

North-East Tanzania Conference

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The North-East Tanzania Conference (NETC), with headquarters in the town of Same, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, is an administrative unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church under the Northern Tanzanian Union Conference (NTUC) in the East-Central Africa Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Territory: Kilimanjaro, and Tanga Regions; and a portion of Simanjiro District.

Statistics (June 30, 2020): Churches, 320; membership, 58,862; population, 5,528,501.¹

Origin of the Adventist Work in the Territory of the Conference

The Adventist mission work in the territory of NETC was organized in 1903.² The first Seventh-day Adventist mission center was established by Abraham C. Enns and Johannes Ehlers.³ Some considered it “the birth place of Tanzania Adventism: Pare.”⁴ The mission center was placed on the southern part of the Pare Mountain ranges in the Giti valley, which they named Friedenstal (“valley of peace”). Later, Suji Mission became the main center where the Field headquarters were built. Previously, the conference was called East Tanzania Field, then it was changed to the North-East Tanzania Field, and now it is the North-East Tanzania Conference.

Formative Events that Led to the Organization

As the Church continued to grow in the area, the recommendation was made to upgrade it to conference status. This was done in the Tanzania Union Committee held in Arusha on February 23, 1959, under R. W. Taylor as chairman and E. A. Okeyo as secretary.⁵

In the year 1960, the conference was officially launched with the name, “North-East Tanzania Conference” (NETC), and it covered four geographical regions: Tanga, Kilimanjaro, Arusha, and Manyara with a total of 6,662 members.⁶ Among the institutions owned were Suji Secondary School, Parane, Chome, and Tanzania Adventist secondary schools. The first officers were Pastor Godson Elieneza, president; Pastor Geoffrey G. Mbwana, executive secretary; Elder Michael M. Kabonda, Treasurer. During the same period, the headquarters were transferred from Suji to the town of Same for easier accessibility.

Since then, the conference has advanced and produced another field named the Tanzania Rift Valley Field (TRVF). The split was done on February 18, 2019, under the Northern Tanzania Union Committee chaired by Dr.

G. Lekundayo and Pastor Daudi Makoye as Secretary. Kilimanjaro, Tanga, and Simanjiro formed North-East Tanzania Conference while Arusha and Manyara formed the Tanzania Rift Valley Field.⁷

In education, the Suji, Parane, Chome, and Tanzania Adventist secondary schools now offer Advanced Level Studies. New institutions have also been introduced, like the Giti English Medium Primary School, the Kana Central English Medium Primary School, the Same-hill English Medium Primary School, the Tanzania Adventist Primary School, and the Kanaan Primary School.⁸

Healthwise, several dispensaries have been established, including the Parane Dispensary, the Olasity Dispensary, the Suji Dispensary, and the Makanya Health Center. These have been instrumental in the advancement of the mission of the Church in the area. A health message communicated through literature by Home Health Education Services and public evangelism have changed the lifestyle of many local residents.⁹

Also, the education curriculum, including agriculture and business knowledge taught in the NETC schools such as Parane and Suji, prepares students for employment or job creation.¹⁰ More than that, the Stewardship Department makes different programs and seminars for training church members and the community in entrepreneurship. Despite the poverty of some of the members, the mission of the Church is being fulfilled, and the Church is growing under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

List of Presidents

Glass (1954-1956); Justine Kimera (1957-1959); Yohana Lusingu (1960-1971); Ezeiel Semgeshi (1972-1975); Godson Elieneza (1976-1991); Geoffrey G. Mbwana (1992-1999); Benadi Mambwe (2000); Zawadi Kajiru (2001-2002); Jeremiah Izungo (2003-2010); Alphonse Mayo (2011-September 13, 2015); Elias Ijiko (September 14, 2015-).¹¹

SOURCES

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Kuhedu, Amos. “Taarifa ya Idara ya Afya: Taarifa ya Kazi kwa Kipindi cha Miaka Mitano 2011-2015.” A report presented at the NETC Session, University of Arusha, Tanzania, September 2015.

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NOTES

1. "North-East Tanzania Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (2021), <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=13663>.
2. Ibid.
3. Gary Land, *A to Z of The Seventh-day Adventist Church: A Historical Dictionary of Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005), 291, 303.
4. Stefan Hoeschele, *The Remnant-African Folk Church 1903-1980: Seventh-day Adventism In Tanzania* (Boston: Laiden, 2007), 51.
5. Minutes of the Tanzania Union Committee, "North-East Tanzania Field Recommendation for Conference Status," (February 23, 1989), Action no. 586.
6. Ibid, p 171.
7. Musa Erasto Nzumbi email message to Emmanuel Wazoel, March 11, 2020.
8. "Educational Institutions in Tanzania," Office of Archives Statistics and Research Directory, accessed March 16, 2020, <http://www.adventistdirectory.org/SearchResults.aspx?CtryCode=TZ&EntityType>; Isaacs Manyonyi, "Taarifa ya Idara ya Elimu na Uhuru wa Dini: Taarifa ya Kazi kwa Kipindi cha Miaka Mitano 2011-2015," a presentation made at the NETC session, University of Arusha, Tanzania, September 2015, 67-72.
9. Amos Kuhedu, "Taarifa ya Idara ya Afya: Taarifa ya Kazi kwa Kipindi cha Miaka Mitano 2011-2015," a report presented at the NETC Session, University of Arusha, Tanzania, September 2015, 150.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

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