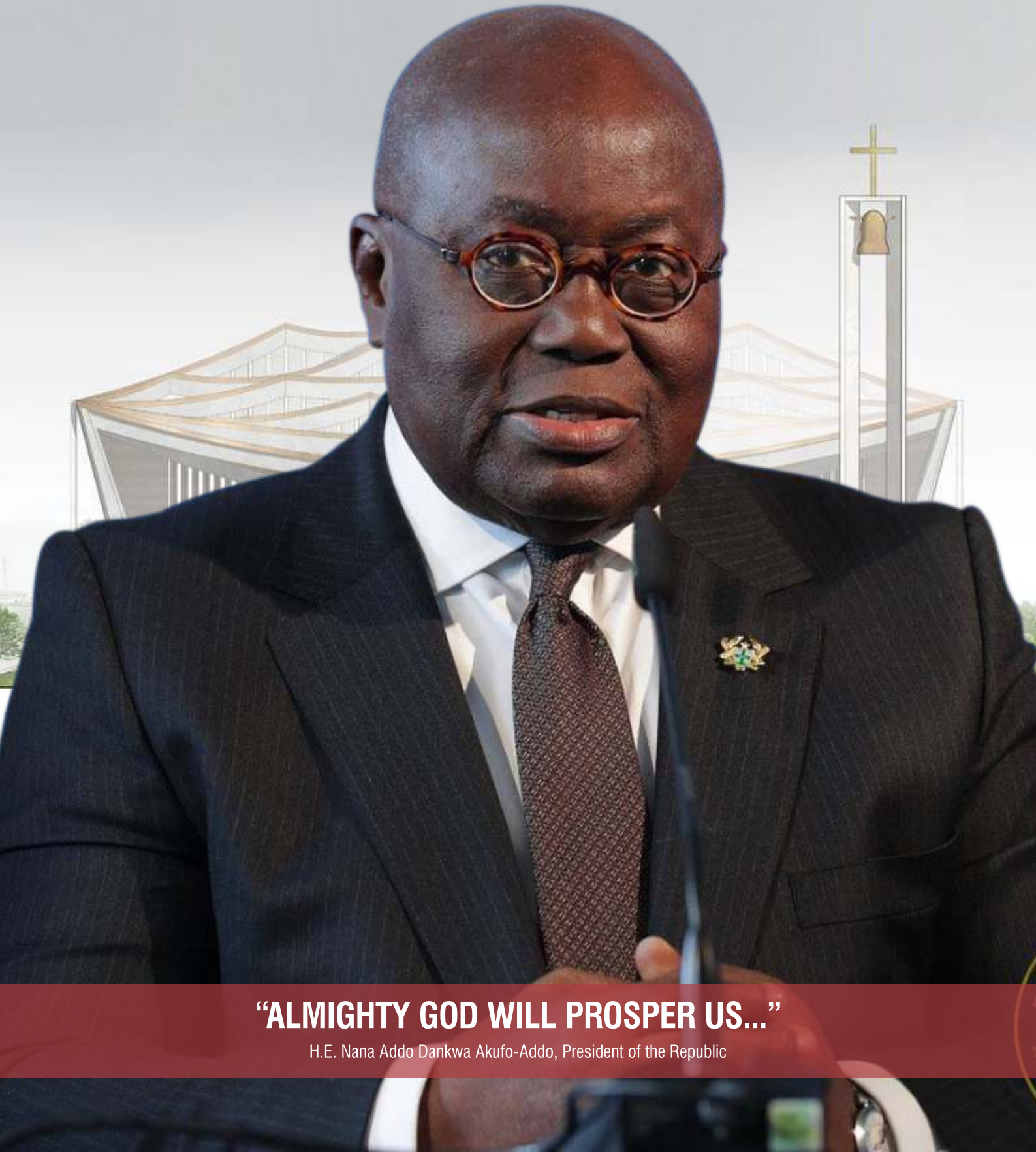


# NATIONAL CATHEDRAL UPDATE



Number 1 - September - December, 2019 - News from the Secretariat of the National Cathedral of Ghana



**“ALMIGHTY GOD WILL PROSPER US...”**

H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic

## THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL AT A GLANCE

The National Cathedral, designed by the leading Ghanaian-British Architect Sir David Adjaye OBE, is both an iconic infrastructure and a convening platform. As an infrastructure, the Cathedral is an iconic landmark that addresses a “missing link in the nation's architecture” by providing a “great church for national purposes” where Ghanaians of all denominations gather to worship, reflect, celebrate, and mourn. It will serve as a venue for formal state occasions of a religious nature such as Presidential Inaugural services, State Funerals, National Thanksgiving services, amongst others. It includes a 5000-seater auditorium, expandable to 15000; baptistery; chapels; conference center; and Africa's first Bible Museum and Documentation Center. As a convening platform, the National Cathedral will be a unifying monument around which to elevate shared conversations on the role of the Christian faith and values in nation building.

The National Cathedral is the vision of the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, and involves close partnership between the State and the Ghanaian Christian community, for its development. This partnership between the state and the Christian community builds on the rich history of the Church's involvement in National development, and reflects the social partnership envisaged to foster participatory development of the country as a collective goal.

Administratively the Chief of Staff is the coordinator of the project at the Presidency. A Board of Trustees made up of leading clergy across the major church denominations, is established to mobilize support, including fundraising, for the Cathedral; and oversee its management once completed. The day-to-day strategic and operational coordination of the work on the National Cathedral is under a Secretariat, headed by an Executive Director with administrative, mobilization and thought leadership responsibilities. The Secretariat also supervises the Project Management Office (PMO) of the Cathedral project, coordinates the Cathedral's national and international institutional relations, and represents the Cathedral to the public.

### THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL UPDATE

The *National Cathedral Update* is a quarterly Newsletter from the Secretariat of the National Cathedral of Ghana, and forms part of the Public Education functions of the Secretariat.

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# WELCOME TO THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL UPDATE

Paul Opoku-Mensah PHD, CEO, National Cathedral (Editor)



The April 15, 2019 fire that nearly destroyed the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, brought out, in almost dramatic fashion, the *place* of the *National Cathedral* in national life. French President Macron's description of Notre Dame as "the epicenter of our [French] lives", reminded the world that even in "secular" France, the National Cathedral is "a cornerstone" of the Nation's spiritual and cultural heritage.

