



THE APOSTOLIC FAITH IN AFRICA

The History of



The History of **THE APOSTOLIC FAITH IN AFRICA**



THE APOSTOLIC FAITH
(AFRICA HEADQUARTERS)
LAGOS, NIGERIA

The History of The Apostolic Faith In Africa



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DEDICATED TO
The memory of

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First Overseer of Apostolic Faith work in Zambia

The Rev. Josiah O. Soyinka
Second Africa Overseer

and

To all faithful and consecrated Saints dead and living

With this prayer
That it may inspire the present and future generations to be
dedicated and loyal to the task of winning Africa for Christ.



THE REV. FLORENCE LOUISE CRAWFORD
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2. *A Short Biography of Samuel Ajayi Crowther* by Ven. Dr. J. Olu Arulefela. Printed by the Government Printer, Ilorin.
3. *Christianity in West Africa (The Historical Analysis)* by E. O. Babalola. Publication International (Nig) 1976

FOREWORD

This book is designed to introduce The Apostolic Faith in Africa to all who wish to be familiar with the denomination. It will also serve as a reference material for members of the Church and reminiscent reading for veterans. It is also designed to give a challenge to the younger generation and galvanise them to active participation in the work of God.

The account opens with a brief history of the founding and growth of the International Headquarters in Portland Oregon, USA, and the life of the Founder of the Church. This is followed by the history of the founding and growth of The Apostolic Faith Churches in Africa. Various areas of evangelistic work are also described as well as the history of the establishment of Churches in Nigeria and the rest of Africa. A short discourse about some founding members follows this. An exhortation by the first Africa Overseer concludes the work.

Most of the materials used in this publication were taken from records left behind by the first Africa Overseer, Rev. T.G. Oshokoya as well as information given by various branch churches. These materials were compiled under the supervision of Esther O. Ogunfowomu, the present Office Manager, who was one of the Secretaries to Rev. T. G. Oshokoya. Editing of this work was carried out by veteran members of the Church.

It is our prayers that God will use the materials contained in this account to arouse the interest of all, especially the younger generation in the Church in the things of God and give them the determination to embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ as their predecessors have done. In doing so, we hope and pray that Africa will be won for Christ.

Rev. Paul Oge Akazue
Africa Overseer



THE REV. PAUL OGE AKAZUE
Third Africa Overseer of The Apostolic Faith

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BIBLE DOCTRINES

As Taught by The Apostolic Faith of Portland Oregon and embraced by the Apostolic Faith Churches in Africa with Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria.

*****BIBLE DOCTRINES*****



BIBLE DOCTRINES



As Taught by The Apostolic Faith

THE DIVINE TRINITY -- The Godhead consists of three Persons in one: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. These are separate and distinct Persons, possessing separate, distinct, and recognisable personalities and qualities, perfectly united in one, and are not to be thought of, in any sense, as merely three names for one Person. In Matthew 3:16, 17 we read of the cooperation of the three Persons of the Godhead: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased", (See II Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 28:19, 20; I John 5:7)

REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD -- Repentance is a godly sorrow for sin with a renunciation of sin. Acts 3:19; Acts 20:21; II Corinthians 7:10; Mark 1:15; Isaiah 55:7; Matthew 4:17; II Chronicles 7:14; Ezekiel 18:21.

RESTITUTION -- The Bible teaches that wrongs against our fellow men for which one can make amends must be righted. One must have conscience void of offence toward God and man. Restitution includes restoring where one has defrauded, stolen, or slandered; paying back-debts, and making confession. Exodus 22:3; Leviticus 6:4; Proverbs 6:31; Ezekiel 33:15; Luke 19:8, 9. Matthew 5:23, 24

JUSTIFICATION AND REGENERATION -- Justification is the act of God's grace whereby one receives remission of sins and stands before God as though he had never sinned. Acts 13:39; Romans

3:25, 26; Romans 5:1; I Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3:24; John 1:12, 13; John 3:3; II Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23; Act 10:43.

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION (Holiness) – Entire sanctification is the act of God's grace by which one is made holy. It is the **second, definite** work wrought by the Blood of Jesus through faith, and subsequent to salvation and regeneration. John 17:15-17; I Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 2:11; 12:14; I John 1:7; Luke 1:74,75; II Corinthians 7:1; I Peter 1:16; Ephesians 5:25-27.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST – The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the enduement of power from on High upon the clean, sanctified life. Luke 24:49; Matthew 3:11; John 7:38,39; 14:16,17,26; Acts 1:5-8.

When one receives the gift of the Holy Ghost, it is accompanied by the same sign as the disciples had on the Day of Pentecost, viz., speaking with tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Mark 16:17; I Corinthians 14:21, 22. Examples Acts 2:4; 10:45,46; 19:6.

DIVINE HEALING -- The healing of sickness and disease is provided for God's people in the Atonement. "With his stripes we are healed" Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:17; Mark 16:18; James 5:14,16; I John 3:8; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38.

THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS -- The return of Jesus will be just as literal and visible as His going away. Acts 1:9-11; John 14:3.

There will be two appearances under one coming: first, to catch away His waiting Bride (Matthew 24:40-44; I Thessalonians 4:15-17); second, to execute judgment upon the ungodly (II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14, 15; Zechariah 14:3, 4).

THE TRIBULATION -- During the time between Christ's coming for His Bride and His return in judgment, there is to be the Great Tribulation, or the time of Jacob's trouble. Matthew 24:21, 22, 29; Revelation 9 and 16; Isaiah 26:20, 21; Mark 13:19; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Malachi 4:1.

CHRIST'S MILLENNIAL REIGN -- Christ's Millennial reign is the 1,000 years' literal reign of Jesus on earth, which will be ushered in by the coming of Jesus back to earth with ten thousands of His saints. At this time He will judge the nations that dwell upon the face of the earth. Jude 14; II Thessalonians 1:7-10.; Isaiah 11 and 35; Revelation 20:1-6.

During this time the devil will be bound. Revelation 20:2, 3. It will be a reign of peace and blessing. Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25; Hosea 2:18; Zechariah 14:9-20; Isaiah 2:2-4.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT -- God will finally judge the quick and the dead according to their works, Revelation 20:11-14; Daniel 12:2; Acts 10:42.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH -- The Word teaches that this earth which has been polluted by sin shall pass away after the White Throne Judgment, and God will create a new Heaven and a new earth in which righteousness shall dwell. Matthew 24:35; II Peter 3:12,13; Revelation 21:1-3; Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22.

ETERNAL HEAVEN AND ETERNAL HELL -- The Bible teaches that hell is as eternal as Heaven. Matthew 25:41-46. The wicked shall be cast into a burning hell, a lake of fire burning with brimstone forever and ever. Revelation 14:10, 11; Luke 16:24; Mark 9:43, 44.

NO DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE -- The Word teaches that marriage is binding for life. Under the New Testament law, the law of Christ, there is but one cause for separation -- fornication; and no right to marry again while the first companion lives. Matthew 5:31, 32; Matthew 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2, 3.

WATER BAPTISM -- One immersion (not three) "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," as Jesus commanded. Matthew 28:19. Examples: Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38, 39; Types: Romans 6:4, 5; Colossians 2:12.

THE LORD'S SUPPER -- Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper that His followers might "shew the Lord's death till he come." I Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 22:17-20; Matthew 26:26-29.

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET -- Jesus said, "If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." John 13:14, 15.

Tracts are available and can be obtained, dealing more fully with the above stated doctrines, by writing to The Apostolic Faith, N.W. Sixth and Burnside, Portland, Oregon 97209, USA or The Apostolic Faith, P.O. Box 78, Ebute - Meta, Lagos, Nigeria.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA

The primary objective of the early Christian missionaries sent to Africa was to convert Africans to Christianity, through education. In order to achieve their objective, they established schools, provided for the material needs of the people and lived in their midst, learning their values and culture, and respecting those in conformity with the Bible.

In 1482, the Portuguese Catholics had free movement along the West African coast for commerce, but the spreading of Christianity was their chief aim. They worked in Elmina, Ghana, but were not successful in establishing missions in Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast. The Catholic, through the influence of the Portuguese traders, were the first missionaries to set foot on the Nigerian soil. As in Ghana, Catholic priests accompanied the early Portuguese merchants who traded in Nigeria. Other missionaries later followed.

Below are some missionaries who worked ardently in Africa:

1600 – 1699

1. *Jesuits and Franciscans*
2. *St. Peter Claver*
3. *Prince Domingo*

1700 – 1799

1. *Signor Joseph*
2. *Jacob Elisa*
3. *John Captain, who translated the Apostles' Creed into Fanti.*
4. *Rev. Thomas Thompson, who arranged a training school for Philip Quaake in England.*
5. *Rev. Molville Horne*
6. *John Grigg*
7. *James Rodway*
8. *Glasgow Missionary Society*

1800 – 1899

1. *Metchion Kehner*

2. Peter Harting
3. Nylander
4. Butshen
5. Prase
6. Warnee
7. William Augustine Bernard
8. Johnson, who introduced the system of education evolved by Andrew Bell in Madras, India (Pupil – Teacher method). It was obvious that education and Christianity were inseparable in those days.
9. Jehudi Ashmun
10. Lott Cavey
11. Colin Teaguee
12. Augustus William Hanson, who translated the Gospel according to St. Matthew and St. John into Ga language, and founded his own private school for higher education in Cape Coast.
13. Hannah Kilham, whose constructive study of each language is the basis upon which much of the study of African languages has been built.
14. John Morgan
15. Basel Mission, an Evangelical Missionary Society whose members were Germans. The Mission's emphasis was on farming, with the hope of settling Christians on the land.
16. Johann Zimmerman, who traded and whose trading later became a source of revenue for the Mission.
17. August Steinhansen
18. Johann Gottevl's Christallen, who translated the Bible, a collection of 3,000 popular sayings and a dictionary into Twi language.
19. Thomas Birch Freeman, who trained William De Groff and John Martin for a native ministry in Ghana.
20. Rev. George Chapman
21. R. M. Macbair, who published St. Matthew's Gospel in Mandingo in The Gambia.
22. Thomas Fowel Burton, who wrote a book on "The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy".

23. Dr. Baxron, assisted by Rev. Father John and Reni Bessieux, who translated the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and the Apostles' Creed into Egrebo language.
24. Henry Townsend
25. C. A. Gollmen
26. Bishop Vidal
27. David Hinderer
28. A. C. Mann
29. Rev. J. C. Taylor and others
30. David Livingstone
31. Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a converted slave, who translated the Bible into Yoruba language.
32. Mary Slessor

Many missionaries who came to Africa went into villages and towns to convert people to Christianity. In their effort to accomplish their task, some were killed by wild animals, while some suffered from malaria which put an end to their lives. However, many Africans were educated and became Christians. Soon, the slave trade was abolished and some tribal wars were stopped. Many cruel acts being practised by the natives, like killing of twins, were put to an end.

In this chapter, the work of two of the missionaries are highlighted.

Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Hardly was there any black man of West African origin, who was as well-known and popular among the Church Missionary Society, as Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther. This was not without a reason, because he rose from the position of a rescued slave to that of a Bishop.

"He raiseth up the poor out of the dust... to make them inherit the throne of glory" (1 Samuel 2: 8).

The above statement by the mother of Samuel in the Bible applied to Bishop Crowther too, whose mother's name was also Hannah.

Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, in his place of birth, was named and called Ajayi. His native town was Osoogun, a village in Yoruba land, not very far from Iseyin in Oyo State of Nigeria. At the

beginning of 1821, the Fulanis from the neighbouring countries ravaged Osoogun along with many other towns. Ajayi, with his mother and two younger sisters, were captured as slaves, while his father was killed in the war. Three days later, Ajayi could no longer find his mother and sisters, as a result of slaves being taken over by different masters during the distribution of war spoils. Not long after, they met again. For about three months, while they were in close contact, Ajayi was permitted by his master to make casual visits to his people. Shortly after this, they were once again separated, and Ajayi was eventually auctioned for sale. He was bought by a female Muslim who took him to Egun land near the coast, where slaves were being sold. The Spanish bought him along with many other slaves. They were immediately loaded into a ship, for transportation across the Atlantic Ocean, to the sugar-cane plantations in America.



Bishop Samuel Ajayi
Crowther

The slaves suffered much hunger and thirst from the time they were taken. They were stacked into a ship, in a jam-packed state, chained and padlocked one to another. Their hunger and thirst were coupled with very severe beatings, for the Spanish masters were notorious for indiscriminate and merciless caning of their slaves. Sickness and death were rampant among the slaves. Many would die and be stinking for a long time, while lying next to living slaves to whom they were chained, before the masters would come to separate them and cast the dead into the sea. Ajayi partook of all these hardships and inconveniences.

The Spanish slave ship conveying Ajayi and others had travelled many days on the Atlantic ocean, before two British warships that had been on the watch for slave ships sighted them and caught up with them. The Spanish fought the British but the British gained the upper hand, captured the Spanish slave masters, liberated the slaves and put them into their warships. The captured slave masters were put in chains and also moved into the British warships. The change in situation notwithstanding, the liberated slaves

were full of apprehension because they saw, hung on line, pork meat which they mistook for roasted human flesh. They also mistook the barrels of cartridges which they saw in the ships for skulls of slaves already killed and eaten by the British warship owners. The slaves saw their plight as being out of the frying pan into the fire, but their fear was soon allayed.

Regrettably, a terrible storm arose and sank one of the two ships, destroying all the crew, the slaves and the goods inside it. Miraculously, however, God kept the second ship, in which was Ajayi the would-be Bishop, who would work mightily for God, safe from destruction. The ship sailed and landed in Barthurst, Gambia, and from there to Freetown in Sierra Leone, where the slaves were camped, having been fully liberated. There, they were taken good care of, and given proper education.

Ajayi proved brilliant in the formal education he was given. He was later made a monitor in his school on a monthly pay of seven and a half pence. It was at this time that he became very much engrossed in spiritual learning. He felt the guilt of sin, asked for and received forgiveness of sins from the Lord. This gave him much joy.

Following his conversion, Ajayi was baptised by Reverend J. Raben on December 11, 1825, and given the English name, Samuel Crowther. Right from that day, he had been known and so called. As time went on, he started to insert and use his Yoruba name alongside his English names, and the whole world came to know him as Samuel Ajayi Crowther.

Crowther's guardians did not know that he would eventually become a teacher and an evangelist. He was made to learn carpentry and he performed well as an apprentice. When his guardians noticed his zeal for learning, they changed their minds concerning him, and consequently took him to England in 1826. He had spent only four months in school in Islington, when he was recalled to Sierra Leone because a High School had been opened at Fourah Bay. The first name that entered the school's records at its inception was that of Samuel Ajayi Crowther. The school had a set of six young boys as its first intake.

