start a mission at Elmina but the Governor of the Dutch Castle turned down the application and as a result he went to Keta in 1853 and established a Bremen Mission there.

In 1849, the Bremen Mission sent two more missionaries (Groth and Quinius) to assist Wolf and the following year the home mission sent him a wife. The missionaries started a school for boys and also started to learn the Ewe language, but in 1851 had to leave for Germany because of ill health, meeting his death on 9th April 1851 after laying the foundation for a successful missionary activity in Peki. At this time the mission thought it wise to prepare and involve Africans in their missionary activities, so as early as 1863 John Wright, the first Catechist was commissioned.

Like the Presbyterian Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church went into literary work. Wolf produced a Ewe primer, arithmetic work book and Ewe hymn book. In 1861, Schlegel, a companion missionary from Bremen produced the first Ewe primer while Westermann’s Ewe dictionary appeared in 1905. For close to twenty years now, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church went through some schismatic controversy which split the Church into two, namely ‘The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana” and “The Global Evangelical Church.”

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123 Kpobi, Mission, 83.
124 Omenyo, Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism, 60.
126 Kpobi, Mission in Ghana, 85.
The African Methodist Episcopal (Zion) Church

The African Methodist Episcopal (Zion) (AME Zion) Church is an offshoot of the American Methodist Church which began in 1796 in the United States.\textsuperscript{127} It was separated from the white members of that congregation; the reason being that they wanted to hold meetings in which they might have an opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts among themselves in order to be more useful to one another.\textsuperscript{128} Having seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York they adopted the name African Methodist Church Episcopal and started to organize themselves into a viable church community. Around the same period, another group had also separated themselves in the same manner in Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{129}

The Methodist Episcopal Church in New York therefore decided to distinguish them by adding ‘Zion’ to their name. The AME Zion Church is also to be distinguished from its sister denomination whose name does not include ‘Zion’. It is also different from the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME), which was founded through the work of US based Coloured Methodist Episcopal Church.\textsuperscript{130} The Church itself began missionary work in 1896; initially being championed by John Bryan Small, a native of Barbados and stationed at Cape Coast. Bryan Small was a member of the West Indian regiment from 1863-1896. In Ghana the Church was inaugurated in Cape Coast and Keta. The Church, as at November 2004 had a total membership of 250,000 throughout the country.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{127} Agbeti, \textit{West African Church History}, 143.
\textsuperscript{128} H. W. Debrunner, \textit{A History of Christianity in Ghana}, 234.
\textsuperscript{129} Kpobi, \textit{Mission in Ghana}, 91.
\textsuperscript{130} Kpobi, \textit{Mission in Ghana}, 92.
\textsuperscript{131} Anquandah, \textit{Agenda Extraordinaire}, 173.
2.6 IMPACT OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES ON LIFE IN GHANA

Though the spread of the Gospel and the promotion of Christianity through the introduction of Western education were the foremost reason for the arrival of European Missionaries to the Gold Coast, their activities brought improvement in the general life of the people. This desire was apparently to compensate Africa for the raping of the African continent of its natural and human resources. This lends credence to the Scramble for Africa and for that matter the Partition of the continent with its setbacks after some time.\textsuperscript{132}

An impact worth noting is literacy bequeathed by the early missionaries which has contributed immensely in the education and training of the nation’s human resources for development. The following are two examples, just to name a few: Konrad Raiser, a former General Secretary of the World Council of Churches reported thus in a tribute: “Rev. Prof C.G. Baeta lived his ecumenism. The story of the Christian Council of Ghana and of the church union negotiations in Ghana cannot be fully told without mention of the leadership Rev. Prof. Baeta gave to the proceedings. In that encounter, the Christian Council together with the Roman Catholic Bishops’ Conference turned out to be the only institutions that could take on the all-powerful Convention People’s Party led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. They turned out to be not only courageous but also the only other organizations that were able successfully to challenge the Convention People’s Party (CPP)”.\textsuperscript{133}


\textsuperscript{133} Beeko, \textit{The Trail Blazers}, 102.
Another academic luminary is Professor Alex Kwapong, a former Chairman of the Council of State and first Ghanaian Vice-Chancellor (Legon). Also, prior to the above, by 1889 the Rev. Carl Reindorf, a clergyman of the Basel Mission became the first African historian with the publication of his *History of the Gold Coast and Asante*. Robert T. Parsons is reported to have affirmed that by the end of World War I Churches in Ghana were responsible for over 90% of all educational efforts in the country. The missionary activities of the various bodies also gave an impetus to economic development of the country in a more direct way, culminating, among others, in the establishment of various trading companies such as the Union Trading Company (UTC). Also to translate the dictum ‘Head, Heart and Hand’ they set up trade centres to equip people with life skills to enable them earn a living, especially those who could not make it to the grammar school.

Another form of impact of the Presbyterian/Methodist cooperation in the field of education was the joint work in the establishment of Trinity College (now Trinity Theological Seminary) which began in 1942 at Kumasi. The two sister Churches had earlier proposed the formation of a Christian Council in 1926. Suffice it to say that in spite of the positive inroads into the life of the Ghanaian the African through indoctrination, was made to shun his rich cultural heritage which makes him what he is.

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In the words of Kofi Asare Opoku: “though the missionaries spoke with equal authority about local customs and ways of life, they largely “prohibited converts from engaging in their local customs” and rather encouraged them “to adopt euro-Christian attitudes and ways of life.” In a similar vein, Emmanuel Asante has this to say; “the native cultures were looked down upon or suppressed. In the eyes of the colonial administrators who enjoyed the collaboration of most of the earliest missionaries to Africa, the ‘civilized’ or the ‘cultured’ African was the African who had been culturally deracinated and alienated from his or her own African culture”.

In sum, Christian missions brought to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) a number of blessings such as formal education, scientific health care, and agricultural methods, and a variety of technical conveniences. The missionaries saw and presented themselves primarily as messengers of God and were easily accepted as such.

2.7 SOME CHURCH COUNCILS IN GHANA

2.7.1 THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA

Introduction

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) was founded on 30th October 1929 by five churches namely African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, English Church Mission (Anglican), Ewe Presbyterian Church (now Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana); Presbyterian Church

of the Gold Coast (now Presbyterian Church of Ghana) and Wesleyan Methodist Church (now the Methodist Church Ghana). The purpose was the search for unity and to work with members on issues of social concern and be the voice of the voiceless in society. The Council has over the years gone through a series of restructuring and renewal processes in a bid to develop a relevant, efficient and effective organization that is pro-active and responsive to challenges facing the member churches and the nation as a whole. Currently the CCG comprises eighteen member churches and three affiliate Organizations.

**Vision**

The Christian Council of Ghana’s vision\(^\text{142}\) is to be the Triune God’s instrument for change in Ghana where the highest value is placed on Love, Peace, Justice, Unity and Respect for the Dignity and Integrity of Creation. To put it another way it advocates and connects Churches for a Christ-centred Ghana.\(^\text{143}\)

**Mission**

The Council is a fellowship of Churches which have agreed to witness together in fellowship and service to the glory of God. Major concerns of the Council are Justice, Peace, Unity, and Reconciliation; the Council works to strengthen and support its member churches to improve and expand the scope of their witness and service with the world-wide ecumenical fellowship.

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\(^\text{142}\) CCG Brochure from CCG Secretariat, October, 2012.

\(^\text{143}\) Information on the Christian Council of Ghana was obtained from a brochure produced by the CCG in October 2012 made available by the Rev. Daniel Sakitey, a Programme Manager of the Christian Council of Ghana, Osu-Accra in October, 2012.
The Council, in supporting the activities of its member churches, acts according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Council discusses designs, mobilizes resources, and implements programmes and projects reflective of its member churches and broad societal aspirations and interests. The Council is non-partisan in all matters of national interest and derives its working principles from the Holy Scriptures. In sum, it facilitates the united mission of the Christian Church in Ghana in the proclamation and demonstration of the holistic witness of the Church through corporate activities and by enabling community programmes.\textsuperscript{144} The Council works at deepening the nation’s governance system at the local and national levels respectively through advocacy and monitoring of national processes such as elections to facilitate sustainable development in a peaceful environment.

The council engages political parties, the Electoral Commission and other stakeholders in the country in sensitizing citizens on electioneering. It also monitors electoral processes with the aim of securing free, fair and transparent elections. It works closely with other organizations such as the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), Centre for Democratic Development (CDD), Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) and the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG). The Council believes that the right of citizens, especially women, children and the disabled should be protected by all. In view of that, it works to ensure that there is respect for fundamental human rights which includes the right to live, the right to education, the right to free speech and the right to movement with the view to ensuring peace. The Council is instrumental in safeguarding the rights and livelihoods of migrants (refugees) and displaced persons with the support of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

\textsuperscript{144} CCG Brochure, October 2012.
A skills training workshop for young refugees

The Council connects with other Christian bodies such as the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), National Association of Charismatic Churches (NACC) and the Council of Independent Churches (CIC) in advancing social issues and the promotion of Christianity. It also works closely with other religious organizations such as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission and the Ghana Muslims Union in contributing to the socio-economic development of the country by actively participating in national processes aimed at promoting the well-being of Ghanaians and ensuring peaceful coexistence.145

Heads of churches in a group photo after a meeting with other religious groups on national issues

The Council works closely with other religious groups on national issues

Socio-economic Justice Issues are one of the priority areas of the Council. The Council works at promoting livelihoods (through research based advocacy) to influence national and local policies that are geared towards creating a just society. It employs different strategies in acquiring the desired change. Some of the activities the council embarks on are HIV/AIDS, Child Labour, Malaria Control, Climate Change, MDGs, Food Security and Oil & Gas campaigns at the national, regional and district levels.

As part of this, the Council undertakes independent evaluation and assessment of the impact of various programmes and policies as well as providing practical guidance on planning and prioritization processes that will spur economic growth. As part of its advocacy programme, the Council engages with the government and its affiliate institutions in promoting livelihoods through policy formulation, change and practices.

The Council is also very active in campaigning for the accelerated achievements of the 8-bound Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which seeks to improve the livelihoods of citizens especially the poor and the marginalized. To this end, the Council hosted the Secretariat of the MDGs Campaign Coalition for a period of four years (2006 – 2010). Presently, the Coalition is leading the Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) front in advocating for the attainment of the goals.
At a policy dialogue on oil & gas (2nd from left is the Dep. Min for Environment)  The General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe making a presentation at a forum on MDGs

Funding Partners

The Council over the years has been receiving grants from both local and international organizations for the implementation of its activities. Among some of the major donors are the World Association of Christian Communicators (WACC), EED, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), The Ghana Aids Commission, Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme (G-RAP), and the United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC)\(^\text{146}\)

Other Ecumenical Affiliations

These include the World Council of Churches (WCC), the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Fellowship of Christian Councils in West Africa (FECCIWA) and Programme for Christian/Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA)

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\(^\text{146}\) CCG Brochure Osu-Accra – (October 2012).
Committee on Christian Marriage and Family Life

The above Committee’s focused areas are (a) Family Planning, (b) Family Counselling, Family Life Education and (d) Youth. Under the Family Life Education volunteers were sent to schools, colleges and churches to give lectures on topics related to marriage and family life. However, it is the Christian Home Week celebration that has, over the decades, provided the major forum and opportunity for the CCMFL to carry out its educational mandate. This was followed in 1967 by the Family Counselling programme, aimed at training Church-based Advisors entailing the development of a three-year course in Christian counseling. In addition, the CCMFL evolved an Education and Communication Programme for supporting the Family Planning Scheme.

The youth also had their fair share of the CCMFL programmes for pilot Youth Income Generating Project was initiated in the Volta Region which was later replicated at Berekuso near Aburi in the Eastern Region from 1989. This venture integrated family education, family planning services, nutrition and basic health education and counseling with income-generating projects.147

The celebration of the Christian Home Week which was originated from the Council’s education committee has since its inception in early 1950s become a national programme and has acted as a forum for bringing member Churches as well as non-member churches together in ecumenism. The emphasis was on promoting ecumenism and providing Christian education at grassroots level. Hence from the outset, the programme organizers provided a main theme for each year

147 James Anquandah, Agenda Extraordinaire, 80-81.
along with sub-topics and brief introductory notes to guide the resource persons concerned with sermons, teaching and discussions.\(^{148}\) All the above programmes by the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) benefitted the Churches immensely since they act as catalyst for bringing them together for Church unity.

