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The Mission of PATRIENSA SDA Senior High School: A Historical Study

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Abstract

In the process of making disciples and reaching out to the entire world, the Seventh-day Adventist Church owes and operates institutions such as schools, healthcare, publishing houses and so on. The church operate schools from kindergarten through university levels with the aim of providing educational background that meets the physical, social, psychological, mental, moral and spiritual needs of the students. The Seventh-day Adventist Church at Patriensa Township in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality in Ashanti Region of Ghana was established in 1922 by then Ghana Mission Station in Kumasi. The central focus of the church is to expand Adventistism within the municipality through music, education and welfare services. As a means of reaching out to the "spiritual and physical development of members and the community at large, SDA Senior High School, Patriensa (PASDASS) was established to seek to that need. What is the mission of PASDASS in the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church at Patriensa and its environ? The paper aimed to figure out the mission of PASDASS at Patriensa District of Seventh-day Adventist Church. Also, it will go a long way to help readers and the leadership of the South Central Ghana Conference (which is the mother conference) to recognize the contributions of PASDASS to SDA Church, and to calls for support of the church leadership in carrying on this mission. The paper concluded that SDA Senior High School, Patriensa plays a pivotal role in nurturing, training and expanding Adventist mission work at Patriensa District, South Central Ghana Conference and the World Church at large, despite the difficulties and challenges it faces. A number of tangible facts were observed.

Keywords: History, Patriensa SDA Senior High School, Mission, Challenges, Adventist

Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Protestant Christian denomination distinguished by its observance of the Saturday, the seventh day of the week in Christian and Jewish calendars as Sabbath and by its emphasis on the imminent Second Coming of Christ Jesus.¹ They are a conservative Protestant body of evangelical Christians whose faith is grounded in the Bible and faith in Jesus Christ love² which emerged from the nineteenth century awakening in America.³ In the process of making disciples and reaching out to the entire world, the Adventist Church owes and operates institutions such as schools, healthcare, publishing houses and so on. All these institutions are meant to serve humankind and glorify God. The church operate schools from kindergarten through university levels for the purpose of transmitting to students, the Church's ideals, beliefs, attitudes, values, habits, and customs.⁴ The source, the means, and the aim of Adventist education are a true knowledge of God, fellowship and companionship with Him in study and service, and likeness to Him in character development. Ellen White writes;

¹ Arthur W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1961), 233.

² Ibid. 291.

³ R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publication Association, 1979), 14.

⁴ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Church Manual 1979-2016* ed. (Hagerstown MD: Review and Herald, 1993), 89.

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Ministers and church leaders are responsible in the upbringing of a child (student) in the context of exhorting the knowledge of God in at any given stage at all time.”⁵ True education is well defined as the harmonious development of all the faculties, a full and adequate preparation for this life and the future eternal life.⁶ It is the early years in the home and the formal school work that the mind develops, a pattern of living is established, and character if formed.⁷

Adventist philosophy of education is wholistic. It provides educational background that meets the physical, social, psychological, mental, moral and spiritual needs of the students. Its institutions of higher education provide students a unique environment needed in pursuit of learning in the arts, humanities, religion, sciences and various professions, within the perspective of the Adventist philosophy of education and spiritual commitment.⁸

Its core values are to (1) give preference to careers that directly support the mission of the Church; (2) recognize the importance of the quest for truth in all its dimensions as it affects the total development of the individual in relation to both God and to fellow human beings; (3) utilize available resources such as revelation, reason, reflection, and research to discover truth and its implications for human life here and in the hereafter, while recognizing the limitations inherent in all human endeavors; (4) lead students to develop lives of integrity based upon principles compatible with the religious, ethical, social, and service values essential to the Adventist worldview; and (5) foster, particularly at the graduate level, the mastery, critical evaluation, discovery and dissemination of knowledge, and the nurture of wisdom in a community of Christian scholars.⁹ Simply put, Adventist education prepares students for a useful and joy-filled life, fostering friendship with God, whole person development, Bible-based values, and selfless service in accordance with the Seventh-day Adventist mission to the world. To sum up, it seeks to restore and redeem.¹⁰

The Seventh-day Adventist Church at Patriensa Township in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality in Ashanti Region of Ghana was established in 1922 by then Ghana Mission Station in Kumasi.¹¹ The central focus of the church was to expand Adventism¹² within the municipality through music, education and welfare services. As a means of reaching out to the “spiritual and physical development of members and the community at

large, SDA Senior High School, Patriensa (PASDASS) was established to seek to that need.¹³ What is the mission of PASDASS in the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church at Patriensa and its environ?

