



Clifford University, Nigeria.

Photo courtesy of Clifford University.

Clifford University, Nigeria

CHIMEZIE A. OMEONU

Chimezie A. Omeonu is the president of Clifford University.

Clifford University is an educational institution owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist church in Nigeria. The university was founded in 2013, and is located in Ihie, Abia State, Nigeria.

Developments that Led to the Establishment of the School

In 1905 the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists voted to send Jesse and Catherine Clifford to pioneer the Church's work in West Africa. After ministering in Sierra Leone and Ghana, the Cliffords arrived at Ogbor-Hill, Aba, in the present day Abia state of eastern Nigeria in 1923.¹ Since then Aba has continued to be the headquarters of the Church's work in this part of the country.²

On arrival, with the assistance of Chief Nworgu of Umuola Egbelu, one of the villages in northeast Aba, they acquired a piece of land on lease for their house. Among the first converts was Benjamin I. Tikili who was

baptized in 1923 and who became the first ordained minister in eastern Nigeria in 1924. Closely following this was the conversion and baptism of Phillip E. Onwere, Robert O. Nwosu, and A. E. Ukamunna. These men later became the pastors of the first four districts that were created following the increase in membership and fast expansion of the church: Benjamin I. Tikili (Aba District), Phillip E. Onwere (Umuocha District), Robert O. Nwosu (Umuobiakwa District), and A. E. Ukamunna (Umuakpara District).³

Pastor Clifford started an Adventist primary school in Aba and had as pioneer students: Nelson Ihemuka, Wilson Uzuegbu, Sunday Ubani-Ukoma, Robert Nnamdede, James Nwambu, Abraham Nzotta, Adonija Cookey, Josiah Evoh, Daniel Onyeodor, Robert Abaribe, and Philip Onwere, among others. The hunger for Christian education led the church to establish in 1948 the Nigerian Training College at Ihie, about 15 miles from Aba. The school occupied 122.58 acres. The church followed up in September 1953 with the establishment of Adventist High School, Ihie, on the same premises with Canadian-born Lawrence Downing as its first principal. This high school started with 28 students, 19 of whom were Seventh-day Adventists. Out of the 28, only three were girls.

The premises, with its trees and flowers and well-maintained lawns, was a source of beauty to behold and thus attracted people from far and near who came sightseeing. They came to visit the institutions and to admire the ambience of the environment. It did not take long before the schools became household names and highly sought after in Eastern Nigeria.⁴

These schools continued to operate till July 1967 when the Nigerian-Biafra Civil War broke out. The war ended in January 1970, after which all the private hospitals and schools in Nigeria were taken over by the military administration without any compensation to the original owners. At that time the Adventist schools at Ihie were taken over by the military government.⁵ The denomination was only allowed access and management of the Adventist church established on the premises which today is a district headquarters.

On May 29, 1999, Nigeria changed from military rule to democratic governance with three tiers of government: federal, state, and local. The military moved into the barracks and civilians assumed leadership positions. On September 14, 2012, the governor of Abia state, Chief Theodor A. Orji, decided to hand missionary schools back to their original owners to operate. The governor, a Methodist by faith, was of the view that missionary schools would play a pivotal role in inculcating moral values and discipline into the students. The Teacher Training College and the Adventist High School, both on the same premises at Ihie, were among the schools released to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in eastern Nigeria. This gesture was greeted with jubilation and thanksgiving.⁶

Founding of Clifford University

Meanwhile, the church continued to establish other primary and secondary schools in various parts of eastern Nigeria. One such school was the Adventist Secondary Technical College, ASTEC, in Owerrinta-Aba, which was started in September 1993. During its management meeting in January 2008, the idea of actualizing the “college” aspect of the school’s name was discussed and referred to the executive committee of the Eastern Nigeria

Union Mission (ENUM), with Pastor Gideon C. Nwaogwugwu as president, Pastor Bassey E. O. Udoh as secretary, and Emmanuel G. Manilla as treasurer. During the June 2008 midyear meeting of ENUM, a committee was set up to work on the establishment of Adventist Vocational College at Owerrinta. In their report, the committee recommended that instead of a vocational college, it would be better to establish a conventional university.⁷