**Secretariat**

The Council has a Secretariat which administers its day-to-day activities. The Secretariat is headed by the General Secretary with support from two Directors, namely, the Director of Finance and Administration and Programmes and Advocacy. The General Secretary and the two Directors who make up the Senior Management Team (SMT) are supported by other staffs assigned to different programmes and Departments. It is a gender sensitive organization and believes in giving equal opportunities to all.\(^{149}\)

### 2.7.2 GHANA PENTECOSTAL AND CHRISTIAN COUNCIL (GPCC)

The historic motion for the formation of the Ghana Evangelical Fellowship (GEF) was moved by Rev. James Mckeown, the then Chairman of The Church of Pentecost and was seconded by Rev. Daniel K. Saforo of the Christ Apostolic Church. The motion was unanimously carried. The GEF was officially inaugurated on Thursday, November 6, 1969, at the Bible House, Accra. The founding member Churches were: Assemblies of God Church, The Church of Pentecost, Elim Pentecostal Churches, The Christ Apostolic Church and the Apostolic Church.

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\(^{148}\) J. Anquandah, *80 Years of CCG*, 82.

\(^{149}\) CCG Brochure Osu-Accra (October 2012)
Mission and Vision

The Ghana Pentecostal and Christian Council aims at uniting the body of Christ in the Holy Ghost and among other factors, to be an umbrella body that will unite the family of Christ in Ghana and beyond in accordance with the scriptures. It also aims at having member churches to exercise the authority and power given by our Lord Jesus Christ to His Church to go and to preach the Good News with signs following Mark 16:15-18; Matthew 28:19-20 and finally to demonstrate the Love of God to humanity through the provision of social services.

Objectives

The main objectives of the Council are to promote good relationship between member Churches and other church organizations in Ghana in particular and in the world at large creating effective fellowship which shall activate great revivals that will bring about mighty moves of God in our land. The Council also aims at encouraging effective networking among member churches and other Christians by way of sharing ministries, and to maintain high standards of Christian doctrine principles, ethics and attitudes among member Churches as outlined in the Council’s Code of Ethics.

The GPCC aims at constituting a disciplined, knowledgeable and influential entity with the ability to discuss issues on national development, good governance and good citizenship and make presentation before Government and other authorities when necessary and utilizing all gifts in the Body of Christ for the promotion of Christian education, health, agriculture, biological-ecological balance and preservation, social changes, relief activities and poverty alleviation to the benefit of members and the society.
GPCC Week Celebrations

The first Monday to Sunday of October every year is celebrated as GPCC Week. Member Churches in localities in Ghana are obliged to observe and all participate in programmes of activities from the National Secretariat which are circulated to all member churches by the end of June each year. The week is an occasion for fellowship and exchange of platforms among member churches where funds are raised to beef up GPCC National Accounts being co-ordinated by the Regional, District and Local Leaders.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARISMATIC AND CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Unlike the GPCC which was founded by the leadership of four Pentecostal churches, the establishment of the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC) was the effort and vision of one man. Until the NACCC was founded on 1st December 1999 and though the Association had existed informally before that date, all Protestant Churches in Ghana belonged to the Christian Council of Ghana or the Ghana Pentecostal Council. NACCC plays a supervisory role to ensure that its ministers maintain high moral standards. Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, the founder and leader of the Lighthouse Chapel International is credited with solely starting and providing initial funding for the organization which now brings together about three hundred and thirteen churches in Ghana. NACCC was born out of a desire to

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151 Kpobi, Mission, 127.
152 Jones Darkwa Amanor, Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation, 16.
153 Kpobi, Mission, 127.
create a platform for the many charismatic churches that had come into existence to share fellowship and encourage each other.

A study of the aims and objectives of the NACCC indicate that the ideals that informed its formation were not very different from those of the GPCC. Bishop Heward-Mills was however convinced that the new charismatic Churches (or neo-Pentecostals) had a different orientation and approach to ministry from the existing Pentecostals and could therefore not find a comfortable co-existence with the Ghana Pentecostal Council. At the time, many of these churches had little or no contact with each other although they were sometimes situated in the same neighbourhood. It is however clear that the Association was meant to achieve much more than just serve as a fellowship forum.

There are clear statements in the Constitution which indicate the need to provide a medium for the strengthening and edifying of ministers through periodic conferences; the need to provide “a biblically and nationally accepted standard of practice for churches in terms of procedure, morality, and ethics,” the need for a body to speak on behalf of and represent the charismatic churches on national issues as well as negotiate “with other religious bodies, government bodies and any other bodies”.

The Association is also “to serve as and when necessary, as a licensing and ordaining body for up and coming ministers”, and finally to defend the member churches and their leaders from ‘external aggression and intimidation’.\textsuperscript{154} It is a body which contends for recognition, respect

\textsuperscript{154} Kpobi, Missen, 128.
and proper representation of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ and its Ministers in national issues which concern and affect the well-being of the Church of God.

Clearly, the charismatic churches felt neglected and unrecognized on the national scene and were trying to rectify the situation. It was against this background that Heward-Mills invited the leadership of a few of the Churches in Accra to a meeting to discuss the formation of the Association. Membership was made open to all charismatic Churches as well as individual ministers. The Bishop explains that the ‘Christian’ in the name of the Association was to indicate that it was open to even those churches that did not consider themselves as charismatic but were willing to share in the vision of the Association.

The NACCC currently has the most varied membership in terms of liturgical practice, doctrinal confession and social orientation. The General Assembly is the largest forum of the NACCC where all members are represented, but an Executive Council is the supreme governing authority and comprises the founder and six other elected members one of whom may be elected Chairman. The transitional provisions of the constitution however provides that in order to get the association well grounded, the founder would be the Chairman of the Council until such a time that it was determined that the Association was firmly on its feet and a change of leadership was necessary. The handover would then take place by due process of democratic elections. This provision was adhered to until 2003 when Rev. Steve Mensah of the Christian Evangelistic Ministry was elected successor to serve a two-year term. As at July 2015 Archbishop Nicholas Duncan Williams was the Chairman of the NACCC.
From all indications, the NACCC has not only filled a big gap by giving confidence and identity to a large section of the Ghanaian Christian community, but has also made it possible for them to relate and be involved with other Christians. Through its existence, the many charismatic churches now have an identifiable voice and are active participants in the decisions and proclamations of the Christian community. They are consulted and invited to all major Christian functions and when the Churches are required by government to officiate at national functions, their leaders are not left out.

Although not all charismatic churches in Ghana have become members of this Association, its contribution to ecumenical mission in Ghana is enormous.\textsuperscript{155}

\textbf{2.7.3 BIBLE SOCIETY OF GHANA\textsuperscript{156}}

\textbf{History of Bible Work in Ghana}

The real story of Bible work can be traced back to the desire of a young Welsh girl, Mary Jones, to own a Bible in her own language. Mary was born in Wales in 1784 at a time when Bibles were very scarce and expensive. This little girl longed for her own Bible from a young age and saved for years to be able to buy one. In 1800, when she was 16 years old, she travelled on foot for about 40 km in order to obtain her own Bible. During a meeting of the 'Religious Tract Society' in 1802 Thomas Charles, the minister from whom she eventually got a Bible, related Mary's story.

\textsuperscript{155} Kpobi, \textit{Misson}, 130.

\textsuperscript{156} Information on the Bible Society of Ghana was obtained from Ms Catherine Odjidja of the Children and Youth Unit of the Bible Society of Ghana in June 2015.
Plans were made to make more Bibles available in Wales and one of the persons present, Joseph Hughes, cried out: "If for Wales, why not for the whole world?" On 7 March 1804 there was a meeting of 300 people in the London Tavern and the British and Foreign Bible Society was born. The young Bible Society soon spread its wings and expanded to other countries. In Ghana, the early Christian missionaries pioneered Bible work in the 19th century in various parts of the country. However, it was in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s that discussions on the possible establishment of a national Bible Society were held. Pioneering leaders like Rev. Prof. C.G. Baeta, Rev. A. L. Kwansa and Mr. E. S. Aidoo led the drive for the establishment of a national Society. So, on 18th September 1965, Bible House, the head office of the Bible Society of Ghana was officially opened. Full operation as a national Bible Society started in 1966 and it became a full member of the United Bible Societies in 1968.

Mission

The Bible Society of Ghana (BSG) is a non-denominational Christian organization registered under the Trustees Act, 1962 of the Republic of Ghana. It exists to make God’s Word available and affordable and encourage its use. The Bible Society of Ghana is an affiliate member of the United Bible Societies, operating in over 200 countries, whose common task is achieving the widest possible, effective and meaningful distribution of the Holy Scriptures in languages and media which meet the needs of people worldwide and also in translations that are faithful to the Scripture texts in their original languages effectively communicating the message of the Bible at affordable prices.
Bible Translations

The process of Bible publishing, apart from it being laborious and meticulous takes many years and is capital intensive but more can be achieved if the needed funds are readily available. Translations alone normally take twelve to fifteen years by a team of three full time translators, a Computer Assisted Publishing Officer and ten to twelve part time reviewers under the supervision of a Translation Consultant. The translation work is done from the original Greek and Hebrew languages. BSG has translated and published the complete Bible into 8 major Ghanaian languages: Ga, Akuapem-Twi, Ewe, Fante, Asante-Twi, Nzema, Dangme and Dagban and currently work is on the others whilst the older versions are undergoing revision.

Distribution

The Bible Society of Ghana ensures the widest distribution of Scriptures to every part of the country. Currently, we have three main distribution centres where our offices are found: Accra, Kumasi and Tamale. There are two more sales points in Takoradi and Hohoe with about 40 distributors spread across the country. The Bible Society of Ghana also distributes some of its Bibles for free during very special events, to first year students of the University of Ghana in their Christian Fellowship. The Braille Bibles are also given out to the blind.

Programmes

To help us all in our interactions with the Holy Scriptures and to fulfill the vision and mission of spreading the word of God, Bible Society of Ghana has the following programmes: Faith Comes by Hearing, Bible-in-audio Compact Discs (CDs) and Proclaimer, Youth Impact, Literacy and Mobile Film Projects among others. Even though the Bible Society of Ghana receives support
from the United Bible Society, she still needs to raise funds to support her translation as well as
the subsidy on the Scriptures. The funds raised also helps to accomplish the several activities
geared towards the youth and the One Million Bible project for Junior High School (JHS) pupils
all over the country and also to run operations.

The National Council of the Bible Society of Ghana is the highest governing body responsible
for the formulation and monitoring of performance. It may also appoint from the membership of
the Society unto the various committees such as – translations, business, distribution and
outreach, promotions and resource mobilization, children and youth as well as Bible week.

**Management/National Head Office**

The BSG management is the administrative organ that inspires the day to day operations which
formulates strategies to fulfill the mandate of the Society with the national head office located on
the John Evans Atta Mills High Street, opposite the James Fort Prisons in Accra.

**2.7.4 THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT**

The National Catholic Secretariat, which is the Executive arm of the Bishops’ Conference was
established in 1960 and was registered as a corporate body in 1962.

**Mission Statement**

The Secretariat is to implement the decision and policies of the Bishops’ Conference through its
Departments and Commissions for the spiritual and human development of the people of God.
The Secretariat is headed by a Secretarial-General, assisted by an Assistant Secretarial-General and other administrative and accounting personnel.

The Secretarial-General Department co-ordinates the activities of the various departments to ensure that decisions and policies of the Bishops’ Conference are effectively and efficiently carried out. In effect, the National Catholic Secretariat holds the fort when the bishops are not in conference so while the Bishops Conference is the official mouthpiece of the Roman Catholic Church; the National Catholic Secretariat is responsible to the Ghana Bishops’ Conference.

The Secretariat has thirteen Departments/Commissions some of which are the Department of Education and Commission (with a section on Religious Education), Department of Health (which includes the Catholic Drug Centre and the production pharmacy), Department of Socio-Economic Development (which has a section for migrants and refugee, Justice and Peace, and Department of Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations. Each Department or Commission is headed by a Bishop as Episcopal Chairman and the President of the Conference heads the Secretarial-General Department.

The Department Of Ecumenical Relations and Inter-Religious Dialogue

This Department aims at formalizing the already good relations between the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and its member churches.\textsuperscript{159} Joseph Mullin however focuses on the Catholic Church and how the Church could contribute to the realization of the aims of ecumenism to foster union among believers in Christ. He criticizes the Church’s traditions with regard to how it relates with non-Catholics.

Mullin further reports that ‘the Church’s perspective is enlarged by historical events, and does not see the conquest of the soul, the working converts, as her exclusive aim, but recognizes that, as the servant Church and custodian of truth, she has the obligation of witness and service to the whole non-Catholic and non-Christian world.\textsuperscript{160}

Suffice it to say that since Vatican II (1962-65) the Catholic Church has changed its dogma and has been a force to reckon with, regarding worldwide ecumenism; in fact in the Greater Accra and in other Regions of the country they feature prominently in Local Council of Churches affairs.