Two years later, he proved so competent in his academics that he was appointed an assistant tutor in the college. In 1830, he was

appointed to be in charge of a school in Regent, Sierra Leone. After another two years, he was moved to Wellington. Shortly after this, he was recalled to Fourah Bay college as a full-time teacher. He remained there for a long time. In the year 1841, he was moved from his job to assist Reverend J. F. Schon, who had been appointed by the British Government as a member of a group of explorers to the River Niger. The Church Missionary Society asked Rev. Schon and Mr. Crowther to survey the possibility of Gospel work in the Niger area.

The work done by the team was very difficult, particularly because they did not travel down the River Niger's course in a steam engine boat. The very clumsy course of the river, and the inability to understand the local dialect of the people, were among the problems they encountered. To crown it all, were the sicknesses and diseases that plagued many members of the team, and even killed some of them. All these made them turn back, hardly finishing half of their assignment. This made Reverend Schon lament that he could sum up all their efforts in one word: *failure*.

Apart from the seeming failure, it was this exploration that opened people's eyes to the sterling qualities of Mr. Crowther, due to the undaunted attitude he displayed in the midst of the problems encountered. He proved very useful. While other members of the expedition, black and white, were falling ill and becoming despondent, he remained very healthy and strong, giving succour and encouragement to others on their return trip.

It was this quality in him that made Reverend Schon write to the Church Missionary Society, recommending him for a job as a cleric. Without much debate, the C.M.S. sent Ajayi to England. After advancing in more theological education, the Bishop of London appointed him a deacon on June 11, 1843. Four months later, he was fully ordained, thus becoming the first black man to be ordained a priest, and he performed well. His own success resulted in the appointment of other black men, not only from West Africa, but from various parts of Africa.

Immediately after his ordination, Reverend Samuel Ajayi Crowther travelled back to Sierra Leone to continue his work. On December 3, 1843, he delivered his first sermon, in English, in his new capacity as a priest in Sierra Leone. The topic of his sermon that day

was: *There is still room*. Following this, he delivered another sermon in Yoruba to his own people — the newly liberated slaves. His exhortation pleased them so much that there was a resounding echo of *Amen, Amen, Amen*.

Rev. Crowther, having fully settled in his new profession, for which God had raised him up and made him survive all odds, zealously worked to propagate the Gospel in his parish.

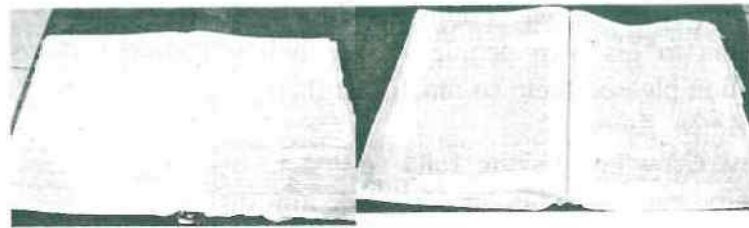
After some time, he and two white missionaries, Revds. Townsend and Gollmer, went to Badagry, a coastal town in Nigeria. Their real destination was Abeokuta, but at the time they got to Badagry, they could not proceed to Abeokuta because of intertribal wars *en route*. They, therefore, stayed on in Badagry to preach the Gospel. This was in 1844. They spent one and a half years in Badagry before proceeding on their journey to Abeokuta. Revds. Crowther and Townsend set out, leaving Rev. Gollmer behind to supervise the work in Badagry.

On August 2, 1846, Crowther and Townsend stepped into Abeokuta and were warmly welcomed, especially by the liberated slaves, who had embraced Christianity in Sierra Leone, but had returned to Abeokuta. The Egba chiefs, in and around Abeokuta, were particularly happy to receive the evangelists. Sagua, leader of the Egbas at that time, gladly received them too.

Three weeks after the commencement of the missionaries' work, Crowther unexpectedly met his mother and his two sisters in Abeokuta, after twenty-five years of separation. The mother and the sisters embraced Christianity. They became part of the early converts in Abeokuta who were baptised by Rev. Townsend. Crowther continued his work of spreading the Gospel light in his land with all his heart, love and strength. The Lord really blessed and prospered his work.

Translation of the Bible into Yoruba

When Crowther first got to Badagry, he observed that the new Christians could not read the English Bible. He then single-handedly translated the Bible into Yoruba language. He finished the work within one year and the translated work was taken to England for printing. He also translated other books into Yoruba in order to help believers who were being trained in the school set up by the missionaries, and also to



The first copy of the Yoruba Bible translated by Crowther (left) and the English Bible used to translate it



The first Mission House built in Nigeria by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in the town of Badagry. It was started in 1842 and completed in 1845. It is the first storey building in Badagry

help the larger community.

However, it was not always smooth-sailing with Bishop Crowther. When he was getting old, he lost key people in his life. Firstly, his dear wife, who had happily shared her husband with the Church for many years, died in 1880. Secondly, his loving mother died in February, 1884, when he was on Episcopal duties to the

Niger area. As if these were not enough shocks in his life, Rev. J. F. Schon, who had been a close friend in the team to survey the possibility of Gospel work in the Niger area, died in 1889.

As a result of his domestic distress, coupled with the burden for the Church on his heart, he broke down and his health deteriorated. He was finally called to his reward in Heaven by his Maker, in December, 1891.

Mary Slessor, A Missionary to Calabar, Nigeria

When the Modern Missionary Movement came into existence at the close of the eighteenth century, it was essentially a male preserve.

Married men who were called by God to foreign lands, however, took their wives with them. The thought of single women being called to such work was unheard of. It was not until the turn of the century that the idea of female emancipation gradually began to dawn.

With time, the way was opened for women to volunteer as missionaries. When Hudson Taylor founded the China Inland Mission in 1865, he was prepared to send single women into the interior of China to minister to other women. Thus, when Mary Slessor applied to join the Calabar Mission in 1875, she had no problem in gaining acceptance. Mission Boards were at last waking up to the realisation that women had a special contribution to make in the spread of the Gospel. Soon, female volunteers outnumbered the males.

Mary Slessor felt she had a double disadvantage when she applied to become a missionary: she was a woman, and she belonged to the working class. By sheer grit, determination and prayer, she overcame all obstacles and soon allayed all lingering fears of her being sent to West Africa, the supposedly *White Man's grave*.

Slessor's early years in Scotland were spent in extreme poverty and she suffered hunger and deprivation. She was born the second of seven children, three of whom died. Her alcoholic father lost his job and they were forced to leave Aberdeen to seek work in Dundee. Their new home was one room with no water, lighting or toilet facilities. There was hardly any furniture, and the available bed was only a mattress placed on the floor. On Sundays, they were able to escape from the situation for a while, when her mother took the children to church, where Mary first heard the Gospel.

From the age of ten, Mary started spending half her day at school and the rest at the mill. At fourteen, she started working full-time, putting in a 58-hour week at the looms.

Her interest in missionary work developed at an early age when a sermon by a missionary, who had worked in Calabar, created a deep impression on her. After she became a Christian in her teens, she was further encouraged by reading the missionary record about her hero, David Livingstone. She realised she would need to improve her education if she was to become a missionary, so, she started to borrow books from the church library. She also joined an evening class for two nights a week. Her church minister recognised her ability to

communicate, and persuaded her to help with Sunday School and the young people's work. Later, he persuaded her to speak to adult groups, but she was always conscious of her working class background, and became tongue-tied in the company of *better class people*.

When the news of Livingstone's death came in 1874, her interest in Calabar was renewed. Yet, for a year, she tried to forget the idea, thinking she had nothing to offer; but whenever she prayed, the name *Calabar* came to her mind. In the end, God won! She applied and was accepted as a *female agent*. In August 1876, she sailed to Calabar.

The Calabar Mission was founded in 1846 as an offshoot of the Scottish Missionary Society, and the first missionaries included both white people and Jamaicans of African descent. They found that slave trade was strongly entrenched in the area and it was the cause of much violence and depravity among the tribes. The natives were animists: they worshipped the gods of the sky, sun and rain, and the spirits of trees, rocks and rivers. They also practised witchcraft.

When Mary went to Calabar, her first tour of duty proved quite uneventful and lasted less than three years. She familiarised herself with the area and other mission stations, visited the women in their homes and taught in schools. She also began to learn *Efik*, the local language, and surprised the people at the speed with which she was able to communicate with them. She eventually became so fluent that she knew not only the colloquial phrases and the inflections, but their gestures as well. In her second year, she contracted malaria. Although she recovered, yet she was sent home to Scotland to recuperate.

On her return, Mary was pleased when she was given charge of the mission station at Old Town, which enabled her to put some of her ideas into practice. She quickly became involved in outreach: she opened three new out-stations, acted as a teacher and a district nurse, dispensed medicines and conducted four services each Sunday, walking a circuit of several miles.

An important decision she made at this time was to 'go native', a decision which the Mission did not entirely approve of. She abandoned some of her more cumbersome items of clothing; and instead wore a simple cotton dress and canvas shoes, though she often went barefoot. She also got rid of her ringlets and wore her hair short. Keeping tea as her only luxury, she gradually gave up eating imported food in favour of the local produce, which saved her both time and

money. Probably, as a result of her working class background, Mary felt more at home with the natives than with her missionary colleagues. She found out that the natives accepted her, and as she shared their difficulties, they sought her help and advice. She realised that this type of evangelism was more effective than preaching.

Often, Mary felt horrified at the way the natives treated anyone found guilty of an offence and sometimes she just had to intervene. On one occasion, a woman accused of adultery was to be punished by having boiling oil poured over her as she was tied, spread eagled, on the ground. Mary stood between the victim and her tormentor, her eyes fixed on him until at last he retreated. The people marvelled at this display of the power of the white man's God.

The death of her mother and sister left Mary free to decide to move further inland to reach the dreaded Okoyong tribe, who were still officially at war with the Efiks. The Board finally agreed to the decision, and taking five orphaned children with her, she moved into the village of Ekenge.

For a while, she was tolerated by Chief Edem and the other chiefs, and allowed to stay in a woman's compound. It took some months before she was given her own hut, a gesture that indicated they had accepted her.

As with the Efiks at Old Town, Mary gave much attention to treating illnesses and teaching the 'Book'. Some of the people also wanted to learn to read and write. The more dramatic events, however, took place when she was allowed to attend trials where several punishments were meted out. At times, she challenged the chiefs' decision and was able to save some from being put to death. The men were amazed at the way she confronted the chiefs and witch doctors, and credited it all to the power of her God.

Throughout all her years in Africa, Mary maintained her cheerful faith. "*If I am seldom in a triumphant or ecstatic mood*", she once wrote, "*Christ is here and the Holy Spirit. I am always satisfied and happy in His love*". She kept her close relationship with God, reading her Bible by candlelight and praying alone, often outside under the stars.

Because of her intimate knowledge of tribal laws and religion, she was frequently consulted by Government Officials. In 1898, Mary was

appointed a Vice-Consul to preside over the natives at Ankpa. The Okoyong people also held her in high esteem and gave her the title – *Eka Kpukpro Owa* – Mother of all the people.

Over the years, Mary often went down with fever and would often simply force herself to carry on working. As she grew older, she became increasingly infirm. In the end she collapsed, and as she laid dying, she was heard whispering, “*O God, release me*”. When she was laid to rest in Duke Town Cemetery, all flags were flying at half-mast.

Thanks to her effort: schools were founded, babies and twins were saved from death, regular drunkenness and killings became things of the past, raiding and stealing of slaves ceased. Above all, the Gospel was preached and the tribes taught about God and the ‘*Book*’.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FOUNDING OF THE INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Origin

The Apostolic Faith had its beginning in the United States West Coast in the early part of the twentieth century, during a worldwide spiritual awakening, which came as an outgrowth of the Welsh revival of 1904.

Christian workers and religious leaders had been earnestly praying for greater spiritual power in their lives, so that their service might be more effectual for the Lord. Their prayers were answered when the long-awaited outpouring of the Spirit came, as promised in Joel 2:23-29, empowering many for service and creating a missionary fervour that extended worldwide. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 1906, upon a group of sanctified people, in the city of Los Angeles, California, set in motion The Apostolic Faith work, which established its Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, in 1907.

The Apostolic Faith, which has steadily grown and established branch Churches worldwide, was founded by a woman, the Reverend Florence Louise Crawford. Born of parents who were atheists, she was never taken to a Church nor taught to pray or read the Bible. Rather, she grew up in an atmosphere where the existence of God was denied.

“God is no respecter of persons:

“But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34,35).

Florence L. Crawford loved the pleasures of life before her conversion, but deep down in her heart was a yearning for God. While she was going about enjoying herself, God saw in her, qualities He could use for His glory.

As she was dancing one night, God called and said audibly to her in the ballroom: “*Daughter, give me thine heart*”. This led her to seek God until she prayed through and her sins were forgiven. Her life was immediately transformed and her interests changed completely. She had an ardent passion for the salvation of souls and did a lot to be a

blessing to others.

Meanwhile, she had a very great hunger to receive deeper spiritual experiences from God. She sought in vain for a long time, what she needed to satisfy her soul. After the spiritual Latter Rain, which fell in April 1906, she attended the revival meetings at Azusa Street in Los Angeles, USA, where she was sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire.

In the later part of 1906, in answer to the call Mrs. Crawford had received, she prepared to leave Los Angeles to enter more distant fields of service in the work of evangelism. Without any financial assistance, she boarded a train northward-bound toward Portland, Oregon. In her heart was a prayer that God would meet her every need and open new doors for Gospel work.

While in Salem, Oregon, Mrs. Crawford was invited to hold services in a mission hall in the city of Portland. She arrived at noon on Christmas Day, 1906, and at 3.00 pm the same day, she assumed her responsibility in a humble little building located at Second and Main Streets, in the lower section of the city. Far from fancy was that place of worship! The building, once used for a blacksmith shop, had been cleaned up and made into a "sanctuary," where the Lord was pleased to bless seekers after righteousness.

The Spirit of God moved upon the hearts of those who attended the meetings. Many were converted under Mrs. Crawford's preaching, and it was not long until the pastor-in-charge turned the work over to her. After she accepted, she discontinued the custom of taking collections – much to the amazement of the pastor. He asked, "*Who is going to be responsible for the upkeep of this place if no collections are taken?*" In sheer faith, she replied, "*I will be responsible*". **From that day till date, no collections have ever been taken in any Apostolic Faith Church.** Tithes and freewill offerings have continued to meet every financial need of the Gospel work worldwide.