ENUM executive committee accepted the recommendation and it was voted to name the proposed university Clifford University, in memory of the evangelistic, sacrificial, and educational exploits of the legendary British missionary family, Pastor and Mrs. Jesse Clifford.⁸

It could have been called Adventist University of Eastern Nigeria, but to avoid discrimination on grounds of religious affiliation and thereby encourage religious freedom, the National Universities Commission (NUC), an important arm of the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education charged with the establishment of universities, does not encourage tertiary institutions to be named after orthodox religious organizations or bodies, but rather that they be named after foreign missionaries and/or founding members who are Nigerians. Thus Babcock University in Western Nigeria was named after Pastor David C. Babcock (1854-1932), an American missionary who brought the Seventh-day Adventist message to Nigeria in 1914 and began work in Erunmu, Ibadan, in present day Oyo state.⁹ Pastor Jesse (1894-1967) and Mary Catherine (1898-1985) Clifford, a British missionary couple, brought the message to eastern Nigeria in 1923 and settled in Aba, Abia state;¹⁰ while Pastor J. J. Hyde, another American missionary, took the message to northern Nigeria in 1930 and settled in Bukuru, present day Plateau state.¹¹

Though the church has already acquired 112.16 hectares of land at Owerrinta for the proposed Clifford University, following the return of the church's schools at Ihie by the Abia state governor, the church decided to start Clifford University at the same location of the two schools at Ihie—Teacher Training College and Adventist High School. A lot of the school structures were destroyed during the war years (1967-1970), and structures surviving the mismanagement and careless handling by the military were badly damaged.¹²

Church members throughout the nine states in eastern Nigeria were mobilized to start contributing money for reconstruction and building of various new structures as well as fundraising for the proposed university.

On November 9, 2012, a formal application was sent to the National Universities Commission (NUC), a department of the Federal Ministry of Education that sees to licensing of tertiary institutions in Abuja, Nigeria's capital. The application documents were sent through Professors Chimezie A. Omeonu (vice president, Academic Administration, Babcock University), and Friday Mbon (former academic vice president, University of Calabar), and Drs. Yetunde E. Alozie (senior lecturer in nutrition, University of Uyo, and director of education, Eastern Nigeria Union Mission), and Kennedy C. K. Nwangwa (principal, Ministry of Education, Abia state). Before this submission, the necessary forms and documents had been obtained by the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission Education Department as far back as February 17, 2012, from the NUC. The implementation committee decided that submission of the forms and other vital documents was long overdue.¹³ For this submission, the four

implementation committee members who were appointed to go to Abuja for this transaction were: Prof. Chimezie A. Omeonu, Prof. Friday Mbon, Mrs. Yetunde Alozie, Ph.D., Pastor Kennedy C. Nwangwa, Ph.D.

After analyzing the church's application, the government, through the NUC, decided to visit the proposed Clifford University campus site for an assessment of the structures, personnel, and finances, as well as the level of readiness for commencement of the university.

The first site assessment visit of the NUC took place October 26-29, 2013. The committee was composed of the following members: Prof. Akaneren Essien (former vice chancellor, Univ. of Uyo) (chair), Mallam Abdullahi Hamza (deputy director, NUC) (secretary), Dr. (Mrs.) Modupe Adeniran (deputy director, NUC), Barrister Pascal Erruaga (legal adviser, NUC), John Abba (chief financial officer, NUC), Mallam Mustafa Rasheed (chief physical plan officer, NUC), Tony Adejumo (principal ICT officer, NUC). In their exit interview, they authorized Clifford University to start with three faculties: Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Science, and Faculty of Management and Social Sciences.¹⁵

Within these three faculties, there will be ten departments: History and Diplomatic Studies, English and Literary Studies, Christian Religious Studies, Management Studies, Economics, Political Science, Chemical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Computer Science.

Then within these ten departments, there will be 15 degree-programs: History and Diplomatic Studies, English Language, English Literature, Christian Religious Studies (Theology), Economics, Accounting, Business Administration, Political Science, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, and Mathematics/Statistics.