Beyond the outpouring of "grief" - from the elderly, the Youth, Christian, non-Christian - was something even more remarkable: the spontaneous offer of financial support from billionaires to ordinary citizens, for the restoration of this jewel of the French Nation. In less than a week of the fire, almost a \$1 billion was promised by rich, powerful French families and companies. For instance, François-Henri Pinault, Chairman of the Company that owns Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent, promised €100 million. Almost immediately, Bernard Arnault, CEO of LVMH - which owns Louis Vuitton and Dior, pledged €200 million, as did the Bettencourt Schueller Foundation of L'Oreal. French energy company Total also pledged €100 million. Besides these big donors, contributions from ordinary citizens began to pour in. For instance, the US-registered charity "Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris" saw its donors increase dramatically from fewer than 800 on the morning of the April 15 fire, to 10,600 immediately after the fire. This response of the French to Notre Dame was a timely reminder of a historical fact: Throughout history, the building and restoration of the great Cathedrals have produced the great mobilizations in society

The Tabernacle, Temples, the great Cathedrals, **all** tell similar stories of engagement and mobilization. This mobilization around the great Cathedrals (and the Tabernacle, temples) is possible because they serve critical national purposes as sacred national infrastructure (i.e., church for national purposes), and national legacy projects /monuments, linked to the nation's heritage and collective self-identity.

## Throughout history, the building and restoration of the great Cathedrals have produced the great mobilizations in society

Recently in June 2019 I was reminded of this when I visited the National Cathedral of Norway - the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim. Although I had lived in this city for almost two decades, and had seen the role the Cathedral plays in Norwegian national life, I just found out during this trip that the plans to restore Nidaros in the 19th century produced the largest mobilization, ever, in Norway's history. My favorite in this mobilization saga is that of a Norwegian businessman in Portugal who sent 96 bottles of wine from his winery to be auctioned to support the Cathedral project. By far, one of the most striking examples of mobilization is the building of the Cathedral of Milan. As told by author Bill Shore:

*"When construction commenced on the Milan Cathedral on the Milan Cathedral, craftsmen came from across Europe - stonemasons, sculptors, master masons, blacksmiths and carpenters - and cooperated to an unprecedented degree. While*

*nobles made large financial donations, contributions came from **all citizens**, sharing whatever their strengths happened to be. Weavers, bakers, butchers, tanners, millers, and fishermen took turns donating their services, without salary, as did physicians and apothecaries. It is said the Vicar worked in the stone yard. Groups of young women dressed in white went through town and countryside collecting offerings"*

The KEY to this mobilization is captured by Bill Shore:

**"Somehow it had been communicated and understood that it wasn't just that building a truly great cathedral would require everyone to share their strength, but rather that everyone sharing their strength would result in a truly great cathedral"**

The Vision for the National Cathedral of Ghana, and the Partnership proposed by the President to build it, fits this historical pattern. The National Cathedral offers a sacred, cohesive, space and infrastructure for the nation in ways which, we are confident, will influence our self-identity as a nation. If the response, so far, to the launch of the fundraising campaigns is anything to go by -and it should be -we are at the cusp of a historically unparalleled mobilization whose impact will be felt beyond the building of the National Cathedral.

**The National Cathedral Update**, a quarterly newsletter from the Secretariat of the National Cathedral, forms part of the Public Education functions of the Secretariat. It will provide information on the National Cathedral, and document the coalition that will support it. In this expanded, inaugural issue, we recap the story of the National Cathedral so far: The Vision of the President; interview with the Architect; the launch of the Fundraising and Mobilization campaign; and the beginnings of the coalition to support the Cathedral. We look forward to your feedback.

## “ALMIGHTY GOD WILL PROSPER US...”

H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo : President of the Republic



H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic

The President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, has reiterated his determination to bequeath to the nation a National Cathedral, describing the project as a “priority among priorities”. Launching the Fundraising Campaign for the National Cathedral in Ghana on December 28, 2018 and February 8, 2019 in Washington DC, the President (re)articulated the vision for the Cathedral, the rationale for it, and the envisaged partnership for its development. At the launch in Accra:

*“I cut the sod for the construction of the Cathedral on the occasion of our country’s 60<sup>th</sup> independence, knowing very well that, if I may be permitted to make that comparison, like Solomon at the dedication of the first temple, I know that God cannot be contained in a physical edifice. Rather, and again like Solomon on that occasion, the building of the National Cathedral is to serve as a gesture of thanksgiving to God for his blessings, favor, grace and mercies on our nation. And to give me an opportunity to redeem a pledge I made to him before I became President.”*

Launching the Fundraising Campaign in the presence of the Ghanaian Diaspora and Friends of Ghana on February 8, 2019 in Washington DC, the President elaborated further:

*“There are still some people who ask the question, why a National Cathedral? I want to proffer 3 reasons; Firstly, since gaining our freedom and independence from the British colonial power 62 years ago in 1957, Ghana has been spared civil war, famine and epidemics. We are certainly no better than the other nations, and*

*our neighbors who have been confronted with these challenges. But I believe it is by the grace of God that we have been preserved and sustained. And the construction of the National Cathedral will be an act of thanksgiving to the almighty for his blessings, favor, grace and mercies on our nation.”*

*“Secondly, 71% of the Ghanaian people adhere to the Christian religion, grouped under the various persuasions of the Christian faith. The interdenominational*



Veep Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, First Lady Rebecca Akufo-Addo and H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic



*National Cathedral will help unify the Christian community and thereby promote national unity and social cohesion. The supreme court of Ghana, in unanimously rejecting recently a challenge to the constitutionality of the cathedral project, laid particular emphasis on this point in granting approval for the development of the project."*

*"Thirdly I made a pledge to Almighty God, that if He is gracious enough to grant my party, the New Patriotic Party - and I victory in the 2016 elections, after two unsuccessful terms, I will help build a Cathedral to his glory and honor.  
**I am determined to redeem this pledge!"***

In Washington DC, the President provided a clarification on the nature of the Cathedral:

*"The Cathedral will not just be another national monument adorning the skyline of Accra. It will be the rallying point for the Christian community to come together to worship, to pray, and to promote deep national conversations on the role of faith in building Ghana. It will house a bible museum, and it will be an iconic infrastructure for national, regional and international pilgrimage and tourism."*

A recurrent concern of the President, stressed at both the Accra and Washington launch, is that the building of the National Cathedral should not place undue burden on the finances of the state. Rather he proposes a national and transnational coalition - a "coalition of the willing" - to build the National Cathedral.