Second and Main Street Church

A revival broke out at the Second and Main Street Church. Every chair was filled, the aisles packed, and the doorway jammed. Crowds stood out into the streets. City officials became concerned because of fire hazards and took safety measures to limit the number of people

coming into the place. Gospel truths were preached by Spirit-filled ministers who shunned not to declare the whole Word of God.

A number of people who came to worship at the Second and Main location, were church goers who hungered for the fullness of God's blessings. One time, after Mrs. Crawford had accepted an invitation to preach in another church, that whole congregation attended the services at The Apostolic Faith Church.

Persecution

Serious persecutions were common occurrences in those days. Hoodlums would seek to disrupt the meetings. As time passed, every window in the building was broken as well as the glass in the door. The windows and doors had to be boarded up; but the evangelistic services continued. Numerous curious seekers attended the meetings. False rumours were circulated, but these only drew more people to the meetings. Many were convinced of the presence of God and prayed for forgiveness of their sins.

News reporters were not the most welcomed people at that time, when all available space was needed for those interested in hearing the Word of God. One day, a man who came to obtain an account on the services, feigned himself to be a "*drunk*" wanting to pray. With a bottle in his pocket, he made his way to the front and knelt at the place of prayer. His purpose was to get a close-up view and to write a derogatory report for the newspaper. Instead of his investigating the Gospel, the Spirit of the Lord investigated him, convicted him of sin, and saved him. He had nothing then but a good report — a story of victory over sin.

Along with other persecutions which accompanied the preaching of the Gospel, the leader of this work also suffered many personal hardships, much reproach and false accusation. One time, when holding meetings in a California city, she was severely injured from a bottle thrown through a window, which cut a large gash in her forehead. Another time, in Portland, a patrol officer was sent to arrest her. He said, "*I have a warrant for your arrest but it seems I cannot use it*". She smiled, knowing that God had His hand over the work which He had called her to do.

First and Madison Church

In the later part of 1907, at the close of the first Apostolic Faith camp meeting at Twelfth and Division, a larger hall was rented, located at First and Madison Streets. Accommodation in those early-day churches was not considered the most important item. However, humble quarters and persecution failed to hinder the onward march of God's work.

Services were always conducted in a spirit of enthusiasm and confidence, and God never failed to bless His people. For years, there was no pulpit in the Church on which to lay the Bible. When Mrs. Crawford would rise to give the message, she would clasp her Bible in one hand, and lift the other to direct the congregation in singing some old Gospel songs, before starting her sermon. The Spirit and presence of God were so greatly manifested, that souls received their sanctification or the baptism of the Holy Ghost before an altar call to prayer was given.

Portland Chosen as the Headquarters



Florence Louise Crawford

During the Founder's first year in Portland, she and a number of workers took some extended missionary trips into new territory. They held special meetings in Seattle, Washington; Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota in USA. They also held meetings in Winnipeg and Manitoba in Canada. Souls were saved and added to the fold during those meetings. To be in the will of God was Mrs. Crawford's supreme desire. She was willing to stay in the East or to return to the West Coast. While she was in Minneapolis, God spoke to her, saying, "*If you will go back to Portland, Oregon,*

and stay there, I will make that place the Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith Work and I will raise up the standard of the Gospel in that city". She returned to Portland and gave her time and strength in promoting the Gospel in the area.

The work in Portland remarkably prospered; and in 1908, the growing congregation moved into its Headquarters at Front and Burnside Streets. There, the publishing of The Apostolic Faith literature began and was soon mailed throughout the world.

In those days, there came some who would gladly have taken over the organisation; but God had chosen His leaders whom He could trust to proclaim the whole truth and not let down the standard of His Word. And according to the promise given Mrs. Crawford in Minneapolis, the **Headquarters of this Apostolic Faith Work was established in Portland, Oregon.** It was not long until a number of branch churches were added along the Pacific Coast and in the Middle West. Capable ministers, appointed by Portland Headquarters, took the pastorates.

Although Mrs. Crawford was not trained in a theological seminary, she had a thorough knowledge of God's Word. Much of her time was spent "sitting at the feet of Jesus", learning His truths. The Bible was her constant companion, chart, and compass. **And she continually prayed that God would keep the ballast of the "Gospel Ship" (as she called this work) intact: that this work would never drift into fanaticism and false doctrine, or give way to modernistic trends.**

Stormy sessions arose sometimes when people who were not sound in doctrine tried to attach themselves to the Church. Possibly they wanted to indulge in fanatical manifestations, add some false theory, or some pet sin they wanted to retain and still be in fellowship; but the Overseer of this organisation was no compromiser and she never lowered the standard for anybody.

Camp Meetings

In the middle of 1907, a camp meeting was held at Southeast Twelfth and Division Streets. The large tent, seating several hundreds of people, was often filled to capacity and many were turned away. Persecution accompanied the preaching of the Gospel and sometimes, the tent was pelted with rocks during the services.

The 1908 camp meeting, held on Mount Tabor at the outskirts of the city, also proved to be an eventful and spiritually blessed session.

The 1909 camp meeting, held in Montavilla district, east of the city, was also remembered for the conversion of a number of people who became zealous Christian soldiers of the Cross.

There were two Fulton camp meetings held in the early days: one in 1910 and the other in 1913. Both of these were marked with the conversion of people from different walks of life. There were special tent meetings held in Vancouver, B.C. in 1910 by workers from Portland.

In the later part of 1908, after the close of the Mount Tabor camp meeting, The Apostolic Faith secured a large building at the corner of the Front and Burnside Streets, for their Headquarters. Meetings were conducted at the location until 1922.

New Headquarters Building Erected

By the year 1922, after holding services for 14 years in the old Lighthouse by the Bridge at Front and Burnside, there was a need for larger quarters to accommodate the growing congregation. In the downtown district of Portland, an old pioneer estate was for sale – a quarter block, 100 ft x 100 ft. at the intersection of two busy streets, Northwest Sixth Avenue and Burnside Street. The price of the property, \$150,000, plus construction costs for erecting a large new Headquarters building, was no small financial undertaking. Involved in this proposition was not only a lot of money but also much hard labour. The previous year, they had built the large domed shaped tabernacle on the campgrounds at S.E. 52nd Avenue and Duke Street.

By February 16, 1922, papers had been signed pertaining to the purchase of the property and it was not long until the corner at Sixth and Burnside became a scene of beehive activity. On the last day of February, 1922, workmen began tearing down the frame buildings formerly used for such places as saloons, theatres and cheap rooming houses.

This downtown Church was a revival centre for many years since its dedication in 1922. Evangelistic meetings were held regularly at this location, with the exception of a few weeks when the annual camp meeting took place at the tabernacle grounds. Both the Sunday and

weeknight meetings were held at the Headquarters building until 1947, when it became evident that the seating capacity of 1,200 was inadequate for the large Sunday crowds. The Sunday meetings were then transferred to the tabernacle at S.E. 52nd Avenue and Duke Street which seats 2,400 persons. The Apostolic Faith has held annual midsummer camp meetings in the city of Portland, and since 1920, the meetings have been conducted on a beautiful park site, located at South East 52nd Avenue and Duke Street. These annual conventions of international interest, have proved to be a source of spiritual revival and a valuable means of evangelism whereby many souls are saved.

On Saturday afternoon, June 20, 1936, the eventful and useful life of the Leader of this work came to a close. It can well be said of her that she was **“called, and chosen, and faithful.”** Though her thirty years of labour in the Gospel work ended, the far-reaching effects of her labours continue to live on and bear fruits unto eternal life.

The Work Continues

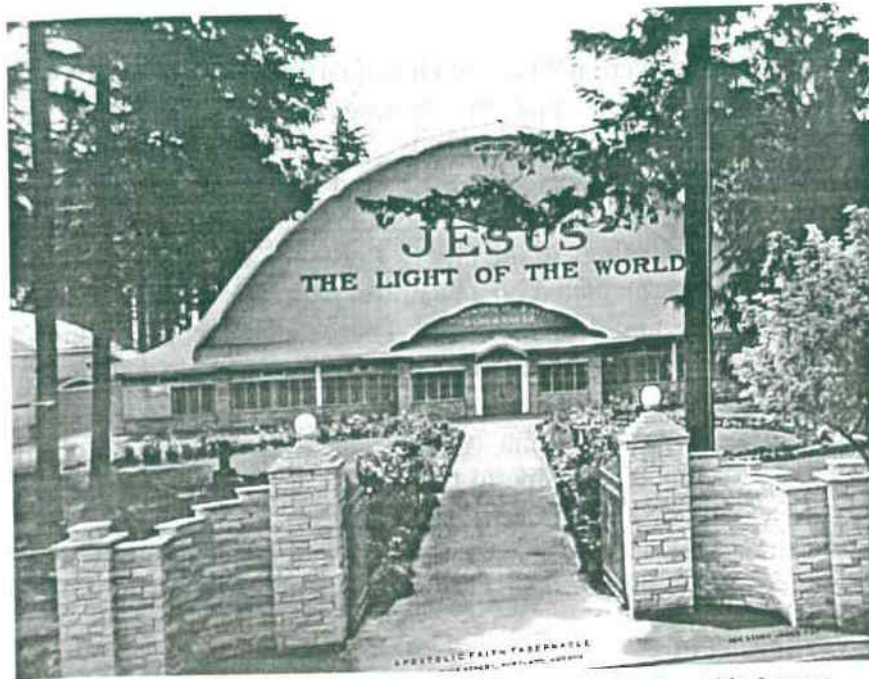
Following the Founder's passing on, the Torch of Truth she had carried was taken up by her son, The Rev. Raymond Robert Crawford, who was chosen of God to further the work to which Mrs. Crawford had dedicated her life. From the time of his conversion, he set the example of the joy of service in giving one's life wholeheartedly to the work of the Lord.

As an ardent, enthusiastic and spirit-filled young evangelist, he had no idle time on his hands. Progressive-minded with regards to the methods of disseminating the Good News of salvation, he sought out the most practical and efficient means by which workers could enter open avenues with the Gospel.

In the early years of The



Raymond Robert Crawford



The Apostolic Faith Church Tabernacle at 52nd and Duke, Burnside Avenue, Portland

Apostolic Faith work, when highways were somewhat rugged, he and other workers made a number of coast-to-coast evangelistic trips by automobile. A few years later, in 1920, Brother Ray pioneered the aerial phase of evangelism and was pilot of the first Apostolic Faith plane, the "Sky Pilot". It was also the first plane ever used exclusively for distributing Gospel literature. On occasions, he would give pointed messages from God's Word, right from the cockpit, after making a landing.

In 1949, he felt the urge of the Spirit to do some evangelistic work along the inland waters of British Columbia and south-eastern Alaska. He was captain and pilot of the seagoing vessel, the "Lower Light", which carried workers into that territory.

Rev. Raymond Crawford preached a militant sermon, declaring that a militant Church will become triumphant only through much prayers and application of the Word of God to the individual heart and life. Besides preaching, teaching, and other capacities in which he served, he often conducted the choir and orchestra.

From the year 1936, when he succeeded the Founder, he carried the responsibility of the worldwide work. Visitations were made regularly to hospitals, convalescent homes in Portland, and in the surrounding areas.

He was a fearless defender of the Gospel truths, and during the fifty-five years of his ministry, he faithfully admonished Christian brethren around the world, to fight the good fight of faith. The Reverend Raymond R. Crawford, the second Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work with Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, spent practically his whole life in the field of evangelism.

For more than a half century, he fervently preached the Gospel in its fullness, purity and power, pointing souls to the Saviour Who can redeem and transform lives.

Not only was he a mighty exponent of the Word of God, but a man who lived what he preached and firmly believed "*all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*". He preached the Word — and nothing but the Word — in season and out of season, reproving and exhorting "with all longsuffering and doctrine".

In some of his messages, one can find practically a whole sermon condensed into a sentence; and his messages are dotted here and there with precious gems of eternal value, greatly treasured by those who love the deeper truths of God's Word.

He triumphantly finished his earthly course on June 3, 1965.

A letter, written several months before Ray Crawford's death, revealed that he had suggested Brother Loyce C. Carver to take his place. Hence, Reverend Carver assumed the responsibility of this service to the Lord on June 4, 1965. During his years as Overseer, The Apostolic Faith work continued to expand around the world. The number of correspondents from Africa increased greatly, and new Churches were begun in many African nations, enlarging the work in the continent to a size of more than 650 established Churches. He visited Lagos, the Africa Headquarters, several times. He also visited some other countries in Africa.

Gospel work was begun in Korea, and churches were dedicated there. Churches were also founded in Japan, the Philippines, Newfoundland, the Dominican Republic, US Virgin Islands and Jamaica, as well as in numerous locations throughout the United States

and Canada.

Brother Carver supervised the construction of a new International Headquarters Office and publishing plant, as well as a new church building in Portland.

During the camp meeting in Portland in July 1993, he brought his prayerfully made decision to retire from the position of General Overseer before the Board of Trustees of the Church. He recommended that The Rev. Dwight Baltzell, then serving as a pastor in Medford, Oregon, be appointed to serve as his successor. On Saturday afternoon, July 10, 1993, the Board of Elders met and unanimously ratified the appointment. Rev. Baltzell's selection was accepted by the entire congregation, as they stood to pledge their approval and support without one dissenting voice.

Brother Dwight led the work of The Apostolic Faith worldwide for seven years, during which his active service made him tour several branches of the work. Within the period, he made two trips to the Africa Headquarters, Lagos, Nigeria, both of which were of great blessing. But just as God's plan for us as individuals occasionally takes us down unexpected paths, God's plan for The Apostolic Faith as a Church soon took a new direction. On July 1, 2000, the first Saturday of the 2000 camp meeting in Portland, Oregon, Brother Dwight Baltzell read a letter to the congregation of his intention to step aside, as the Superintendent General and Chairman, International Board of Trustees. He then recommended Brother Darrel Lee to take up the assignment of the leadership of the work.

Following the reading of the letter, the congregation stood



Loyce C. Carver



The Apostolic Faith Headquarters Office in Portland, Oregon, USA



Portland Headquarters Church

unanimously, signifying their support of Brother Darrel Lee's appointment.

Until his appointment, Brother Darrel Lee was the pastor of the Portland Church. He now serves as the Superintendent General of all The Apostolic Faith Churches worldwide, while Brother Dwight Baltzell was appointed the Head of the Foreign Mission of The Apostolic Faith.



Dwight L. Baltzell



Darrel D. Lee

CHAPTER THREE

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH WORK AT THE AFRICA HEADQUARTERS

Africa is a vast continent with many countries, tribes, languages and traditional beliefs.

Before the introduction of The Apostolic Faith Work in Africa, some Christian organisations had sent missionaries to the continent, established churches and had large followership. Some of these denominations at first believed in salvation as a first definite work of grace, but with time, they changed their doctrines in order to conform with the situations around them. As a result, churches like the Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C.) and The Apostolic Church were later established and many people, who were not happy with the state of conventional churches, joined them.