The International Board of Education's (IBE) focused visit to the proposed university took place June 6-9, 2014. The IBE makes recommendations on accreditations of tertiary institutions and approval of new academic programs to the Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA). The nine-member team was chaired by Dr. John Taylor, Jr., associate director of Education of the General Conference, with Prof. Chiemela N. Ikonne, West-Central Africa Division Education director as secretary.¹⁶

The recommendations and directives of these two accrediting agencies help the university start on a strong footing. On January 15, 2015, at a joint meeting of the Physical Planning Committee, and Ways and Means (Finance) Committee, an action was taken to invite the NUC for a second and, hopefully, final visit.¹⁷

Clifford University Investment Project

On December 23, 2012, the president of the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission (ENUM) Pastor Bassey E. O. Udoh, Ph.D., called a meeting of the Ways and Means Subcommittee of the Clifford University Implementation Committee to discuss how to raise funds for the proposed university. A conference-by-conference fundraising campaign was agreed to.¹⁸

The idea was presented to the pastors and first elders at their first meeting of the new year at the union conference headquarters in Aba on January 9, 2013. By this time, a new idea had come to the committee to include in the fund-raising efforts the idea of making Seventh-day Adventists investors in the Clifford Project. When the idea was accepted by church leadership, *Stakeholders Investment Cards* were printed for each baptized Adventist in the union conference.¹⁹

Principle officers, directors, and key church officials of three conferences in Aba were addressed, and each conference was given a pack of investment cards containing 2,000 cards. Committee members visited conferences and churches to inform members, promote the investment option, and distribute the investment cards. Many members responded positively. The capital campaigns were carried out in the following areas on the dates stated: Aba East Conference, Aba (February 17, 2013), Aba North Conference, Aba (February 17, 2013), Aba South Conference, Aba (February 17, 2013), Rivers-Bayelsa Conference, Ahaoada (March 24, 2013), Akwa Ibom Admin. Unit, Uyo (March 30, 2013), SDA Church No. 1 Sch. Rd. Aba and SDA Church, AEC HQ, Aba (April 6, 2013), Enugu-Anambra Conference, Enugu (April 7, 2013), Rivers East Administrative Unit, Eleme (April 13, 2013), Rivers Conference, Port-Harcourt (April 14, 2013), Imo-Anambra Conference, Owerri (April 20, 2013), Abia Central Conference, Umuahia (April 21, 2013), South East Conference, Calabar, and Anambra Conference, Awka (July 2013).

In March 2014, General Conference president, Pastor Ted Wilson, visited Nigeria and participated in the centenary celebrations of the church. He visited Ihie and the numerous construction sites. He was full of appreciation for the clergy and laity who have united to build an Adventist university for the teeming members of the church in Nigeria. He was also impressed with the progress of the work done and promised that he would present a progress report to the church leadership and urge them to help the members in eastern Nigeria in their efforts to build a university. What followed next was the donation of \$250,000 from the headquarters of the world Church, for the proposed university.²⁰

A letter was received from the NUC on February 2, 2015, in which the commission gave a list of "38 structures whose pictures in hard and soft copies" should be sent to them. The commission would visit after evaluating the pictures. On May 13, 2015, a list of 112 structures and facilities at Clifford University (plus albums and flash drives) were submitted to the NUC by Profs. Chimezie A. Omeonu and Friday Mbon, and Dr. Yetunde E. Alozie.

By May 2016, it was learned by the Implementation Committee that of all the proposed universities to be recommended by the National Universities Commission (NUC), the first of such in the year as well as first by the Mohammadu Buhari-led federal government, Clifford University was number one and scored the highest in the assessments.

As a follow-up to this cheering information, the Eastern Nigeria Union Conference president, Pastor Bassey E. O. Udoh, Ph.D., followed the example of King Jehoshaphat in 2 Chron. 20:5-24 in declaring a fast in all Judah when faced in battle by the Ammonites and Moabites.