So far this Chapter has looked at the beginning of Christianity in Ghana, coupled with the advent of missionary Churches in the country, culminating in their uniting to set up the Christian Council of Ghana and the National Catholic Secretariat. The Chapter also saw the rise of Pentecostalism and the formation of Councils under which these Churches operate. The chapter

\textsuperscript{159} David Asante Dartey, \textit{Glimpses, Ideas and Vision: An Ecumenical Perspective} (Accra: Graphic Packaging Ltd., 2004), i.

closed with the socio-economic impact of these Churches, especially the missionary ones on the life and thought of Ghanaians. Chapter Three will focus on the main work of ecumenical activities of the Madina Local Council of Churches.
CHAPTER THREE

PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MADINA LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the programmes and activities undertaken by the Madina Local Council of churches to help foster unity among all Christian denominations within Madina Township. Key issues to be examined are the two national ecumenical programmes, namely Christian Home Week and Bible Week Celebrations and also a short historical account of Madina as a settlement. The maps below show the research area or the case study under consideration showing the location in Accra as well as the aerial view of Madina (Accra) within the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. It also shows Madina, Accra with its main suburbs and surroundings. Chapter Three is an illustration of the history and programmes and activities of the Madina Local Council of Churches, the main topic of this research.

MAP OF MADINA, INDICATING ITS LOCATION WITHIN GREATER ACCRA REGION
MAP OF MADINA TOWNSHIP AND ITS SURROUNDING SUBURBS

Source: Google Maps, Website address: https://maps.google.com.gh/maps?

Madina as a settlement town lies on longitude 0.10 ° West and 5° .40’ North\(^{161}\) and it is part of the Greater Accra Plains. Lying on a gently undulating land to the north of Greater Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) area, Madina is currently located on the Accra-Dodowa road exactly at the former 10\(^{th}\) mile. Madina, Accra came into being in 1959\(^ {162}\) and the first half of the 1960s saw the arrival of the various denominations of the mainline (historic) churches entering the new township followed later by the Pentecostal, neo-Pentecostal and Christian and Charismatic ministries. Thus, the Presbyterian, Methodist, the Anglican and the Roman Catholic Churches among several others came at different times to do mission in the area.

\(^{161}\) Department of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana, Legon.
This state of affairs was not peculiar to Madina. Nkansa-Kyeremateng asserts that: “Fragmentation has constituted the most serious bane of Christianity over the years, and ecumenism has been concerned with healing the various splits which have plagued the Christian religion since its first major schism in 1054 CE. Even though the various sects proclaim to be Christ’s disciples, their convictions clash over many a petty issue, and their paths diverge as though Christ himself were divided. (I Cor. 1:13)\textsuperscript{163}.

3.1 Programmes of the Madina Local Council of Churches

The Madina Local Council of Churches has nationally and locally planned programmes as well as unstructured activities. There are two main ecumenical activities in Ghana: these are the Christian Home week and Bible Week celebrations. Bible Week celebrations normally take place in February of every year while the programme for Christian Home week is observed in May annually. These celebrations are guided by themes proposed by the Bible Society of Ghana and the Christian Council of Ghana in concert with the Pastoral Care Unit of the National Catholic Secretariat. These are translated into local daily programmes.

Other programmes that are locally planned are: Annual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols held during Christmas, Easter Monday Picnic, Annual Programme for Women’s Wing, Widows Might Ministry and Free Medical Service among other social services. In Madina, the programmes start on Wednesdays and end on Saturdays. The Council at the beginning of the year has a planned calendar of activities. Each congregation is supposed to launch the week on

\textsuperscript{163} K. Nkansa-Kyeremateng, \textit{History, Mission & Achievements}, 95
Sunday preceding the week-long celebration. The annual activities of the Christian Home Week dilate on the needs of the family and the role of the Church in the society.

Society is made up of members of particular families with differing backgrounds and temperaments. So, we need to examine what family entails in Ghana. Nukunya focuses attention on three types of families, thus the nuclear family which refers to a couple with their children, and explains that a couple without children does not constitute a family, the polygamous family and the extended family connoting a social arrangement in which an individual has extensive reciprocal duties, obligations and responsibilities to relations outside his immediate (nuclear) family.\textsuperscript{164}

3.2 The Two Main National Ecumenical Programmes.

These are the Christian Home Week and the Bible Week celebrations. This Chapter deals with the summary of publications of the Christian Home Week and the Bible Week celebrations, respectively. The materials do not cover all of the twelve year period because I was not able to access all of them from the archives of the Bible Society of Ghana and the Christian Council of Ghana as well as the member Churches forming the Madina Local Council of Churches. The researcher had to rely mostly on some of the executive members of the Madina Local Council of Churches – both past and present. The annual publications of the Christian Home Week have been arranged to address issues concerned with the needs of the family and the role of the Church in society. Most of the themes touch on issues bordering

parenting, women’s empowerment, youth and the strategies of addressing some social cankers such as HIV/AIDS and drug abuse. Bible perspectives on social issues which provide guidance and direction in life for national development are the core issues of the Bible Week celebrations. Below are sample programmes for Christian Home Week and Bible Week celebrations. Sample programmes for the two national ecumenical celebrations are displayed as appendices 6 and 7.

As a practice and to attract public attention, prior to these arrangements local councils have the option to organize an activity peculiar to their environment and circumstances such as floats, Jesus’ march, and dawn broadcast as a way of publicizing the impending function. The LCCs should ensure that these programmes are attractive and interesting to pull people of all ages. The executive may nominate a person to moderate or facilitate the discussion or the person may come from outside the area depending on the nature of the topic or theme. Teaching or discussion takes between 45 minutes to an hour and a combination of English and the local languages are employed for the benefit of all members of the congregation. Time is always allotted for clarification and contributions from the floor.

In all cases silver collection is taken to raise funds for the Bible Society of Ghana and the Christian Council of Ghana, the organizers of the CHW/BWC. Individuals who may like to contribute are free to do so and their remittances go to the Bible Society or the Christian Council of Ghana through the Local Council of Churches. The contributions of Churches and individuals as well as other important issues appear in the booklets annually to encourage the donors. The delegated functions of the Churches during such celebrations include leading as liturgists,
scripture reading, organizing equipment for clean-up activities, and making arrangement for film shows as the case may be in the order of service.

### 3.2.1 Christian Home Week Celebrations Activities from 2003 to 2012

Ten out of the thirteen booklets of the Christian Home Week celebrations during the period under consideration are:

- **2003** - Rid Your Home of Domestic Violence;
- **2004** - Singleness and Single Parenting;
- **2005** - Fidelity in Marriage and Relations;
- **2006** - Are We Poor In Ghana?
- **2007** - Celebrate Ghana’s Golden Jubilee;
- **2008** - Rape and Defilement, A Challenge to the Family;
- **2010** - Social Change – A Challenge to the Church and Society;
- **2011** - Broken Marriage and Its Impact On the Family and Beyond;
- **2012** - Parenting – A Journey of Love and Patience.

The above-mentioned themes/topics were organized in such a way that if diligently carried out, will educate the church members with regard to their role as the conscience of the people, and thereby improve upon the moral structure of not only church members but members of the larger community. The contents which are a summary of the discussions during the period are as follows:
2003 – Rid your home of domestic violence

Domestic Violence is a term used to describe an actual or threatened physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or economical abuse to a person one is usually closely related and two abuses which readily come to mind are sexual abuse and physical abuse.

In a patriarchal society like ours, men tend to wield power over women, but close to twenty years now, women now recognize their rightful place in the home as well as in the society at large. Apart from husbands who are known to be domineering on their wives other men also at times make advances on house helps with sharp female features, leading to rivalry between the wife and the house-help in the home.

This in itself eventually explodes into domestic violence. Also in many polygamous marriages where there is no peace simply because one wife tends to produce children more than the other spouse misunderstanding is likely to occur and peace eludes that relationship. The effects of domestic violence are many, some of which are emotional breakdown and attempted suicide. These effects may lead to admission to a mental institution.

Domestic Violence, it is known, dates back to the home of the first family in the Bible as shown in Gen. 4:1-5 and the drunkenness of Noah after he had planted a vineyard and tasted of the wine. To make for peace the following objectives should be addressed: The Domestic Violence

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165 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Pentecost Press Ltd., Accra (2003).
166 Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2003.
Bill should be turned into law to protect the vulnerable, especially the women in the society. The Church may do well to enhance Christian Education in the various denominations. The Church in concert with the state should not water down on punitive measures against the abusers because they are the very persons who grow up into adulthood in an environment of abuse and finally become abusive husbands and men in a future marital relationship.

The topic ‘Singleness and Single parenting – a challenge to the Church was the topic given for discussion in 2004.

In the traditional African setting, from birth, socialization directs people to get involved in marital relationship with its attendant child upbringing, leading eventually to the equipping of life skills needed in marriage and its responsibilities. From the Christian perspective marriage is a wonderful gift from God and must be entered with absolute care but where internal and external pressures compel the youth to marry, they at last and at times realize that a wrong decision had been taken. That is when the focus is devoid of readiness, personal character and religious beliefs and it ends on the rocks and singleness comes into being. Singleness (not marriage) and single parenting (not two-parents) become the only option.

The Ghanaian places much value on married people and two-parent families and so singles/single parents find it difficult to estimate their worth. It is expected that the Church, being the voice of God must raise its banner to make all feel wanted. Through the grace of God the

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167 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Pentecost Press Ltd., Accra (2004)
168 Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2004.
Church is fully equipped with the knowledge, skills and concern to meet these challenges with the resources – both human and material at its disposal.

The topic ‘Fidelity in Marriage and relationship was the topic approved for the 2005 Christian Home Week celebration.

2005 – Fidelity in marriage and relationship

Fidelity means living with one’s partner in a truthful way, in all things related to the union, for example, sex, child care, finance and business. A synonym of fidelity is faithfulness, which connotes “trust in”, “confidence in” or “belief in”. So fidelity is mutually dependent on each other in relationships. The focal text speaks of a master-servant relationship and the interpretation is our faithfulness to God.

Fidelity in marriage is clarified separately from all other relationships. Marriage is a relationship which is unique from all other ones because it is God-made. The essential ingredient of leaving and cleaving puts the marital relationship in its own class having left the apron-strings of parents and not necessarily abandoning them. The uniqueness can also be seen in the context of sexual relationship which should be confined to the couple and no other person. The relationship is deemed “honourable among all and the bed undefiled”. Pre-marital and extra-marital relationships are totally unacceptable to God. Being truthful and keeping faith implied in the faithful servant (Matt. 25: 21,23) has an element of service. Having delineated marriage as a unique relationship, the others in no small measure also require fidelity. Some of these are

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169 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Pentecost Press Ltd., Accra (2005).
170 Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2005.
171 Programmes Department of the CCG and the NCS, Accra, 2005.
courtship, friendship, and servant-hood which require faithfulness. The parties in the marriage relationship therefore need to be hardworking to bring about satisfaction on both sides of the union. The subject of infidelity, irrespective of the relationship is at the foundation of society because this rare value brings the fruit of joy in the presence of God. The topic “Are We Poor in Ghana?” was chosen for discussion in 2006

The term ‘poor’ or poverty is a relative one depending on the person’s perception in life but it connotes a state of lacking something. Some of the areas which put Ghana as a poor country are health, illiteracy, unsafe drinking water, guinea worm etc. These can be averted through personal hygiene and the safe keeping of the environment.

Trade liberalization and withdrawal of agricultural services include factors which place the nation as poor. In the year 2006 not less than twelve million of a population of 18.9 million was living below the poverty line with children suffering the most from malnutrition. They also dropped out of school since their parents could not meet their needs culminating in teenage pregnancy. On the Church front members who felt inadequate tried to find solutions to their problems by moving from Church to Church for solutions to their socio-economic problems which some pastors and church leaders promise to offer but most of the church members are disappointed.

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172 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Pentecost Press Ltd., Accra, 2006.
173 Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2006.
174 Programmes Department of the CCG and the NCS, Accra, 2006.
Drawing inspiration from Dt. 15:11, the congregation was admonished that there would be poor people among them and it is their responsibility to take care of them as and when necessary. Some of the areas in which the Church could assist are vocational and educational training, and establishment of small scale industries, health service, community development and other job-creating opportunities. As a way forward, the Church should be a vanguard against all sorts of injustice, endeavour to establish industries that can make members self-sufficient and economically independent, providing literacy education to as many people as possible. The topic for 2007 was Celebrate Ghana’s Golden Jubilee was the topic chosen for discussion in 2007.  