Apostolic Faith Publications Appear In Africa

The veterans of The Apostolic Faith in Portland, Oregon, USA, had prayed for many years that God would save the people of Africa. In answer to their prayers, an American Missionary, Frank E. Hein, who had lived for many years in Nigeria and Sudan, left for home in 1920. He later became a worker in The Apostolic Faith Printing Plant in Portland, Oregon. As he was sending out Gospel materials to people in different countries, he became burdened for his acquaintances in Africa. This led him to translate some tracts into Hausa language. The tracts were later translated into some other African languages and these were printed and distributed all over the continent. These printed materials became very effective in spreading the Gospel message. Wherever they were received, souls hungry for salvation eagerly studied them and prayed until they had the assurance that their sins were forgiven.

Founder's Early Life

God raised a **man of vision**, who was instrumental to the introduction and establishment of The Apostolic Faith Work in Nigeria. That person was Reverend Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya. *Brother T*, as he was fondly called, later became the First Africa

Overseer of The Apostolic Faith Organisation.

Born on March 30, 1912, into a noble nominal Christian home of Chief Olowa of Imodu compound, in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria, Timothy was a very active man among other young people in the local church, but there was sin in his life.

He was the only child of his parents. His father sent him to a Baptist secondary school in Ogbomoso, south-western Nigeria, with the intention that he would attend a theological school thereafter. He wanted young Timothy to become a clergyman.

However, after a year in the school, an uncle lured him away into becoming an engineer in Lagos. Timothy yielded to the temptation and went with the uncle to Lagos, but he was disappointed, because the uncle did not fulfil his promise. In 1930, he was apprenticed to an auto-mechanic, and later, a black-smith. Unknown to him at that time, God had a plan for his life and was weaving the thread of the fabric into a wonderful pattern.

In 1933, he got married to Miss Hannah Emiola Onalaja and God



Timothy Oshokoya and his family — Matilda (left), Hannah (wife) and Grace



Timothy and Hannah in later years

blessed the marriage with two daughters: Matilda and Grace.

Timothy worked at a mechanical workshop in Ijebu-Ode for a while and then moved to Ibadan. He soon joined bad company and started making counterfeit coins. One day, the police caught up with

him and he was put in a police cell and later charged to court. He knew that the case was a lost one, as he was sure he would be jailed. Since he did not want to ruin his life and the name of his family, he engaged God in serious prayers. Miraculously, God brought him out and set him free from the case. In his testimony, he said:

"I was charged to a Grade A Customary court at Abeokuta, capital of Ogun State, Nigeria, and locked up in a single cell. Alone in the solitary cell, I had, as it were, a panorama of my past life and a heavy remorse came into my heart. I reflected that I should have completed the Baptist Theological Seminary course and become the pastor of a church, if my father's plans had been allowed to materialise. Then, God spoke to me that it was pride that had brought me thus far. I admitted and started to plead for forgiveness. I entered into a covenant with God that, if in His mercy He would set me free without being imprisoned, I would give the honour and glory to Him alone. I would also serve Him faithfully the rest of my life. I promised God I would not engage in the illegal business again, but I would live to tell of His love and mercy. Early in 1938, I was discharged and acquitted by the court".

From Abeokuta, he moved to Lagos in search of a job. He got one with The United Africa Company (U.A.C.) as a tally clerk at the customs shed. He said:

"I put in a prayer request at the Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C.) that I might keep my job. Since I grew up in the Baptist Church, I continued to attend the Baptist Church in Lagos. But as I went for prayers at the C.A.C., I got more and more involved in praying. Before I knew it, I was attending the C.A.C. regularly and so, I joined the C.A.C. in Lagos early 1939".

He cherished the time he had for prayer at the church premises whenever he was off-duty.

His Conversion

When he came out of the police cell, early 1938, he decided to fulfil the vow he made to God while in trouble, and he destroyed

everything that had to do with counterfeiting. That was how Timothy found his way back to God through the harrowing experience. Though he had thrown away his Bible when young, he bought a new Bible and started to hunger for more of God. As he read the Bible and prayed, the Lord continued to deal with his heart. He did away with his old life and friends. He said:

"Whilst praying one day, I had a wonderful experience which flooded my heart with joy that knew no bounds. I felt a great change in me and all about me. I knew I had one special blessing from God. I felt the presence of God with me every time and everywhere. I lost the taste for anything flamboyant. The experience put so much thirst in me that it prompted me to desire more of God and prayer".



Timothy Oshokoya

Through one Evangelist Odutola, Brother Timothy received some Apostolic Faith tracts which he read. Later, he came across more of them in the hands of Evangelist Babalola, the Founder of C.A.C. worldwide. This was another way of God's leading Brother Timothy a step further in God's divine plan for him. He wrote letters to The Apostolic Faith Mission in Portland, Oregon, and in 1942, he received the first parcel of tracts. He studied them diligently. The doctrines, as outlined by The Apostolic Faith Mission of Portland, Oregon, so affected him that from that point, his whole life and purpose were transformed.

His contact with The Apostolic Faith publications in 1942 gave him a clearer understanding of the Bible doctrines. From the teachings in the tracts, he realised that the blessing he had earlier received was a genuine experience of salvation or being born again. It was then very clear to him beyond any doubt, that the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses one from sin.

He soon realised that he needed a deeper experience in his heart.

He read about sanctification from the tracts and felt the need for it. In his own words:

"I prayed for the grace of sanctification according to John 17:17 - 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth', and God sanctified me through the Blood of Jesus Christ. I prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit as in the Acts of the Apostles chapter 2, and I received the mighty gift of the Holy Spirit and fire".

Brother Timothy Oshokoya then convinced Brothers Lucas Obakoya and D. T. Robbins, who were his fellow Evangelists in the C.A.C, of their need for salvation. They too prayed and their sins were forgiven.

Prayer Group Formed in Lagos

As Brother T continued to develop spiritually, the Lord also continued to lead him on. In February 1940, he was assigned to be an Evangelist for the Western part of Nigeria by the leadership of the Christ Apostolic Church. He was later appointed the Minister-in-charge of the church at Agege. This was a challenge to him. His constant communication with The Apostolic Faith, Portland, Oregon, greatly affected his ministry and theology under the Christ Apostolic Church. For example, according to the practice in the church, those who were sick, would bring water in containers to be blessed by a prophet, as they believed this holy water would heal them. But Brother Timothy laid emphasis on the efficacy of the Blood of Jesus to heal by faith without the use of "holy water." This brought serious opposition, as some members of the congregation agreed with him, while others disagreed. The stiff opposition to this doctrine disturbed Brother T's peace of mind.

In 1944, he was led by the Holy Spirit to organise a prayer group. Later on, the group added Bible study (mainly reading tracts received from Portland) to the prayer programme. More people got interested as the news of the special meetings spread. Brother Ben Abbey, a *Beninese*, who was a heavy smoker, got saved and stopped smoking completely. He later became the first Overseer of the Apostolic Faith Churches in Dahomey (now Republic of Benin). The four of them

decided to hold meetings in Lucas Obakoya's home at Mushin, Lagos.

On October 14, 1944, at one o' clock in the afternoon, a special meeting was held by Brothers Timothy Oshokoya, D. T. Robbins and Lucas Obakoya. A thorough comparison of the teachings of The Apostolic Faith was made with those of the other pentecostal groups. The Christian experiences of the three of them were also examined in the light of the Word of God. The result of the meeting was the adoption of The Apostolic Faith Doctrines and Teachings, since they were based on the Word of God. This was communicated to the Portland Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith. Thus, The Apostolic Faith began as an Organisation in Nigeria.

As soon as the Organisation started, these three people — Timothy Oshokoya, Lucas Obakoya and D. T. Robins — tendered their resignations to the C.A.C, opting to walk in the fulness of the newly-found Light. It was not an easy decision. Their resignations were not taken lightly by the General Executive Council of the C.A.C. at Ibadan. They tried to persuade them to change their decisions, but this did not succeed. Finally, Timothy Oshokoya and Lucas Obakoya were summoned before the General Executive Council to openly defend their reasons for resignation. Both made it clear that they had found the yearning of their hearts for the truth and this could not be compromised. They were sure that the doctrines, as preached by The Apostolic Faith, clearly stood on the Word of God.

At last, the Council meeting ended with one of the elders adopting the saying of Gamaliel in the Acts of the Apostles 5:38, 39:

"For if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

"But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God".

With this, they let them go. Waves of persecutions and victimisation followed in the wake of their resignation.

With no financial support from anywhere and with no means of livelihood whatsoever, it was a step of faith into the unknown. The Lord was with them and despite all odds, Brothers Timothy Oshokoya, Lucas Obakoya and a few others stood together to continue in the true Gospel with a determination to keep it uncontaminated.

CHAPTER FOUR

EARLY DAYS ACTIVITIES AND GROWTH IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

The Church At Little Road

In spite of the waves of persecutions and victimisation, the group continued in faith, the *“Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following”*.

Realising that their new-found faith would be appreciated by an enlightened public, Brother Timothy Oshokoya decided that the group should be brought from Agege, then a village 22 miles away from Lagos, to the city where the bulk of average elites such as teachers, civil servants and those working in companies were residing in those days. So, in 1946, the group started meeting at 26, Little Road, Yaba, Lagos, in the sitting room of one of the converts, Sister Julianah Senbanjo. They held prayer meetings and read tracts.

The method of service, the literature distributed and the exposition of the Word of God, were greatly appreciated by the elites.

Movement From Little Road

There was a split at this early stage. This was caused by the refusal of one of the people who joined the group to reconstitute his life. He had earlier been dismissed from the Apostolic Church because of his adulterous life. He then came into the fellowship of The Apostolic Faith. He was encouraged to straighten his crooked marital life, which he promised to do, but failed. The leader then told him he could not labour in their midst in such a sinful condition. Unfortunately, this man was popular with the majority of the members. On November 2,



26, Little Road, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria

1947, Brothers Timothy Oshokoya, Lucas Obakoya and a few others, namely: Ezekiel Oshobowale, Michael Oduwole, Sisters Rebecca Onanuga, Hannah Oshokoya and Eunice Oshobowale, left the Church at 26 Little Road, Yaba, to separate themselves from those who refused to stand for the sound doctrine. They had the determination to do the will of God.

Prayer Meeting At Denton Street

On November 5, 1947, morning prayer meetings commenced at 80, Denton Street, Ebute Meta. Souls who were thirsty for God attended regularly.

At Ibadan Street

On November 16, 1947, the Church moved to a single room apartment at 63, Ibadan Street, Ebute Meta. That first Sunday, the morning service started at 10.00 am and ended at 12 noon, with a total number of 11 people, consisting of 4 men, 4 women and 3 girls. In addition to church meetings, there were various evangelistic outreach programmes to neighbourhoods, institutions and penal homes. The second service had 18 people in attendance in the morning. Evening services were held at 7.00 pm. Occasionally, they had to rent Lisabi Hall at Ebute Meta, to accommodate more people for special meetings.

Right from the inception, no collection plates were passed. It was determined that God's work would be financed through tithes and offerings according to the Word of God. And God did not fail them.

Saints' meetings were held in this venue at intervals. Various developmental issues such as registration of the name of the Church in Nigeria, selection of church officers, among others, were discussed.

God was backing all their decisions, and great progress was recorded. The Church entered a new phase after her movement to Ibadan Street in 1947. The



An elementary Sunday School class at 63, Ibadan Street, in 1949

activities intensified and soon the Word of God spread round the vicinity. In 1948, the membership grew.

Various contacts were made with the International Headquarters in

The Minutes Of The Meeting Held By The Body Of The Apostolic Faith Mission on November 29, 1947

On this day, the 29th November, 1947, we, the under mentioned as the Body of The Apostolic Faith Mission, held a meeting at 63, Ibadan Street, Ebute Meta, East, under the chairmanship of Brother T. G. Oshokoya.

The meeting which started by 7.30 pm, held some discussions about:

- i) How we would progress in this Ministry into which we were called by the grace of God,*
- ii) How we would have the name of the Church registered,*
- iii) How we would select the church officers and trustees.*

Brother Oshokoya, the Chairman, rose up and suggested the choice of Brother Oduwole as the General Secretary, Brother Oshobowale as the Financial Secretary and Brother Obakoya as the Treasurer. Other members of the Body consented and the selected ones were asked if they accepted. They agreed to take the posts and promised to be faithful, by the grace of God.

After this, all the 6 decided to get the Church registered as early as possible.

We then decided to choose three trustees; but we could get only two who were Brother T. G. Oshokoya and Brother L. A. Obakoya. They were to carry on the trusteeship, hoping to choose the other one when available. This meeting that lasted an hour, was brought to a close by the Chairman who said the closing prayer at 8.30 p.m.

Attendance:

Brother T. G. Oshokoya (Minister- in - charge)

Brother L. A. Obakoya (Evangelist)

Brother E. A. Oshobowale

Brother M. B. Oduwole

Sisters R. O. Oreolu Onanuga and H. E. Oshokoya

Signed: M. B. Oduwole (Secretary)

Minutes Of The Meeting Held on November 29, 1947

Portland, Oregon, USA, reporting the progress of the work. The improvement gladdened the heart of the General Overseer, Rev. Raymond Crawford, who made necessary arrangements for a missionary to travel to Africa, especially to this young fold, which desired to know more of the methods and practices of The Apostolic Faith.

A Missionary From Portland

In January 1949, Brother George Moore Hughes, who had earlier volunteered to serve in any part of the world, came as a missionary to Nigeria, in the company of Brother Peter Van der Puije of Ghana (formerly Gold Coast). Of great significance was Sunday, February

Minutes Of The Meeting Held Today January 4, 1948 By The Body of The Apostolic Faith, Lagos

On this day, January 4, 1948, the following:- Brother T. G. Oshokoya (Minister), Brother L. A. Obakoya (Evangelist), Brother E. A. Oshobowale, Brother M. B. Oduwole, Sister R. O. Onanuga, and Sister H. E. Oshokoya as the Body of The Apostolic Faith Mission, held another meeting which started at 3 pm, at 63 Ibadan Street, Ebute Meta, under the chairmanship of Brother T. G. Oshokoya.