On July 20, 2016, Pastor Udoh declared a second fasting and prayer program among all Seventh-day Adventists in eastern Nigeria for Clifford University for funds to finish the work and for the approved charter from the federal government of Nigeria as recommended by the Federal Ministry of Education on the assessment of the National Universities Commission. Events after the praying and fasting exercise, and further developments in the quest for charter, showed that God answered the prayers of His children.

An Eastern Nigeria Union Conference-wide prayer and fasting session was again declared on September 30, 2015, by the president, Pastor Bassey E. O. Udoh. The East Nigeria Union Mission had attained union conference status in 2014.²¹

Second Fund Raising Drive

Dr. Emmanuel O. Adaelu, chairman of the Ways and Means (Finance) Subcommittee, had in 2013 led out in the first fundraising drive which was voted by the Implementation Committee and approved by the Executive Committee of the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission, the proceeds of which were used to establish part of the six science laboratories on campus.

By February-March, 2016, the operating funds had dried up and there was again need to start raising funds from members of the Adventist church. A proposal to this effect was voted by the Union Executive Committee and Dr. Dave Nyekwere, former president of Port-Harcourt Conference, was authorized to coordinate this second fund-raising drive. Pastors and laymen were sent to different conferences and churches within the union in Eastern Nigeria to solicit funds to enable the university to prepare fully for commencement and also to fulfill their obligations as faithful stewards of God.²²

Since the university will be completely residential, it was further decided by the Implementation Committee that staff for essential services, such as medical doctors and nurses, cafeteria and student affairs staff, and drivers, among others, should live on campus due to the constant and sometimes emergency demands of their work. Although the church leaders, pastors, and laypersons traveled extensively in eastern Nigeria in an attempt to raise funds and promote Clifford University, the amount raised was minimal.

University Medical Center Face-lift

While Pastor Dave M. Nyekwere focused on fundraising, Dr. Emmanuel E. Enyina, a long-standing medical doctor in the service of the church, focused on the development of the University Medical Center. According to the recommendations of the NUC Team, the medical center is to have the features of a modern hospital, since it is intended to serve both the university campus and the larger Ihie community as well as others who may need its services.²³

Repairing the medical center, adding furnishings, planting flowers, and adding a modern entrance gate for the community, gave the medical center a face-lift. Dr. Enyina worked with Emole Njoku, a professional in assessment, procurement, and installation of science equipment, who did most of the furnishing and worked hard to give the center a modern look.

Security Screening of Major Stakeholders

By November 25, 2015, the Special Committee on Private Universities (SCOPU) wrote, demanding a list of the Council or Board of Trustee (BOT) members for the proposed university. This was sent immediately. Two days later, the SCOPU secretary, Barrister Pascal Eruaga, replied, stating that the list NUC is expecting is “a minimum of five and a maximum of nine.” Again, after due consultations, a list of eight members was sent to the commission.

This screening took place at the office of the director of Security Services, DSS, Abuja on April 15, 2016.²⁴ Using the federal government of Nigeria established communication channel, the result and report were later sent to the NUC.²⁵

From the middle of 2016, Adventist Church leaders, members of the Clifford University Project Implementation Committee, and other stakeholders eagerly awaited the news of reception of the Charter.

The statute establishing private universities in Nigeria states that approval of a private university anywhere in the country will be after recommendation by the National Universities Commission (NUC), announced by the Federal Executive Council, usually chaired by the head of state and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, in this case Alhaji Mohammadu Buhari, GCFR. This council often meets on Wednesdays and decisions made are announced to the State House-ASO Rock (Nigeria's seat of government) Press Crew and correspondents by a cabinet minister or minister of state concerned or any other minister as officially mandated by the head of state.

