PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA
CHARIS CONGREGATION, NEW FADAMA

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH FROM 1982 TO 2022 (40 Years)

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Charis Congregation, New Fadama was founded by the Kaneshie PCG Bible Study and Prayer Group on the 18th of July 1982. The BSPG team that founded the now Charis congregation was led by Mr. Daniel Nyarko, now a minister of the PCG, Messrs. Emmanuel Owusu-Asare, Joseph Osei-Bonsu, Owusu Agyemang, Opoku Minta, Ms. Leticia Omari, and Ms. Grace Ohenewa. They scouted the Fadama community for a number of people who were willing to give their lives to Christ and to form part of the intended preaching post.

After some months of scouting and evangelizing to get both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterians to constitute the new congregation, some members were won and the preaching point had its services held in two classrooms at Abeka 1&2 Middle School. It was the first church planted in New Fadama.

Before the first service, the team of young Christians from Kaneshie Presby held open-air crusades, house-to-house visitations, and dawn broadcasting in and around the New Fadama area to propagate the gospel. These activities yielded results, and six adults and six children formed the first congregants of the church.

The Church grew from a total of 12 with time to a larger number. The founding members of the congregations included: Mrs. Vida Afrifa, Mrs. Salome Keteku Kwakye, Mrs. Comfort Eyerson, (deceased), Mrs. Grace Danso, Mrs. Comfort Benefo-Darkwa, Mad. Margaret Ntow (deceased), Mad. Animwah, Miss Victoria Asomani, Sis. Mavis, Constance Nimako, Augustus Ahwireng (deceased), Mr. E.T Quarshie, Mr. Emmanuel T Cudjoe, Samuel Aboagye, and Augustine Appiah.

INAUGURATION

The young church was officially inaugurated on March 13th, 1983 by the then District Minister of Kaneshie PCG, the late Rev. A. L. Kwansah (Rtd.). On that fateful day, 27 adults and 3 children were baptized and confirmed. Mr. Joseph Adomako-Manu was then appointed as the caretaker of the Congregation and later he was sponsored by the Church and district to be trained at Ramseyer Training Centre (RTC) Abetifi - Kwahu as a Catechist. He successfully completed and was inducted into office on 24th November 1991.
He led the first Interim management committee, to strategically organize programmes that

brought more members to the church.

Before the team of young Christians who led in the establishment of the church could get members to join the new church, there was an open-air crusade to proclaim the gospel to the community, organized house-to-house evangelism, visitation, and dawn in and around the New Fadama community that was fast growing. At the end of these activities, the team chalked some success by winning six adults and six children. These souls that were initially won became the bedrock for the establishment of the church as it is today.

The young church which happens to be the first Christian denomination church established in New Fadama amidst the numerous difficulties was gradually growing. It, therefore, became necessary due to the growth that the church gets inaugurated. Hence, on the 13th of March 1983, the young but growing church was inaugurated and officially recognized as a church of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

The then District Minister of the Kaneshie congregation, Rev. A. L. Kwansah, together with the District Council of Kaneshie District performed the inaugural ceremony for the New Fadama Presby church. During this special and memorable occasion, twenty-seven (27) adults and three (3) children were baptized, with some or the adults being confirmed. This opened up a great opportunity for the church to grow and also attract several people within the community. Since the church was young and did not have a place to worship, the leadership of the church sort permission from the heads and authorities of the Abeka 1&2 Middle School to use one of their classrooms as a place of worship. This continued for over ten years.

At some point in time, one classroom was inadequate to meet the growth of the church. As a result, another classroom was added to augment what was in use. The children's service and the Junior Youth were using the other classroom as well as making use of the shade that was provided by the huge nim trees on the compound. It is recorded that, between the space of ten years (10 years) almost all the generational and some inter - generational groups were established to add to the church life of the congregation. The under-listed church groups were inaugurated as follows: BSPG - 1st June 1986, Church Choir - 19th August 1987, Men's Fellowship - 30th August 1987, Women's Fellowship - 17th July 1988, YPG & JY - 1st April 1990, Blue Cross- 12th June 1990, Singing Band- 1992. The young adult fellowship was later formed as a decision of the General Assembly to create a group that will serve as a bridge between the YPG and the Men's and Women's fellowship. In 2010, the Young Adult Fellowship of the New Fadama congregation was established. This group brought together all the young men and women between the ages of 30 to 39 together.

LAND ACQUISITION

After the church celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1992, the numbers had overwhelmingly increased which necessitated an expansion or finding a permanent place of worship. The Session

realizing the urgency of a permanent place of worship decided to acquire a plot to put up a permanent structure to cater for her members. Prior to December 14th, 1990, when the current place of the church is built, a plot was acquired earlier in June 1988 which was later taken from the congregation. There were literally, fights over the land and one of the contentious issues was that they (the community) would not allow the establishment of any church in that community and especially on that piece of land. The case was litigated at the competent court of jurisdiction for over a year. After some time, the session was informed by the then moderator (Rt. Rev. D. A. Koranteng) to drop the case and seek an out-of-court settlement. Also, they were informed that instructions from Castle had gone to the head office of the church and to the police to discontinue the case. After several disagreements, the church decided to let go of the land. Though the cost incurred in buying the land which was c300,000 (GHS30.00) was paid to the church by the contending parties, nonetheless, the amount spent in developing the land at the time of the litigation which also amounted to c300,000 (GHS30.00) was not paid to the church.