The paper aims to figure out the mission of PASDASS at Patriensa District of Seventh-day Adventist Church. Also, it will go a long way to help readers and the leadership of the South Central Ghana Conference (which is the mother conference) to recognize the contribution of PASDASS, and calls for the support of the church leadership in carrying on this mission.

Primary and secondary sources for the paper include; published and unpublished books, articles, and the internet and personal interviews. The paper is organized into five parts. The first part introduces the paper. The second part deals with a brief history of PASDASS. The third part focuses on the role and mission of PASDASS on church growth. Part four deals with the challenges PESDASS faces. The fifth part is will conclude the paper and make a recommendation.

A History of SDA Senior High School, Patriensa (PASDASS)

SDA Senior High School, Patriensa was established in 2008 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church at Patriensa.¹⁴ The School is one of the Seventh-day Adventist private Senior High Schools in Ghana. It is the only Senior High School of South Central Ghana Conference. The School is located at a suburb called Patriensa at Konongo on the Asante Akyem Agogo road in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Konongo, which is the capital of Asante Akyem Municipal as at 2010 Population and Housing Census had a settlement population of 41,238 people.¹⁵ Patriensa the actual location of the school at the same period had 7,000 residents.¹⁶ Asante Akyem Municipality has a youthful population of about 37%.¹⁷ PASDASS is counted among 2,296¹⁸ second cycle Adventists institutions which are operated by the Seventh-day Adventists Worldwide and seven in Ashanti Region, Ghana.¹⁹

In the year 1962, according to Kwakye Yeboah a.k.a Teacher Kwakye, a coordinator of Patriensa SDA 90th Anniversary²⁰ in anniversary Hand Book, 2012, said Adventists primary school was established first time in the town. Middle School, which was the continuation of the primary, was latter added to it. They used the church house at the beginning and later built three classrooms with mud

⁵ Ellen G White, *Prophets and Kings* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1985), 486-487.

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Education* (California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), 7

⁷ Luke 2: 40, Child Jesus grew and waxed strong in spirit filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.(New American Standard Bible).

⁸ James A. Tucker, “Pedagogical Application of the Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Education,” *Journal of Research on Christian Education Summer* 10 (2001):170.

⁹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Policy Manual on Education*, 2003 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1993), 221-224.

¹⁰ Ibid, 225.

¹¹ Kofi Owusu-Mensah, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism: A History* Vol. 1(Advent Press, 2005), 31.

¹² Ibid., 33.

¹³ Yaw Owusu, Headteacher, Patriensa SDA Primary School, interview by the author, Patriensa, 21 June, 2017.

¹⁴ “SDA Senior High, Patriensa”, SDA Senior High, Patriensa accessed 22 June 2017, <https://www.pasdass.edu.gh>.

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konongo_Ghana

¹⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriensa>

¹⁷ Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census: District Analytical Report Asante Akyem Municipality* (Ghana: Ghana Statistical Service, 2014), 80.

¹⁸ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of Archives and Statistics, *Seventh-day Adventist Year Book 2016*(Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2016), 5.

¹⁹

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_senior_high_schools_Ghana.Ashanti_Religion.

²⁰ Kwakye Yeboah, *Patriensa 90th Anniversary Hand Book*, 2012, 6.

sand. It started with 12 children. The first headteacher was the late Opanin Kofi Owusu. The indigenous people did not know the importance of education and were reluctant to send their children to school. Teacher Kofi Owusu had to move from house to house,²¹ begging parents to send their children into the school. Some of the pioneer pupils were the late Nana Afreh (Kontihene of Patriensa), J.K. Nsiah who later became a teacher at the primary school, Stephen Agyekum, Ossei Yaw and others.

In 1984, the Church appealed to the then new Chief of the town, Nana Kwadwo Agyapong who was one of the early students at SDA Junior School when it was first started for another piece of land. The land was meant for the establishment of Adventist Educational Complex. The Chief and his subjects gladly agreed to release a land of 78 acres to the Church. With the help of Pioneer Elders like Paul Obeng Akrofi, Owusu Kwadwo, Amakye Aduna, Mark Asiedu and the entire church board, a proper acquisition of the land has been secured for further future development.

After the acquisition of the land, a six member delegation was sent to the office of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) through Central Ghana Conference (mother conference of Ghana) for assistance. By the grace of God, ADRA agreed and supplied all the necessary materials needed for the completion of six classroom block which was meant to begin a Junior High School block. Another six classrooms and a storey building were built for the running of a Senior High School.