On the eve of the declaration of Ghana’s independence at the Old Polo grounds on 5th March, 1957 Kwame Nkrumah, surrounded by his colleagues saw the flag of Ghana being hoisted whilst the Union Jack (British flag) was being lowered. Christian celebration of the Golden Anniversary of Ghana’s independence was significant because the Portuguese, who came to Shama and Elmina in the fifteenth century, were accompanied by Roman Catholic missionaries who hoisted a flag and celebrated mass, with the view to converting the natives to Christianity. The Church therefore played a significant role in the proclamation of the Gospel and the development of the human resource for the socio-economic development of the country. So apart from engaging in the lucrative trading in gold, spices and slaves, the colonizers built Churches and founded schools side by side for the development of the souls and minds of the natives to enable them read the Bible leading to salvation in Jesus Christ. Further, the colonizers

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175 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Pentecost Press Ltd., Accra, 2007.
176 Published by the CCG/NCS, Accra (2007).
introduced their own brand of Christianity which contributed immensely for the needed educated persons for the socio-political leadership relevant to the country’s struggle for nationhood.\textsuperscript{177}

By the end of the First World War agitation for self-government had gained momentum being mainly spearheaded by products of the Christian mission and schools. At the turn of the twentieth century, Christianity which stood at 21% by 1957 had risen to 45% and 70% at 2000 with 40% of all schools in the country, rendering 30% of the health delivery system.\textsuperscript{178} It is therefore a foregone conclusion that the Churches had every good reason to be part of the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the nation’s independence and thanking God for the many blessings not only on the country but also for allowing the seed of the gospel to flourish, yielding good dividends. The 2008 topic for discussion was Rape and Defilement: A Challenge to the Family.

2008 – Rape and defilement: A challenge to the family\textsuperscript{179}

Simply put, Rape and Defilement is the act of forcefully engaging in carnal knowledge with someone against the person’s wish. They are criminal and suspects face the full rigours of the law. The following are but few examples reported in the Bible and the punishment meted out to them; Shechem raped Dinah, daughter of Jacob and Leah, and Dinah’s brothers revenged (Gen. 34:1-30) and Potiphar’s wife attempted to lure Joseph to forcibly have sex with her (Gen. 39:7-23). Though she told a lie, Joseph was punished (Gen. 39:7-23) and Eli’s sons were reported to be involved in a number of rape cases (I Sam 2:22-24); consequently, they were killed in a battle (I Sam. 4:11). Finally, Amnon raped his sister Tamar and was killed two years later (II Sam.

\textsuperscript{177} Programmes Department of the CCG and National Catholic Secretariat 2007.

\textsuperscript{178} Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2008.

\textsuperscript{179} Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Pentecost Press Ltd., Accra (2008).
Even though the Church is very much concerned about waging war against the menace, the victims of rape and defilement appear uncooperative. In some cases, victims feel shy to report to the Church, which will like to protect its name and image in the public eye. Also the Church, if informed handles the issue on the quiet to avoid stigmatization on both the Church and the victim; also due to ignorance, some people are not aware that they should report incidence of rape and defilement. Some perpetrators are Church leaders who the Church will not like to expose.

The Church and the family have a role to curb this menace once and for all. The family may do well to encourage those affected to report rape and defilement cases; families should discourage offensive dressing and make-ups; people and especially family members should not rush their wards into pre-marital relationships. More importantly, no perpetrator should be covered; in few biblical examples perpetrators were punished and conscious efforts must also be made by families to teach moral values for better character formation. In 2009 the topic for discussion was Child Labour and Trafficking – A Challenge to the Family and the Ghanaian Society.

From time immemorial humankind has been bedeviled by uncaring behaviour towards each other and this normally happens to the poor or vulnerable in the society and child labour and trafficking is no exception. Even though slavery and slave trading was abolished a long time ago.

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180 Programmes Department of the CCG and the NCS, Accra, 2008.
181 Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2008.
182 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Fredieko Ventures, Accra, 2009.
certain behavioral patterns in our society today can be termed slavery and more. Both child labour and trafficking constitute a form of uncaring behaviour towards the vulnerable or poor in the society. The “selling” of a human being irrespective of age normally across one’s border constitutes trafficking. And the inhuman treatment meted out to a victim constitutes the labour; this affects every continent and most countries the world over.  

Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, “the engagement of minors to work in the night at hotels, bars, hawking from 8.00pm to 6.00am or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”. The following were some victims of human trafficking and child labour who were “given away” by close relatives to their masters engaged in fishing business: Bernard Siano Narwey (5 years); Tetteh Solomon (13 years) and Ebenezer Agborkey (6 years) respectively. They went through various degrees of ill-treatment such as spending long hours (12 hours and beyond sometimes without food or little food) on the sea or river, coupled with threats from their master. One reported of an ordeal in Liberia when they were taken hostage with some traumatic experiences, such as threatened death and severe beating. This was because they had entered an alien territory. Attempts were made to shoot at them but their bodies missed the bullets. At a certain time one reported of hiding in a bush for two days and later joined some people on a boat to Ghana, abandoning his master to enable him to further his education.

\[183\]Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, Accra, 2009.
In tackling such a situation the Church must not only sympathize but also empathize with practices of this nature, by taking on the responsibility of sensitizing them concerning the harm which may linger on for ages, pray for God’s intervention because God can intervene in our human situation when we pray. The Church can also play the role of advocacy in tackling the menace. Finally, the Church can raise this issue at all biennial or annual gathering of the various Churches and denominations across the globe.\(^{184}\)

The 2010 topic was Social Change – A Challenge to the Church and Society

2010 – Social Change: A Challenge to the Church and Society\(^{185}\)

“Everything flows, nothing stands still.” This quote by Heraclitus (c535 BC – 475 BC), is true when one considers the many changes that occur in almost every department of the whole universe. Humanly speaking, we are not unaware of the changes that continue to occur from the day we were born when we were unconscious of what went on around us until we become adults.

The third and fourth verses of the hymn “Abide with me … by Henry Francis Lyte, (1793-1847) runs thus: ‘Change and decay in all around I see; O thou who changeth not, abide with me’\(^{186}\) also lends credence to this phenomenon of society being dynamic and not static.\(^{187}\)

The Bible depicts that before the fall of man everything was perfect. Our fore parents hid themselves from the presence of God among the trees of the garden. This means that things can go awry with humanity when there is a negative change in our relationship with God. Being the source of our unity, the moment we take God out we begin a blame game as Adam and Eve did;

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\(^{184}\) Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, Accra, 2009.

\(^{185}\) Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Fredieko Ventures. (2010).

\(^{186}\) Methodist Hymn Book 948.

\(^{187}\) Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, Accra, 2010.
accusing each other for being behind their disobedience. We must admit that God gave us a responsibility and that is, the care and upkeep of the world but humanity had not responded well to his/her responsibility and this has led to climate change, being prolonged and affecting some places adversely in food production.\textsuperscript{188}

One other social change in our institutions that is worth noting is family life and its attendant permissiveness of homosexuality and this must be condemned in no uncertain terms. We cannot talk about social change without making mention of discipline which was held in high esteem when some of us were growing up. It appears nowadays the pendulum has shifted and it is the responsibility of the Church to instill discipline in the society irrespective of the generation in which we find ourselves. The independence/freedom given to the present young generation must be guided since nowadays majority of the youth try to resist all forms of parental correction and would like to “run even before they learn to crawl” which is not the best and go to any length to rationalize their stance. The Church and society should never gloss over this rare value, failing, posterity will blame us.

The 2011 topic was Broken Marriage and its impact on the Family and Beyond.

2011 – Broken Marriage and its Impact on the Family And Beyond\textsuperscript{189}

Marriage, as a gift was instituted by God Himself and He expects humanity to respect it at all times. From Genesis through to Revelation love and relationship are the two essential keys to a successful union in all its endeavours. God therefore expected the first couple to live and to love each other. In this regard partners are created to be complementary and supplementary to each other.

\textsuperscript{188} Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, Accra, 2010.

\textsuperscript{189} Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Fredieko Ventures. (2011).
other towards a fulfilling union. According to Genesis 1:26-27 marriage should reflect the image of God since each individual is created in His image, an opportunity to be a witness to a lost world. In a marital relationship God expects the couple to procreate, that is, to continue with the creation of God with its added responsibilities. The love which should prevail in the institution of marriage should not merely be sentimental but as expressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13.

In many ways, marriage provides a platform for accomplishing God’s intentions for humankind. This is why marriage, as a sacred institution, should not be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but thoughtfully, reverently and in the fear of God.\(^{190}\)

God abhors divorce and He always expects that parties in the marital relationship must promote peace through their behaviours in order to portray this rare value of peace to the entire world. In Mal. 3:14-16 the Prophet explicitly declares that God hates divorce. Marriage should be permanent and there should be no grounds whatsoever for divorce or separation.

Being a covenant which affords the partners to nurture their children and to seek spiritual growth in the Lord, divorce affects the upbringing of children and as a result affects the psyche and appreciation of a loving God. The effects of divorce adversely affect the children even into adulthood.

To err is human and also to be Christ-like forgiveness should be part and parcel of marriage life unconditionally. Premarital counselling should be taken seriously at all levels to mitigate the

\(^{190}\) Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat 2011.
rate of divorce and separation and the understanding of the whole institution bearing in mind the challenges and joys of being in it. By and large, Christians should seek the face of God at all times before entering the relationship and continue to make Him the “centre bolt” throughout the duration of the union.

In 2012 the topic for the celebration of Christian Home Week was Parenting – a Journey of love and patience.

2012 – Parenting – A Journey of Love and Patience

Parenting is the raising of a young person in as healthy a manner as possible. To put it mildly, the parents’ role is to provide the child with a safe, secure, nurturing, loving, and supportive environment, one that allows the offspring to have a happy and healthy youth; and this is the responsibility of the parent”.

In the Old Testament a disobedient child was brought before the elders and he/she was stoned to death to avoid a disgrace to the family but the Jewish confession of faith as told in Dt. 6:1-9 says something different. The text from Deuteronomy suggests the following four ways, thus – listening, obedience, loving and teaching. The text also instructs parents to teach diligently, repeatedly, naturally and personally.

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191 Published by the CCG/NCS and printed by Rufest Graphic Ventures, Accra, 2012.
192 Programmes Department of the CCG and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, Accra, 2012.
Since children learn more through observation parents need to be careful with regard to what they do or say, especially in the presence of the children. For example, if the father physically abuses the wife the child will get a message that there is nothing wrong in physically assaulting a wife and the child will grow with it into his future marriage. For the female ones, they learn from the father that all men are abusive, and these perceptions may have adverse effects on the children as they grow into adulthood and begin to take responsibility of parenthood from their parents.

The entire membership of the Local Council of Churches present was admonished through the discussion which ensued that as parents we need to be loving and obedient to God’s word. In teaching our children let us be diligent, and make use of every opportunity to ensure that the child learns something from it and live a life that is worthy of emulation. Like the Old Testament the New Testament places emphasis on the home, not the Church, as the place for effective parenting. In fact one of the qualities a Christian must possess before becoming an overseer or a deacon is the ability to raise their children properly for if one cannot take care of his/her home well he would not be able to manage the Church which is a composition of various families.

Parenting, which entails the establishment of a good relationship between father and mother and children which springs from a healthy relationship with God constituted the family. Therefore, “reverence for God and the devotion to family are at the heart of the Bible’s teaching on the well-being of a home”.

3.3 The Bible Week Celebrations


Like the Christian Home Week celebrations the under mentioned are a summary of contents in the flyers which were discussed during the week-long celebration.

2001 – The Bible and the challenge of the New Millennium: Morality and Good Governance

The 2001 Bible Week celebration dealt with the above theme. This theme was intended to remind all leaders, be they secular or religious to the effect that they have a duty towards the governed to help reduce the increasing moral degeneration and hardships facing them through leadership with integrity and good governance.

In the course of the discussion, it came out that to attain morality and good governance the society as a whole should depend on nothing but the infallible word of God (Bible Week, 2001). Ghana has entered a new millennium and the call for morality and governance for all

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193 Bible Society of Ghana – 2001 Bible Week Celebration.
and sundry was paramount if the country was to make a meaningful headway. It was reiterated that God is the one who provides a leader with the capacity to govern wisely and justly and divine intervention makes a difference so leaders should seek for same from God. Where a nation is ruled unjustly and with moral turpitude the wrath of God is visited on the people but a nation built on good governance and uprightness will become prosperous (Prov. 23: 14, 16:11-12; Ezekiel 24:1-10, Zeph. 2:1-3).

The moral uprightness and the story of Joseph (Gen. 39:1-10) and David (2 Sam. 11:1-5) was used to remind the congregation and for that matter Ghanaians that sexual discipline is crucial in maintaining good governance and therefore Church leaders should lead exemplary lives. Additionally, Christians were implored to pray for those in leadership positions and also contribute their quota by being conscious of and alive to their civic responsibilities at all times, basing these on biblical passages from Titus 2:1-8, 3:1-2, 1 Pet.1:13-16, and Rom. 13:1-7. In sum, the Christian is reminded to be light of the world and salt of the earth. In this wise, he is not only called to flavour, but also to defend that which is the right of the poor and the marginalized in the wider community. The topic for the 2002 Bible Week celebration was National Reconstruction – The Bible speaks.