The session finally got two plots of land where the church now resides. This happened on the 14th of December, 1990. The land was bought from Nii Nikoi Olai Amonita IV, Asere Mantse of Accra at the cost of One million Two Hundred Thousand cedis (c1,200,000), The construction of the first phase of our current chapel began shortly after the purchase in 1990. In 1993 the leadership of the church decided to move from the New Fadama school classroom. So, on the 21st of June, 1993 the first service was held at the new site where the church is located. The first service was held under canopies and on benches. Although the place was not in good condition to commence service, the leadership together with members tried to put the place in order to ensure a serene atmosphere for the service. Members were elated when they had the service on their land and in peace.

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING

On the 5th of March, 2000, the foundation stone laying and unveiling of the plaque of the chapel were laid by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Sam Prempeh, the Moderator of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church. Significant to this occasion was the donation of c250,000.00 by Mr. Clifford Fiadjoe during the ceremony and again promised to donate the same amount of c250,000.00 till the building is completed.

EARLY MINISTERS

As a preaching post, the church did not have Reverend ministers being posted there. However, the interim leadership took up these duties till the church officially had caretakers and catechists to lead the services of the church. Also, ministerial students from the Trinity Theological Seminary were brought to help in administering and supporting ministry. Among those who played leadership roles in the church include Mr. Emmanuel Danso (24th January to November 1988), Mr. D. K. Asenso (24th April 1988 to 30th January 1989), Rev. A. A. Aboagye (1st to 30th January 1989), Mr. J.K. Azumah (October 1990), Mr. Michael Otibu Darko (October to December 1990). It must be noted that the first official minister of the congregation was Rev.

Martin B. Nabor who served the church from January 1991 to 31st sOctober 1992. After he left the church did not have any minister posted to the congregation for a while. From August 1996 to January 1998, Rev Felix Asante served as the minister in charge of the congregation, at this period the church was not a pastoral station hence all ministers who were posted there were tent ministers.

The first ten years of the church had Rev. Martin B. Nabor as the first minister who was assigned to help grow the church. His love and dynamics contributed largely to the growth of the church. His northern background became a solid catalyst that propelled the growth of the church.

The first minister-in-charge of the congregation was posted by the General Assembly in 1996. Rev. Felix Asante was then introduced to the church as the minister-in-charge on the 4th of August, 1996 by the district minister.

Rev. Henry Amoako later assumed duty as an attached minister of the congregation, he was an attached because he was a full-time student at the University of Ghana. He served from December 1998 to 18th July 1999. Rev. Felicia Adu-Kurni took charge of the church's administration from 3rd December 1999 as the minister in charge and ended on 12th August 2001. Rev. Herbert A. Oppong was also introduced to the church as minister-in-charge on 28th October 2001 , he served till September 2002. Rev. Emmanuel Obeng Ntow took over from 2002 to November 2004. On 24th December 2004, Rev. Budu Asiaw joined the church as the minister in charge, he served in that capacity until August 2005. Thus Rev. Budu Asiaw ended the regime of the non-residence ministers of the congregation.

PASTORAL STATUS

As the church grew stronger and larger, the Kaneshie District that gave birth to the New Fadama congregations recommended that the station be given a pastoral status. This meant that a full-time minister was to be assigned to take charge of the congregation. Hence, on the 21st May 2006, the Presbytery Chairperson, Rev. Dr. D.N.A. Kpobi, assisted by Rev. Kissiedu-Ayi (Presbytery Clerk), Rev. G.A. Dadzaa and members of the Presbytery council organized a special Elevation Service for the New Fadama congregation. This elevation to a Pastoral station saw the first resident minister of the congregation as Rev. Eric Carlos Adebi-Caesar. After Rev. Adebi-Caesar, the following ministers also came in as residence ministers: Rev. Stephen Lankwei Lawson, (it was during the tenure of Rev S.N.L. Lawson that the church was officially named the CHARIS CONGREGATION), Rev. Martin Kwasi Addai-Naami, Rev. Theophilus Kofi Sakado, Rev. Alfred Owusu Boateng and Rev. Samuel Tetteh Quaye.

