



Údarás um Fhorfheidhmiú Corparáideach  
Corporate Enforcement Authority

## **EBENEZER ODUNTAN SENTENCED TO 7 YEARS FOR COMPANY LAW AND THEFT AND FRAUD OFFENCES**

Mr. Ebenezer Oduntan, a Kildare-based pastor of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) (City of David), with an address in Newbridge Co. Kildare, has this afternoon been sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment at Naas Circuit Court.

Following an investigation by the Corporate Enforcement Authority (CEA), and after a three-week trial, Mr. Oduntan was convicted of 9 company law offences (providing false information), 73 counts of theft, and 5 counts of deception. The aggregate amount involved in the theft charges was in excess of €125,000.

Imposing a sentence of 7 years' imprisonment, with the final 6 months suspended, Judge Martina Baxter referred to the position of trust that Mr. Oduntan held as pastor of the Church. She referred to the *'...quite substantial amount of control that he had...'* and observed that *'...no-one ever questioned him. They trusted him, such was the esteem in which he was held at that point in time.'*

Judge Baxter further stated that *'Clearly, it was a very prolonged, premeditated, and well-planned scheme on the part of Mr. Oduntan... As he created the financial structures, there was no oversight and no accountability.'*

The aggravating factors identified by the Judge included the significant sums involved and the fact that there had been no attempt at restitution. She said that *'this was a complex, sophisticated and pre-planned crime. He treated the Church funds as his own.'* Judge Baxter further stated that *'Serious wrongdoing requires a severe sentence to reflect the censure of society'*. She noted that, while Mr. Oduntan had pleaded guilty to some counts mid-trial, the pleas did not reduce the complexity of the trial – *'When he pleaded, that evidence was already there.'* She concluded that his culpability was high, and that he had lost all available discounts.

ENDS/

**CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY  
26 APRIL 2024**

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## **NOTE FOR EDITORS**

### **Corporate Enforcement Authority**

The Corporate Enforcement Authority ('CEA') is Ireland's company law enforcement agency. The CEA's functions include to:

- promote compliance with company law,
- investigate instances of suspected breaches of company law,
- take appropriate enforcement action in response to identified breaches of company law,
- supervise the activities of liquidators of insolvent companies, and
- operate a regime of restriction and disqualification in respect of directors of insolvent companies.

The CEA discharges its mandate to promote compliance with company law through a range of activities, including developing and publishing accessible guidance materials and through its outreach activities.

The CEA's enforcement remit is both civil and criminal in nature and, in discharging that mandate, the CEA has at its disposal an extensive suite of statutory powers including:

- the power to require the production of documents, including electronic documents, by companies and relevant third parties,
- powers of search and seizure,
- the power of arrest, i.e., by CEA officers who are seconded members of An Garda Síochána, and
- powers to request the courts to order certain additional investigative measures.

The CEA is a multi-disciplinary agency whose staff complement includes, amongst others, accounting and legal professionals, seconded members of An Garda Síochána, and digital forensics experts.

### **Redeemed Christian Church of God ('RCCG')**

The RCCG is a Pentecostal denomination founded in Lagos, Nigeria. It has churches worldwide, with dozens of parishes across Ireland.