

Dynamics of international mission in the Methodist Church Ghana

Kirk Stephens Sims

OCMS, PhD

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ABSTRACT

Christianity is currently coming to terms with the demographic shift of now being primarily a Southern church, and mission is emanating out of its new heartlands. In recent generations, it has not been uncommon to interpret international mission from places like Africa through the paradigmatic thinking of the modern missionary movement. However, missiologists have begun to take note of the ways of thinking in the majority world. Important to missiological conceptualisation of many in the majority world is the role of migration, and it offers perspectives into what may very well be an unfolding mission paradigm.

As a mainline church with strong roots in Ghana, the Methodist Church Ghana gives insights into how a church in a worldwide communion both understands and navigates mission on the world stage. This thesis explores the conceptualisation of international mission in the Methodist Church Ghana. It ascertains the priority the Methodist Church Ghana places on international mission, and it gives identification to the ways in which international mission is conducted.

As demonstrated in the semi-structured interviews, the Methodist Church Ghana has a favourable view of its international mission engagement and the direction with which its mission is headed to in the future. Based on the cultural values of communal responsibility, it employs a missional church ecclesiology as mission occurs collectively through the modality. As its members migrate to lands beyond Ghana with different Methodist narratives, it must negotiate seemingly paradoxical perspectives as it belongs to a larger world communion and lives out its evangelical 'world parish' theology. Through migration and the expressions of mission by and amongst its diaspora communities, differentiating models for interpreting diaspora mission can be identified in the Methodist Church Ghana.