FIRST ASSOCIATE MINISTER

For years after the formation and elevation to a pastoral station, the church has had one minister-in-charge at a time supported by a catechist. In the year 2021 , the Abeka district session council standing committee had an emergency meeting with the congregational session on the 27th of

June, .2021 , to discuss the possibility of having an associate minister.. This was quite unexpected since the financial and logistical strength of the congregation could not support two ministers. However, the district standing committee agreed to share the cost of the allowance that will be given to the associate minister. This decision and move paved the way for the first associate minister (Rev. Dan Francis Tobgor Annan) to be posted to the congregation. Rev. T Annan served for only a year (September 2021 to August 2022) in the congregation.

MINISTERIAL AND CATECHISTS TRAINEES

To the glory of God, the Charis congregation has contributed to the training of ministers of the gospel and catechists for the Church. It is on record that the first member to have been candidated and trained into the Holy Ministery was the Rev. Moses Kwame Adjocaste. The Rev. Gideon Okyere and Rev. Samuel Adu-Panin were the second and third members who were candidated and trained by the church as ministers of the Gospel. Currently, (April 2022), the church is supporting Mr. Stephen Bani-Kwakye, who is receiving his Ministerial REFORMATION training at the Ramseyer Training Center Abetifi. The church has also supported and trained. abled men into becoming catechists of the church, these include Cat. Adomako Manu, Cat. Alfred Odoi Asare and Cat. Emmanuel Okyere.

CARETAKERS AND CATECHIST

The presbyterian church would always have a leader entrusted to take charge of the church at every given time. From the day the church was established in July 1982, members of the BSPG Kaneshie branch had been in charge until the first IMC was chosen. The first caretaker of the church was Mr. Daniel Anim Nyarko, followed by Mr. Robert Boateng. These two caretakers were chosen during the IMC periods. The first session had Mr. Joseph Adomako Manu as the first member of the congregation to be chosen as the caretaker. Subsequently, Mr. Adomako Manu was given presbyterian training to become a full catechist of the church. He was then inducted as the first catechist of the New Fadama congregation. He ended his duty as the catechist on the 15th of June, 1997. Catechist Danie Osafo-Aryeh on the 26th June, 1998 took over the administration of the church from Rev. Felix Asante, he diligently handled this position with all seriousness and meticulousness. He was transferred from the congregation and was replaced by Catechist Charles Newton Ansong on the 31st March, 2002. Cat. Ansong retired from active service while at the New Fadama congregation. His valedictory service was held on the 6th December, 2009. Cat. Ernest Yaw Mfaafo was posted to the congregation as the catechist with a charge in December, 2009. He served until he was transferred from the congregation on the 29th September, 2013. An introduction service was held for Cat Alex Asiedu on the 23rd February, 2014, he served for four years. On the 8th July, 2 01 8, Cat. Peter Appiah took over as a catechist with a charge till June, 2021. Currently Cat. Edward Yeboah Darkwa is serving as the catechist in charge. His charge started on the 27th June 2021 till date.

SESSIONS AND LEADERSHIP

From the inception of the church, there were two Interim Management Committees (IMC) that

led the day-to-day running of the church and ensured proper administration of the church. The first two IMCs were led by Mr. E.Y Nyameamah and Mr. C.K Boadi Ansah (Chairpersons for the first and second respectively).

After these two periods ended in 1986, the first election for Presbyters to constitute the first session of the New Fadama congregation was held. The election saw Mr. Edward Okyere as the first Senior Presbyter of the church, Mr. Clifford Fiadzoe (Session Clerk), Mrs. Comfort Benefo - Darkwa (Treasurer), Mr. Joseph Adomako Manu (Caretaker), Mr. Eugene Yaw Tabi, Mrs. Sophia Angba and Mrs. Vida Afrifa as members. This crop of leadership led the church to organize its first congregational conference in December, 1994.

Several individuals have played and occupied key positions in the church. some of the senior presbyters who led the various sessions included: Mr. Diaka, Mr. Saka, Mrs. Vida Afrifa, and Mr. Daniel K. Asare.

Currently, the church is led by Rev. Samuel Tetteh Quaye, assisted by Catechist Edward Yeboah Darkwah and the current Session. The current Senior Presbyter is Mr. Nelson Owusu Ofori with Mrs. Sethina Annang Danquah and Mr. Frank Oduro Offeh as the Clerk and Assistant Clerk respectively.

CONCLUSION

To the glory of God, the New Fadama congregation, now the Charis congregation, appreciates what the good Lord has done in the life of the church all these years. forty years of celebrating the faithfulness of God.

Ebenezer, thus far the Lord has brought us. It is indeed true that God has called us through His Son, Jesus Christ, and has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. The church boasts of many successes chalked up over the years, from the district through the national level. Today, we celebrate all the gallant men and women and all the mighty people of valor who labored to see the growth of the church to this day.

We appreciate everyone who has also, in diverse ways, contributed and donated their substance and energy to see the Charis congregation the way it is today. May the good Lord continue to show us his mercies, may he bless and keep all of us, may his countenance fall upon us and be gracious unto us; and may he tum his face towards us and give us His eternal peace.

CHARIS - BY GRACE
***CHARIS - BY THE GRACE OF* GOD.**