Important Historical Events and Periods

On Wednesday, November 2, 2016, approval of Clifford University as a private university was announced by the Minister of State for Education, Prof. Anthony Anwuka, after a Federal Executive Council meeting in Abuja. Twenty days later, on November 22, 2016, the Charter was presented to Clifford University by Prof. Anthony Anwuka assisted by Profs. Abubakar Rasheed, executive secretary of NUC, and Akanaren Esien who led the team for the first two visits on behalf of the NUC. The Charter presentation was done at the National Universities Commission Secretariat, Aja Nwachukwu Hall, in Abuja. In attendance were more than 70 Clifford University Implementation Committee members, Church leaders from the West-Central Africa Division of the Church, and major stakeholders of the Clifford University Project.²⁶

The jubilation greeted the announcement on federal radios and TVs. You could hear people at times singing: “The Lord’s our Rock, in Him we hide, our shelter in the time of storm.” And in some morning devotions for church workers, the Bible text was often Psalm 126:3, 6, “The Lord has done great things for us and therefore we are glad, those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.”

By December 15, 2016, the appointment of Pastor Ted Wilson (visitor), Pastor Bassey E. O. Udoh (chancellor), Pastor Oyeleke A. Owolabi (pro-chancellor), Prof. Chimezie A. Omeonu (president), and Principal Officers—Prof. Oyesegun O. Oyerinde (academic vice president), Dr. Yetunde E. Alozie (director for admission and records), Kelechi Nwankwo (vice president for financial affairs), Dr. Saturday Omeluzo (vice president for information resources management), and Dr. Justina Sam-Okere (vice president for student services) was concluded.²⁷

The three Adventist faculty deans were also appointed: Prof. Friday Mbon for faculty of humanities, Prof. Christian U. Iroegbu for faculty of science, and Prof. Nathaniel C. Nwezeaku for faculty of management and social sciences. There are also associate officers and directors including: Dr. Kanaelechi C. K. Nwangwa, the associate director of student services; Edet Eyibiyo Okon, associate vice president for financial services; Dr. Dave M. Nyekwere, university chaplain; Dr. Esowe Dimgba Dimgba, assistant chaplain; Dr. Precious E. Omeonu, director of corporate affairs; Henry Adiele, protocol officer and community liaison officer; Dr. Emmanuel E. Enyinna, director for medical services; Pastor Gideon C. Nwaogwugwu, coordinator for general studies program.

On Sunday, January 8, 2017, the principal officers were inaugurated by the pro-chancellor, Pastor Oyeleke A. Owolabi (DMin, Ph.D.). Next there was an aggressive drive to enroll students. Many of the church leaders were at youth congresses, women’s ministries events, camp meetings, and Adventist secondary schools to promote the new university and to appeal to students preparing to enter universities to come and have the benefits of an Adventist Christian education.

On February 20, 2017, the senate and administrative committees of the university were inaugurated by the vice chancellor and, before the end of February 2017, interviews for various categories of staff were concluded. On March 5, 2017, Clifford University started classes and lectures began.²⁸

To begin with, there was a total enrollment of 126 students: 44 in Humanities, 55 in Science, and 27 in Management and Social Sciences. One hundred and thirteen were Seventh-day Adventists, while 13 were not. Ninety-three were male and 33 were female. One hundred and twelve were in the hostels and 14 were legally married and living off campus.²⁹

On Friday, March 10, 2017, the university council was inaugurated at the university’s senate chambers after the formal installation of the chancellor and pro-chancellor and investiture of the president. This took place a few hours after the grand opening of the University Medical Centre.³⁰

The inauguration of the university council was followed the next day, Sabbath, March 11, 2017, with a special thanksgiving service held at the Abraham Nzotta Central Auditorium with the pro-chancellor, Pastor Oyeleke A.

Owolabi leading out. This 3,500-seat auditorium was built and donated by Dr. and Mrs. Paul Ogwuma, former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria and an opinion leader from one of the donor communities. It was named in memory of the Adventist church pastor, Pastor Abraham Nzotta, who brought the Adventist message to the Ihie community and to adjacent communities.

Clifford University accepts students regardless of color, race, tribe, ethnicity, or state of origin. It believes in unity in diversity. The university belongs to all men and women who have something beneficial to offer in accordance with the time-tested philosophy of education of the Adventist Church. If you have something to offer, you are welcome.

Historical Role of the School in the Church, Community, Nation, and World

Clifford University is owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It went through a successful resource verification visit by the International Board of Education (IBE) on June 6-9, 2014.