- i) The Chairman gave words of advice to the members about how we should try our best to do the work of God faithfully, till the church land at 28 Yaba Road, Ebute Meta, is secured, in order to hold meetings there as early as possible. He added that we should do the work to which we were called so satisfactorily, that it might be the will of God who has chosen us to give us power, that we might show transgressors their ways.*
- ii) Brother Oduwole was selected by the Body as the Auditor. The meeting closed at 5 pm.*

Signed: M. B. Oduwole, (Secretary)

Minutes Of The Meeting Held on January 4, 1948

6, 1949, when Rev. G. M. Hughes held a business meeting with the saved souls after the morning service. He asked if the body of believers accepted all the doctrines as preached and practised by The Apostolic Faith Organisation. There was an affirmative answer with a raise of

***The Minutes Of The Meeting Of The Apostolic Faith Members
Held Today August 27, 1948***

A meeting was held today by The Apostolic Faith elders and the saved souls. The constitution and bylaws for incorporation were read to the hearing of the congregation.

- 1. The Minister-in-charge (T. G. Oshokoya) gave us words of exhortation which were very inspiring to the listeners.*
- 2. The Secretary was given the papers to read while the Minister interpreted and illustrated the wordings. After the reading of every sheet, the people in attendance at the meeting were asked if anyone needed explanation and to those who needed, explanations were given.*

After this, the Minister gave words of explanation and commented on all that was read so that nobody would be ignorant of anything concerning the constitution and bylaws. The papers were then taken to the L.E.D.B. for registration.

This meeting was brought to a close without argument or dispute. The saints said a general prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus, through Whose grace things were done amicably.

*Attendance: T. G. Oshokoya (Minister-in-Charge)
L. A. Obakoya (Evangelist),
E. A. Oshobowale
M. B. Oduwole (Secretary)
Shipeolu, Adeleye, Michael O. She, James, Orimi, Oshikominu, Samuel,
Sisters Oshosanya, Shyllon, Oshokoya, Odu, Oshobowale,
O. Adeleye, Ayinke, F. Olajide.*

Minutes Of The Meeting Held on August 27, 1948



Rev. George Moore Hughes

hands. He read a letter from the General Overseer, Rev. Raymond Crawford, and then appointed Brother Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya to lead the Church and Brother Lucas Adebayo Obakoya to assist him. They were ordained and given credentials immediately. There were 85 people at the meeting.

George charged the whole assembly to co-operate and pray for the progress of the work in Nigeria. He advised all to play their parts in paying their tithes and free will offerings as written in Malachi 3:10, as this was the only means by which the work could be carried on. There and then, the tithe box was introduced to the assembly.

Beginning of Ordinances



Rev. Peter Otto van der Puije

In July 1949, Brother Timothy received a letter from Brother George Hughes, that authority had been given from the Headquarters, for the group to observe the ordinances of Water Baptism by immersion, the Lord's Supper and the Washing of the Saints' Feet. The saints decided to hold revival services, instead of a camp meeting, since there were no facilities for camp meeting then. Those meetings were unforgettable. In 1949, 17 saints were immersed in water. As early as 5.00 am, candidates for this ordinance went to the Lagos Lagoon for

the service. This was the first baptismal service. The names of the candidates were:

Brothers:

- (1) Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya

- (2) Lucas Adebayo Obakoya
- (3) Jettey Benedict Abbey
- (4) Michael Bamidele Oduwole
- (5) Samuel Adetunbo Orimi
- (6) Hector Abimbola Elebute
- (7) Emmanuel James

Sisters:

- (8) Rebecca Oreolu Onanuga
- (9) Hannah Emiola Oshokoya
- (10) Elizabeth Oyebola Abosede
- (11) Henrietta Aina Pearse
- (12) Florence Bolurin
- (13) Abigail Adunni Odu
- (14) Marie Olubunmi Shyllon
- (15) Alice Olateju Akodu
- (16) Roseline Bridget Lydia Thompson
- (17) Margaret Rachel Lathbridge.

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH

N. W. SIXTH & BURNSIDE
PORTLAND, OREGON, U.S.A.

This is to Certify THAT

_____ IS A DULY APPOINTED _____
AND A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING OF THE APOSTOLIC
FAITH MISSION, INCORPORATED, PORTLAND, OREGON.
WITNESS MY HAND THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 1951

BY _____ GENERAL OVERSEER

SIGNATURE OF PERSON IDENTIFIED

Rev. Oshokoya's Credential

During the visit of Rev. George Moore Hughes, he undertook a tour of The Apostolic Faith Churches in the southern parts of Nigeria in the company of Rev. Peter van der Puije, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya and Rev. Philip O. Inyang, who later joined them.

Though his visit to Africa lasted only seven months, it brought tremendous help to the leaders of the different groups in their various locations. They were taught practical Bible doctrines and this enabled them to firmly build up their congregation on the sound teachings of the Bible. On February 10, 1949, the Missionary left Nigeria for Ghana, through the Republic of Benin.

After his return home, a great number of people all over the continent began to correspond with the International Headquarters in Portland, Oregon. These correspondents were usually linked with the existing groups and churches in Africa, and many have thus been converted.

Correspondents Visited

In February 1951, instructions came from the Portland Headquarters, that Brother Timothy Oshokoya should visit some of the correspondents and groups, who were worshipping in the name of The Apostolic Faith. On February 20, 1951, he left Lagos by ship for Port Harcourt, in the Eastern part of Nigeria. He went inland by road to visit many groups in the areas known today as Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Imo and Abia States. Brother Philip Inyang had been used by God to start The Apostolic Faith work at Ikot Enwang, via Ikot Ekpene, which is now the Headquarters of the work in Akwa Ibom State. Brothers Oshokoya and Inyang visited other parts of the then Eastern Region — Aba, Owerri, Onitsha and Asaba. Since motor cars were very few, most of the journeys in those days were on foot, by



Brother Timothy Oshokoya and Lucas Obakoya, the first registered members of the Board of Trustees in 1949

bicycles and trucks. Later in the year, a Gospel team left Lagos to visit some places such as Ibadan and Saki in the Western part of Nigeria.

Watering the Seed

In 1953, Rev. George Hughes, burdened with the work in Africa, visited Nigeria again. Brothers Hughes, Oshokoya and Van der Puije, made very exacting and hazardous campaigns for six weeks in the Eastern and Western Regions of Nigeria. They visited all the existing groups.

After conducting some revival meetings in Lagos, Brother Hughes left for Accra, Gold Coast. On Sunday evening, March 28, 1953, at 10.20 pm, after all the goodbyes were said, the beloved Brother Hughes, on the last leg of a round-the-world tour, took a flight from Accra, Gold Coast, to the United States of America. He carried with him his final reports and news of meetings with people of different lands, to be presented to his Overseer at the Portland Headquarters. Instead, the Lord called him to Heaven, to give his final report to the Great Captain, in Whose army he had been such a faithful soldier.

On the plane, he became critically ill, and at the first stop – Robertsfield, Harbel, Liberia — about 50 miles from Monrovia, the Great Missionary passed on. His body was laid to rest in the Firestone Cemetery, Robertsfield, Liberia. Though, he was encompassed about with the love of literally thousands of people around the world, yet for some reasons known only to God, it was left for those who had not known him to lay his body to rest. It was a fitting tribute to Brother Hughes' work in Africa, that his body was left in Africa, near the people whom he loved, to await the trumpet call.

Lagos Chosen as the Africa Headquarters

On August 13, 1949, a resolution was duly passed and adopted by the General Overseer, Rev. Raymond Robert Crawford and the other members of The Board of Trustees of the Apostolic Faith of Portland, Oregon, USA, the International Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith Mission, that Timothy Oshokoya of Ebute Meta, Lagos, Nigeria, should be the true and lawful Attorney of The Apostolic Faith Work in Nigeria.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that the APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF PORTLAND, OREGON, U.S.A., a corporation organized under the existing laws and by virtue of the laws of the State of having its principal office in the City of Portland, Oregon, Multnomah, State of Oregon, U.S.A., and being a religious and not-for-profit corporation, has caused this instrument to be made and executed by its General Overseer and Board of Trustees in the City of Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., and some appointed and authorized and its powers over said, territories, and certain Territory (States) of South-Africa, Lagos, Nigeria Colony, West Africa, to be its true and lawful Attorney, for it and in its own, place, and who cannot be liable hereafter to touch the right to execute or perform any and in truth so thought to, the said State, to execute, disseminate, accept, promote, and enforce its order, articles, covenants, to create and establish Stations, Churches, Societies, and places of worship to preach, conduct, teach, instruct, administer, distribute, promulgate, transmit, disseminate, or other persons necessary to carry on its objects, purposes, spreading of the Gospel and teachings of Jesus Christ, to be its use and ownership either by gift, purchase, donation, or lease, or otherwise way and all kinds of property, including personal and real estate and fixtures to hold, receive, deliver contracts, notes, bonds, receipts, bills of exchange, other instruments whatsoever that may be necessary or useful in executing the foregoing purposes, or acquiring, receiving, using, utilizing and all property therein acquired either of possession or ownership to collect moneys and funds and or otherwise and deposit the same in banks, trusts, or other

APPOINTED WITH HIS POWER OF ATTORNEY, and in his right to the said State, to execute, disseminate, accept, promote, and enforce its order, articles, covenants, to create and establish Stations, Churches, Societies, and places of worship to preach, conduct, teach, instruct, administer, distribute, promulgate, transmit, disseminate, or other persons necessary to carry on its objects, purposes, spreading of the Gospel and teachings of Jesus Christ, to be its use and ownership either by gift, purchase, donation, or lease, or otherwise way and all kinds of property, including personal and real estate and fixtures to hold, receive, deliver contracts, notes, bonds, receipts, bills of exchange, other instruments whatsoever that may be necessary or useful in executing the foregoing purposes, or acquiring, receiving, using, utilizing and all property therein acquired either of possession or ownership to collect moneys and funds and or otherwise and deposit the same in banks, trusts, or other

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Witness my hand and seal of said Corporation, this 28th day of August, 1953.

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Witness my hand and seal of said Corporation, this 28th day of August, 1953.

Power of Attorney from the International Headquarters

Brother T was invited to attend the camp meeting at the Portland Headquarters. He arrived Portland on June 9, 1951. The convention was to start on July 1, so he spent the time preceding the meetings in learning music, and getting acquainted with the work.

During the convention, he was called upon to give a report of the work in Nigeria. His inspiring report convinced the Portland Headquarters that Brother Timothy was the chosen man for the Gospel work in Africa.

He left Portland, Oregon, on July 25, 1951, with the commission to tour some West African countries and meet The Apostolic Faith correspondents. It was on the return trip that Brother T caught the vision and had the burden of winning *Africa for Christ*.

In 1955, he was in Portland for the second time, on invitation to attend the camp meeting. Again, the brethren were eager to hear the news from Africa and Brother T was given another opportunity to give a report. The report which was to precede the Bible teaching, took the time for the Bible teaching and at the end, God used it wonderfully. Many came to the altar weeping and re-consecrating their lives to God. The General Overseer, Rev. Raymond Crawford, said, "I have caught

a vision, God has raised up Brother Timothy for the work in Africa". At the end of the 1955 camp meeting in Portland, Lagos was named the Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith Work in Africa and Rev. Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya was made the Africa Overseer. There and then, a commission was given him to visit Liberia again on his way back from Portland.

Tracts and magazines arrived from Portland Headquarters regularly and were faithfully distributed free of charge.

Brother George Hughes was the head of the African Correspondence Department at Portland, Oregon. After his demise, his cousin, Ruth Elizabeth Ashwell (nee Green), was asked to assume the responsibility of directing the African Correspondence Department in 1953. Sister Ashwell, fondly referred to as Mother of Africa, was a spiritual mother to many people in the continent of Africa.

Ruth felt the call of God upon her life at an early age. When she was 17, she consecrated her life to the Lord. The Lord called her to full-time service for Him and she began working at The Apostolic Faith Headquarters Office on September 15, 1936.

On assumption of her duty at the Africa desk, God gave her a deep motherly love for her correspondents in Africa. She had a personal contact with each of them, knew them by name, and attended to their problems individually. Her loving and encouraging letters played a vital role in the growth of The Apostolic Faith work in Africa. The letters were very inspiring, edifying and many souls were saved through reading them.

She loved Africa and the Africans. She often told anyone who cared to listen, that she was an African at heart, though her skin was white. She was very hardworking. She laboured day and night to send replies to her children in Africa. She had another office at home so that after leaving the church office at the end of the day's work, she continued working till very late at night. She prayed over the



Ruth Ashwell

individual problems treated in the letters. She won victory for many on her knees. She faithfully laboured at the African Correspondence desk for 46 years until her retirement in 1999. When she died on October 14, 2001, the Africa Headquarters composed a poem in her honour. The first verse is reproduced below:

*Mother! Darling Mother!
Full of love and care
Labouring day and night
Working with paper and pen
To solve the problems of the myriads
Of your children in Africa.*

Sister Ruth Ashwell will never be forgotten by the many Africans whose lives she touched.

The Church at Simpson Street

As the Church grew larger, a property at 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta was acquired. Before the Church moved in, the bungalow was being occupied by some people. One of the occupants was a renowned herbalist and fetish priest. He did not want to leave the premises, therefore he resorted to threat, to scare Brother T and his group. One day he lifted up his hand and touched Brother T's forehead, bent down to touch the ground, and gave Brother T only seven more days to live. However, the brethren met daily in front of the building to sing and pray. After a few days, the fetish priest lost his son, and his wife became seriously ill. Then, the man called for Brother T and requested



The Church at 22, Simpson Street



The New Building (Mission House) at 22, Simpson Street

for prayer. The people of God willingly prayed for him and in no distant time, the man got accommodation elsewhere and moved out.

Immediately he moved out, renovation work commenced on the building and services started in earnest. A few rooms behind were reserved for lodging. That was the first mission house for the Church. Today, the property has become a two-storey building, housing some of the full-time workers of The Apostolic Faith Headquarters.

Moved to Moloney Street

By the year 1955, the church building at 22, Simpson Street, was already full. Therefore, the leaders purchased another piece of land in



Digging of the Basement at 49, Moloney Street



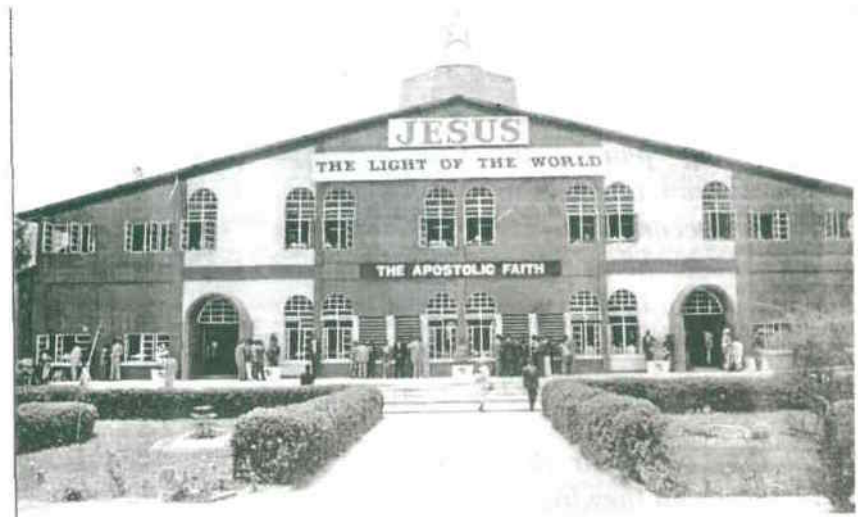
The Church at 49, Moloney Street

Ebute Meta for a church building. Preparations were made to build a bigger church at 49, Moloney Street, Ebute Meta. On November 8, 1955, construction work started on the new site. Since the land was a slope, a basement was dug and a hall, half the size of the main building, was erected.