2002 – National Reconstruction – The Bible Speaks

The MLCC discussed at length and noted that reconstruction does not only mean physical dimension but a restoration of the basic foundations of life, and rediscovery of self and our God-given potentials. – (Bible Week 2002). Further, the group noted three very important aspects

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194 Bible Society of Ghana – 2002 Booklet on Bible Week Celebration
to national reconstruction namely (1) the family (Joshua 24:15); (2) the community (Nehemiah 2:17) and (3) human resources (Gen. 6:5). It was noted that the human resource aspect is the most paramount which will redirect the national focus. In highlighting the need for the national reconstruction due to natural disasters (drought, flood) and human factors (civil wars, corruption, and mismanagement) the experience of Israel was used as a point of reference.

The Bible made it clear that God created the world out of chaos and therefore for any restoration God should be at the centre of everything (Gen. 6:5-7; Amos 2:4-8; 2 Kgs. 17:5-11). It was realized also that for a nation to move on an even keel for restoration there should be a restoration through confession to misconduct by the whole nation (Neh. 1). As a human institution opposition would be expected from different quarters but where the citizens remained steadfast and determined success would be at the end of the tunnel (Neh. 4:1-9; 6:1-4, 15, 16).

In conclusion, members of the Madina Local Council of Churches were called upon to repent and lead righteous lives and to have a permanent cordial relationship with God who, in His own wisdom, will direct their path and success will eventually crown all their efforts.

The 2013 theme was The Bible, the Church and the challenges of HIV/AIDS.

2003 The Bible. The Church and the Challenges of HIV/AIDS

It was noted that the discussion on HIV/AIDS as an anathema always found itself outside the four walls of the Church and so the pandemic has been with us for a long time because of the stigma people attached to it. It appears to have stigmatized families whose members have been affected with the disease which up till now has no cure. As an anathema or curse in both the

195 Published by the BSG, designed and printed by Combert Impressions, Accra, 2003.
196 2003 Bible Week Celebration – Bible Society of Ghana.
church and the society, the authorities thought it wise to bring it to the domain as worth treating as a topic in the year 2003. At the ecumenical level it came to light that many people might have the opportunity to take part in discussions which may go a long way in reducing its incidence.

At the personal and interpersonal levels it has been realized that the incidence of HIV/AIDS was due to indiscipline which was not inculcated in the youth, implying that there was insufficient grounding in moral and sex education in schools as well as the churches leading to infidelity and sexual promiscuity. In a further reflection, it was noted that human beings were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and that each person is unique and valuable to God (Ps. 8:3-9; 139:14-18). Man has run away from his maker making him to become sinful and with this state of affairs he has been alienated from God. Man is therefore leading his own life devoid of decorum. It was realized also that sex is a gift which should only be enjoyed by people in marriage. The gathering was reminded that their body is the temple of the Almighty God and must not be toyed with; life of purity must be led by God’s creation.

It was reiterated that due to the spate of indiscipline on personal and interpersonal levels, society was pursuing immoral life with marital infidelity and sexual ‘looseness’ coupled with unhygienic practices. This phenomenon affects others but since the human being is peculiar he/she must face the music alone. Psalms 88:1-18; Job 19:1927; John 9:1-3 show that God identifies with the suffering of those in grief and they should recognize that their suffering may not necessarily be as a result of their sinful nature and they may not also be the worse sinners. Christians should therefore not condemn others (Lk. 18:9-14) and portray themselves as the only people who are
holy because sin could tempt anybody irrespective of one’s station in life (I Cor.10:12); Gal. 6:1-2).

Furthermore, Churches were entreated, as representatives and as the conscience of the nation to lend support to the suffering in every way possible. Through Biblical verses such as Gen. 1:27-31, Matt. 19:4-5, I Cor. 7:1-5 people should be reminded that the body is the sanctuary of God and so sex should be used responsibly since it is only for those who are in marital relationship. Faithfulness should always be a yardstick for marriage partners.

The 2004 Bible Week centred on the topic: God’s Word: Hope and life for all.

2004 God’s word: Hope and life for all.

This theme was chosen to mark the 200 years of celebration of Bible Society work globally since the Bible, the bedrock of Christianity would enable professors of Christianity to experience true life and live in hope in a chaotic world.

In an introduction, it was made clear that God brought creation, establishing order out of disorder as stated in Gen. 1:1-5; Is. 45:18-19. Because Jesus is hope and life, He gives victory and confidence for living as illustrated in Rom. 8:31-35, 37-39 and Col. 2:13-15.

Finally it was concluded that hope and life is not automatic; Christians should always be reminded that they need to obey the word of God and meditate on it daily and diligently, allowing it to change and influence lives as stated in James 1:19-25; Joshua 1:6-9; Ps.119; I Pet.

\[^{197}\text{Published by the BSG, designed and printed by Combert Impressions, Accra, 2004.}\]
2:1-2). In this direction, the Christian is being called and reminded that his being physically in
the world does not mean he is of the world; he should therefore be able to distinguish himself by
exhibiting a conduct that will give hope and assurance to the downtrodden in the society in
which he finds himself at all times.

The theme chosen for the 2005 Bible Week was God’s Unchanging word in a changing world.

The MLCC celebrated the week meaningfully and apparently, the theme was a reminder to
Christians that in spite of phenomenal changes globally the Lord Jesus Christ remains yesterday,
today and forever (Heb. 13: 8). Though there were changes evident in the world the power that
held the power (universe) together remains intact and constant and therefore there remains a time
for planting and harvesting and changes in the seasons continue to occur. The enduring and
changing nature of God and the word continues to give meaning to life and creation is not
thrown out whatsoever, despite the decay of society – Gen. 8:22; Ps. 119:89). The gathering was
reminded of their dual role as Christians and also as citizens at the same time.

The 2006 Bible Week focused on Integrity: National life and God’s word.

This theme was selected to create awareness among Christians and other stakeholders about
God’s willingness to look for people of integrity and uprightness with the view to transforming
the world into a better place to live in. It was noted that this was an opportune time for the topic

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198 2011 Bible Society of Ghana Week
199 Published by the BSG, designed and printed by Combert Impressions, Accra, 2006.
because there was a lack of integrity internationally because social evils abound and they were being perpetrated. Some of them are bribery and corruption, armed robbery, greed, indiscipline of various kinds and magnitude, intolerance and other negative attitudes not mentioned here. It was expected that this topic will lead to Ghanaians inculcating integrity into their personal lives and also incorporate lives nationwide.

There was emphasis on the fear of God and to allow integrity and decency to be guide in personal as well as private and public life. In the contemporary world, it was noted that integrity which has to do with uprightness, wholeness and soundness of character, has become a rare quality. A person of integrity is looked at as incorruptible and blameless and as one whose dealings with himself and with others are so transparent that he does not compromise his position either publicly or privately because he or she is an image of God. The gathering was advised to eschew double standards in all that they do since they owe the community a duty as salt of the earth and light of the world.

Theme for Bible Week for 2011 was God’s word: still transforming lives in a changing world.200

2011 God’s word: still transforming lives in a changing world.

Transformation is often used in the Bible to refer to a change in moral character, or a way of life, for the better. Throughout the history of humankind, the word of God has transformed the lives of both individuals and groups positively. It has gone further to transform the social, economic, political and religious lives of both individuals and groups. Sometimes, the transformation

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200 Published by the BSG, designed and printed by Combert Impressions, Accra, 2011.
comes in the form of physical change, such as from a poor condition of health to a better health condition. Most often it is from a poor moral, economic or political situation to a better one. From creation it is crystal clear that the word of God transformed the universe from “a formless and desolate” universe, to an orderly and beautiful world full of different types of creatures.

The following characters come to mind when we talk of economic transformation in the Bible. Jacob –Due to his unflinching faith in the Lord, he was blessed with wealth despite all the efforts made by Laban his brother-in-law, to keep Jacob from becoming rich. The greedy Gehazi had his life transformed and God used the prophet Elijah to economically change the life of the Widow of Zarephath.

Also through the word of God the kings of Israel followed the guidelines and instructions given them to rule the land. They were told not to choose just any one for the throne but to ensure that the chosen king is the choice of the Lord. He must be one of your own people; saith the Lord. Do not make a foreigner your king. The congregation reiterated the fact that righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to the people, and they saw it as a clarion call for all the Churches of the land in Ghana to pray every Sunday for God to grant wisdom to our Heads of State for peaceful leadership which may go a long way to enhance peaceful co-existence among the rank and file of the people. Yes, the word of God is still transforming life today, for many people of faith have come out publicly to proclaim transformations in their lives due to coming into contact with the word of God, either through hearing it read, or reading it themselves. At deliverance and revival services of the Churches testimonies are given in this regard.
In an attempt to do an assessment of Christian Home Week and Bible Week celebrations respectively during the period under consideration, this Chapter gives an overview of the historical material which was published for Christian discussion and reflection for the past ten years. As has been said already, not all the booklets and flyers were accessed owing to some challenges by the Bible Society of Ghana and the Christian Council of Ghana respectively. Most of the themes on Christian Home Week as enumerated already were on family as the focus, drawing attention to strategies that Christian families can adopt to survive in the light of the dynamics of the contemporary world.

It is worthy of note that throughout the programmes the family has been portrayed as the primary means of shaping the lives of the people in the society. It was also noted that the family has gone through a lot of technological change, in that some of the changes that had occurred had tended to undermine Christian attitudes and values to life patterns. On the other hand, the Bible Week themes were inclined towards social problems affecting the Ghanaian community. Biblical perspectives were used extensively to explain the issues at stake, quoting from Scripture in substantiating arguments and suggestions in order to give hope and assurance into the future for Christian believers. By and large all the themes were so far appropriate to Christian life. They, to a large extent, provide basic guidance to individuals, families, communities and the nation at large, to enable them cope with the exigencies of life and impact meaningfully as Christians who are termed ‘salt of the earth and light of the world.‘

Aware of the current moral confusion, it may be concluded that moral and religious education coupled with uprightness may be the possible way to shape the moral fibre of the society. The
only activities associated with the publication and celebration of the CHW/BWC is worthwhile Christian celebrations. There is the need to examine how they are able to achieve the desired impact speculated by the planners and organizers.

3.4 Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches and mainline Churches in Ecumenism

In his book *Mission in Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*, Kpobi posits that the Ghana Pentecostal Council and the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches have impacted positively in the transmission of the gospel. In fact they have spread their wings through the length and breadth of Ghana and Madina township is no exception. Even though the study under consideration does not directly deal with their operations within the Madina Local Council of Churches their activities/programmes are not poles apart with the mainline churches. The writer had an encounter with the following churches operating under the umbrella of the Ghana Pentecostal Council and the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches:

1. The Assemblies of God Church

2. The Church of Pentecost

3. The Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry

4. The International Central Gospel Church and

5. The Apostolic Church, Ghana

The Assemblies of God Church in Madina reports of some inter-Church relations with the Immanuel congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana which is close to them in the form

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of music festivals, debates, drama, and sporting activities. These programmes are organized periodically by the Departments within the Assemblies of God Church such as the youth, the choir and the men’s and women’s wings. According to Mr. Boamah Adjepong, the Administrator these activities take place reciprocally and they see themselves as belonging to the same Christian faith with an artificial boundary heading towards the same destiny in Christ.

The Church of Pentecost at Koonaa, otherwise known as Emmanuel reports of early morning prayer meetings coupled with Bible Studies where the Christian community around the area patronize a lot and according to Elder Gordon Agyeman one can emphatically say that participation cuts across all walks of life especially Christian organizations close by who join the believers in praise, worship and the study of the scriptures. Mr. Agyeman observes that activities like revivals and crusades attract Christians living in the catchment area which include those of the mainline denominations. He mentions that at some social events like football, volley ball and indoor games like ‘oware’ and ludo members of the departments in the church such as the men’s fellowship, the women’s wing, the choir and the youth invite their Christian brethren around the area in the socialization with the view to creating the necessary unity and cohesion expected of Christians.