*"It is my earnest wish that the building of the National Cathedral should not be a burden on the state. That is why we are mobilizing the Christian community home and abroad to join us in partnership to raise the needed resources to build the cathedral. We seek to build this partnership on the rich history of the churches' involvement in our nation's*



*development. From Agriculture, Education, Health amongst others, the church has been a major contributor to our national life and a strong partner of the state--which has chosen for its part to donate the land and a modest seed fund for this development in the partnership."*

*"I am confident of the support of the Ghanaian people, for this coalition of churches, corporations and individuals in bringing this project to fruition. This will be a historic coalition, and the names of*

*the supporters will be written in gold in the annals of our history.*

***I am proud to call myself a leading member of this coalition...!"***

The importance of this transnational coalition, notwithstanding, the President concludes:

***"I am confident that like Nehemiah in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, it is the Almighty God who will prosper us, and make us succeed in this endeavor!"***

## PRESIDENT AT THE MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE IN WASHINGTON DC



The development of the National Cathedral includes a Bible Museum, the first of its kind in Africa, which will focus on the history and impact of the Bible in Ghana and the African continent. It will involve close collaboration with the Churches, Theological Institutions, Ghanaian and International Scholars and the Para Church Organizations. It focuses on the impact of the Bible in both the religious and non-religious domains of national life.

Since February 2018, the Secretariat of the National Cathedral has engaged the leadership of the Museum of the Bible in Washington DC. The 430,000-square-foot Museum of the Bible, which opened in November 2017 to wide acclaim, is located close to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and is one of the most technologically advanced and engaging museums in the world. Showcasing rare and fascinating artifacts spanning 3,500 years of history, the museum offers visitors an immersive and personalized experience with the Bible, and its on-going impact on the world.

On the afternoon of February 8, 2019 the President, Nana Akufo-Addo, visited the Museum, and was given a guided tour by the Founder and Chairman of the Board of the museum, billionaire businessman Steve Green. In welcoming the President, Steve Green explained that the goal of the Museum is not



to proselytize, but rather to call all people to engage this historic book that has impacted the world, including providing the founding values and principles for the United States. This same Book, he indicated, is what provides the principles for the success of his family's Business, Hobby Lobby, one the largest arts and crafts shop in the United States.

He explained that the Museum examines the Bible in three ways: its history, its impact, and its narrative. And these form three of the key floors at the museum. He indicated that the Museum is an "incredible collaboration" of over 40 individuals and institutions that have come together to have items that are on display in the museum. "And there are many faith traditions that have come together as well," he added. At the "*Illumination*" section of the Museum, the President was shown samples of Bibles translated worldwide, including languages of Ghana—and the languages in Ghana which still need Bibles in them.

Steve Green explained that it "thrills" him, indeed it's "heartwarming" to hear of the President's vision to establish a National Cathedral in Ghana, that also includes a Bible Museum. He offered his support, and that of the Museum, in the development of the National Cathedral of Ghana and its Bible Museum.

In his response, the President congratulated Steve Green for the elegant and extraordinary Museum. He reiterated his commitment to the National Cathedral, and its Bible Museum - although "not as elegant" as the Museum of the Bible in Washington DC. He expressed his appreciation, and that of his delegation, to Steve Green and his wife, Jackie, for the tour; for their decision to co-host the launch of the National Cathedral's Fundraising campaign in the USA at the Museum; and their offer of support for the National Cathedral of Ghana.

The President was accompanied by Ghana's Ambassador to the US, Dr Adjei-Barwuah; the Minister for Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, Hon Kofi Dzamesie; Archbishop Duncan-Williams, Trustee & Chair of the Fundraising Committee; Rt. Rev Dr Justice Akrofi, Trustee & retired Anglican Archbishop; and Dr. Paul Opoku-Mensah, CEO of the National Cathedral Secretariat.





# "IT SHALL COME TO PASS!"

Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams



Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams, a Trustee and Chairman of the Fundraising Committee of the National Cathedral, has made a spirited and passionate defense of the Cathedral project, and called on the Church in Ghana to support it. At the launch of the Fundraising campaign in Accra and Washington DC, Archbishop Duncan-Williams provided reasons for his support:

*"When I was asked to join the Board of Trustees, I decided to go see his Excellency the President one on one. And I said: 'Mr. President, I want you to tell me why a National Cathedral. Why this dream? Why this vision? I want you to talk to me.' And he said Archbishop, I made a vow to God that if I become President I will see to it that the National Cathedral is built to His name and His Glory. And as a spiritual man as I looked him in the eye, I was convinced. And I believed that, that was the key that unlocked his victory. And at that point I knew that he will need every help to bring to pass this noble cause."*

Calling on Ghanaian Christians, at home and in the Diaspora, to support the National Cathedral project, he chall-

enged them to be part of this vision and to join to build for God and country.

As he put it:

*"This is bigger than political parties. It is bigger than Mr. President, and it is bigger than You and I. And this is not something that Mr. President or his party can put a claim to or will it to his children. It is that which will represent the spirit and soul of this country. It is a National inheritance and legacy."*

Arguing that the Fundraising campaign will be taken throughout the country, and in many parts of the world, he stressed:

"We are committed and determined

to see money raised. **It shall be done! It shall come to pass!"**

Concluding, he made a passionate call on the Church in Ghana to support the Cathedral:

*"Let us rise together, put our differences and political persuasions aside and for once as Christians let's do something that unite us. Let's build a place of reconciliation; A place of unity. A place of forgiveness, a place of true love and a place and a building that will cause You and I to be remembered by posterity. That when the history of this building is told, there is no way that you, your family and my family will be forgotten."*





# A GLOBAL FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

Fred Oware, Co-Chair, Fundraising Committee



*As part of the launch of the Fundraising Campaign in Accra, an outline of the Fundraising strategy for the National Cathedral was presented by the Co-Chair of the Fundraising Committee, Mr Fred Oware. In this section we reproduce the strategy, as delivered.*

## INTRODUCTION

The vision of the President, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo – Addo, is to bequeath to our nation, an iconic national monument that shall be the meeting place for national events of religious significance. This requires all Ghanaians to embrace this noble idea and contribute generously according to how one is blessed.

