**AN ALUMNUS SHARES PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPACT OF CSU THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN HIS 30 YEAR MINISTRY JOURNEY**

The founder of El Shaddai Baptist Temple at Ahinsan Estate, Kumasi, Rev. Michael Kofi Amankwaah Gelly, a member of the Ghana Baptist Convention and an alumnus, has shared revealing perspectives on how his training at Christian Service University influenced his worldview about ministry and shaped him to start and pastor the church for the last 30 years. He made this disclosure when the Church celebrated its 30th anniversary which also coincided with the 30th Anniversary of Rev. Gelly’s ministry as a pastor on Sunday May 5, 2024.

**Background to Ministry**

According to Rev. Gelly, he was confronted with the decision to start a new church in a circumstance he described as “unthinkable” after crisis erupted in Mercy Baptist Church at Anloga where he was supporting the head pastor as a youth leader with no immediate drive to pastor a church. The exigences of the time forced him to abandon his dream to become a professional teacher to now turn to Christian Service College (now CSU) to pursue Diploma in Theology (1995-1998) and then Degree in Theology (2003-2005) to prepare himself for the divine assignment.

Even though he currently holds Master of Divinity from Baylor University, Texas (2008-2011), Rev. Gelly unequivocally claims that his training at CSU gave him the right perspectives on how to survive in a turbulent mission field where immorality, adultery and idolatry reigned. “Without the grace of God and teachings on areas such as church growth, church management, systematic theology and the rest, I couldn’t have survived in such a mission field,” He noted. He reminisced how he was able to overcome all the difficult challenges by applying himself to diligence and faith in God. It was not surprising that Rev. Gelly personally invited the President of the Christian Service University, Prof. Sam Afrane to deliver the anniversary sermon.

**Sermon**

Speaking on the theme: “***Celebrating the Gift of God***”, Prof. Sam Afrane anchored his message on 1st Corinthians 16: 14-18 to explain that the story of the El Shaddai Baptist Temple is synonymous with the Church in Corinth. However, he assured the head pastor and the entire congregation that God will always reign supreme and build his church. He ceased the occasion to celebrate the Lordship and eternal reign of Jesus as owner of the Church, acknowledge the persevering spirit of Rev. Gelly and the contribution of each member of the church in the last 30 years. On the way forward, Prof. Afrane, urged Rev. Gelly to keep the faith alive (2nd Timothy 2:15), be a role model to the church (1st Timothy 4:12), show progress in all things (1st Timohty 4:15) and finally, endeavour to finish his ministry (2nd Timothy 4:5b). To the church, he charged them to run the race set before them (Revelation 2:10), examine themselves constantly (2 Corinthians 2:5) and stand united in prayer.

CSU celebrates Rev. Gelly for demonstrating transformational leadership and impacting his generation. We use this occasion to encourage and urge all alumni who are making impacts in their various fields of endeavour to remember the ethical and godly values the institution has imbibed in them. We stand by you and are more than ready to connect to make local and global impacts towards the transformation of society.