

JOYFUL SPIRIT-FILLED SERVICE MARKS GHANA INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY HERE

by Min. Nicholas Thompson

Ghanaians and friends of Ghana converged on the Church of the Living God, Oak Lawn on Sunday, March 7th for a special service, as part of the country's 53rd independence anniversary celebrations here.

Intercessory prayers were offered seeking God's continued protection and prosperity for Ghana as well as the well-being of Ghanaians living in the Chicagoland area. Vibrant songs and dancing punctuated the service, which included a powerful sermon on one's purpose in life. A highlight of the event was the singing of the national anthems of Ghana and the United States. Tributes were also paid to Ghana's founding father, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah for his selfless leadership.

Among the large number of people who attended the joyful spirit-filled service were John Assabill, president of the Ghana National Council, Rev. Dr. Kofi Noonoo, chairman of the Council Churches, other pastors, ministers, and elders of Ghanaian community.

In an inspiring sermon, Rev. Victor Owusu Temg, Church of Living God's pastor, urged Ghanaians to live up to a higher calling of God as demonstrated by the life of Kwame Nkrumah. "Stand up for something, live for something. We were created for a special purpose. We are here for a reason," he declared. "We must live for worthy causes, other than just acquiring an education and making a living for yourself and family. What matters most is that you become important in someone else's life."

Quoting from the Books of Isaiah, John and the Acts of the Apostles to support his point, the pastor affirmed that God wants us to be a blessing to others. Whatever you have or do, if they are not of the Master's use, they are nothing. One's good works will redeem him or her shortcomings, and in the state of coma, the Lord can grant you relief and extend your life based on that. Even when you die, your good works for others will speak for themselves.

"The essence of living is to be a blessing to others, the nation and people. Don't take for granted your existence. Life lived for only self and family is nothing" he said. "If you also stand up for your country and people, God will bless you."

Referring to Kwame Nkrumah and major Bible personalities such as Solomon and David, he said because they stood up for something their good works are memorial to them.

"We are made for each other. That's why Kwame Nkrumah declared that Ghana's independence was meaningless until it was linked up with the total liberation of the African continent," he said amid applause.

Rev. Jonathan A. Codjoe, pastor of the Apostolic Church International and the Rev. Isaac Paintsil, pastor of the Christ's Oasis Ministries led the congregation in prayers for the well-being of Ghana and Ghanaians. Rev. James Acquah blessed the offering.

In his remarks, Council of Ghanaian Churches President Noonoo said the the umbrella group has grown from five to 20 churches and ministries during the 15 years of its existence. He appealed to all Ghanaians to offer strong support to the council, which organizes the annual independence and GhanaFest church Services. The Council also serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas among pastors, ministers and elders in a way to enhance the spiritual well being of Ghanaians in the Chicagoland area.

Rev. Noonoo hoped that Ghanaians would a building to be renamed "Ghana House" for joint spiritual and social activities by the Ghanaian community. He added that he looks forward to the day when members of all Ghanaian churches and ministries will come together to honor a fellow Ghanaian Christian on his or her passing.

The vote of thanks was given by Minister Nicholas Thompson, executive director of Africa Resurrection and Restoration Ministries. Brother Akuamoah of the Church of the Living God served as master of ceremonies for the event.