At the International Central Gospel Church (Prayer Assembly) I was hosted by Pastor Foster Agyeman, one of the spiritual heads and Madam Stella Geli and Mr. Ebenezer Asibu-Bonney both Intercessors of the Church. My hosts report that on Thursday mornings between 9-11am there is prayer meeting which is open to the general public and it attracts people of different
denominations. On Fridays the prayer session begins at 6.30 pm and ends at 8.00 pm and they register huge attendance. They also organize yearly programmes which include Empowerment Conference and Raising Giants. In these events topics like business, marriage, career guidance and counseling and entrepreneurship are handled by experienced facilitators and since these programmes are publicized all and sundry participate to the admiration of all. On 14th February every year Valentine Day celebration is replaced by an Evangelism programme and members of the Church team up with other Christian churches around Abokobi, North Legon, Ashongman and the surrounding areas to reach the unreached with the word of God.

At the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry (CEM) I was privileged to meet with Pastor Charles Afile, an Associate Minister of CEM who spent quality time with me with regard to what they do as a Christian organization. According Pastor Afile at CEM there are so many educational and ministerial programmes which are not organized for CEM members alone but they are open to the general public including members from other denominational churches far and near. For example, the School of Ministry is organized for new converts and members from other Christian organizations from far and near register to participate. This takes three months to complete. This programme is organized for all new members of the church. Those from outside the church are free to go back to make an impact to their various Christian ministries.

Another programme worthy of mention is the Bible School which takes two years where courses like Basic Biblical beliefs and Systematic theology are taught. Successful candidates who wish to enter the full ministry get admission to the Pastoral Leadership School for a year to be fully
equipped for ministry of the Church at CEM. Christians from other denominations, I am told, do register and participate fully in the programme. They go back to their respective churches to beef up their evangelism activity. CEM also has an elaborate annual event called ‘Christ to the Rural World’. This is a week-long programme at a rural setting with Psalm 41 and Matthew 25 as their focus. Apart from engaging the rural folk with the word of God the Church hierarchy in conjunction with professionals like medical doctors, nurses, clinical psychologists and ministers and pastors of other Christian organizations who participate in the event do free medicals, surgery, other health screening exercises, for instance eye testing, Blood Pressure measurement accompanied by distribution of free medications to revamp the lives of the people. In addition free distribution of the following also takes place:

a. food and clothing (for the aged and the underprivileged),

b. Bibles for everybody;

c. Machetes for farmers in need of farming implements.

According to Pastor Charles Afile the departments in the church such as the choir, men’s ministry and the women’s wing organize programmes where churches in the neighbourhood are invited for participation and socialization. Other programmes like Empowerment Summits are also planned and participation is open to the general public including Christians. In all these events the organizers coordinate with the Local Council of Churches; needless to add that at the end of the day they make sure that participants who give their lives to Christ are encouraged to register with a Bible believing church to continue with their faith journey in Christ. So in essence some of their programmes are geared towards bringing the church to the community at large.
At the Apostolic Church, Ghana, I met with Apostle S.D.K. Osafo, the Area Superintendent for Madina and Pastor E.H. Anaman, a retired but energetic minister of the Church who gave me a nice reception. According to them even though the Apostolic Church, Ghana does not belong to the Local Council of Churches they are not ‘at loggerheads’ with them. Some of the programmes they organize attract members of the general public including Christians because they believe that their work is to make disciples irrespective of the person’s station in life. Apostle Osafo remembers with nostalgia the launching of Bible Week some time ago at the Church where Mr. Jude Hama, then General Secretary of the Scripture Union was the Guest Speaker, all within the confines of ecumenism. According to them some time ago the local Methodist Church threw invitation to their youth in a programme which he believes brought the youth of the two churches together. On the day of my visit there was ‘Tally’ and the attendance was not members of the Church alone but people from all walks of life including Christians of other denominations nearby. They also once in a while organize annual programmes like Health Awareness activity where everybody within reach is invited to access their health.

Apostle Osafo said he believes that Christian unity does not necessarily connote physical togetherness but even unity in diversity can do wonders in our contemporary world. This lends credence to the fact that some of the programmes organized by the above ministries are not different from those organized and planned by the Local Council of Churches in the township. It is believed that in God’s own time all Christian organizations will come under one umbrella geared towards a common goal or destiny. From the foregoing one can deduce that some ecumenical activities between the Pentecostals/Charismatics and mainline churches are on-going in Madina albeit in a different manner.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the programmes and activities of the Local Council of Churches, Madina, Accra. The purpose of this study was to examine the activities and impact of the local council of churches at Madina area, a suburb in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This chapter presents the findings of the study through graph and tables. The findings were generated from semi-structured questionnaire and interviews.

This chapter is on the data analysis with reference to the following research questions: What are the main contributions of the grassroots ecumenism in the township of Madina, Accra? What impact do the activities of the local council of churches have on the people of the area and the way forward?

4.1.1 Data analysis

The researcher used frequency distributions to organize and analyze the data and presented the categorical variables by means of tables and graph. The tables reflected the numerical values obtained for a particular value as well as the percentage of the sample.

4.1.2 Socio-demographic background (bio-data) of respondents

This section represents the bio-data of respondents. The study targeted two groups of respondents: the executive council members and the church members in the area. The first group of
respondents was the executive council members. They were targeted because they are in charge of the ecumenical society in the area and will be able to outline the activities of the society better for this study. The second group of respondents was the various church members living in the study area. The members in this group are the direct beneficiaries of the ecumenical society and will be in the position to answer the study question better. The table below indicates the level of involvement of each denomination in the study and the demographic data and percentages of the executive council members as well as church members.

Table 1: Demographic background of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Denominations)</th>
<th>Executive members</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Church members</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.P Church</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: field survey, 2013
Table 2: Marital status of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Executive members</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Church members</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: field survey, 2013

Table 3: Ages of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Respondents</th>
<th>Executive members</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Church members</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: field survey, 2013

Table 1, 2 and 3 represent respondents’ Christian Denomination, Marital status and Age respectively. Out of the 5 executive members under the local council of churches at Madina, 20% of the respondents each were from Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, Evangelical Presbyterian and Lutheran Churches respectively. 80% were married and 20% widowed. Majority of the
respondents (60%) were above sixty years of age while 40% of them were between ages 31 and 60 as shown in Table 3. On the part of the Church members, out of 291 respondents used for this study, 159 (54.6%) were selected from the Presbyterian Church, 36 (12.3%) from Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 36 (12.3%) were from Baptist Church, 36 (12.3%) also from Methodist Church and 24 (8.2%) were selected from Lutheran Church. The bio-data analysis also shows that married respondents outnumbered the bachelors and spinsters among the Church members.

4.1.3: What are the main contributions of the grassroots ecumenism in the township of Madina, Accra?

This research question aimed at examining the main contributions of the grassroots ecumenism in the township. It also investigated respondents’ knowledge of the presence of the local council of Churches in the town. Below indicates Executive Council Members’ view of the Madina Local Council of Churches.

Table 4: Executive council members view of the MLCC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Main purpose</th>
<th>Other purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>To unite Churches</td>
<td>For the purpose of serving God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Understanding among various Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.P.</td>
<td>Unity among member Churches</td>
<td>Oneness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>To foster unity</td>
<td>Oneness in the Lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>To unite all Christian Churches</td>
<td>Churches unity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2013
All the respondents, both the Executive and the Church members said they were fully aware of the Council in the town. On the question of the main contributions of the grassroots or local level Ecumenism in the township of Madina, majority of the executive members said implementing of national programmes such as Bible Week and Christian Home Week celebrations and socialization, clean up exercises, fund raising in support of evangelism and recreational activities foster the needed unity and cooperation. This also promotes unity among members of the township since some of the church members are the same people in the township.

Other activities stated by the executive members were as follows: 60% of the executive members said implementing of national programmes such as Bible week celebration, Christian home week celebration and socialization while 40% of the respondents said the Council contributes immensely to the town’s development through activities such as clean up exercises, fund raising in support of evangelism and recreational activities.

On the part of the church members, 70% representing 204 respondents said the Council contributes a lot to the town through Christian home week celebration, fun games, Bible week celebration and Easter picnic while 17.5% representing 51 respondents said the Council contributes to the town development through fund raising services and clean up exercises. All the respondents said they have ever heard of Christian home week and bible week celebrations in the area.
4.1.4 Research question 2, what impact do the activities of the local council of churches have on the people of the area?

The question sought to find out the effect of the council’s activities on the people in the township. All the 5 executive members representing 100% indicate that the activities foster unity, peace and cooperation among community members. It also promotes spiritual growth, moral sensitization and social harmony among the people.

On the part of the church members, 186 (64%) of the respondents agree with the executive members that the Council helps to promote and foster unity and cooperation among the Churches in the area. 75 (25.7%) of them said it helps to encourage mass education on moral training, parenting and conflict management while 48 (16.4%) of them indicate that it helps in raising funds for the Bible Society for evangelism and spread of the word of God in schools and in the community. All the respondents overwhelmingly state that the activities of the council are relevant to them as Christians and as a nation.

Diagram 1: Evaluation of Local council of churches activities by members

Sources: Field Survey, 2013
4.1.5 On the question ‘what is the general attendance level for such programmes?  

The table below indicates a low attendance level of the Church members’ participation in the Local Council activities at Madina area.

**Table 5: Attendance level of Ecumenical Programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage suggested by</th>
<th>Percentage of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.P.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: field survey, 2013

Church authorities indicated that members’ participation of the local Council activities is reducing year by year and more effective planning and interesting activities should be organized and church leaders should therefore be educated on the benefits of the ecumenical activities as a whole to help increase the participation of various Church members.

4.1.6 What is the way forward?

The research question 3 aimed at finding out the way forward for the Council. Stated below are some suggestions and recommendations by the executive members and church members to help
improve the activities of the Local Council. On the way forward, the study reveals that 5 (100%) of the executive members under the Local Council stated that members and leaders of the various Churches should be more committed and dedicated. They should also plan all their various Church activities in consultation with the Council, to avoid clashes between Local Council of Churches programmes to minimize absenteeism and apathy at ecumenical programmes and activities.

There is always the need to choose Executives from each of the various Churches to serve on the council. Three representing (60%) of the executive members suggested that the Council should make their programmes more attractive and interesting, 2 (40%) of them were of the view that the Council should engage in intensive education on their activities, and adequate publicity should be made to make members aware of the programmes and activities and that announcements made in the chapels are not enough. Publicity should go beyond that, for example, the employment of banner and AM as well as FM publicity should be added to augment what is currently on the ground in order to create more awareness.

On the other hand, 291 (100%) respondents of the Church members state that it is very important for all Churches to come together to foster unity and cooperation for better development. One hundred and eighty six (64%) of the respondents suggested that the programmes should be organized at least three times in a year. They were also of the view that the executive members should visit all the Churches at least once every month to educate members on their activities, while 123 (42%) of the respondents suggested that all churches should be more involved in the activities of the Council.
Publicity in all forms should be carried out at least two weeks prior to the programme or activity. Members in the various Churches should be involved in the activities of the council by assigning them duties to perform. All the respondents stated that members should be encouraged to participate fully in all programmes of the Council. There should be proper dissemination of information since this is very important for the way forward of the Council. Representatives from all the Churches in the area should be made to serve on the executive board of the Council.

4.1.7 Summary

The foregoing makes nakedly clear that grassroots ecumenism is on-going in the township of Madina by the Churches and both members and the executives of the council are, to a large extent, playing the role expected of them; there has also been some measure of positive impact on the lives of the people, but there is some room for improvement. It appears with the population explosion the tempo with which the Local Council of Churches began about three decades ago has gone down. This may be due to some human challenges such as socio-economic and other factors of the Church members as well as the entire community. Since the Council has come to stay and operating, strategies should be evolved to keep its head above water and this compels everyone to put his/her hand to the wheel.

As already stated the researcher did some interviews (unstructured) with the leaders of the Churches pertinent to the research under study and the following were the responses or findings: The first information given by the leaders was the numerical strength of their denominations, which according to them was dense on paper, but the active and committed members were about
half the actual number of members who attend Church regularly and this affects participation in activities in the Church.

Against this backdrop the leaders were unanimous in agreeing that attendance level at ecumenical activities in the township had come down drastically compared to the numbers at the inception of the Council when Madina was a small settlement town. Some of the reasons alluded to, they contended, were that most of the Churches had become self-sufficient – that is they had settled down and having attained maturity they feel they could handle their activities singlehandedly without any dependence from any quarter whatsoever.

Some also complain that they normally have their annual programmes planned before they receive notification concerning the celebration of the two annual ecumenical programmes – Christian Home Week and Bible Week celebrations. Another case in point was that some of the old people who saw the beginning of ecumenism in Madina township had left the scene either through death or relocation leaving the organization of programmes in the hands of the current members. The weak ones at home stated with nostalgia the commitment with which some of them handled the programmes when they were very young; they therefore complained bitterly that that devotion is no more.