It was a great day when the Church moved into the basement. The first Sunday service was held on November 30, 1958. The attendance was 657:

New Headquarters Church Dedicated

The Church continued to grow. A ten-acre plot of land was purchased at Anthony village. On March 2, 1972, the foundation of the Great Tabernacle, 240ft x 150 ft, with a gallery and a basement 20 ft



The Great Tabernacle

deep, was laid. The tabernacle was first put to use on August 6, 1972, being the opening of the 22nd Annual Camp Meeting. On August 1, 1981, the new Africa Headquarters Church was dedicated. There were 8,020 people in attendance.

At the dedication service, Rev. Timothy Oshokoya brought to mind the dedication of Solomon's temple. The Scripture reading was:

"And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:

"That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

"If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;

"What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the

plague of his own heart,
and spread forth his hands
toward this house:

“Then hear thou in heaven
thy dwelling place, and
forgive, and do; and give to
every man according to his
ways, whose heart thou
knowest; (for thou, even
thou only, knowest the
hearts of all the children of
men;)

“That they may fear thee
all the days that they live in
the land which thou gavest unto our fathers” (1 Kings
8:23,29,37-40).

In answer to prayers offered in the tabernacle, thousands of souls
have been saved from their lives of sin, and healed from diverse
diseases and ailments. Uncountable are the wonders and miracles
wrought by God.

The Anthony tabernacle stands out as a soul-winning edifice.
There is a beautiful inscription — *JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE
WORLD* — with a brilliant star above it. Around the tabernacle are
well-trimmed and beautiful flowers. There is a map of Africa laid
out, reminding the saints of the great focus of the Church — “Africa
for Christ”. The ten-acre campground is beautifully planned.
The Children’s Hall is on the right side of the tabernacle, across the
road. Towards the south



The Children’s Hall on the Anthony
Campground



The First 5-man Board—From left : Francis
Akinboye, Ezekiel Oshobowale, Timothy Oshokoya,
Lucas Obakoya and Hector Elebute

of the campground is the lodging area with cabins and long
dormitories. There is a modern kitchen and dining hall/cafeteria,
library, general office, filling station, printing department, power
house, electrical, transport, mechanical, carpentry, plumbing, welding,
painting and other departments on the campground.

The work of the building, landscaping and multiplicity of other
projects on the campground represent years of continuous and
intensive labour, carried out by willing hearts and consecrated hands.

The Work Grows And The Torch Passes On

At the inception
of The Apostolic
Faith work in Nigeria
in October, 1944,
there were three
members: the
founder, Brother T,
and two others. By
1983, the work had
grown tremendously
with many branches
in all the states of
Nigeria, and in many
countries in Africa.

After 39 years of
faithful service to his
Master, the Lord
called Brother T
Home to Glory on
November 16, 1983.
Before his passing
on, he had prayed
fervently for many
days and nights, to
know the mind of
God on who would
take up the mantle of

Timothy O. Oshokoya
P. O. BOX 74,
EBUTE-METTA, LAGOS STATE,
NIGERIA
21. 6. 83

The Board of Trustees,
The Apostolic Faith Mission,
49, Moloney Street,
Headquarters, Lagos.

Dear Fellow-labourers:

Thanks be to God Almighty for ans-
wers to your prayers, your cooperation
and your unflinching and uncon-
promising faith I stand for this
old Time Religion. My earnest
prayer for you is that God may
pilot you and this glorious ship of sal-
vation to the foot of Jesus Christ.

The great Burden my heart transferring
to you is not to remove the hand-mark of
this 39 years old glorious gospel, nor change the
policy and method. It has suffered lots of
fair and unfair criticism within and without
for which you are witnesses today.
The leadership of the work is by the grace
of God handed over to Brother Josiah Soyinka
after my home call.
My funeral service programmed short and
simple will release the attendants in a good time
In Him send my love
to you and the Board of Trustees
Timothy Oshokoya

A letter from Brother T to the Board of Trustees
choosing a successor

leadership of the Gospel work after him. Sister Ruth Ashwell, the Head of the African Correspondence Department at The Apostolic Faith World Headquarters, wrote a letter to him when he became very ill, requesting to know his suggestion over a successor, should it please God to take him to his reward. This inspired him to pray the more earnestly.

A few months before his death, he drafted a letter in his own handwriting, suggesting Brother Josiah Soyinka as his successor. He addressed a copy of the letter to the Board of Trustees of the Church in Africa and another copy to the Portland Headquarters.

Brother Josiah Soyinka was the Secretary/Treasurer to the Board of Trustees of the Church at the Africa Headquarters, Lagos, Nigeria. He had faithfully laboured under Brother T for many years. In December, 1982, Brother Soyinka was on Brother T's team of six that went to Zimbabwe. During Brother T's illness, Josiah had been the link between Brother T and the Lagos congregation.



Josiah Olubode Soyinka

On December 4, 1983, the mantle of leadership as the second Africa Overseer was taken up by Brother Soyinka. During his tenure, he undertook missionary journeys to many Apostolic Faith branch churches in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), Cote D'Ivoire, Republic of Benin, Cameroon, and many other African countries. He was a powerful preacher. There was a great expansion of the work as many branch churches and Bible Study Centres were opened in Nigeria and in many countries in Africa.

At the close of the 1999 Lagos camp meeting, Brother Soyinka preached his last sermon titled *A Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit*. He clearly bade farewell to the large congregation with the words, *Mission Accomplished*. He also requested the congregation to join two children in singing the song, *Away, Far over Jordan*. No one was left

in doubt that he was on his way to meet his Lord. On September 4, 1999, in Jos, Plateau State of Nigeria, Brother Soyinka went to his reward.

On September 28, 1999, Rev. Dwight Baltzell, the General Superintendent of The Apostolic Faith work worldwide, arrived in Lagos from Portland, Oregon, for the funeral of Brother Soyinka. After the burial, he held a meeting with the Board of Trustees in Lagos to deliberate on the choice of a successor. After much prayers, Rev. Paul Ogechukwu Akazue was appointed to take up the leadership of the work. Brother Paul, at that time, was the pastor of the Accra, Ghana congregation and the District Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work in Ghana. On October 3, 1999, Brother Paul Akazue became the third Africa Overseer. He was presented to the Lagos congregation and everybody happily stood to ratify the Board's decision.



The 5-man Board of Trustees in 1999 From left: E. O. Aina, H. A. Elebute, Paul O. Akazue, A. O. Olamijulo and S. C. Nnodim

Brother Akazue courageously took up the challenge. He travelled to Accra, Ghana, to handover the work there to Brother Akwasi Debra

Brother Paul has a great vision for the work. Realising that the Anthony Village campground could no longer accommodate the large crowd, and after much prayers, the Lord revealed to him that he should take the congregation to Igbesa.



Brother Akazue (left) preaching at a service in Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria

purchased in 1982 for a new campground by the first Africa Overseer, Brother Timothy Oshokoya. In March 2000, the Lagos saints converged at Igbesa to prepare the land to build a much bigger tabernacle. In January 2002, Rev. Darrel Lee, the Superintendent General, visited Nigeria and laid the foundation of the new tabernacle at Igbesa. On August 10, 2003, the first camp meeting at the Faith City, Igbesa, was held in two large domed tents seating over 20,000 people.

In the tradition of the founding fathers, Brother Paul has made missionary journeys to Cameroon, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, and South Africa. On March 15, 2000, Brother Paul also went on a missionary journey with five other brethren to the francophone countries in West Africa.

The Apostolic Faith Secondary School was established on October 10, 2002, to inculcate formal and spiritual training in the young people. Large parcels of land have been donated by traditional rulers to the Church for the establishment of agricultural and educational projects.

The Website of The Apostolic Faith in Africa, www.apostolicfaith-ng.org was launched on April 8, 2003. On April 13, 2003, the first radio service of The Apostolic Faith in Lagos was broadcast on Eko FM 89.5, Lagos. This has continued on a regular basis.

The Lagos congregation is well over 30,000, in 28 Apostolic Faith branch churches, under Lagos State, at the time of writing. Although, there are numerous branch churches spread all over Africa, The Apostolic Faith Church remains the same — one in **faith, doctrine and practice.**

CHAPTER FIVE

PIONEERS AND SOME OF THE EARLY CONVERTS

Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya

Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya was saved from his life of sin in 1939 and he became very thirsty for more of God.

He came across some Apostolic Faith tracts and then wrote The Apostolic Faith Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, USA. The first parcel of tracts was sent to him in 1942, and he read them. There, he learnt that the experience he had received was called salvation. He also read about the experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He prayed and received them.

By 1944, through his unrelenting efforts, The Apostolic Faith Church was born in Lagos, Nigeria. The Church soon spread to various parts of Nigeria, the West African coast and also Southern Africa.

Brother T's life cannot be severed from the growth and progress of The Apostolic Faith work in Nigeria and all over Africa. He was ready to stake his life for it. Tracts and magazines arrived regularly from Portland Headquarters and these were faithfully distributed.

From the start, Brother T was determined that there would be no soliciting for funds for the Lord's work: no harvest, no bazaar and no fund-raising. The Church



would be solely financed by tithes and offerings. He spent as much as he could on the development of the Church, instead of on food and clothing for himself. There were times when he had to wrap himself with his wife's wrapper after washing his only clothes, but he was undaunted. Sometimes, the family would go to bed without any food. At such periods, they would kneel down together and ask for God's provision and by daybreak, food would be waiting at their doorstep.

His vision was, "*Africa for Christ*", and it has become the motto of the Church in Africa. The vision spurred him to travel far and wide with the Good News. In South-Western Nigeria, he carried the Gospel crusade to cities such as Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ijebu-Ode, Akure, Ife, Okeho, Ondo and Saki, to mention a few. In the East and North, he made trips at different times to Kwara State, Kabba area, Jos, Benin, Agbor, Enugu, Umuahia, Aba, Port Harcourt, Ikot-Enwang, Calabar and Oron. In all the places visited, the work of God has taken off wonderfully. Most of the journeys in those days were on foot, and by bicycle and trucks, because motor cars were very few and hard to come by.

Many years after the work started in Nigeria, Brother Timothy developed a burden for the work in schools. He made a number of visits to several schools in Northern Nigeria, in places such as Kano, Kaduna, Jos, Ilorin, Ayetoro-Gbede and Kabba. In 1970, the first retreat was held at Ayetoro-Gbede for teachers and students.

From his experience in the fifties and sixties, he was convinced that he could not make any headway in schools as long as he went in the name of the Church. The name of Association of Visiting Secretaries (AVS) was then adopted. The AVS also organised international retreats and rallies, where thousands of young people were converted.

Brother T was a lover of music. As far back as 1945, he started the orchestra with a guitar and a mandolin. From this stage, more musical instruments were acquired. In 1951, he went to Portland, where he learnt to play various musical instruments. He came back to teach others, and this led to the first musical concert in December 1952, with eight people performing.

He also developed a burden for a printing plant which he started in 1951 with a duplicating machine. This was nurtured to become a

standard press at the Anthony Village Campground. A modern kitchen was built and equipped at the campground to cater for over 10,000 people during the annual conventions, retreats and rallies. A transport department was established to purchase and maintain vehicles used for Gospel outreach. The collection of children for both morning and afternoon Sunday School was also started by him.

The mechanical, plumbing, carpentry, welding and electrical workshops, as well as an automatic power plant and a filling station at the Headquarters, were all established by Brother Oshokoya. An audio and visual recording section was also established by him.

His methods of executing missionary undertakings, his fortitude and exemplary life, were really challenging. He did bequeath a heritage which should be an incentive to win Africa for Christ.

A few months before he passed on to Glory, he updated his Will. He then addressed three envelopes: one to the Board of Trustees, one to his family (both containing his Will), and the third containing his handover letter. He wrote in the Will: "*I give to my Trustees all my property upon trust that my landed and building property situated at 53 (now 37), Isaac John Street, Igbobi, Lagos, be given to The Apostolic Faith Church with Headquarters at 49, Moloney Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos*".

One day, he told the people around him that he had a limited time to live, and Heaven had already told him when he would be coming Home. However, with a concern for the work in Africa, he became worried about the future of the Gospel work. He could not take his breakfast that day. Soon, God gave him a song: *Be Still My Soul*, a song which was rendered by the Female Choir at his funeral.

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to thy God to order and provide;
In every change He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly Friend,
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*

*Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He has the past.*

*Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.*

*Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last. Amen.*

He worked till the very last minute of his life. His last official duty took place late in the night, when he consoled and counselled a minister who lost one of his parents. By 10.00 pm on that day, he prayed with the minister and others who accompanied him, and bade them goodnight. Three hours later, at about 1.10 am on Wednesday, November 16, 1983, he breathed his last and went Home to meet his Saviour, Whom he had dearly loved and faithfully served. He died on active service as he had wished.

“For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep” (Acts 13:36).

It can also be said of Brother Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya that he served his own generation until he was called up to Glory.

Lucas Obakoya

Brother Lucas Obakoya was a co-evangelist with Brother Timothy Oshokoya in the Christ Apostolic Church. When Brother T was saved, he told Lucas about his experience. Lucas was an Evangelist, but he was not sure of Heaven. Even though he was well-versed in the order of prayer and had been a preacher for about six and a half years, he still listened to the simple story of salvation. He humbled himself, confessed and forsook his sins and God saved his soul, sanctified and filled him with the Holy Ghost. God made him to be a part of the beginning of this work. Timothy Oshokoya,



D.T. Robbins and himself, formed the first group that gathered on October 14, 1944, to start the **First Apostolic Faith Meeting**. He was the second of the two-man Board of Trustees, which later grew to a five-member Trusteeship. He was a gallant soldier who was full of faith. He was a determined man who never gave up amidst persecutions and trouble. He never looked for commendation but gave of his time and strength in an untiring and self-less manner, regardless of what he was called on to do. With little thought of himself, he laboured faithfully and effectively in the Gospel work for thirty-three years, before he was called up to Glory on July 10, 1977. His wife, Kofoworola Obakoya, worked tirelessly in the Printing Department before she went for her reward in December 15, 2001.