One of the duties of the Fundraising Committee of the Board of Trustees for the National Cathedral of Ghana Project, is to outline to you the strategies adopted to extend invitations to all Ghanaians, both at home and in the diaspora, our friends and well-wishers of the global community and urge them to support the project.

The President's vision is anchored on a funding model that would not place financial burden on the state. He has clearly mapped out key features of the

funding model. These are mainly:

To form a partnership between the State and private funding sources especially the Ghanaian Christian Community.

To include income generation facilities as part of the project to raise the necessary finance to sustain proper maintenance culture after completion of the Cathedral.

Thus, the state is offering the required land as well as freeing it of any encumbrance so that work can start as soon as possible.

## STRATEGIES

In pursuance of the President's vision within the described framework, the Trustees through the Fundraising Committee have developed various strategies which include:-

**Church Engagement Strategy:** to mobilise Churches and other Christian groups throughout Ghana and the Ghanaian Diaspora, to make financial contributions in the support of the Cathedral project. This would be a major thrust with targets being agreed with major denominations and groupings in the Christian community, both local and international.

**Corporate/ Institutional Support:** to seek support from corporate institutions and other charitable institutions – including foundations – nationally and internationally.

**Major – Donor Platforms:** to appeal to businessmen and businesswomen of the Christian faith to make donations in support of the project.

**Direct Public Appeals** through widely publicized and/ or televised nationwide fundraising events at which the President will directly appeal to Christians to donate in support of the project.

**Individual Support** involving online and mobile money strategies

**Building Materials** are also acceptable.

## TOOLS OF IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve the foregoing, we shall employ the following:

Door to door visits and follow-ups to the premises of all major stakeholders targeted to achieve this vision.

We will advertise the names of collecting banks purposely to collect donations for onward transfer to the Trustees' main account. Mobile Money platforms, Online transfer facilities, Direct payments at the Secretariat's office, Sale of souvenirs. Periodic events organised to raise awareness and enthusiasm.

## INCENTIVES

The Trustees would be reviewing for approval after due processes some incentives including:

Hall of Fame / Donors which would display names of donors in various categories of Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Ivory.

There will be special Halls, Rooms, Windows, Doors, Walkways, Pews, Trees, etc., which would be appropriately named after certain categories of donors. Other incentives as may be approved by the Trustees.

## CONCLUSION

The Trustees are setting up institutional arrangements to oversee the activities of the Fundraising Committee and the Secretariat to ensure proper record keeping as well as bringing into reality the President's Vision.



# LAUNCH OF THE FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN - GHANA

Accra, December 28, 2018













# LAUNCH OF THE FUNDRASING CAMPAIGN - USA

Washington DC, February 8, 2019













## FIRST SKY GROUP MAKES FIRST DONATION TO THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL



The first major, private, donation to the National Cathedral project was made in January 2018 by the First Sky Group, an agglomeration of companies comprising of First SKY Construction, First SKY Commodities, Volta Serene Hotel and Serene Insurance. At the 15th Anniversary and Thanksgiving Service of the First SKY Group on Sunday, January 14, 2018, the company donated an amount of GHC 2 million to support the building of the National Cathedral.

Explaining the motivation for the donation, the Chairman of First SKY Group, Eric Seddy Kutortse, said: *"We together as a Board have prayed to God, and he says he needs a permanent place to abide. As a nation, this has also been the vision of the President. He has even gone beyond to cut the sod for the construction of the Cathedral. This Cathedral is not for any denomination - it is not for the Pentecost Church, or Assemblies of God Church, but a National*

*Cathedral That is why we are fully supporting this divine idea. In total we are donating two million Ghana Cedis, one million in cash the other one million as building materials which include 4000 bags of cement, tones of iron rods among others"*he added.

Eric Seddy Kutortse, who is also the Co-Chair for the Fundraising Committee of the National Cathedral Project, called on Ghanaians and private entities to support the building of the National cathedral for the country.





## ACCRA RIDGE CHURCH - THE PRESIDENT'S CHURCH - LEADS THE WAY



The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Accra Ridge Church, meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2019 has formally committed to financially support the National Cathedral Project.

As the Methodist Minister at the Church Rt Rev Sampson Kwaku Gyabeng, and the Council Chairman, Mr Emmanuel Kojo Hayford explain:

*"At the AGM meeting, members gathered deliberated over what kind of help the Church could give to the realization of this dream by our own member, the President of the Republic of Ghana.*

*A Vote was taken and the decision was that a second collection be taken at all the services of the Accra Ridge Church in all the Churches bi-annually to support the project.*

*The months of July and December was chosen as months for the contribution to this laudable project for a duration of 2 years.*

*Prayers will also be said during the Church's intercessions time at all the services to ask God to help achieve this objective."*

The first fundraising event was held on July 7, 2019 when a special offering was taken for the National Cathedral at the service, and the money sent to the Secretariat of the National Cathedral.

**By this decision, the Accra Ridge Church, the President's Church, becomes the first Church in the country to officially commit to support the National Cathedral Project.**

The Accra Ridge Church, was established in 1935 at the instance of a number of Europeans, mainly in Government service and a large community of Anglicans

staying in the Ridge area of Accra, who wanted a service in English and of simpler pattern than that available at the Anglican Cathedral. Although the Accra Ridge Church started as an Anglican congregation, it quickly transformed into an interdenominational church with the adoption of an interdenominational constitution. The church is currently affiliated to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Methodist Church Ghana and the Anglican Diocesan Council of Ghana.

The Accra Ridge Church is the home church of the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo.



## THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL AND THE GHANAIAN DIASPORA

A key part of the mobilisation strategy of the National Cathedral, is the role of the Diaspora. The launch of the Fundraising campaign in Washington DC on February 8, 2019 was a major thrust in the strategy to include the Diaspora in the coalition to build the National Cathedral.

Outside of the launch of the Fundraising Campaign, are a number of low-key discussions, meetings, and events all aimed at engaging the Ghanaian Diaspora in the National Cathedral project. These include engagement with the Ghanaian Embassies and Ambassadors abroad, who play critical mediating roles in connecting the National Cathedral to the Ghanaian Diaspora. While the most developed of this, currently, is the Ghana Embassy in the US, preliminary discussions have also taken place with Ghana's Embassies, and Ambassadors, in Norway and Israel. As the Mobilisation and Fundraising picks up steam, links would be developed with regions and countries with a sizeable Ghanaian Diaspora.

