

Makanta, Msafiri Yohana (1930–2018)

TOGOLANI S. MAVURA

Togolani S. Mavura, B.A. in religion (Bugema University, Kampala, Uganda), is currently a frontline pastor in North East Tanzania Conference. He is married to Anna D. Mgoghwe and they have three children.

Msafiri Yohana Makanta was an Adventist pastor, teacher, mentor, and writer from Tanzania.

Early Years

Msafiri Yohana Makanta was born and raised at Malindi village in Lushoto district of the Tanga region of Tanzania on February 1, 1930, where his father was a pastor. He was the third born out of four children. His mother was Nakijwa Makinya. Makanta was baptized in 1950 at the Miamba Seventh-day Adventist church.



Msafiri Yohana Makanta

Photo courtesy of Togolani S Mavara.

Education and Marriage (1944-1951)

Makanta attended Suji Primary School. He achieved a certificate of standard eight. From 1952 to 1953, he joined Ikizu (Mara) teaching college. Makanta enrolled at Bugema College in Uganda where he studied for a Diploma in ministry in 1956 and 1957. In 1966, he graduated with a Diploma in health education from Loma Linda University's Public Health and Tropical Medicine Field Station¹ at Heri Hospital. In 1971, he earned a certificate in agricultural studies, also from Loma Linda University. On July 7, 1954, he married Sifael Paul Mweta at the Miamba Seventh-day Adventist church in Same district in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania. Makanta and his wife had five children, John (Makanta), Upendo, Stephen, Julius, and Joyce.²

Ministry

From 1954 to 1955, Makanta worked as a teacher at Chome Primary School. He was a teacher and district leader at Mbeya Mission Station from 1958 to 1963. In 1964, he was ordained to the ministry when he was a district leader in Tabora. From 1964 to 1965, he served as a pastor in the Tabora district. He was transferred to Magomeni district of Dar es Salaam from 1967 to 1969. From 1969 to 1970, he was the chaplain of Heri High School and Heri Hospital in Kigoma. In 1971, Makanta served as a district leader in Kigoma. He was appointed head of the department of stewardship and personal ministry for the Tanzania General Field in Morogoro in 1972, a responsibility which he carried until 1976.³ In 1977, he became director of church development, stewardship, and lay activities in the North-East Tanzania Field.⁴ In 1984, he was appointed to head the Sabbath School department at Tanzania Union until 1989.⁵ The following year, he was appointed to serve as the first president of the West Tanzania Field in Kigoma, a responsibility he carried out until 1996 when he retired.⁶

After Makanta retired, he returned to his original home at Miamba and continued leading out in the various ministries of the local church. While he lived, he wrote books and several publications such as KIOO, LIHUBIRI NENO, etc. He died on June 15, 2018, at Bwambo Health Center, Same district in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania.⁷

Contribution

Makanta's contributed to the Seventh-day Adventist Church education, ministry, and leadership for forty-two years.⁸ His publications still contribute to the formation and operation of the church. During his retirement years, he was a model farmer and mentor for many farmers in his local village.⁹

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Paul W. Dysinger, "The Public Health and Tropical Medicine Field Station of Loma Linda University Operating at Heri Hospital in Tanganyika," *Southern African Division Outlook*, July 15, 1963, 6-7.

2. Sifael Paul Mweta, interview by the author, March 13, 2020, Miamba Village.
 3. "Tanzania General Field," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1972), 101.
 4. "North-East Tanzania Field," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1977), 114.
 5. "Tanzania Union," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1985), 89-90.
 6. Renalt Utou Fungomeli, interview by the author, March 13, 2020, Miamba Village.
 7. Personal knowledge of the author.
 8. Msafiri Yohana Makanta, Service Record, West Tanzania Conference, 2019.
 9. John Makanta, Personal Communication, March 16, 2020, Tanga Region.
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