



History of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana

1828, The Beginning- The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) started as the Basel Evangelical Mission Society from Basel Switzerland. The first four missionaries arrived in Christiansburg, Osu, Gold Coast (now Ghana) at the request of the Governor, Major de Richelieu, who wanted to improve the moral life of Europeans there. They were Karl F. Salbach, Gottlieb Holzwarth, Johannes Henke and Johannes Gottlob Schmidt. All died within three years from malaria.

1832 A second team was sent- Andreas Riis, Peter Petersen Jaeger, Dr. Christian Frederich Heinze, two of whom also died. Andreas Riis survived because of the intervention of a traditional herbalist. In 1835 he moved from the coast to Akropong to seek a healthier climate and less negative influence from the Europeans to a place where people were more open to the gospel. He founded Christ Presbyterian church, which is the first Presbyterian church in Ghana. After 12 years there were no converts and 8 missionaries had died. The Basel mission wanted to abandon Ghana. Then King of Akuapem, Nana Addo Dankwa 1 told Riis “If you want to succeed bring Africans who understand us.”

The West Indian Breakthrough- In 1843 the Basel mission brought 24 Moravian missionaries from Jamaica, freed African slaves who were Christians. They understood the culture and climate better. People like John Hall and Alexander Worthy Clark became the first Presbyter and Deacon. This was the turning point. The church started to grow fast, first on South-Eastern Ghana and Akuapem, then spread to Asante and the North. The impact of the Caribbean Christians was in evangelism, spirituality (our hymns and liturgy), social action (education, agriculture, potable water and architecture), development of vernacular, and church leadership.

During World War 1- The Basel missionaries, who were German were deported by the British. Scottish missionaries from the Church of Scotland took over. In 1918, the first joint Synod of the Ga, Twi East and Twi West Districts was organized at Akropong. An executive Synod Committee, of eight African members and three missionaries, was established, and the Reverend Peter Hall and Reverend Nicholas Timothy Clerk were elected as the first Moderator and Synod Clerk respectively. Both men were second-generation Caribbean Christians. In 1926 the Basel Mission church was renamed the Presbyterian church of the Gold Coast and after independence in 1957 it became the Presbyterian church of Ghana (PGG) with the Motto: “That They All May Be One”.

Contribution to Ghana- The PCG didn’t just preach. It built the nation through education and health and culture. By 1881 Basel Mission and three other missions owned 136 of 139 schools in Ghana. It started the Christian Messenger newspaper in 1883. Today PCG has over 2,400 Basic Schools, 34 Senior High Schools including Aburi Girls, Prempeh College (with Methodists, 1943), five Colleges of Education and two presidentially chartered Universities.





In Health the PCG is the 3rd largest provider in Ghana after the government and the Catholic Church with 55 hospital and clinics. In language and culture, the Presbyterian church translated the Bible into Twi, Ga, Ewe, and compiled dictionaries and proverbs.

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana today is one of Ghana's oldest and biggest churches. With headquarters in Osu, Accra, it has twenty-one Presbyteries, 4,546 congregations and Preaching Posts, nearly one million members, 5,701 agents, 1,149 ministers, 2,329 catechists. It is a glorious mix of young and old Christians, rooted in a strong tradition and yet adapting to contemporary trends. Through nurture groups like the Children's Service, Junior Youth, Boys' and Girls' Brigade, National Union of Presbyterian Students of Ghana, Young People's Guild, Young Adults' Fellowship, Women's Fellowship, Men's Fellowship, Ministry to the Aging, Church Choir, Singing Band, Bible Study and Prayer Group, and several independent praise and worship teams, the Church provides Christian education at various levels for all her members.

History of the Ebenezer Presbyterian Church in Anum

The Ebenezer Presbyterian Church at Anum is 162 years old. It was one of the earliest mission footholds established across the Volta River corridor into the inland regions of Ghana. Alongside evangelism, this church has served as a pioneer for Western education, literacy, agricultural techniques, and medical care in the surrounding Guan-speaking Anum.

In 1864 the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society, from Basel Switzerland sent three missionaries named Fritzer, Rottman and Clause to Anum in the Eastern region of Ghana to establish the gospel. In 1868, Rev. Ramsair was brought to join and assist them. Unfortunately, in 1869 Ramsair and his wife and child were captured and taken during an inter-tribal war, leading to the temporary collapse of the mission.

Twelve years later, Mr. Oko went to the Head of Government (Christianborg Castle) to make a request for the reinstatement of the mission. Following the request, Rev. David Asante was sent to restart the missionary work. Several missionaries came and went. Some died but the mission continued. During the First World War (1914-1918) the last foreign missionary, named Zimmerman was sent back to Switzerland. Following his departure, the church has been managed by locally trained pastors from Trinity College, which is a Seminary for both Presbyterian and Methodist Pastors. Today the church is led by the Rev. Issac Ababio.

Afriyie Bonsu Dankyi, who is a member here at Fort King was nurtured by the church at Anum. She will share her experiences with us and the Mission Ministry will rely on Afriyie to guide us and facilitate contact between Ocala and Anum. We look forward to friendship and a growing mutual mission between our two congregations.