Ben Abbey

Before the conversion of Brother Ben Abbey, he was a heavy smoker and was neck-deep in sin. He came in contact with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through the ministration of Brother Timothy Oshokoya. He confessed his sins, got saved, stopped smoking completely, and became interested in the things of God. Later, he received other Christian experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Brother Abbey was one of the early converts in 1944, when the members of the group were studying The Apostolic Faith Tracts and holding prayer meetings.

He, with Brothers Oshokoya and Elebute went to obtain permission from the Governor to hold services in the Republic of Benin.

On August 13, 1948, Brother Abbey was appointed to lead the group which was worshipping in a small room at Dantopa, Cotonou.

He later became the first Overseer of the work there. He passed on to Glory in 1967.



Peter Otto van der Puije

Brother Peter was the leader of a Church known as *Faith of the Apostles*, before he came in contact with some Apostolic Faith tracts. He communicated with The Apostolic Faith International Headquarters in Portland and received more tracts and literature. The papers explained the doctrines and what The Apostolic Faith Mission stood for. He studied them and was highly inspired.



In 1948, he was invited to the camp meeting in Portland Oregon. This exposed him to the work and practices of The Apostolic Faith. He fashioned his life along the old-time religion by praying through to the Christian experiences of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Rev. Peter van der Puije came back to Ghana more equipped spiritually, to organise his church in line with the sound

doctrines of the Bible as preached by The Apostolic Faith. He encouraged his church members to obtain their Christian experiences and to affiliate with The Apostolic Faith. Some members of the Faith of the Apostles Church embraced the affiliation, while others left. With the assistance of the Missionary from Portland, Rev. George Hughes, a solid foundation was laid and the work began to thrive.

He fought manfully on, not giving in to the vicissitudes of life, as he faced every persecution, trial and trouble, with spiritual fervour. He was fond of using the trials of Job in his sermons, to encourage his congregation to keep up a cheerful heart and a smiling face, under all circumstances, and "*never say die until death*".

When he knew his time was up, he called for Brother Marteye and told him, "*The egg must break but the Church of God will stand*". He thanked his wife for her industrious life, love, support and care. He also called the children, held their hands one after the other and prayed for them. He was called to Glory in March 1955.

Ezekiel Oshobowale

Ezekiel Oshobowale was a native of Awa near Ijebu-Ode in Ogun State, Nigeria.



As a young man, he was very tough and rascally. He was a heavy smoker and an alcoholic.

His wife came in contact with The Apostolic Faith Church and was converted. She started taking The Apostolic Faith magazines home. The husband often used the magazines as toilet paper instead of reading them.

One day, he glanced at the paper he wanted to use, and God spoke to him through the paper. He was convicted and later prayed through to the Christian experiences.

Brother 'Shobo', as he was fondly called, was a valiant soldier of the Cross. His way of life was a reflection of the fact that he was a retired soldier of the Nigerian Army. Everything he did was done with precision. For many years, he drove the Gospel team vehicle to many locations in Nigeria and beyond. He was an untiring Works Superintendent, especially during the building of the Anthony Campground. For many years, he was the Sunday School Superintendent at the Headquarters, until he was appointed the pastor of Ijebu-Ode Church. He also pastored Ibadan Church and later went on transfer to pastor Abeokuta Church in Ogun State. He became the first Overseer of The Apostolic Faith in Ogun State.

At Abeokuta, when he realised that there was no standard mission house, he sold his only plot of land at Lagos and donated the proceeds towards the building of a beautiful mission house. He lovingly supervised the building himself. Shortly afterwards, on January 24, 1978, he passed on to be with the Lord he had diligently and energetically served.

Hannah Emiola Oshokoya

Hannah got converted and whole-heartedly accepted the doctrines of The Apostolic Faith, after the conversion of her husband, Rev T. G. Oshokoya. She was one of the foundation members of The Apostolic Faith in Lagos, Nigeria.

Though with little formal education, she trained herself in many

fields — sewing, catering, midwifery and singing — to become a great asset to the Gospel. She was thereby a good helpmate to her husband.

She was recognised as “a Mother” by all, not merely by virtue of her being the wife of the Africa Overseer, but because she caught a



vision of Heaven herself. She grew along with Brother T in the work. Her prayers as an altar worker were very inspiring. She tirelessly laboured in the Printing Department. She was very skilful in the cutting of the pictorial memory verse slips given to the children on Sundays. She worked diligently until she became too old to work.

At the inception of the work, when times were hard, and the necessities of life were so lacking that her family could not afford a meal, she endured all the hardship and was reasonable with her husband. Through thick and thin, she cheerfully suffered along with him.

Truly, Sister Hannah Emiola Oshokoya's *price* was far above rubies. She went on to be with the Lord on May 28, 1994.

Hector Abimbola Elebute

Hector Elebute was born in Ogbogbo, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State of Nigeria.



His mother tried to introduce him to Christianity while in school, but he joined bad company. He was lured into magical practices and occultism, which disrupted his education. About this time, he came across Brother T. G. Oshokoya, who was also rascally and full of vices as a young man, but who had been miraculously changed. This challenged him. He humbled himself, prayed and God saved his soul in 1939. He left all his magical

powers and deserted the Pentecostal Church he used to attend with all the practices of the church. He gave himself to praying and studying the Word of God.

In 1940, he secured an apprenticeship appointment as a locomotive driver with the Nigerian Railways Corporation. This took him away from Lagos to Ibadan, Enugu and Makurdi. In 1946, he came back to Lagos and resigned his appointment. He went into the importation of printing machines, which later metamorphosed into a printing press. He helped to print the outlines of the Sunday School lessons in Yoruba for a few years, before the Church was able to establish her own printing press.

He later prayed through to sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, at 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos. He joined the choir, singing tenor and playing trombone.

Brother Elebute was used by God as the purchasing officer for the Church at Lagos. In 1982, he was posted to serve as the Overseer of the work in the Republic of Benin. The Lord used him mightily in His service during the period of nine years spent in Cotonou, before he was recalled to assist at the Headquarters. Three church buildings located at Porto Novo, Bopa and Parakou in the Republic of Benin, were constructed during his tenure. A standard mission house was built at Cotonou. God also used him to acquire plots of land for the building of churches in many locations. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith Church for many years.

Julianah Shenbanjo

Sister Shenbanjo was converted in 1946, and the young Apostolic Faith Church started to meet in her sitting room at 26, Little Road, Yaba, Lagos State. She worked for the Lord in different capacities. She was especially active in the Choir and Orchestra where she played the violin and sang alto. As she was getting older, she was advised to stop playing the instrument because of her age. She boldly said, “*I shall play this violin until I breathe my last. When I put down this violin,*



I will exchange it with a golden harp". And this was exactly what happened. A few days after her last music practice, she went up to take her harp.

Philip Inyang

Philip O. Inyang was born in Ikot Enwang, Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. According to the custom in his area, his parents usually offered sacrifices on his behalf, to protect his life, because he was the only child. However, after attending Sunday School in one of the churches around him and learning that God was the only one Who had the power to protect, he refused further sacrifices on his behalf. To his pleasant surprise and that of his parents, he started to enjoy perfect health. He testified: *"This gladdened the hearts of my parents and not long after, they started attending my former church with me"*.

One day, Philip got an Apostolic Faith tract titled, *How to Become a Disciple of Jesus Christ*, from a relation whom he met at Ikot Ekpene market. He kept the tract for two years without reading it. In 1937, he read the tract for the first time and thereafter read it again and again, sometimes in tears. He hated all the transgressions and disobedience to the Word of God practised in the church he attended. The more he tried to point out the wrong things done in their midst, the more his church members hated him. For this reason, he decided to start a separate fellowship with three people who loved the Word of God concerning salvation from sin. He was then accused of bringing division into the church. He was threatened by policemen, that anyone who accepted any other church doctrine would pay five pounds as a fine to the Government. He ignored the threat.

In 1940, his group built a small house for prayer. Brother Inyang wrote letters to The Apostolic Faith Headquarters in Portland, Oregon in America and received replies with parcels of tracts. He then erected a



signboard thereby openly identifying his group with The Apostolic Faith. Brother Inyang was later chosen as the Leader.

On the instructions of the International Headquarters in Portland, Brother T. G. Oshokoya visited the group in Ikot Enwang in 1951. Brother T invited Inyang to the 1951 camp meeting in Lagos. The first time he went to the altar, he was unhappy with the person who prayed with him. He told the helper that he was saved, because he was a pastor of a church and he gave people the Lord's Supper. He said:

"One day, I pretended to be praying and stayed very long at the altar of prayer. I was the last person to leave the altar that day. This brother came to me and asked how was it with me? I told him that at least he saw that I left the altar bench last and that should prove to anyone that I have been saved. I thank God that this brother did not leave me. It was the second day that I sincerely prayed and God forgave me my sins. Soon after that, God sanctified me and gave me the baptism of the Holy Spirit".

Brother Inyang decided at that very camp meeting that he was going to teach his people the Bible doctrines as taught by The Apostolic Faith, and that, if his people did not take it, he would go away from among them. Some members left but with courage he continued with the few who remained and later Ikot Enwang became the Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith work in the area.

Through Brother Inyang's relentless activities, branch churches were established at Udon Ebom, Uyo, Calabar and Ikot Osukpong. He later became the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work in Eastern Nigeria.

On September 9, 1969, Brother Philip O. Inyang, passed on to Glory in Lagos. He was buried on September 17 at Calabar. Though, he is gone, his work continues to bear fruit.

Francis Akinboye

Francis Adisa Akinboye was a nominal Christian before he came in contact with The Apostolic Faith. In his attempt to search for God, he used to wear white garments with coloured girdles as practised in white-garment churches. He fasted a lot and at times went on the

mountain tops to pray, believing that he could win the favour of God by so doing.

One day, he went to a meeting conducted by The Apostolic Faith, where he heard a sermon about the consequences of sin. Immediately, he realised his position as a sinner, and that he would go to hell if he died in that condition. This prompted him to pray, confessing his sins, and Jesus wonderfully saved him from his wretched, sinful life.



It took him time before he could pray through to sanctification, the second work of grace, because he was used to fasting, and thought he could easily obtain it by long fasts. The Lord explained to him that he could get nothing from Him by his personal efforts, it is only by grace. When he leaned hard on God, asking Him for His sanctifying grace, the Lord graciously sanctified him and later baptised him with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Francis Akinboye was a very zealous man. He led a team of Gospel workers to the seaport to minister to the seamen and marine workers. As one of the early members of the Choir and Orchestra, he played the trombone. He was a powerful preacher and a great evangelist. He was part of the Gospel team which accompanied Brother Oshokoya, on his tour of various parts of the country. He was very loving. He pastored Ijebu-Ode Church for several years with the unflinching support of his wife, Remi Akinboye, who was the organist. While at Ijebu-Ode, he held services at Ijebu-Ode on Tuesdays, at Ibadan on Wednesdays, at Ijebu-Ode on Thursdays, at Ibadan on Fridays, proceeded to Lagos for Sunday School Conference on Saturdays and went back to Ijebu-Ode for Sunday services. He did all these every week, joyfully and without complaints. God was his succour.

He later became the Overseer of the work in Kwara State (now Kwara and Kogi States). It pleased God to call him Home, one day on his journey to Kwara State, in December 1979.

Josiah Olubode Soyinka

Born on January 4, 1930, Brother Soyinka, as a young man, had been a churchgoer, who did not know that a man could have a personal relationship with God. Although he worshipped at a church in Lagos, he continued in his sinful life of smoking, lying and cheating.



In 1953, he was sent along with five others by his church, to go and study the mode of worship at The

Apostolic Faith, so that some aspects of the worship could be incorporated into their own. While on this mission, he was convicted and converted by the sound preaching of God's Word. He was later sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost. In 1969, he got married to Sister Esther Tokunbo Moses, who was called Home in 1973. He got married again to Sister Nike Moses on July 1, 1978.

Brother Soyinka was a great teacher and preacher, who held his audience spellbound. He made the study of the Bible his priority and this showed clearly in his teachings. He was loving, kind, generous and very humble. He could apologise to anyone at any time of the day and in any circumstance, just to be sure that the other party was reconciled.

On December 4, 1983, the mantle of leadership of The Apostolic Faith in Africa fell on Brother Soyinka, who was at that time the Secretary/Treasurer to the Board of Trustees of the Church at the Africa Headquarters, Lagos, Nigeria.

During his tenure, which lasted till September 4, 1999, Brother Soyinka undertook missionary journeys to many Apostolic Faith Churches in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo,

Cote D'Ivoire, Republic of Benin, Cameroon and many other African countries. He also visited many branch churches in Nigeria. There was a great expansion of the work as many churches were opened.

At the close of the 1999 Lagos camp meeting, Brother Soyinka preached his last sermon titled: *"A Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit"*. To end the sermon, he said the following words: *"Mission accomplished. I can now say: 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word'"*. He then asked the congregation to join two children in singing a song — *Away, Far Over Jordan* — thereby definitely informing the congregation, of his imminent departure to the Glory Land.

Two weeks later in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, where he had gone immediately after the camp meeting to take a rest, he laid down his sword for a glorious crown.

Morgan Sengwayo

Brother Morgan Sengwayo recalled his early life when his mother wanted him to be baptised in her church. He refused because he was not impressed by the lifestyle of the church members. Later, in Johannesburg, South Africa, he was afflicted with a dreadful infectious disease, which could not be cured in the hospital. His life was to be terminated for fear of contaminating others; but with the intervention of a kind nurse who knew his fate, he was assisted to escape. Thereafter, he met a praying group who prayed for him and he was healed. This set him seeking God and he later heard about salvation. His heart longed to be saved. One day, by a stream, he prayed earnestly the way he knew best: he told God to save his soul or he would drown. The Lord saved him that day. Afterwards, he came across a tract of The Apostolic Faith Church, wrote to Portland, Oregon, and was sent some Gospel materials.

The call of God was strong in his life, and he hungered to be closer to Him. In a wonderful way, God led him to Bulawayo, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). He received a letter from The Apostolic Faith in Portland, Oregon, saying that Rev. Timothy Oshokoya was coming from Nigeria to Rhodesia. Sengwayo was invited to meet him and help as an interpreter. One of the first things Brother Timothy said to him, when they met was, *"You seem to have been saved for years,*

but do you understand what sanctification is?" Tears rolled down his cheeks as he tried to answer. The Spirit of God spoke right into his heart and said, *"This is what you have been hungering for, since you were saved. Take it!"* Brother Oshokoya fully explained the second work of grace to him. He listened, and then went to pray in the bush, near his home. God sanctified and later baptised him with the Holy Ghost.