At times some of the elderly people complain that the youth accuse them of having passed their prime and they should therefore leave the responsibility for them to manage and manage alone. They (the youth) also complain that some of the programmes are not attractive enough and this
gives them room for showing apathy or boycotting the programmes entirely except during the Easter when they join their peers in sporting and other related activities. Still with the youth it appears some of them have registered with some professional and academic institutions to attend classes in the evenings and at times at the weekends with the view to enhancing their chances for upgrading in their respective careers. They only attend during their free or leisure time.

Some church leaders also complain about the timing of the programmes (February for Bible Week and May for Christian Home Week), a time when they claim they have to plan and supervise programmes which had already been lined up for execution by their respective Headquarters. Here the very people who are supposed to ginger up their members to attend the LCC activities get engaged in equally important activities of their Churches. Some of the reasons appeared to be attitudinal and evasive. They just refuse to take part; nevertheless, they open their chapels for the celebration, even when they do not take part.

Some of the leaders complain of lack of employment on the part of the youth and the current cost of living which the youth contend is telling adversely on their lives thus affecting their participation in most Church activities, not only with the LCC programmes. Some of the young men and women also claim that the themes or topics lacked understanding; they should therefore be couched in a simple language which could attract them to fully participate.

Notwithstanding the above most of the leaders claimed that the necessary impact for both Church and non-church members of the township had been felt. According to some of them through the
celebrations, some registered members, who for one reason or another were not attending Church had come back to join their friends to worship God and through that they had resumed the former roles which they played in their various groups. Also almost any time there was a function new members attend and some of them eventually register to be members of the Church. The leaders believe that all was not lost and they promised to do all in their power to ginger up their members for a fuller participation next time around.

It is noteworthy that Vida Felicity Akua Asima who conducted a similar research in Accra New Town some seven years ago shares some of the concerns expressed in this study. She however, did not complain much about low attendance at functions. This might be due to the fact that some of the pioneers of the Local Council of Churches were alive at the time and apart from their deep involvement in the formulation and execution of the programmes and activities of the Local Council of Churches, they could also give a supporting hand to the up-and-coming generation unlike the situation in Madina where with population explosion some members had relocated to places beyond the Madina township even though some maintain their affinity with the Churches.

The following were some observations by the researcher:

Apart from the Catholic Church almost all the schools in the public system are being controlled and maintained by the government of the day and Christian religious instruction which used to be ‘compulsory’ is no more the case. What is on the curriculum is Religious and Moral

Education where the pupil is exposed to some sort of general religious education and morals without reference to a particular faith; it is therefore the responsibility of Christian parents and guardians to find time and space at home to instill into them proper moral training and uprightness along Christian lines.

The Christian Home Week and Bible Week celebrations are doing a lot in this direction because during these celebrations some parents bring their children to the Church for a good exposure. Aside the moral training which the children are exposed to unconsciously, the parents themselves learn to socially promote harmony among themselves as Christians and since some of the people who attend these functions are not Christians it creates an opportunity of learning to live among unbelievers who make time to attend the celebrations and this is a good avenue of evangelism for the unreached.

Also through the participation of these programmes there comes the promotion of good family life and healthy relationship among couples. It is also on record that through these functions Church members are able to tolerate each other irrespective of their denominations and faith and at the end of the day spiritual growth is enhanced for the benefit of believers and the gospel is made open for non-believers and traditionalists alike.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Five which constitutes the completion of the study is meant to review the outstanding points examined in the work and a summary of each is outlined. The recommendations which are based on an analysis of the findings are suggested. Finally, the conclusions of the work are stated.

5.2 SUMMARY

The work was conducted to narrate and examine the ecumenical activities of the Madina Local Council of Churches over the period 2000-2012 and to appraise the impact of the activities on the individual as a Christian, the Church and the society as a whole. Against this background, the study looked at the historical overview of Church Councils, ecumenical movements and their undertaking in Ghana. It has mainly examined the formation of the Madina Local Council of Churches and its two major and other ecumenical activities. It finally analyzed and evaluated the impact of the Council’s ecumenical activities on the individual Christian, the Church and the society in general.

Chapter one dealt with the general overview of Madina Local Council of Churches, Christ’s teaching on Church unity, the growth of Ecumenism, the significance of Ecumenism and Ecumenism in Ghana. It also reviewed some existing literature on ecumenism in Ghana.
Chapter Two looked at a short historical sketch of mainline Churches in Ghana and the impact of missionary activities on life in Ghana and some Church Councils in Ghana.

Chapter Three dealt with the programmes of the Madina Local Council of Churches as well as the summaries and discussions of the literature and contents of the two major national programmes of the Madina Local Council of Churches organized annually, namely Christian Home Week and Bible Week Celebrations respectively. The chapter scrutinized the available learning booklets and flyers designed for discussing the themes. A total of ten booklets on CHWC and seven on BWC were investigated accordingly.

Chapter Four was meant to test the perception that local level (grassroots) ecumenical activities have the potential of enhancing unity, stability and growth of the Church in general if well taken care of at the local levels. It also looked at the assumption that the more effective involvement of various categories of Church members in the two nationally planned programmes as well as other locally organized activities the greater the likelihood of a meaningful impact on the individual members, the local Council, the Church and the wider community.

To evaluate the truth or otherwise of the perceptions, primary sources were used, such as interviews, personal and participant observation and a questionnaire method were utilized. These were employed to determine the religious affiliation of the members, the organization of the two ecumenical programmes, that is Christian Home Week and Bible Week celebrations, the level of participation of the various categories of membership of the Madina Local Council of
Churches, their knowledge of the ecumenical activities as well as the relevance of such activities and programmes to them as Church members and Christians.

From the data analysis a conclusion was drawn that the leadership was playing its role, in spite of the lukewarm attitude of some of them. Views from church members as well as the executive are a clear indication that the programmes and activities of the MLCC were leading to social cohesion and unity, but for obvious reasons some of the young people were not fully participating in the ecumenical as well as other locally planned activities of the Council and because of that they would not be fully impacted. The above findings form the basis of the conclusion of the study which is depicted in the last chapter.

There was enough evidence that involvement was due to some economic factors and organizational bottlenecks. The participants, against the background of low involvement made some recommendations to address the situation to help attain more ecumenical results to their liking in the future.

Chapter Five takes care of Summary, Recommendation and Conclusion, for the way forward; there was a clear indication that there had been some element of success but there is room for improvement since it was realized that executive members should be more committed to their role with the view to influencing their members to be more committed in both Church activities and the ecumenical programmes of the Council.
Most of the workers in the Church in Madina, Accra commute to the central city of Accra, Tema and other places, distances ranging between fifteen and twenty five kilometers and transportation home after work in the evenings is a challenge hence the inability on the part of some members to show up at functions which are normally held in the evenings, but some of the reasons are attitudinal. Late comers to the activities are not able to benefit; at times they do not attend at all since they complain that they have some social and economic obligations to grapple with. Sometimes attendance at functions is almost left to the host denomination which is frustrating. There should be full participation to bring about the needed impact. Even though unity and cohesion were achieved some of the youth, as already said showed apathy; they complain that some programmes are not youth friendly.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It goes without saying that some measure of success has been achieved so far during the period under study even though some strategies could have been put in place to maximize the gains so far achieved. For example: Leadership should be more proactive and committed in order to attract more attention from both members and non-Church members in the area of consideration. The leadership is therefore urged on to be up and doing to influence their members to follow suit.

According to the sages variety is the spice of life; it would therefore be advisable and as much as possible to invite experts from outside the community as facilitators instead of local people during programmes. Tenure of Council executive should be adhered to, to avert any suspicion on the part of the executive who may hold on to ‘power’ beyond the stipulated period. Also the
need to do evaluation or appraisal of activities be it nationally planned programmes or locally organized ones cannot be over-emphasized since it will enable the Council to determine its strengths and weaknesses with the view to addressing them adequately for the good of the Council and as far as possible political partisanship should be avoided during programmes; this may bring bad blood among members.

The locally planned programmes, for example, eye testing should be undertaken more regularly as a solution to some of the social and economic problems in the locality. General health screening could also be organized by the LCC for both church members and the general public as the church’s contribution of their social services to the community. Through that, it is believed that non-Church members may consider enrolling in some of the Churches.

Backsliders may also be lured to rescind their decision of staying away from the fellowship of the Church. There should be frequent interaction among the leadership of the various Churches themselves in the form of exchange of pulpit and other joint programmes on issues of common societal interest affecting and involving not only the leadership but also the group executives of churches forming the Madina Local Council of Churches. A more innovative means could be an avenue to Christian witness for example the world wide communion service held in October annually could involve all churches of the local council of churches on rotational basis just as the two nationally planned programmes are organized.
The youth in the Council of Churches should be mobilized not only during Easter activities but at
occasions in the course of the year for an activity or programme that could bring church unity.
Activities like sports and games, Bible Quiz competitions, Bible Studies, picnic and choral
festivals could be organized not only during the Easter festivities but quarterly to foster the
needed unity and cohesion. Also a joint hymnody/hymnology programme could be organized
involving two, three or more choirs featuring on rotational basis at different venues. In so doing
congregation members may come to appreciate the meaning, composition and authors of hymns
or songs hitherto unknown to them. This could also serve as a way of socialization for members
and being a common platform for learning from others, needless to add that it will help to check
deviant membership of the youth.

Unfortunately and most of the time materials meant for celebrations are not received in good
time which is a set-back of the MLCC. According to the Calendar of the Madina Local Council
of Churches, programmes take place in February (BWC) and May (CHWC) and since these
programmes cannot be planned or organized effectively without the booklets and flyers, the two
bodies namely, Christian Council of Ghana/National Catholic Secretariat and the Bible Society
of Ghana should be alerted and reminded to ensure early dissemination of the materials. This
will facilitate the successful organization or planning of the events.

It is also recommended that both national and local programmes should be publicized
adequately. Announcements made during church service alone do not appear to be sufficient
enough. Frequency Modulation (FM) and AM networks or stations may be implored to relay
messages concerning the celebrations; other forms of information could also be displayed at
strategic points in the township for the consumption of the general public. The youth, as far as possible, should be involved in the planning and execution of some of the programmes to offer them the recognition and opportunity of full participation.

It is a fact that not all Church members would get the opportunity to attend these evening programmes due to personal but good reasons and it is therefore recommended that the various churches could use the materials at seminars and workshops for the benefit of all and sundry. Also, if need be, and at the appropriate time, the materials should be translated into the local languages to enhance meaningful teaching, learning and discussion at various group levels of the Churches. It is rather unfortunate that booklets and other materials used for the celebrations were difficult to come by; in fact they do not come on time. They normally come at a time when almost all local church programmes had already been lined up making it difficult at times to include them in the ecumenical programmes.

It is expected that each Church should have copies of these materials on their database which could be tapped for reference as and when necessary. The Christian Council of Ghana/National Catholic Secretariat and the Bible Society of Ghana could also do well in this direction. We should evolve a strategy to ensure timely dissemination of the relevant materials to facilitate research at all times.

Churches could come together and create the needed awareness for job creation so as to keep the youth in the Church because some of them complain of lack of job opportunities which make them feel reluctant to stay in the Church. Guidance and Counselling centres could also be
opened to guide the youth on their careers and scholarship could be created for needy but brilliant students and pupils to enable them continue with their education or vocations where necessary.

One of the programmes that attracted members to get involved in the local Council of Churches in Madina at the initial stages was literacy programme where all the major languages were taught by some members of the Council. But as the population started to grow with the Churches this activity became a thing of the past. It is recommended that this issue should be revisited and where possible reintroduced to enable those who cannot read and write in their own native language to do so.

The Council may also do well to initiate measures to form an organization to help students to upgrade themselves in both the BECE and the WASSCE examinations to enable them gain admission to institutions for continuous education (tertiary) or vocational training. The idea, it is believed will open avenues for the students to be gainfully employed in various disciplines or skills and an impact may be felt within the Council and the community in general.

The Council within the spirit of helping the underprivileged could create awareness for voluntary contributions to the aged/marginalized, orphaned and mentally/physically challenged in the community to enable them feel at home at all times. Affirmation of denominational commonalities and understanding of their varied differences should be a sine qua non in the day-to-day activities of the local council of churches.
It is also expected that this research work, apart from serving as a historical record for the Madina Local Council of Churches it will be a source of academic pursuit for other scholars in the field of local level ecumenism.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Theologians, missionaries and like-minded persons were by no means agreed that Christianity was brought to the West African coast in a broken and divided form.\(^{203}\) Obviously, the Churches which were founded by the missionaries followed the strategies of their forebears. Gradually these Churches gained independence from their ‘missionary fathers’ but the identity from their parents was not done away with. In a way they still held on to their mother’s ‘apron strings.’ Based on the priestly prayer at Jn.17:21 the mainline (historic) Churches decided to come together in an organic form, with the name ‘The Church of Christ in Ghana’.\(^{204}\)

The mainline Churches in Ghana were not the only Churches in this enterprise; some other Churches on the African continent were also involved. In Ghana, the main stumbling block was the integration of the ordained ministry between the Episcopalians and the others. After a series of negotiations for about two decades, the Churches involved started pulling out from the negotiations one after the other until the whole venture became an exercise in futility; nevertheless there has been peaceful co-existence among them – abandoning organic union but believing in unity in diversity which had taken root since the advent of Christianity from the mid-fifteenth century.