By the beginning of September, 2008, SDA Senior High School, Patriensa started with twenty four (24) students, with a single course, General Arts.²² The first Headmaster was called Mr. Palange Ofrange Sammy. Currently, the school which is called SDA Senior High School, Patriensa (PASDASS) is having enrolment of 630 students with various courses that is run in the secondary education. Presently, the school offers five courses in General Science, Agricultural Science, General Arts, Home Economics, and Business Studies, Admission is opened to all qualified Junior High School pupils regardless of your cultural, ethnic or religious background.²³ The school rules and regulations are for all to follow to ensure discipline which is the mission statement of the school.

The school has a farm land which is used for farming and other agro-production. Some farm produce include; ginger, maize, cassava, plantain and so. They have started sachet water production which is meant for commercial purpose.

Currently PASDASS as Adventists private Senior High School is headed by an ordained minister, Pastor Kwame Agyemang Osei.²⁴ The Chair of the Board of Management is Pastor (Dr). Kwabena Annor Bofo who is the President of South Central Ghana Conference.²⁵ Pastor Alex Nana

Owusu is the current Local Manager of the school.²⁶ The table below indicates the Heads of the school ²⁷(from 2008-2016).

Term/Period	Head	Title
2008-2010	Mr. Palange Ofrange Sammy	Headmaster
2010-2013	Mr. A. K. Sarfo Duku	Headmaster
2013-date	Pastor Kwame Agyemang Osei	Headmaster

The Mission Work of SDA Senior High, Patriensa

Since the mission statement of the school emphasizes discipline and integrity²⁸ in a context which promotes the four dimensions (intellectual, spiritual, psychological, and physical) of life for service to God and mankind, it has a mandate of offering spiritual growth-oriented services to all types of people. Basically, the school focuses on Bible studies, prayer meetings, evangelism and witnessing, community services, God's first stewardship approach, positive Christian attitude and behaviour and counselling and guidance.²⁹ True education means more than the perusal of a certain course of study.³⁰ It means more than a preparation for the life on earth. It has to do with whole being and with whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.³¹

The mission of PASDASS on the students as well as the community is overwhelming. It has brought a positive change and improvement on the people. These have made great contributing to church growth particularly South Central Ghana Conference. The assessment is based on the interview conducted as well as personal observation made. They are as follows:

Training and Equipping Students: "Study to show thyself approved unto God."³² Ellen White wrote "It is by training in the common duties of life and in ministry to the needy and suffering, that efficiency is assured."³³ A Minister of Youth and Sports once said: "The youth are a major source of human capital and key agents for socio-cultural economic and political development as well as technological innovation worldwide."³⁴ A well trained youth can accomplish a lot for the church and a nation. In order to have well equipped youth, the school trains most

²⁶ South Central Ghana Conference, "Minutes of South Central Ghana Conference Departmental Meeting," Kumasi, Ghana: South Central Ghana Conference, 15 February 2015.

²⁷ PASDASS, *Handbook of Profiles of Headmasters*, 2013, 16.

²⁸ "SDA Senior High School," SDA Senior High School, accessed 22 June 2017, <https://www.pasdass.edu.gh>.

²⁹ Evans Owusu-Antwi, Chaplain, SDA Senior High School, Patriensa, interview by the author, Patriensa, 23 June, 2017.

³⁰ James E. Reed, *a History of Christian Education* (Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 64.

³¹ Ellen G. White, *Education* (California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), 13.

³² 2 Timothy 2:15(NASB)

³³ Ellen G. White, *Education* (California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), 268.

³⁴ Akua Sena Dansua, "National Youth Policy of Ghana: Towards an Empowered Youth, Impacting positively on National Development," accessed 24 June 2017.

http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Ghana_2010_National_Youth_Policy.pdf.

²¹ Grace Aboagyewaa, Former Women's Ministries Coordinator, Patriensa Central Church, interview by the author, 21 June, 2017.

²² PASDASS, *Academic Handbook of the School*, 2010, 3.

²³ Ibid, 4.

²⁴ Dairy 2016, *Ghana Union Conference*, (Accra: Advent Press, 2015), 32.