The second strand of the Diaspora strategy is the Ghanaian Diaspora Churches, which are growing in numbers, influence, and with considerable financial clout. These represent a key part of the "Ghanaian Christian Community" whose mobilisation will be critical to the overall coalition building for the National Cathedral.

The third is the engagement of Ghanaian Diaspora organisations and individuals with resources, skills, and expertise relevant to the development of the National Cathedral. Within this category are private sector actors, professionals with skills in the building industry, and scholars – including theologians – whose work will be needed for the development of the National Cathedral and its Bible Museum.

Information of the Ghanaian Diaspora's engagement in the National Cathedral project, would be a key feature of the National Cathedral UPDATE.



**Embassies:** Ghana's Ambassador to the US, Dr Agyei-Barwuah (L) and National Cathedral CEO, Dr. Opoku-Mensah discuss the National Cathedral's outreach to Ghanaians in the US.



**Diaspora Scholars:** US-based Ghanaian theologian and Professor of New Testament at Gordon College, Dr Daniel Darko (M), visits National Cathedral Secretariat to explore collaboration.



The President of the Ghanaian Ministers Association of Southern California, Dr Steve Adarkwa (R), at the National Cathedral Secretariat to discuss the US Churches' support for the National Cathedral



## CHIEF OF STAFF MEETS BOARD OF TRUSTEES



The National Cathedral envisages a partnership between the State and the Ghanaian Christian community, and Ghanaians in general. On June 3, 2019 the Chief of Staff met the Trustees to discuss the nature of the Cathedral, the framework for its registration, and the role of the key stakeholders: The State, the Board of Trustees and the Secretariat of the National Cathedral.

Overall the understanding was that the National Cathedral was a Presidential initiative with the Chief of Staff responsible for the coordination of the project. The instrument for implementation was a Foundation, registered as a company limited by guarantee. The role of the stakeholders was understood as follows:

- i) The **State** (President), is the initiator of the National Cathedral;
- ii) State (President) Commissions the Architect;
- iii) Secures/Guarantees the legal/legislative basis;

- iv) Provides and prepares the Land for the Cathedral;
- v) Provides Seed Money for Design Phase;
- vi) Establishes and Resources Secretariat; and
- vii) Participates in the implementation

The **Trustees**, appointed by the President to shepherd the Cathedral project, have the following roles

- i) Hold the Cathedral in "Trust" for the people of Ghana,
- ii) Provide direction for the development of the NCG,
- iii) Oversees fundraising for Cathedral project,
- iv) Oversee procurement process for construction phase of NCG,
- v) Mobilize the Church, and Nation, in support of the project,
- vi) Approves Budgets, Policies, and Programs of NCG Secretariat;
- vii) Monitors the progress of the NCG project, and

- viii) Develops Framework to Manage Cathedral—when completed

The **Secretariat**, on the other hand, has responsibility for the

- i) day-to-day Strategic and Operational implementation;
- ii) development of budgets, policies and programs for approval by Trustees & State
- iii) provision of progress reports on Cathedral to Trustees and State
- iv) Coordination of the NCG's relations between Architects, Design & Construction teams,
- iv) Coordination of the NCG's National & International institutional relations, and finally
- v) Representation of the Cathedral to the Public

The Chief of Staff was accompanied to the meeting with the Trustees by the Deputy Chief of Staff, Samuel Abu Jinapor; Deputy Attorney-General, Godfried Odame; and Snr State Attorney, Ms Yvonne Bannerman.



# “DESTINY HAS MADE US LEADERS”

Interview With Sir David Adjaye, OBE



The great Cathedrals of the world are renowned, in a major part, for the Architects who designed and built them. Essentially, behind every great Cathedral is a great Architect. The National Cathedral of Ghana follows in this tradition of Architectural excellence, having as its Architect, Sir David Adjaye OBE, a global iconic Architect. Born in Tanzania to Ghanaian parents, Sir David Adjaye's work includes iconic buildings like the National Museum of African and African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington DC; the Museum of the Nobel Peace Awards in Oslo Norway; and the Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO.

In this section, the Editor of the *National Cathedral Update*, Prof. Paul Opoku-Mensah, interviews Sir David Adjaye on several issues related to the National Cathedral.

*POM: In proposing the construction of the National Cathedral, the President argues that the Cathedral addresses a 'missing link' in the nation's architecture. What is your understanding of this "missing gap," and its influence on your design?*

DA: In commissioning this Cathedral project, the President talks about the

need for this piece of architecture to fulfill a missing gap in the nation's architecture. My understanding of this incredible statement by the President is that, Ghana is 70% Christian Faith with as many as 30,000 churches. However, in its public role as a unified body, the real spiritual seat and soul of the nation has no 'center'. There currently is no space where all come together to celebrate this sacred aspect. And I think this is what the president is hinting to – to be able to celebrate the sacred in the nation: important funerals, important events, markings and very sacred things that should not be done in secular spaces. And the need for that, and how all cultures have this differentiation, to be able to honor and make special the sacred within society.

*POM: A number of people have raised concerns about your design of the National Cathedral. What informs your design strategy, and why do you believe it is the most appropriate for the Ghanaian context?*

DA: In meditating on the commission for the Cathedral, it dawned on me that here was an important moment to not just replicate a church as we have seen it from the West but to acknowledge that

African Christianity is unique and is a new flower in the garland of flowers of the Christian religion. That it is specific and unique; and here is a specific moment to use the calling of a national project to understand a new national style for what our specific Christianity is about. The project really seeks to look at our roots as a people; our sacred roots, and our rituals about divinity, and about our rituals that bring us into embrace with the Christian Theology, and this could make a hybrid culture that we have in Christianity which is unique to Africa. The building seeks to look at those references, specifically the Boaman culture of the Akan and Ashanti people. But also, of all the regions who have a chieftaincy culture, which is the predominant nature of Ghanaian civilization. The Boaman culture for me is not to be underestimated because in real terms the roots of architecture lie in the textiles that are the binding structures that surround us. And in the Boaman umbrellas which are in the durbar celebrations when the King, Queen Mother and other important dignitaries are revealed at special moments or on Sunday, Akwasidae etc. This is analogous to the relationship we have with Christ, which in the New Testament is a revelation of the Divinity of Christ that we have accepted into our



lives. And I think that there is no irony between these two things that cannot be underplayed. It is a very powerful confluence, which is part of the strength of the belief of Africans in Christian Theology. And I think that our architecture can use that and reinforce that already-binding scenario into something which can become a new architectural style for our religious buildings.

