

# Zambia Adventist Publishing House

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Zambia Adventist Publishing House is a Seventh-day Adventist printing company serving the church's literature needs in Zambia and the surrounding region.

## Overview

Zambia Adventist Publishing House (ZAPH), previously known as Zambia Adventist Press (ZAP), was established to publish spiritual, educational, and health books, as well as magazines in English and other seven major Zambian languages. It also publishes books in Portuguese, French, and Kiswahili for church entities in the neighboring countries. Calendars, business cards, picture rolls, and other stationeries have also been published in English. The plant is located in Chilanga District, Lusaka Province, on an eight-hectare plot of Farm No. 457-A, along the Kafue Road, about thirty-one kilometers south of Lusaka, Zambia's capital city.

## Developments That Led to the Establishment of the Publishing House

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's publishing work in Zambia has a long history that is traced back to the time (before 1972) when Zambia was a mission field under the Zambesi Union Mission in the then Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Until the 1980s, denominational literature was ordered from publishing houses outside the country, like Malamulo Publishing House in Malawi,<sup>1</sup> Sentinel Publishing House in Cape Town, South Africa,<sup>2</sup> and All Africa Publishing Association in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

However, the economic situation of Zambia, plus the government policies of the 1980s that resulted in the continuous devaluation of the currency, sky rocketing inflation, and the shortage of foreign exchange<sup>3</sup>, made it difficult to continue with the importation of books. This created a drought of books in Zambia. As a result, a number of literature evangelists left the canvassing work. This negative development caused the Adventist Church leaders to start thinking of establishing a local publishing house. This was realized in 1982 when the church established Zambia Adventist Press.<sup>4</sup>

Promotions for raising funds to establish the publishing house were done in churches during worship services and other church gatherings like camp meetings. Members responded so generously in that they donated anything of value, such as chickens, goats, cattle, and cash. These promotions were started in the early 1980s and continued up to 1989 when the then Zambia Union Mission received an appropriation from the General Conference. The *Adventist Review* church journal later reported these donations in the following way:

Elder [Neal C.] Wilson was personally instrumental in procuring a donation for the press project. The Eastern Africa Division donated the land, and substantial donations came from the Zambia Union [Mission], literature evangelists, members and workers from the six Zambian fields, Pacific Press Publishing Association, and the General Conference Publishing House Expansion Fund.<sup>5</sup>

Zambia Union Mission established and registered the then Zambia Adventist Press with the Registrar of Societies on August 28, 1989.<sup>6</sup> It was to operate as an entity of the Adventist Church. The press operated under that registration until March 5, 2010 when it was incorporated as a Limited Company by Guarantee of the SDA Church owning all the shares. This was necessitated by the fact that the government required all entities, including local congregations, to be registered with either the Registrar of Societies or the Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA). Considering the nature of ZAP's operations, the administrative board opted to register ZAP as a Limited Company under the new name of Zambia Adventist Publishing House.

Later on the Eastern Africa Division bought, on behalf of the Zambia Union Mission, a farm-land on plot number 457A in Chipongwe, Chilanga District, from Mr. Joseph Brown, an Adventist church member. The Zambia Union Mission publishing director, Pastor Mfayabo Mtshiya, described the farm in the March 11, 1989, *Mission Quarterly* story saying, "A 20-acre (8-hectare) piece of land with several old buildings on it has already been purchased, but the buildings must be renovated and printing presses and other equipment purchased. The property is well located, next to a railway siding, and it has fruit trees and a good well."<sup>7</sup>

This plot was to be used as the site for building the printing factory. However, since the plot had a public road passing right through the middle of the farm, the publishing house management became reluctant to build the factory on the site. This led the publishing house board to buy another plot in Leopards Hill, south-east of Lusaka. Although this new site was closer to Lusaka than the site in Chipongwe, this plot was found to be smaller in size, and attempts to sink a borehole on the plot revealed a lack of the presence of ground water. This eventually led management to go back to Chipongwe where the factory was later built and still stands to this day.

## Founding of the Publishing House

The groundbreaking ceremony, led by Dr. L. D. Raelly, then president of Zambia Union Mission, was conducted in 1990.<sup>8</sup> The guest of honor was Elder Neal C. Wilson, who was serving as the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at that time.<sup>9</sup> Others who attended the ceremony included Elder Bekele

Heye, president of the Eastern Africa Division; Ireneo Cargill, treasurer of Zambia Union Mission; Pastor Mfayabo Mtshiya, union publishing director; Pastor Moses Mwenya, Adventist Book Centre manager; local field presidents and other church officers, as well as local mission field publishing leaders.

