

Agboka, David Narter (1907–1999)

NII LANTE THOMPSON

Nii Lante Thompson is an ordained minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with over three decades of ministerial experience. He is currently serving as the Ministerial secretary and Family Ministries director of the Southern Ghana Union Conference in West Africa. He holds a D.Min. from Andrews University.

David Narter Agboka was among the first native Ghanaian ministers and evangelists in Ghana.

Early Life, Education, and Marriage

Stephen Tettey Agboka, a trader in Winneba, a coastal town in Ghana, and Salome Khaki, a trader in Ada, another coastal town in Ghana (88 miles apart), married each other and on July 30, 1907, in Accra, their son David Narter was born. David began his schooling in Ada and completed it in Koforidua in the Eastern Region in 1930. A year later David was employed by the Seventh-day Adventist mission as a teacher and sent to Agona in the Ashanti Region to work under Pastor Frank L. Stokes. David Agboka, who was then a Presbyterian, enrolled in the Layman's Bible Training Course and after completing it he was baptized into the Adventist faith. He also took courses in stenography and bookkeeping. In 1933 he was transferred to the mission headquarters in Bekwai as secretary to Pastor Jesse Clifford, the mission president. He served in that capacity for eight years. In 1934 David Agboka married Eunice Okumko, with whom he lived for 50 years.¹

Ministry

In May 1941 the Gold Coast Mission voted to send Evangelist David Agboka to Accra, the national capital, to open up the work in the city. On his arrival with his wife and two children, he found only four other people who had heard the Adventist message, but none of whom had been baptized. He worked tirelessly preaching and giving Bible studies from house to house, office to office, and even in public places. In 1944 Evangelist Benjamin Okoe Tetteh joined him in the evangelistic work in Accra. Work in the city was tough compared with work in the hinterlands.²

In December 1947 Agboka became the fourth Ghanaian Seventh-day Adventist to be ordained to the gospel ministry. It was at a camp meeting at Osino in the Eastern Region with the newly appointed president for the West African Union Mission, Pastor William McClements, in attendance.³ In May 1949 Pastor Agboka and Pastor Adeoye from Nigeria were sent by the West African Union Mission to Sierra Leone to help Pastor S. B. Simons conduct an evangelistic campaign in the city of Freetown. They were there for six months. On his return, Pastor Agboka was sent to Koforidua to relieve Pastor Stokes who left for home on account of the ill-health of his wife.

Late in 1951 he returned to Accra. From 1952 to 1955, Pastor D. N. Agboka and the missionaries in Accra introduced the “Light Bearers’ Club,” a Bible training course in evangelism, to the Accra church and every church member, young or old, was encouraged to join the club.⁴

In 1956 Pastor Agboka was transferred to Jasikan in the Volta Region to again do pioneering work. After four years in Jasikan, he was sent to Takoradi where he worked for nine years until his retirement in 1969. The veteran pastor was recalled in 1970 to serve again for one and a half years as pastor of the Hansen Road Church (formally called the Accra Church). Finally, Pastor Agboka settled in his hometown, Tamatoku, near Ada in the Greater Accra Region, still pastoring until he passed away quietly on July 26, 1999, after a short illness resulting from a fall.⁵

Pastor David Narter Agboka was the pioneer minister who moved the Adventist faith in Ghana from its rural setting to Accra, the national capital of Ghana.⁶

SOURCES

Brocke, Eunice Miranda. *Adventism In Accra*. Accra: Advent Press, 2011.

“Biography of the late Pastor David Narter Agboka.” Funeral service program, September 2, 1999.

Owusu-Mensa, Kofi. *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism*. Accra: Advent Press, 2005.

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1. “Biography of the late Pastor David Narter Agboka,” funeral service program, September 2, 1999, 2.

2. Eunice Miranda Brocke, *Adventism In Accra* (Accra: Advent Press, 2011), 3.

3. Kofi Owusu-Mensa, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism—A History* (Accra: The Advent Press, 2005), 225.

4. *Ibid.*, 16.

5. “Biography of the late Pastor David Narter Agboka,” 2.

6. *Ibid.*, 4.

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