*POM: Why is the Cathedral important for Ghana Now?*

DA: I know that in a country that is developing, sometimes it's hard for people to understand how different initiatives and programs can happen in parallel to one another. That there isn't a specific hierarchy for how things necessarily happen. This project is not just an important building for the spirituality of Ghana, but it's also a project that shows the confidence of Ghana at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. To be in charge of its destiny, and to be able to express an image of itself to the nation and to the world. The confidence that this brings cannot be underplayed. It helps in many, many parts of our lives and our global relationships. It strengthens the relationships of people looking at us, our ability to deliver excellence, our ability to have a spiritual and unified whole, and to have monuments that dignify what is an important part of our cultural evolution. And I think that it is hard when you are looking at it, to understand it in the hierarchy of let's say a hospital or a school, which is pragmatic. But architecture that is about the aspiration can be an incredible catalyst for the perception of our country as a forward-looking country. A country to come to, a country to be part of, respect and appreciate, our sense of a greater purpose beyond the things that are our everyday.

*POM: The President has designated the National Cathedral a "legacy project". What is the Cathedral bequeathing to the Nation?*

DA: The Cathedral is not just a Hall for the celebrations, or the sacred rituals of

the nation. It also has within it facilities for community - there is a music school, a museum of theology, of the Bible (Bible Museum), facilities for events; small chapels for more local events; baptism and wedding spaces. Then there are the garden grounds. A special garden that is dedicated to the nation on the grounds of this building. So, what we are building is more than just a Cathedral space, but a public building for Ghanaians to have as a different experience. It's not a shopping mall. It's not a place where you have to pay to consume. It is a space that is for your wellbeing, to talk about the aspirations of the nation, and of the faith of the nation, and its future.

*POM: Historically, the great Cathedrals have always served as sites for pilgrimage and for tourism. What is the potential of this Cathedral for tourism?*

DA: The potential for the Cathedral in terms of its public outreach cannot be measured. To build a new park in Ghana, where tourists at the moment have no new spaces to go to that talk about our new public life. To make a park is to really celebrate our relationship to nature and our understanding of the work-life balance, and the balance that we need in our cities. And the Cathedral acts as a beacon to tourists, to visitors and to national and regional visitors of some of the attraction and power that is coming from the confidence that Ghana is displaying in its future, and its ability to hold itself into the future, and to form its future with its own identity.

*POM: Ghana has always had leadership aspirations beyond the country. Beyond Ghana, what relevance has the National Cathedral for Africa, African Christianity, and perhaps, even for the world?*

DA: I think Ghana has always been a small country punching well above its weight. We are the 'Black Star', the example that liberated the Continent. I always remember stories being told by my family and dear friends around the world of when independence happened, other African nations, other people,



Sir David with OBE award

would travel to Ghana just to see a country that was managed by Africans in full flow with its joy and its confidence, holding its future. And I think that in a way, the excitement for me in making this project is in carving an identity in architecture that is from our own roots, and our own heritage. And to celebrate that extraordinary heritage with the world through architecture, and through the rituals that will be performed in that architecture, to celebrate our uniqueness. That again, will be a trailblazing signature of the Ghanaian spirit, and the Ghanaian nature. We are leaders – I would say that, **destiny has made us leaders**, and I think it is beautiful that we continue to set the bar high, and to continue to innovate and show how the future can unfold.

*POM: You often talk about the Cathedral and job creation. Can you speak to this?*

DA: The making of this Cathedral, like all great buildings, is not a small endeavor. It is a work which we believe will also not only produce a beautiful building, we are clear it is going to do that! But that it will bring new skills and new technology to Ghana. It will allow us to explore technologies that have not





*Sir David Adjaye by the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture, which he designed*

been used in this country, bringing that expertise to us, and making us leaders in our region for this kind of architecture. This is something that good architecture can produce. It can raise standards in our industry, and allow more employment, and more jobs, the capacity to be able to do more in our nation in terms of the built environment. And this is also very exciting. By its very nature, a project of this scale sparks a leapfrog effect, offering greater access to resources and technologies that may ordinarily not be accessible, further positioning Accra among key African cities to visit. Accra will join many global cities known for attracting visitors and local groups to historic landmark sites and the National Cathedral will from inception unlock a robust skills and job creation matrix in line with the vision set out by President Akufo-Addo for a 'Ghana beyond Aid'. What I believe Ghana's leadership envision here is a process of catalyzing local resources, both human and natural. It is about optimizing investments in our people, building

sustainable industry and professions that engineer social and economic growth in our country. The National Cathedral of Ghana will contribute extensively to promoting agency not only in terms of our leadership's vision for Ghana, but also in response to the needs of Ghanaian people through the realization of endemic solutions, a thriving local ecosystems and value chain. The range of job sectors and specializations to be unlocked at varying stages will include; architects, interior design teams, engineers, contractors, technology specialists, surveyors, city planners, artists, curators, landscapers, environmentalists, historians, librarians, administrative staff & security, tour guides. A robust value chain, the National Cathedral of Ghana will not only facilitate job creation, it will inform the kind of leapfrog Africa has witnessed since the proliferation of mobile and cellular phone technology.

*POM: One of the key attractions of this Cathedral is that it is designed by "David*

*Adjaye," a global iconic Architect with Ghanaian parentage. What does it mean to you to design and build this Cathedral?*

DA: For me as a Ghanaian, this project is more than just a job. I was brought up outside of Ghana but in my adult life I have returned to Ghana. My roots, which were trained by my family, by my mother specifically, have never left me. And I have always felt in my heart that I am a Ghanaian. This project for me, in building with the skills that I have learnt in the world, a building of significance in this country, could not be more humbling and more touching. It is an incredible honor to be able to give one's service through what one does to make something of significance in one's home country.



# PRAYER CAMPAIGN FOR THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL KICKS OFF



A prayer campaign for the National Cathedral has taken off with three events at the site of the National Cathedral in August 2019.

In the first event, the Board of Trustees ended their monthly meeting on August 5, 2019, by a visit to the site of the National Cathedral to pray for the project. In prayers led by the Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Archbishop Palmer-Buckle, and concluded by Rev Prof Emmanuel Martey, the Trustees kicked off the Prayer Campaign ---a key component of the mobilization strategy for the National Cathedral. They later joined with some of the workers on the site to continue this prayer for the project.