As an Adventist university, the institution affirms the policies, principles, and practices of the Church and upholds the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the denomination. There are some basic features and practices that are unique to Adventist tertiary institutions. These include: work study programs; week of prayer sessions (in Clifford University, it will be conducted once in each semester, including during summer school) which often lead to baptisms and are aimed at drawing members of the university community closer to God; emphasis on moral and spiritual discipline which includes compulsory worship/chapel attendance; integration of faith and learning, a system of bringing in Christ into every facet of each university program, as well as in the course of studies; value based education; annual Ingathering to solicit for funds for the physically challenged and care for widows, widowers, and orphans; internally displaced people (IDPs); the sick and mental retarded; and destitute.

Added to the above, important programs of the world Church such as special days or moments of prayer and fasting and world youth day will be observed by the university community. A special focus was given to the theme for 2017 which was "Christ Our Righteousness." An official announcement has been made to place emphasis on the theme chosen by the Church for 2018, which is "Faithfulness to His Word," and consider it as a point of focus when arranging and designing various church/university programs.

Clifford University is 15 miles east of the leading commercial city of Aba. Within this city and the other adjacent towns of Umuahia, Owerri, Uyo, Port-Harcourt, and Onitsha, the institution, though not yet a year old, is already having a positive impact in the spiritual and economic lives of people. The church on the campus, Abraham Nzotta Auditorium, is a 3,500-set building that will provide room for worship for everyone from the campus as well as worshippers from the host communities. This has been the situation from the inception of the university.

Plans are to have the Ihie Indigenes Bursary/Scholarship Scheme in the coming years. The university also plans to sink some boreholes in strategic places in the donor communities, participate in community road maintenance, and render community service such as "Keep Ihie Clean" by public health students. There is a church inside the premises of the university which serves as the Ihie district headquarters. This Anna Forsyth Memorial SDA Church (so named in memory of Anna Forsyth who went to the USA and solicited funds that were used to build the church) will help theology students do their ministerial practicum and allied programs especially learning the ministerial skills of preaching in the vernacular, as well as participating in ministry in rural communities.

One service which the community has appreciated so much is the establishment of the Clifford University Medical Centre which is located opposite the palace of the current Ihie Autonomous Community Traditional Ruler, Eze Engr John Ogbuanu, JP. and which equally offers state-of-the-art medical services to both the university and the donor communities without any form of discrimination. At a meeting with the administrative committee of the university and the land donors held on November 30, 2017, the spokesman for the land donors and a renown community leader, Mr. J. E. Nwaogwugwu, an alumnus of the defunct Adventist High School, Ihie, thanked the university administration for the care the medical center is giving to the sick from the community. The president of the university in turn informed the audience that plans have been made to expand the medical center and add a laboratory for various medical tests.

In terms of contributions to community development and social responsibilities, at present more than 23 people from the donor communities are working in various departments of the university. Before the August 5-12, 2017, Week of Prayer with the theme "The Endtime" led out by Pastor Dave M. Nyekwere, various fliers and invitation cards were distributed in the surrounding communities. Many people came and baptisms were held. Clifford University has a good relationship with the neighboring communities.

What Remains to Be Done to Fulfill the Mission

The university needs funds to put certain structures in place to enable it to meet some of the ingredients of its chosen mission. There are structures that need to be in place to help the university attain the position of a full-fledged Adventist institution. Some of these include completion of the church, the games and sports arena, student center, counseling services, chaplaincy unit, and staff housing. These will require some capital outlay but in the final analysis will help the university in the achievement of its mission.

The mission of Clifford University is "to prepare graduates who are adequately and holistically empowered and equipped to serve God and humanity." This mission is closely linked to the vision which entails being "a leading institution driving the frontiers of knowledge anchored on the values of excellence, service, and faith." Almost everything needed to fulfill the intended mission is available, but there is need to review the curriculum for the

training of our pastors and allied church workers in view of the social, economic, spiritual, and mental state of the world; therefore, there is need for an Institute for Theological Studies.³¹

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Izima, D. *A Brief History of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Eastern States of Nigeria*. Aba: Maranatha Printing Press, 1973.

