

# North Central Nigeria Conference

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Amos Isaiah Catier is secretary of North Central Nigeria Conference.

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Formerly part of North East Nigeria and North-West Nigeria Conference, North Central Nigeria Conference (NCNC) was organized in October 2013. Its headquarters is in Karu LGA, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Territory: The Federal Capital Territory; the states of Benue, Nasarawa, and Niger; and the Local Government Area of Takum in Taraba State.

Statistics (June 30, 2021): Churches, 56; membership, 10,739; population, 16,932,502.<sup>1</sup>

## The Origins of the Adventist Work in the Territory

The Adventist work in the present territory of NCNC began in 1960, when Pastor Bulus Mallum Kakwi took the Advent message to Arumtumara and Mangar villages and baptized the first members in these places. Pastor Simon I. Naasamu continued Pastor Kakwi's mission work. Nyanya was the next place to be evangelized. For many years not much progress was made. However, when Abuja, in whose vicinity Nyanya is located, became the new capital of Nigeria many Adventists from different parts of the country migrated to Abuja in 1980s. Nyanya church was organized in 1992. The first pastor of Nyanya church was Ibrahim Dantunkai. Sometime later another church was established at Garki, and Sabbath Schools groups were organized in Ado, Aso Pada, Keffi, and Garaku.<sup>2</sup>

As Adventists from different parts of Nigeria migrated to Abuja, some settled at Suleja. Among them was Ayuba Adira Daniel, a tailor. He opened the door of his shop for members to worship every Sabbath. Among those worshipping at Suleja were families of God's Power Chikwocha, Goodluck N. Emelugun, Chijindu Chijioke, and Sgt. Yohanna.<sup>3</sup>

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was established in Minna, the now capital city of Niger State, in 1962. The first service was held in the house of Mr. Emelek at Railway Quarters. The civil war in Nigeria that lasted from 1967 to 1970 caused many church members who were from the eastern part of Nigeria to return to their hometowns. When peace returned, Amos Zacharia, a literature evangelist, reestablished the church at Suleja. Timothy Ayuba's house was where the few members and their families conducted services on Sabbath days. The Church membership grew rapidly when Niger State was created by the Federal government in 1976, and civil servants, some of whom were Adventists, were transferred to Minna. Among the Adventists that came to Minna at that

time were: Sunny James, Yohanna Amumu, G. I. Akhaine and family, brother Gideon, Mr. and Mrs. Abosedo, and Mr. Obawole. The first worship was held at the house of G. I. Akhaine. Pastor S. H. Jensen, then president of North Nigeria Mission, visited Minna and later sent Pastor G. N. Nwaehigbe to serve as pastor for the church in Minna.<sup>4</sup>

The Tivs are the largest ethnic group in Benue State. The first convert among them was Anenga Apesaza Num. He became an Adventist in the 1960s when he was a teacher in one of the Seventh-day Adventist primary schools at Saminaka. A mission station was opened at Makurdi, capital of Benue State. The first pioneer pastor to serve at Makurdi was Mikah S. Nasamu. Anenga resigned from the Ministry of Education and answered the call to serve as a minister among his people in Benue State. He was ordained to gospel ministry in 1992, becoming the first local resident from the Benue State to be ordained as an Adventist minister. Prior to the organization of the NCNC in 2013, Benue State was part of North East Nigeria Mission.<sup>5</sup>

## Historical Antecedents of NCNC

Until 1993, there was only one field in the whole of North Nigeria, and it was called North Nigeria Mission<sup>6</sup> In 1993, two missions were organized from North Nigeria Mission: North East Mission and North West Nigeria Mission.<sup>7</sup> In 2000, North West Nigeria Mission was further reorganized.<sup>8</sup> To further ease the gospel work in the north of Nigeria, it was deemed necessary to organize a third field from the two already existing missions. Thus, North Central Nigeria Conference was organized in 2013.<sup>9</sup>

## Conference Officers

Presidents: Harry Yohanna (2013-2014); Harry Yohanna (2015-2017); Micah S. Nasamu (2018-)

Secretaries: Ibrahim D. Maviah (2013-2014); Cartier Amos (2015-2017); Amos Isaiah Cartier (2018-)

Treasurers: Abendnego Chidawa (2013-2014); Abendnego Chidawa (2015-2017); Abed Ishaya Chidawa(2018-)<sup>10</sup>

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### SOURCES

North Central Nigeria Conference records. Kept in the conference archives, Karu LGA, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, various years. <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

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### NOTES

1. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, "North Central Nigeria Conference," accessed December 19, 2022, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=52364>.
  2. Yusuf Manga, interview by Amos Isaiah Catier, Abuja, June 14, 2018.
  3. Records of NCNC.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Ibid.
  6. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, "North Nigeria Mission," accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/1992.pdf>.
  7. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, "North Nigeria Mission," accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/2002.pdf>.
  8. Ibid.
  9. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, "North Nigeria Mission," accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/2014.pdf>.
  10. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, "North Central Nigeria Conference," accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/2018.pdf>.
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