In the second event, the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta, brought the Founder of the Global Day of Prayer Movement, South African Businessman, Graham Power, to the site to pray for the National Cathedral. The Global Day of Prayer, which started in Cape Town in 2001 with 45,000 people, now takes place in 220 countries in the world involving millions uniting in prayer on the Day of Pentecost every year ([www.globaldayofprayer.com](http://www.globaldayofprayer.com)) Graham

Power was in the country for the Ghana launch of the Unashamedly Ethical (UE) Movement, which he also founded. The Finance Minister and Graham Power were joined by Canadian Businessman and UE Board member, Don Simmonds; Ghanaian Christian Businessman, Rev Kwabena Darko (Darko Farms); and the CEO of the National Cathedral, Dr. Paul Opoku-Mensah.

In the third, and culminating event of the start of the Prayer Campaign, the inaugural meeting of a "National Cathedral Prayer Network" took place at the site of the National Cathedral the afternoon of August 25, 2019. The National Cathedral Prayer Network, initiated by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Rt Rev Dr Asante Antwi and coordinated by Bishop Eddy Aryee, the Presiding Bishop of BlessedHouse Chapel Int., will hold prayers at the site of the Cathedral on the last Sunday of every month from 2pm-4pm.

In welcoming the participants to the inaugural meeting, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees Rev. Dr Asante Antwi, recalled the vision of the President for the National Cathedral, stressing that the project enables us as to put God at

the centre of our national life. He challenged all Christians to join in this nationwide campaign to pray for the success of the National Cathedral project. The Coordinator of the Network, Bishop Aryee, indicated that the strategy is to attract as many Ministers and Christians as possible to be part of the network. In an address, the Deputy Regional Minister for Greater Accra, Mad. Elizabeth Sackey stressed that the corporate prayer of Christians was necessary for the "permission and blessings of Heaven" for the success of the project. On his part, the CEO of the National Cathedral, Paul Opoku-Mensah, in thanking the participants, confirmed the readiness of the Cathedral Secretariat to work with the organisers to develop the network into a major trans-national mobilization and prayer platform for the National Cathedral.

The participants were divided into groups each praying on different areas of the site, thus covering the whole area, symbolically, in prayer.

The next prayer meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2019 at the Cathedral site.





## THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL AND NATIONAL COHESION



The President's vision for the National Cathedral is not just an infrastructure for National events of a religious nature. Equally important, it is to be an infrastructure that unites the country, and help create national cohesion. This national cohesion function, more so, was a major consideration in the Supreme Court's decision upholding the constitutionality of the National Cathedral project.

National cohesion and unity are therefore major operational ethos, to be integrated into every aspect of the implementation of the project. The use of the Independence Day celebrations to mark the critical milestones of the National Cathedral – the sod cutting (March 6, 2017; the unveiling of the design (March 6, 2018) – are all in the spirit of national unity, cohesion. Ultimately the aim is to create a sense of national ownership for the National Cathedral.

As part of this quest to create national ownership, and to deploy the Cathedral in the service of national cohesion and unity, a delegation of the Trustees, led

by Trustee and Chairman of the Fundraising Committee, Archbishop Nicholas Duncan Williams, paid courtesy calls on two of our former Presidents, Presidents Jerry John Rawlings and John Mahama. The visits were to brief the two former Presidents on the progress on the Cathedral, listen to their views on its development, and invite the two former Presidents to the formal launch of the Fundraising campaign for the Cathedral on December 28, 2018.

The delegation to President Mahama on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2018 included Archbishop Duncan Williams; Vice Chairman Archbishop Palmer-Buckle; Rev Dr Joyce Aryee; Rt Rev Dr Justice Akrofi and National Cathedral CEO, Paul Opoku-Mensah. The discussions, which were very cordial and productive, focused on key issues about the National Cathedral. In his remarks, President Mahama affirmed the importance of the National Cathedral project, acknowledged some of the concerns that had been raised around the project, and challenged the

Trustees and the Secretariat to develop the Cathedral project within a truly national, non-partisan framework to engender the support of all Ghanaians.

The visit to President Rawlings on December 24, 2018 involved Trustees Archbishop Duncan Williams, Rev Dr. Joyce Aryee, Rt Rev T K Awotwi Pratt, and Cathedral CEO Paul Opoku-Mensah.

The discussions were cordial, candid and productive. President Rawlings, who attended the launch of the fundraising campaign, highlighted different aspects of the project, particularly its benefits to the nation. He indicated that as a Catholic, He will support the official position of the Catholic Church on the National Cathedral.

Overall the visit was not only productive, but it set the tone and created a veritable platform for continuous dialogue with the former Presidents on the development of the National Cathedral. The Secretariat was charged to facilitate this dialogue.





# NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL SECRETARIAT

The National Cathedral Secretariat been set up to provide the day to day coordination of the National Cathedral project. The Secretariat, located at the State House, also serves as a “Clearing House” for information on the National Cathedral.

In this section we present some of the “goings” and “comings” at the Secretariat.

**We look forward to welcoming you to the Secretariat!**



## I. Architect Engages Board of Trustees

The Architect for the National Cathedral, Sir David Adjaye, meets to engage the Board of Trustees at the Secretariat.



## II. President of American Bible Society visits Secretariat

The President of the American Bible Society, Dr. Roy Peterson, visited the Secretariat. Since February 2018, the Secretariat has been in discussions on collaboration with the American Bible Society, and its Faith and Liberty Discovery Center. The Center, a technologically-immersive Museum that explores the influence of the Bible on the values of the Founding fathers of the USA, is scheduled to be opened at the historic Independence Mall in Philadelphia in 2020.



## III. Finance Minister Meets Design Team

The Minister for Finance. Ken Ofori-Atta, was at the Secretariat to engage the Design team. He challenged the team to see this as major National Assignment that is more than a job!



## IV. Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast visits Cathedral Secretariat

A delegation from the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast movement led by its chair, Knesset-member **Robert Illatov**, and Co-Chair **Michele Bachman**, former US congresswoman and Republican Presidential candidate, visited the Secretariat for information on the National Cathedral. The Architect, Sir David Adjaye, made a presentation to the group on the concept and design.