Magaji, Ezekiel D. *Synopsis of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Northern Nigeria* Unpublished manuscript, 1983, in author's private collection.

Udoh, Bassey E. O. *Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria: Eastern Nigeria Union Mission First Quinquennial Session Report*. Lagos: Natural Prints Limited, 2006.

NOTES

1. David T. Agboola, *Seventh-day Adventist History in West Africa (1888-1988): A Mustard Seed*, (Ibadan: LASOB Productions, 2001), 28.
2. Unless otherwise stated, information in this article comes from the author's personal knowledge as the president of Clifford University.
3. Bassey E. O. Udoh, *Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria: Eastern Nigeria Union Mission First Quinquennial Session Report* (Lagos: Natural Prints Limited, 2006), 3-5.
4. D. Izima, *A Brief History of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Eastern States of Nigeria* (Aba: Maranatha Printing Press, 1973), 43.
5. Dave M. Nyekwere. *Medical Institutions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Nigeria: Instrument of Evangelism (1940-2000)*, xv, 3-7.
6. This is the author's personal knowledge as the vice chancellor of Clifford University.
7. The committee had as members the following people: Pastor Kanelechi C. K. Nwangwa (chairman), Elder Naboth H. A. Nwafor (secretary), Kevin N. Nwaige, A. C. Ogbonna, G. M. B. Agbarevo, Kate Ndukauba, Yetunde E. Alozie, Gabriel N. Okwandu, Christian U. Iroegbu, Nathaniel C.

Nwezeaku, Friday Mbon, C. N. Bariko, Arthur Nwafor, John U. Ihedinihu, and Mathew Wegwu.

8. The chairman of this committee, Pastor Kanalechi C. K. Nwangwa, who at this time was the principal of the Adventist Secondary Technical College (ASTEC), is presently the associate dean of Student Services, Clifford University.
9. Agbooola, 24
10. Jessie Clifford. *The Beginning of the work in Ibo country, Nigeria*, a handwritten report from Jesse Clifford at Aba to William McClements at Ibadan, 1923.
11. Ezekiel D. Magaji, *Synopsis of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Northern Nigeria* (Unpublished manuscript, 1983, in author's private collection).
12. This is the author's personal knowledge as the president of Clifford University.
13. Ibid.
14. The author, Prof. Chimezie A. Omeonu, was one of those that went to Abuja to submit the church's application to the National Universities Commission, NUC.
15. *Exit Report of the NUC Site Assessment Team to Clifford University*. This was a document handed over to Pastor Bassey E. O. Udoh, the chair of Clifford University Implementation Committee, 1-3.
16. The membership of the accrediting team was as follows: Prof. John W. Taylor - Associate Director of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA – *Chair*; Prof. Chiemela N. Ikonne - Education Director, West-Central Africa Division, Abidjan, Cote D.Ivoire – *Secretary*; Prof. Michael O. Akpa - Professor of New Testament Studies and Youth Ministry, Babcock University, Ilishan Remo, Ogun state – *Member*; Dr. Lossan Bonde - Dean, School of Business and Computer Sciences, Cosendai Adventist University, Cameroon – *Member*; Dr. Ken Breyer - Assistant Vice President for Construction and Architectural Services, Loma Linda University and Medical Center, California, USA – *Member*; Elder George Egwakhe - Associate Treasurer, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA – *Member*; Prof. James Ogunji - Chief of Staff to the Vice Chancellor, Babcock University, Ilishan Remo, Ogun state – *Member*; Prof. Sola Ogunwenmo - Vice Chancellor, Adventist University of West Africa, Monrovia, Liberia – *Member*; Mrs. Neila Wurangigan-Caan, Chair, Department of Technical Services, Loma Linda University Libraries, California, USA – *Member* (Clifford University Records, June 6-9, 2014, Clifford University Archives).
17. Ibid. The following were the implementation committees and their members:

Academic Programs and Personnel Committee: Yetunde Alozie (chair), Benson O. Oluikpe (alt. chair), Christian U. Iroegbu (secretary), Chimezie A. Omeonu, Friday M. Mbon, Cosy N. Bariko, Arthur Nwafor, G. N. Okwandu, Nathaniel Nwezeaku, Ademola S. Tayo, A. Chibueze

Ogbonna, Mathew Wegwu, Kevin N. Nwaigwe, Naboth H. A. Nwafor, John U. Ihedinihu, Michael Okpara, Machiadighikwe Agbaraevu, Kanelechi C. K. Nwangwa, Kate N. Ndukauba, Ngozi Dike, and Josiah O. Anonaba.