The construction of the printing factory was assigned to a local contractor who faced some technical challenges. The project was then taken over by another local contractor under the supervision of an engineer. At inception, the factory building consisted of one huge warehouse without any partitions. Some time later, a portion of the building was partitioned to create offices and shower rooms. Overall, the establishment of a printing facility in Zambia became of such an international importance that it was included in the report of Pastor Ronald E. Appenzeller, the General Conference Publishing Department director, during the General Conference session held in Indianapolis, Indiana, in July 1990. Pastor Appenzeller expressed hope that the establishment of the printing press in Zambia would solve the tremendous shortage of literature that existed.<sup>10</sup>

The initial components of printing equipment were purchased from South Africa, and these included a Rolland Parva single color offset press, a Heidelberg GTO single color offset press, darkroom and editorial equipment, folding machine, a perfect binder, a stitcher, and a trimmer.<sup>11</sup> A year later a smaller press was bought to take care of the printing of small-size jobs.

The first general manager of the Zambia Adventist Press was Malvin Schutz, an American missionary of German origin.<sup>12</sup> Being a qualified printer with 30 years of experience at the time, Schutz personally took charge of running the machines. He also spent time training local workers on how to run and manage the printing factory equipment.

## History of the Publishing House

The initial printing work was done in a temporal shelter, in the garage belonging to Zambia Union Mission situated at the junction of Independence Avenue and Burma Road<sup>13</sup> in the year 1982<sup>14</sup> now occupied by Lusaka Conference. Production work started with ten employees. In time, the number of workers rose to 17. However, due to increased running costs, the number was later reduced to 12. In due time one worker<sup>15</sup> was called to join the General Conference Audit Services (GCAS). This left the publishing house with 11 workers, and unfortunately following the death of one of the workers<sup>16</sup> who was not replaced afterward, the number of workers remains at 10.<sup>17</sup> In 1992 alone, 110,000 books were produced at a value of U.S. \$165,000.<sup>18</sup>

In the prelude to the establishment of the press, the raising of funds by the church members and other donors was accompanied with enthusiasm. But following the initial successes of the printing work, all that early enthusiasm soon died out as church members noticed the high prices of the books. Having given their donations, church members believed that they had subsidized the cost of books, if not having paid for them in full. In addition to this, the fund-raising promotional messages promised that the books would be translated and printed in the local languages. Management, however, found this to be difficult due to the unavailability of

qualified translators. Hence, church members, local fields, and even the Adventist Book Center began to look elsewhere for sourcing their printing orders and books for colporteurs.

To lower the high cost of production, Zambia Adventist Press subcontracted a South Korea Adventist Printing House to print ZAPH books at a lower production cost and then ship them back into Zambia. The lower prices of Korean printed books led church members to again support ZAPH through their purchases of those books. Church members were also happy with the better quality of paper used in the printing of books.

Although the offices for ZAPH management continued to be situated at the then Zambia Union Conference headquarters' premises (which now belongs to Lusaka Conference), after the printing press moved from the garage to Chipongwe, then in 1997, ZAPH management offices also moved to Chipongwe farm where the printing factory was situated. This was done to enable management to be closer to the printing plant. Later, however, the management board, through the recommendation of ZAPH management, decided to set up its office in the city of Lusaka, to enable management to easily contact its clients. Clients were finding it difficult to travel 31 km to Chipongwe in order to make business orders with ZAPH. The office was first situated at Carousel building on the southern end of Lusaka city's central business district, but later relocated to Anchor House on Cairo Road to avoid paying high rental charges at Carousel. Some time later the office was again moved to Lusaka House along Cairo Road, mainly because of the dilapidated condition of the building at Anchor House. Currently, the management offices are still situated at Lusaka House while the printing plant remains in Chipongwe.

Further improvements were later made on the type of printing machinery used at the publishing house factory. Instead of sending color separation works outside the country, the factory acquired additional, advanced equipment that can do the color separation within the factory. ZAPH has also purchased a two color machine. This has enabled the factory to print over two hundred seventy-seven thousand pieces of literature annually. This figure is broken as follows: 63,000 subscription and trade books, 134,000 periodicals, and 80,000 church supplies. However, due to lack of capacity for printing hard cover bound books, ZAPH has continued to print books in paper-binding or perfect-binding. Nevertheless, it suffices to report that the running of all the factory machines is now being done by local workers.

## Historical Role of the Publishing House

From 1990 to date, ZAPH has continued to print *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guides*. The first Bible Study Guides to be printed were those of the first and Second Quarters of 1991 (*Samuel, Crisis, Change, Challenge and Rainbow in the Rain, Ezekiel*). Children's Bible Study Guides were added to ZAPH's printing work from 2006 onward. These include: *Beginner, Kindergarten, Primary, Power Points, and Cornerstone Connections*. Calendars have also been printed though not consistently.