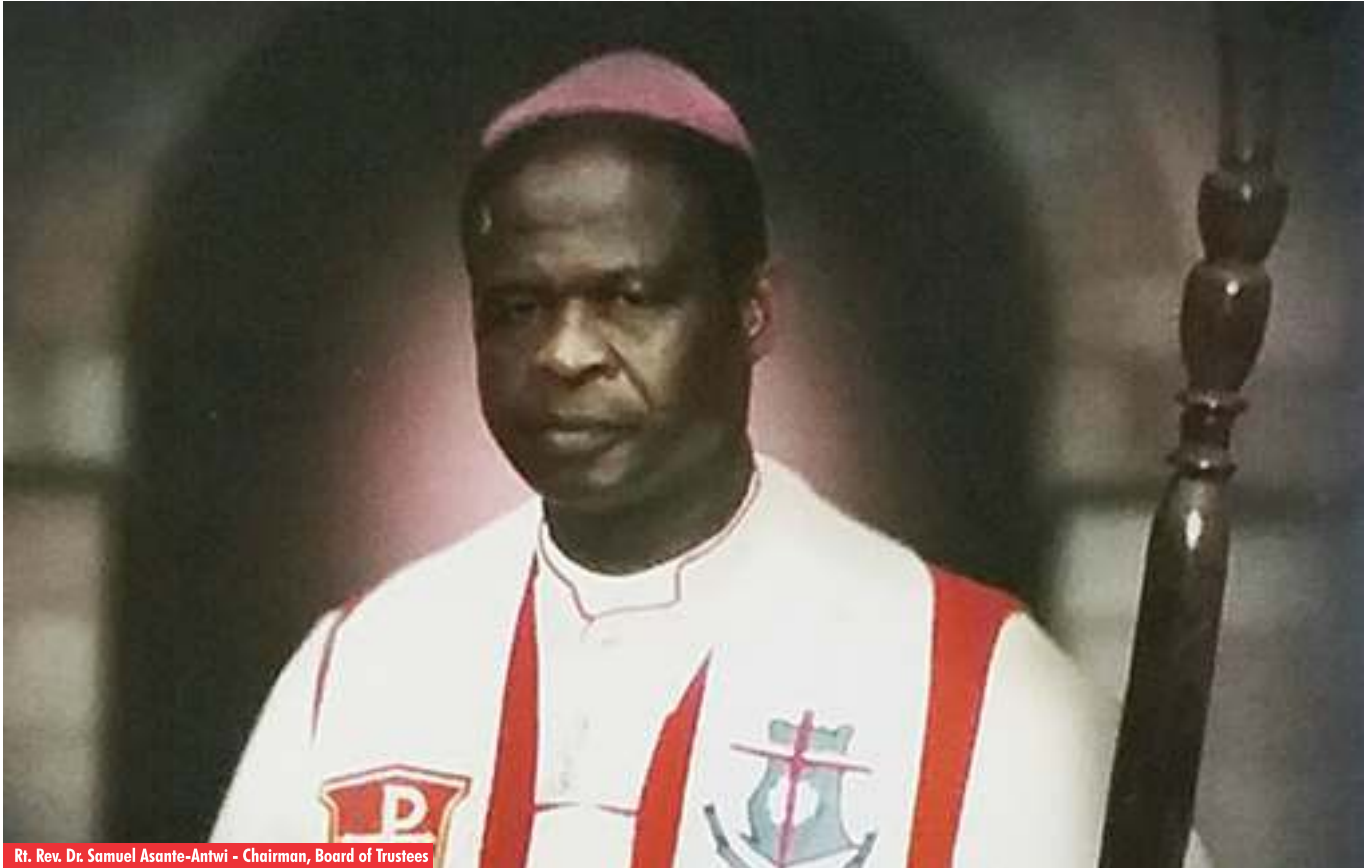
## V. Norwegian Museum Experts Visit National Cathedral Secretariat

Two Norwegian Museum experts visited the Secretariat of the National Cathedral for information on the Cathedral, and it's Bible Museum. The discussions explored potential collaboration



# A FINAL WORD - FROM THE TRUSTEES

“Ever Ancient, Ever New”



Rt. Rev. Dr. Samuel Asante-Antwi - Chairman, Board of Trustees

Since the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo mooted the idea of the National Cathedral, and cut the sod on March 6, 2017 for work to commence, the Board of Trustees have spent over two years planning for the take-off of the construction works. There have been regular meetings by the 14-member clergy Board of Trustees drawn from the various denominations in the nation.

We have had notable encounters with the Chief of Staff at the Presidency. We have also had interactions with our former Heads of State, the current Chief Justice, and Speaker of Parliament. We have interacted with Ministers of Finance, Lands and Natural Resources, and Municipal Chief Executives.

A Secretariat has been put in place with limited staff of two. The office has worked tirelessly to facilitate documentation, statutes, registration of the project under the companies Act.

The project has in the spirit of “EVER ANCIENT EVER NEW” also received a lot

of criticism, some in the spirit of the Sanballats, Tobias and Geshens.

The Lead Architect, Sir David Adjaye, has also been singled out for criticism. The site for the project, and the project in general, landed in the Supreme Court, with a verdict in favor of the National Cathedral.

On the 28th of December 2018, a historic dinner to launch the Fundraising Campaign, took place in Accra, Ghana. It was followed by the launch in the USA on February 8, 2019. The President was at all the two events.

The Trustees are now focused for the takeoff, and to complete the construction in partnership with the technical experts. Demolition has taken place and the site is to be used for a “People’s Cathedral Prayer”, launched at the site on August 25, 2019.

The major question is: WHEN IS MASSIVE FUNDRAISING GOING TO HAPPEN? The answer is simple: Accra Ridge Church, THE PRESIDENT’S CHURCH, has taken the lead.

All Christian leaders and various umbrella churches must now rise up over the construction of the Nation Cathedral, which is a symbol to unite us with the historical faith.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr President, the Chief of Staff, Members of the Board of Trustees, the Fundraising Committee, the indefatigable CEO Paul, Operations Director Abena, the Lead Architect Sir David Adjaye, and Kofi Bio, Adjaye Associates’ Director of Africa Projects. I recognize the role played by government Ministries particularly the office of Attorney General and Ministry of Justice, the Registrar General, the silent supporters and vocal critics, and others with kind hearts, loving spirits and positive attitudes. All these have made it possible for this maiden edition of the *National Cathedral Update* to inform and educate readers about the National Cathedral of Ghana.

**Rt Rev Dr Samuel Asante Antwi,**  
Chairman, Board of Trustees





## ARISE AND LET US BUILD!

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