Ways and Means (Finance) Committee: Emmanuel O. Adaelu (chair), Innocent Anyahuru (secretary), Emmanuel G. Manilla, Luke N. Onuoha, Nathaniel Nwaezeaku, J. U. Ihedinihu, Michael Okpara, Monday Benson, Marcus M. Dangana, and Chimezie A. Omeonu.

Physical Planning Committee: Emmanuel Dike (chair), A. Chibueze Ogbonna (alt. chair), Kevin N. Nwaigwe (secretary), Ben Ojum, Meze Enyindah, Vine C. Nwosu, and Chimezie A. Omeonu.

Legal Services Committee: Barrister Paul Anonaba, Paul Anaba Chambers, and Barrister Gertrude Eleweke.

18. Clifford University Records.

19. This assignment was to be worked out by the Fundraising Committee, as follows: Emmanuel O. Adaelu (chair), Emmanuel G. Manilla (vice chair), Innocent Anyahuru (secretary), Nathaniel C. Nwaezeaku, Monday Benson, John Ihedinihu, Emmanuel Dike, Chimezie A. Omeonu.

20. Clifford University Records.

21. I, Chimezie A. Omeonu, the author, was the secretary of the Planning Committee that hosted the General Conference president in 2014 when he came for the Centenary Celebrations in Nigeria, the church having started in 1914.

22. Personal knowledge of the author.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Those that supported the above exercise were: Bassey E. O. Udoh, Oyeleke Owolabi, Moses C. Njoku, Emmanuel G. Manilla, Chimezie A. Omeonu, James A. K. Makinde, and Luke N. Onuoha.

26. Clifford University Records.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Personal knowledge of the author, as the vice-chancellor of Clifford University.

30. Clifford University Records.

31. Ibid. The Council members and their respective committee memberships are as follows:

Academic Standards Committee: Olufemi O. Oyerinde (chair), Friday Mbon, Nathaniel C. Nwezeaku, Ekundayo Alao, Christian U. Iroegbu, Daniel M. Dangana, Saturday Omeluzor, and Shem Bindas (secretary)

Appointment and Promotions Committee: Chimezie A. Omeonu (chair), Sunday J. Kayode (vice chair), Ademola S. Tayo, Oluwayemisi Aina, Godwin D. Amasa, and Yetunde E. Alozie (secretary)

Audit Committee: Marcus M. Dangana (chair), James Nwokocho, Enyinnaya K. Ugur, Prince Wakanma, and Nnamdi Martin Onyemmur (secretary)

Conflict Resolution and Legal Committee: Francis F. Daria (chair), Paul Ananaba (chair), Gertrude Eleweke, Elizabeth Esochaghi, Victor Nwosu, and Bassey Anwanane (secretary)

Finance Committee: George E. Manilla (chair), Emmanuel O. Adaelu, Amos Ibhiedu, Adedeji T. Adeleke, and Kelechi Nwankwo (secretary)

Physical Development and Planning Committee: Emmanuel Dike (chair), Akin Akinfenwa, Festus Nmegbu, Beniah E. Ojum, Paul Ogwuma, J. A. Kayode-Makinde, and Beniah E. Ojum (secretary)

Spiritual Life and Outreach Ministry Committee: Moses C. Njoku (chair), Anyalebechi Nnununke (vice chair), Comfort Abali, Flora Abaribe, Aniekan J. Umoh, and Rowland Nwosu (secretary)

32. At a moment of writing of this article (2019), a proposal to this effect has been sent to the Academic Standards Committee of the university. The next step is to send the proposal to the Governing Council for final approval.

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