²⁵ South Central Ghana Conference, "Minutes of South Central Ghana Conference Quadrennial Session," Kumasi, Ghana: South Central Ghana Conference, 20-25 December 2014.

of the youth in Master Guide School program. About twenty five (25) Master Guides are trained in each academic year. Entrepreneurship training is given to prepare each and every one to start thinking about his/her own enterprises when become mature. They complete the school and dispersed throughout the country, to serve God and country. Admonishing teachers and parents Ellen G. White counseled them to exercise a great constringe in order not to jeopardize students' life. She penned; Dealing with human minds is the most delicate work ever entrusted to mortals, and teachers need constantly the help of the Spirit of God, that they may do their work aright. Among the youth attending school will be found great diversity of character and education. The teacher will meet with impulse, impatience, pride, selfishness, undue self-esteem. Some of the youth have lived in an element of arbitrary restraint and harshness, which has developed in them a spirit of obstinacy and defiance. Others have been treated as pets, allowed by overfond parents to follow their own inclinations. Defects have been excused until the character is deformed. To deal successfully with these different minds, the teacher needs to exercise great tact and delicacy in management, as well as firmness in government.³⁵

Evangelism: Evangelism is the key to the expansion of every church. The Church trains and nurtures church members, which intend increase the membership³⁶ of any congregation (church). This is to accomplish the Great Commission³⁷ Jesus gave (Matthew 28:18-20) to the Church. To make this materialize, each term has a program called Week of Spiritual Emphasis which is organized to revive and evangelize the students. New souls are won each term into the Adventist Church. Apart from the Week of Spiritual Emphasis, the normal church serves, like Sunday Bible studies, Mid-week prayer, Friday sun down and youth activity have been streamlined to exhort the word of God which shaves students' lives. The school also has a wing which is dedicated to evangelism known as Advent Truth Missionaries (ATM), dedicated to the study of the Bible and sharing with others.

The Table below shows some of the souls won over the past six years through Week of Spiritual Emphasis and Public Campaigns of the school.

Result OF Evangelism and Witnessing (2010-2016)³⁸

Date	Speaker	Souls Won/Baptized
Sun-24 th -30 th October 2010	Elder Yaw Foerdjour	7
Sun-22 nd -28 th May 2011	Pastor Elvis Asiamah	17
Sun-23 rd -30 th October, 2011	Elder Paul Obeng Akrofi	11
Sun-8 th -14 th July, 2012	Pastor Johnson Otchere	31
Sun-4 th -10 th November, 2012	Pastor William Agyei	21
Sun-24 th -30 th March, 2013	Pastor Elvis Asiamah	30

³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (California: Pacific Publishing Association. 1913), 264.

³⁶ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), 5

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁸ PASDASS, *The Statistical Handbook on Evangelism*, 2012, 3-7.

Sun-6 th -12 th July, 2014	Elder Stephenson Osei	21
Sun-15 th -28 th , March, 2015 Public Campaign	Pastor James K. Opoku	42
Sun-16 th -22 nd October, 2016	Pastor A. Nana Owusu	33
Total		213

The school, like the early church always adds souls to the church.³⁹

Community Services: The school serves Patriensa town and its environs in diverse ways. According to Eric Boateng, the Senior Housemaster of the School,⁴⁰ in each term, two days communal labour is done where the students use to drain gutters, sweep and clean community centers and places of importance. Also, they visit health centers, sing to the aged and the sick. All these give a positive image of the Church and new converts join the church.

Counseling and Guidance Unit: Students as well as teachers are not only faced with personal, academic or social problems, but also, they face spiritual problems. Again young people think and meditate on the purpose and meanings of life without having answers to them. Besides, some struggle to understand the social injustice and the sufferings of this world. Others ask why good people suffer and the wicked rejoice. Broken home, academic failure, disappointments, financial challenges are some of the issues the youth face. The school, let by the headmaster and other local elders meet these needs of the youth through counseling and guidance. Their visions and purposes are shaped in this process. Junior High School students and other youth from other denomination attend this counseling and guidance section. They are empowered by the word of God and remain faithful in the Lord.

Tithes and Offering: Giving tithes and offering is a very important part of Christian life.⁴¹ The school is within Patriensa District of Seventh-day Adventist Church of South Central Ghana Conference. As a mandatory policy, all tithes and combined offering is sent to the conference weekly and monthly basis. The tithes and offering from the school helps the financial obligations of the conference and the world church at large.

Analysis Table of Tithes and Offering from PESDASS⁴²

Year	Tithes	Combined Offering
2010	815.60	210.90
2011	1,582.10	810.10
2012	2,635.80	1,060.40
2013	4,811.40	1,894.60
2014	5,122.30	2,265.40
2015	6,518.45	3,114.60
Total	21,485.65	9,356.00

This money goes in a long way to support a missionary

³⁹ Acts 2:44, "So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls" (NASB).