\(^{204}\) Kpobi, Mission, 50-51.
The planting of Christianity on the African continent was not the work of a single group of missionaries but a host of bodies representing different strands of Christian tradition. Historically therefore, Africa has been exposed to a Christianity with several images engendered by different Churches with different traditions. Setri Nyomi puts it another way when he said that denominationalism had been the bane of Christianity from the seventeenth century since most of the missionaries came from different cultures overseas with varied modus operandi. Sequel to this notion Nyomi posits that this has for a long time led to a Church mission in a divided form. He further opines that Churches in a local council fashion should go further in engaging in common witness and action showing commitment and in concert with other Churches to achieve a common goal.

Issues of organic union or otherwise have been embraced by the Christian community to ensure the unity of the Church. The mainline Churches in Madina, Accra initially saw this as a vision worth pursuing so they came together to do mission irrespective of their various ways of doing things. The researcher had no alternative but to agree that with unity in diversity they had achieved some measure of success.

In spite of the above suggestions the researcher will further like to urge the elders in the Churches which constitute the local council of churches to marshal efforts in trying to bridge the gap between the youth and the elderly in their witness. The youth, as of today complain of widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and insecurity; in fact they are even more concerned about

207 Nyomi, ‘Christian World Communions in Africa’,
the increase of unemployment, corruption, nepotism, poverty, diseases, drug abuse, just to mention a few. They contend that since independence the Ghanaian adults plan for the youth and only target them as recipients of their planned programmes and activities. There appears to be many problems which affect the youth, but when adults plan for them they fall short of understanding the issues from perspective and are quick to move their judgmental attitudes from their own perspectives, which worsen the problems rather than solve them. Even though they are involved in public assignments such as electioneering campaigns they are not deemed fit for participation in decision making. The structures on the ground make the youth to always be dependent on the adults and they are never allowed to be self-reliant or to take responsibilities they could take, thus keeping them as children.

Still an area of conflict between the youth and the elderly has to do with leadership in the Church. Both the elderly and youth have a role to play and we need to balance the scales. The old need to train and prepare the young to take their place. The young also need to learn from the old so that God’s will for future generations will be materialized. It is therefore important to the youth in the area of leadership to be prepared and mentored for higher positions in future. In sum, leaders, in general and particularly Christian leaders must note that leadership is about empowering others to carry on from where they leave off. This being so, leaders are to be intentional in finding, disciplining, modeling, and encouraging the younger generation to take after them to maintain continuity at all times.

208 Celebrate Ghana’s Golden Jubilee (Christian Home Week, 2007 (Accra: CCG and Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat, 2007), 15.
In this last chapter suggestions had been offered and if addressed positively it will go a long way to maintain the gains so far made on the ground. It is believed that notwithstanding some pitfalls in the course of the study and the hindrances within the Local Council of Churches in Madina township the study will act as a springboard for future researchers to make more positive inroads on the subject. It is reiterated that to a very large extent the programmes and activities of Madina Local Council of Churches have brought about unity, cohesion and cooperation among the members of the various churches and eventually affecting the socio-economic and marital life of the people and some members of the community at large.
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**Institutional Booklets/Literature**

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Methodist Church, Methodist Hymn Book 948


Proposals for Church Union in Ghana - The Inauguration and Constitution of the United Church. 1973 (Preface)

Christian Home Week topics:

2001- Rid Your Home of Domestic Violence*
2002 - Singleness and Single Parenting; *
2005 - Fidelity in Marriage and Relations*;
2006 - Are We Poor In Ghana?*
2007 - Celebrate Ghana’s Golden Jubilee;*
2008 - Rape and Defilement, A Challenge to the Family;*
2009 - Child Labour and Trafficking: A Challenge to the Family and the Ghana Society;*
2010 - Social Change – A Challenge to the Church and Society; *
2011 - Broken Marriage and Its Impact On the Family and Beyond;*
2012 - Parenting – A Journey of Love and Patience.*

Bible Week Celebration topics

2001 - The Bible and the Challenges of the New Millennium: Morality and Good Governance**
2002 – National Reconstruction – The Bible Speaks,**
2003 – The Bible, the Church and the Challenge of HIV/AIDS**
2004 – God’s word, hope and life for all**
2005 – God’s Unchanging Word up a Changing World**
2006 - Integrity: National Life and God’s Word**
2011 - God’s Word, still transforming lives**.

*Published by the Christian Council of Ghana and the Department of Pastoral Care of the National Catholic Secretariat respectively.

** Published by the Bible Society of Ghana, designed and printed by Combert Impressions, Accra.
Dictionaries/Encyclopaedia


Internet Sources


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN MADINA, ACCRA

Questionnaire for Church Members under the Local Council of Churches, Madina, Accra.

I am a graduate student of the University of Ghana, conducting research on the Local Council of Churches in Madina-Accra. I should be grateful if you could assist me with this study by completing this questionnaire. The information you provide is strictly confidential. Thank you.

1. Please state your Christian denomination


3. Do you have children? Yes ( ) No ( )

4. Please tick your age group: Youth 15-30 Adult 31-60 Above 60

5. Have you any idea about the Madina Local Council of Churches Yes ( ) No ( )

6. If yes, are you a member and what are they meant for?


8. Are you aware that some of the MLCC’s programmes are celebrated nationally? Yes ( ) No ( )

   a. What do you think national programmes celebrated at the local levels are meant to achieve? Please tick:

   b. Mass education on moral training b. To foster cooperation among churches c. To solve ethical problems in society d. To encourage Bible Society raise funds. E. All of the above.

9. Have you ever heard of Christian Home Week celebration? Please tick Yes ( ) No ( )

10. Do you know about Bible Week Celebration? Please tick Yes ( ) No ( )

11. If yes, to 9 and 10, do you participate in such programmes in your Church? Please tick.

   a. Regularly b. not regularly.

13. Can you also recall the topic for Bible Week celebration for this year or any of the past years? Please tick: Yes ( )  No ( )  If yes, state any one of such topics. …………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

14. How relevant is the topic to you as a Christian?  a. Spiritual growth  b. moral growth  c. social unity  Others, specify.

    a. Does your church organize programmes that foster unity with other churches? Please tick. Yes ( )  No ( )  If yes, state some of such programmes. a. ……  b. ……………………….. c

15. How do you rate what has been done so far in MLCC? Please tick:  a. Excellent  b. Very good  c. Good  d. Fair

16. What programmes would you suggest that your Church organizes at the local level to bring together Christian churches in your area?  a. ………………………………………  b. ………………………………………

17. Do you think LCCs need more of such gatherings? Please tick  Yes ( )  No ( )

18. What do you gain from the activities of the Local Council of Churches in your area?

19. Does your local council organize outreach programmes to other people in the community?

    Yes ( )  No ( )

20. Suggest the way forward to improve upon such programmes

    a. ………………………………………………………………………………………
    b. ………………………………………………………………………………...
APPENDIX 2

ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN MADINA, ACCRA

Questionnaire for Executive Members under the Local Council of Churches, Madina, Accra.

I am a graduate student of the University of Ghana, conducting research on the Local Council of Churches in Madina-Accra. I should be grateful if you could assist me with this study by completing this questionnaire. The information you provide is strictly confidential. Thank you.

Please state your Christian denomination


Widowed ( ) Others, specify

22. Do you have children? Yes ( ) No ( )

23. Please tick your age group: Youth 15-30 Adult 31-60 Above 60

24. Have you any idea about the Madina Local Council of Churches Yes ( ) No ( )

25. If yes, are you a member and what are they meant for?


27. Are you aware that some of the MLCC’s programmes are celebrated nationally? Yes ( ) No ( )

C. What do you think national programmes celebrated at the local levels are meant to achieve? Please tick:

d. Mass education on moral training b. To foster cooperation among churches c. To solve ethical problems in society d. To encourage Bible Society raise funds. E. All of the above.

28. Have you ever heard of Christian Home Week celebration? Yes ( ) No ( )

29. Do you know about Bible Week Celebration? Yes ( ) No ( )

30. If yes, to 9 and 10, do you participate in such programmes in your Church? Please tick.

b. Regularly b. not regularly.

31. How often is the programme celebrated in a year? a. Annually b. Bi-annually c. Three times in a year.
32. Can you also recall the topic for Bible Week celebration for this year or any of the past years? Please tick: Yes ( ) No ( ) If yes, state any one of such topics. .................................................................................................................................

33. How relevant is the topic to you as a Christian? a. Spiritual growth b. moral growth c. social unity. Others, specify.
   b. Does your church organize programmes that foster unity with other churches? Please tick. Yes ( ) No ( ) If yes, state some of such programmes. a. ................. b. .................................. c

34. How do you rate what has been done so far in MLCC? Please tick: a. Excellent b. Very good c. Good d. Fair

35. What programmes would you suggest that your Church organizes at the local level to bring together Christian churches in your area? a. ........................................... b. ...........................................

36. Do you think LCCs need more of such gatherings? Please tick Yes ( ) No ( )

37. What do you gain from the activities of the Local Council of Churches in your area?

38. Does your local council organize outreach programmes to other people in the community? Yes Yes ( ) No ( )

39. Suggest the way forward to improve upon such programmes
   b. ........................................................................................................................
      ..........................................................
APPENDIX 3

Madina Local Council of Churches – Current Executive set-up

1. Rev. Edward Serekou-Younge - Chairman
2. Mr. B.N.L. Lamptey - Vice-Chairman
3. Mr. Harrison Wueve - Secretary
4. Mr. Henry Nartey - Asst. Secretary
5. Ms. Salome Owusu - Treasurer
6. Ms. Cecilia Essuman - Financial Secretary
## APPENDIX 4

### MLCC Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Number of Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>1453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic Church</td>
<td>3651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist Church</td>
<td>1402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>7184</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5

Interviews (Unstructured)

Rev. Daniel Sakitey – Programme Manager, Christian Council of Ghana

Rev. E. Serekou-Younge – Minister-In-Charge, Lutheran Church, Madina

Rev. E.A. Pobee – District Minister, Presbyterian Church, Madina

Rev. Dr. B.F. Quamson, District Pastor, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Madina

Rev. Ferguson Sena Quarcoo – Associate Pastor, EP, Madina

Rev. Father Charles Owusu-Ansah – Parish Priest, Roman Catholic Church, Madina

Rev.Fr. A. Quaye, Parish Priest, St. Peter’s Anglican Church, Madina

Mr. Onwona Appah, Administrator, Ebenezer Methodist Church, Madina

Mr. B.N.L. Lamptey, Vice President, Madina Local Council of Churches.

Mrs. Esther Mensah, immediate past Secretary, Madina Local Council of Churches

Mr. Boamah Adjepong, ADMINISTRATOR, Assemblies of God Church, Madina

Elder Gordon Agyemang, Koonaa, (Emmanuel) Assembly, Church of Penetecost, Madina

Pastor Foster Agyeman, ICGC (Prayer Assembly), Madina

Mr. Ebenezer Asibu-Bonney, Intgercessor, Prayer Assembly, Madina

Mad. Stella Geli, Intercessor, ICGC (Prayer Assembly), Madina

Pastor Charles Afie, Associate Pastor, CEM, Madina

Apostle S.D.K. Osafo, Area Superintendent, The Apostolic Church, Ghana, Madina Assembly

Pastor E.H. Anaman, The Apostolic Church, Ghana, Madina Assembly
Appendix 6

Sample Programme for Christian Home Week

Call to worship -- Host Pastor

Choruses/Praise time -- Congregation

Prayer -- A Minister/lay person from Partner Church

Scripture Reading -- Panel (3 local languages)

Topic/Discussion -- (Different facilitators)

Offertory -- Mass Singing Band

Question Time/Forum -- Congregation/facilitators

Dedication of Offertory -- Member from partner Church

Announcements -- A member from Secretariat

Closing Hymn -- Congregation

Prayer/Benediction -- Partner Minister
Appendix 7

Sample for Bible Week Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Bible Week national launch (in a particular Region)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Talk/Symposium on a related topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Choral Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Film Show/Drama on a selected topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Adults Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Bible Sabbath rally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Bible Sunday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Forenoon service at a local congregation
- Joint rallies in afternoon/evening