By 1995 indications of the positive contribution ZAPH was making, together with other publishing institutions in the Eastern Africa Division, was revealed by Dr. L. D. Raelly (division president) in his report presented during the General Conference session held in Utrecht, Netherlands, when he stated:

Our publishing houses and book centres are supplying books to more than 3,960 literature evangelists. These literature evangelists had delivered gospel-packed books worth US \$10.3 million by the end of 1994, and were responsible for 50,860 new believers. We salute our dedicated literature evangelists!<sup>19</sup>

Since its establishment, ZAPH has produced both subscription and trade books. The earliest books that were printed included the following titles: *Happiness in Marriage*, an extract from *Adventist Home*, by Ellen White; *For a Better Future*, by Robert Wieland; *God's Message for Africa*, by Robert Wieland; *Hope for Our Troubled World* (1991), by Levy Muunyuu; *Story Times in Africa*, by Carolyn Stuyvesant; *Adventism in Zambia* (2001), by Cornelius Matandiko; *Explosive Stewardship* (2005), by Cornelius Matandiko; *From Saturday to Sunday*, by Pardon Mwansa; *Enjoy Your Marriage*, by Daniel Chuunga; *Passionate Love*, by George Mwansa; *Women and Marriage*, by George Mwansa; *Impossible Possibility*, by George Mwansa.

ZAPH also printed books in local Zambian languages, which include the following titles: *Kulwana Kupati* (translation of *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen White); *Malyatilo Kuli Kristu* (translation of *Steps to Christ*, by Ellen White); *Ncinzi Ciboola* (translation of *What Is Coming* by Ellen White); and *Manual of Bible Doctrines* in English, by Tonga, Bemba, and Lozi.

ZAPH also accepted printing work from neighboring countries and printed two books in Ki Swahili: *Tangu Sasa Hata Milele* (translation of *From Here to Eternity*, by Ellen White); and *Habari Zamilele* (translation of *The Story of Redemption*, by Ellen White).

ZAPH continues to meet the literature needs of literature evangelists in Zambia, as well as supplying literature to meet spiritual, educational, and health needs of church members and the general public. In this way it contributes to the advancement of the spreading of the eternal gospel in the current Northern and Southern Zambia Union Conferences respectively and beyond.

## Challenges Faced by the Publishing House

Although the ZAPH is able to print and meet deadlines, it is not without challenges. The main challenges include obsolete equipment, low working capital, and the increasing shift to e-books, especially Bible Study Guides that until now have been the main product of ZAPH.

To mitigate the challenge of its obsolete equipment,<sup>20</sup> ZAPH has now embarked on acquiring small and simple machines that can produce books of high quality at reduced cost. Due to their efficiency in production, the small machines are also incurring low maintenance costs, and they also print small quantities as opposed to the traditional offset machines being used. Working through literature evangelists and pastors, ZAPH continues to

encourage members to secure hard-copy books as opposed to relying on soft copies only.

## List of Managers

Malvin Schutz (1990-1992); Rashford P. Musonda (1992-1995); Rene Church (1995-1997); Moses Mwenya (1997-2007); Boldwin Kabanda (2007 to date).

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### NOTES

1. Vivian M. Kanondo, *The Story of Rusangu Mission: A Brief Review* (self-published: 2005), 87.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Charles J. Griffin, "Zambia Press Makes Miracles," *Mission*. April-June 1994, 25.

5. "Ground Broken for New Adventist Press," *ARH*, August 16, 1990, 22.

6. Ibid., 88.

7. M. Mtshiya, "Called to Be a Literature Evangelist," *Mission – A Quarterly Report of World Mission*, Jan – March 1989, Adult Edition. First Quarter, 1989, 26.
8. Cornelius Matandiko, *Adventism in Zambia* (Lusaka, Zambia: Zambia Adventist Press, 2003), 209.
9. "Ground Broken for New Adventist Press," *ARH*, August 16, 1990, 22.
10. Ronald E. Appenzeller, "Publishing Department: Report presented at the General Conference Session," *Adventist Review*, July 13, 1990, 16.
11. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1996), s.v. "Zambia Adventist Press."
12. Matandiko, 209.
13. Kanondo, 88.
14. Griffin, 25.
15. This is George Zulu who is still working as an auditor.
16. Benjamin Mowa died on September 30, 2021, after having worked for ZAPH for seven years. Before joining ZAPH, Mowa spent twelve years working in the National Print Media of Times of Zambia.
17. The ten workers who are currently running ZAPH are: Baldwin Kabanda, Mwansa C. Champita, Albert Munyimani, Chibwe N. Ngoliya, Agness N. Kaluba, Ocean Hakalangu, Oscar Banda, Bostone K. Malundu, Mastone Musonda and Willard Phiri.
18. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1996), s.v. "Zambia Adventist Press."
19. L. D. Raelly, "The Lord Has Blessed us – Report of the Eastern Africa Division presented on Sunday July 2, 1995," *ARH*, July 3, 1995, 21.
20. For example, the PARVA machine currently in use was made in 1962.

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