⁴⁰ Eric Boateng, Senior Housemaster, SDA Senior High School, Patriensa, interview by the author, Nairobi-AUA, 25 June, 2017. Eric Boateng is currently pursuing Master of Divinity at the main campus of Adventist university of African, Kenya.

⁴¹ Timothy 11, *Tithes and Offering: A Study Guide for Leaders in the Body of Christ*, 2004, 2.

⁴² PASDASS, *Tithe and Systematic Analysis Book of the School*, 2014, 4-24.

work of Adventist Church.

Challenges of PASDASS

In spite of the great contributions given to students, community and the church growth at large, the school has quite some number of challenges. Some of them are highlighted below:

Low Enrolment: One key challenge the school faces is the enrolment. Compared to other denominational schools, one can attest that PASDASS' enrolment is not encouraging. We call Adventists parents and guidance to bring their children and wards to receive Bible based education.⁴³

Lack of Financial Support: The school has on its agenda to organize evangelism every long vacation to win souls for Christ if financial support is given.⁴⁴ So we call on corporate bodies, NGOs and individuals who are willing to support to contact the school chaplaincy department.

Church Building: Inconvenience at the place of worship since our number keeps on increasing and increasing. Equipment for worship such as Projector, Lord's super kits, P.A Systems and others are needed to spice up our programs.

Bus: Because the school does not have a vehicle (Bus) to convey students, most of our outreach programs like hospital visitation, children homes visitation etc, are abandoned since there is no money to hire buses.⁴⁵

Conclusion

The paper looked at the relation between PASDASS mission work and the church growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church at Patriensa, Ghana. The paper established that the mission work of PASDASS plays a significance role in the growth of Adventism at Patriensa and beyond. First of all, the School trains, equips and shapes young people who go out and serve the Adventist Church and the nation. They are empowered to think as future entrepreneurs in the contexts of establishing small and medium enterprises when complete their courses. Also, its evangelistic programs and church services such as Week of Spiritual Emphasis and Public Evangelistic Campaigns, Sunday Bible studies, Sabbath worship, Wednesday prayers, Master Guide School program Bible Entertainment programs etc lead to the conversion of many students in and outside the School.

Besides, the contribution from tithes and offerings to the Conference and the World Church at large is very helpful. Furthermore, the School prepares the youth for Christ by meeting their physical, spiritual, academic, social and family needs through counseling and guidance. All these enhance church growth as the youth are saved from backsliding from the church and also able to convert non-Adventists. Moreso, the community services through clean-up exercise, singing, visiting the aged and the sick promote Adventism and through that many people, both the adults

and youth join the Church. Lastly, the academic knowledge that fostering the highest standards of secondary education in Asante Akyem Municipality of Ashanti Region and Ghana as a whole, advancing knowledge in further studies at tertiary levels.

The paper, therefore, concludes that SDA Senior High School, Patriensa plays a key role in the nurturing, training and expanding Adventist mission work at Patriensa District, South Central Ghana Conference and the World Church, despite the difficulties and challenges it faces.

Recommendation

In order to continue to deliver balanced and dynamic secondary education in a Christian context, the school needs support from conference as well as the union. Individual church members, philanthropies and corporate entities are warmly welcome for their support.

Also, church members are requested to send their children and wards to the school for better enrolment. Moreso, the leadership of the school is expected to advertise the school at the local and national radio stations and other advertisement sectors.⁴⁶

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⁴³ Kwame Osei Agyemang, Headmaster, PASDASS, interview by the author, Patriensa, 23 June, 2017.

⁴⁴ A. C. Boadi, Accountant, PASDASS, interview by the author, Patriensa, 23 June, 2017.

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Primary Source: Interview

Date	Person	Position	Remarks
21 June, 2017	Grace Aboagyewaa	Former Women's' Ministries Coordinator	Interview by the author
21 June, 2017	Yaw Owusu	Headteacher, SDA Primary School	Interview by the author
23 June, 2017	Kwame Osei Agyemang	Headmaster, SDA Senior High, Patriensa	Interview by the author
23 June 2017	A. C Boadi	Accountant, PASDASS	Interview by the author
23 June, 2017	Evans Owusu-Antwi	Chaplain, PASDASS	Interview by the author
25 June, 2017	Eric Boateng	Senoir Housemaster, PASDASS	Interview by the author

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