Brother Sengwayo got a job as a dispatch clerk. He would get up early in the morning and visit three to four homes, saying prayers with the members of the families before he went to work. During lunch hour, he would look for a gathering, either at a hot dog stall or under a tree, where workers were having their lunch. He would take that as an ideal place for his sermon and start religious discussions with fellow workers. Every single minute he had, he spent to bring others nearer to God. After work, he would visit eight to ten homes before he went to sleep.

The work continued to grow and many were born again. At his place of work one day, he fell into a trance and the Lord said to him, *"Arise! Go and work for Me, as you promised Me in South Africa in 1943"*. He agreed to do the will of God.

After journeying to Bulawayo as the Lord had commanded him, he started a church there, and today, there is a T-shaped church in Pelandaba, which has become the Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith in Southern Africa.

In 1954, Brother Morgan Sengwayo left his employment and went into full-time ministry. He was assisted by his wife.

Morgan Sengwayo, the son of a poor man, became a teacher, clerk, driver, preacher and finally, the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work in Zimbabwe as well



as in the neighbouring countries.

Brother Sengwayo left this world in March, 1982, to meet his Saviour, Whom he loved so much.

Theophilus Afolabi Ogunnaike

Theophilus Ogunnaike came across the Gospel in 1950, through Brother David Adewoyin who was his co-worker at the Kingsway Stores, Ibadan.

Although he first told Brother Adewoyin that there was nothing special about being saved because he was already a minister in a small group, he eventually followed him to a revival meeting after much persuasion. There, he discovered that his life did not measure up to the Truth that he heard. He knew that there was no joy in his heart. He was often angry and quarrelsome, even though he appeared gentle outwardly.

It took him quite sometime to get saved, but he kept on attending the Church. One day, in his room, the Lord saved his soul. He was later sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost.

He was a zealous Gospel worker. He learnt music and was a tenor singer in the choir. He played violin in the orchestra. He became a Sunday School teacher in 1959.

Brother O, as he was fondly called, was a lover of children and the young people. He regularly took the young people out for picnics, where he taught them to love God. He believed in humility. He preached and practised it. He was a disciplined man, who preached the Word of God in all its fulness.

He did not possess the things of this world, but he possessed things Eternal. He spent everything for the Gospel, everything he had. When people gave him money, he gave it back to the poor. He spoke



few words, but those few words made people want to worship God.

He spent almost all his life in Ibadan, where he was the pastor for over 40 years. He later became the Overseer of Oyo and Osun States. Between 1977 and 1979, he was transferred to Cross River State, to oversee the work there. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith in Nigeria.

He loved God and was loved by God; he loved people and people loved him too. He was kind, gentle and humble. He was a prayer warrior. A few months before his death, he went quietly unnoticed into the Ibadan Church and knelt down at every chorister's seat to pray for each of them. He then proceeded into the auditorium and knelt at each pew to pray for all the members.

On May 21, 1997, after a mighty one-week revival at Ibadan in which over 900 people received different Christian experiences, the Rev. Afolabi Ogunnaike quietly went to his reward. When he died, even people who were not members of the Church, commented that *a great man had departed*.

Brother Josiah Soyinka, who conducted his funeral service, called him *the most excellent Theophilus*. He was a perfect example of what a Christian should be. He was a man of God.

Samson Etuk Ekanem

Brother Samson Etuk Ekanem was born on October 19, 1934, into the family of Nto Akpan Enwang, in Ikot Enwang Village, Ikot Ekpene Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Samson attended the African Church in his childhood. His desire to know more about the Truth encouraged him to move close to Brother Philip Inyang. The latter had been expelled from his former church because he dared to question the polygamous lives of the then leaders of the church. Ekanem, and a few others decided to leave the church. He, with his friend Philip and others, continued to search for a better way of worshipping God. The Lord



led them to the true worship in The Apostolic Faith. He embraced the sound doctrine and prayed through to salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Brother Ekanem became the first choirmaster and organist in the District Headquarters Church in Ikot Enwang. God helped him to supervise the construction of most of the early church buildings of The Apostolic Faith in the Eastern part of Nigeria.

Shortly after the Church started growing in Eastern Nigeria, Brother Inyang sent Brother Ekanem to officiate at a branch of The Apostolic Faith at Ikot Osukpong Ika. The village people came to him angrily to complain that his church members were breaking their tradition by planting and eating sweet yam. Brother Ekanem explained to them why they could not be bound by such traditions. They then proceeded to set the church building on fire but God erected a bigger building at that same location. Since the members took their stand, the villagers stopped worrying them.

Brother Ekanem lived a very humble and God-fearing life. He was deeply consecrated and highly disciplined. He was loved by all who knew him. In spite of his high calling in the Gospel, he related well with both young and old. He encouraged them to prefer the way of righteousness to every other way of life. He would not compromise with sin in any form.

In 1969, after the Home Call of the first District Overseer of the then Eastern Nigeria, Brother Philip Inyang, Brother Ekanem was appointed the District Overseer of the Gospel work in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. He also worked in Oyo, Osun, Imo and Abia States as District Overseer. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith work in Nigeria. He was called Home on September 17, 1995.

Robinson Sanana

Brother Robinson Sanana, a native of Zambia, came across the Gospel while working in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). He was a drunkard and a wayward man, who would leave home for days without coming back. At a time, his wife got fed up and stored the food she cooked daily for him for 7 days, since he would not return home to eat. His wife then gathered the food in a wheelbarrow, took it to his office,

to show his colleagues, as proof that her husband had not come back home for a whole week.

One day, Brother Morgan Sengwayo led the people of God to preach in front of Sanana's home. He heard the Word of God which made him realise his sinful and wretched condition. He prayed, confessed his sins and asked for forgiveness. God saved him and from that time on, made him a responsible husband and father. God helped him to be fervent and diligent in His service.

He was the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith Churches in Zambia until he breathed his last on April 22, 1992.

Sunday Kalu Johnson Okorie

Brother Sunday Kalu Johnson Okorie was born on Sunday, August 30, 1930. Brother Okorie started corresponding with The Apostolic Faith, Portland, Oregon, in 1950. He was saved in 1960. However, as a choirmaster and organist in his former church, he found it difficult to leave until 1961.



In 1963, he was appointed by the Rev. P. O. Inyang to head the Church in Port Harcourt. He was also the choirmaster and organist. During the civil war, between 1967 and 1970, he helped to evangelise the nine villages in Item, his home town. He was called to full-time ministry in 1977.

Brother Okorie wrote many songs in both English and Igbo. These included *Glorify Him* and *Ka M Nogide Nime Jisos*. He also arranged songs like *Ekele Nna*, a medley from the compositions of



Harcourt Whyte, a great musician under whom he trained. During the civil war, he copied hymns by hand so that worshippers could have hymn books to use. As a result of the dearth of Igbo hymn books after the civil war, he consulted with Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, who advised him to compile a hymn book. He then came up with a compilation of 1,000 hymns titled, *Psalms in the Holy Ghost*, along with an orchestration album. He also laboured in the translation of the 36 books of the Sunday School series and many Gospel materials to Igbo language.

In 1978, he became the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work in Abia and Imo States. He was later posted to Enugu and Anambra States. After a while, he was transferred back to Abia and Imo States. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith in Nigeria.

Brother Okorie was a father to all. He greeted both the young and the old with a broad smile which made him approachable. He was indeed a humble man. During most of his sermons, he would burst into tears, thereby moving his audience into spontaneous revival.

He loved the Gospel work so much that for him, there was no leisure time. He used virtually every hour of the day for Gospel work — preaching, counselling, composing songs, translating Gospel materials into Igbo, visiting the sick, playing organ or conducting he choir. Even when on the sick bed, Brother Okorie would still be found doing some Gospel work

Brother S.K.J. Okorie laboured tirelessly among his people, the Igbo, in South Eastern Nigeria, until 1998, when he retired from active service. He passed on to his reward on March 29, 2002. His life and ministry greatly encouraged and edified the saints

Paul Saliu Kolawole Ibikunle

Brother Paul Saliu Kolawole Ibikunle was born on October 29, 1934, into a Muslim family. As a little boy, he thought that he would become a great exponent of Islam. He was sent to a Koranic school and at a tender age, he had started calling people to prayers in the mosque. This trait in him gave his father a high hope that he would follow the way of Islam to the highest limit.

However, in order to pursue his education to the highest possible stage, a friend of his father arranged for him to live with a Bishop of

the Anglican Church at the Bishop's court in Lagos. It was there that he started attending church services. Nevertheless, there was no change in his life. He went to a missionary high school called C. M. S. Grammar School, Lagos.

During his last year in the school, he heard about salvation through a cousin who was a member of The Apostolic Faith. At first, he came to the Church with the intention of just observing and jotting down as many spoken English errors as would be made by the officiating minister. The Spirit of God, however, arrested and showed him the errors of his own ways. He was convicted of his sins which included the schoolboy pranks he played. There and then, he repented, confessed, and God saved his soul. He went to make restitutions to his teachers, members of the Bishop's household and even his parents. He was later sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire.

His conversion stirred up no small opposition and bitter persecution from his Muslim family. At the climax, his father stopped paying his school fees in the crucial final year at school. The promise of God in *Psalm 27:10* was fulfilled to the letter on his behalf, in that God gave him a scholarship which saw him through his schooling. The persecution did not stop there, because he still continued in his newfound faith.

One day, a gang organised by his Muslim relations, came to drag him out of the Church at 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos, chanting "thief, thief, thief". To the amazement of the passers-by, on enquiry about what he stole, his relations said, "No, he did not steal but he is a Muslim who decided to be going to church". Brother Paul, like his Saviour Jesus Christ, bore the shame and molestation without fighting back. He followed his people quietly. On getting home, he was brought before his father who told him to choose that day, whom he would serve — to choose Jesus and be a castaway in the family or to choose the religion of his father. His



reply was, "Even if it remains a shirt on my back, I will serve Jesus". From that day on, he was left to his choice and he continued to fellowship with the people of God undisturbed.

Brother Ibikunle was called to the Ministry in 1961. He voluntarily resigned his appointment with the Nigerian Ports Authority, where he had worked for about four years. He became a full-time missionary at the age of 27. For many years, he was the personal secretary to the pioneer Africa Overseer, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya. In addition to working in the office, he travelled extensively with him, taking the Gospel to many areas in Nigeria. He also travelled with him to other countries of Africa including Ghana, Republic of Benin, Togo, Cote D'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Zimbabwe. His frequent and extensive tours afforded him the opportunity to know and be known by many people, in and outside Nigeria.

As a young man, Brother Paul studied music in the Church and learnt to play the trumpet. He became an accomplished trumpeter and for many years played in the church orchestra. He inspired and trained many youths on that instrument. He was also a talented singer, a tenor soloist, whose renditions inspired and blessed many souls. Brother Paul contributed immensely to the programmes of The Apostolic Faith Choir and Orchestra nationwide, particularly in the states where he worked as Overseer.

In September 1977, he was posted to Benin City, the capital of the then Bendel State, to oversee The Apostolic Faith work. Through his ministry, the Church grew from a very small congregation to the stage where branch churches sprang up at Sapele, Aviara, Warri and Okpanam. A church in Owerre Olubo opted to affiliate with The Apostolic Faith, as a result of the conversion of their founder at one of the revival meetings in Aviara.

In 1982, Brother Paul was transferred to Ikot Enwang as Overseer for the Akwa Ibom and Cross River States and in August 1991, to Kwara, Kogi and Niger States.

Brother Paul was a lover of hospitality and could be regarded as an "Apostle of the Youths". He did all he could to encourage every youth he came across to be interested in music, take a stand for the Gospel and work for God. He had a listening ear, a sympathetic heart and a willing mind to help. He gave many people useful spiritual

counselling for which they would forever be grateful. He was the "beloved Brother Paul" of The Apostolic Faith. On Sunday, January 12, 1992, he was called Home to rest from his labours.

Emmanuel Oluyemi Aina

Brother Emmanuel Aina was born on June 20, 1922. He was a prophet in The Church of the Lord (Aladura) at Ogunseye, a village near Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. When a branch of the church at Abeokuta, led by Isaac Sokeye, got affiliated to The Apostolic Faith, the leader of the church at Ogunseye complained that the Abeokuta church had gone fanatical and crazy. When Aina asked what was wrong, he was told that Sokeye had sent all his wives away except the first one; and that many of the members had stood up to testify that they had been thieves and adulterers, but that the Lord had forgiven them and they had peace with God. The leader then warned them not to attend the Sokeye branch. As he was talking, the Spirit of God was, however, confirming to Aina that those were the people going to Heaven and that he should fellowship with them. He, therefore, decided to visit The Apostolic Faith Church at Igbore, Abeokuta.

The first time he went there, the people were singing *Redemption, O Wonderful Story*. As he listened to the song, tears streamed down his face and he decided to join the Church. He later prayed and God saved his soul. That was in 1955. He was later sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire. He planned to teach members of The Church of the Lord, the doctrines he learnt at The Apostolic Faith but they would have none of it. He then decided to stay at home to pray and read the Sunday School Book given to him at The Apostolic Faith Church. While doing this, six members of his former church joined him and there was a revival. He later went to nearby Kemta village to share the Word of God. There was also a revival. As a result of the two revivals, the converts decided to come together to form a branch of The Apostolic Faith Church



at Kemta. They later moved to Obafe, which was a bigger town. Brother Aina made restitution of his adulterous life. He desired to be close to God and God shed light into his heart through the sound doctrine. In his effort to know more of God, he devoted time to the study of the Word of God and The Apostolic Faith publications. God established him through this spiritual exercise. He became a Sunday School teacher and later a minister of the Word.

He was at various times posted to Orunwa, Abeokuta, Ayetoro-Gbede and Ijebu-Ode as a pastor. In 1978, he was posted to Akure as the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work in Ondo State, a position he held until he was transferred to Abeokuta, Ogun State in 1982 as the Overseer. He came to Lagos in 1998.

Brother Aina has a deep understanding of the Word of God and is well versed in the Scriptures. When he preaches, he has the talent of interpreting the Word to bring out hidden meanings. He analyses into the minutest details. He is very accessible. A little child could walk up to him and start a conversation. He is very humble and ready to counsel anyone who comes to him at any time of the day. He spends his time searching the Scriptures, composing music or playing the piano.

He is a member of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith Church in Nigeria.

Emmanuel Olatunji Shotade

Brother Emmanuel Shotade was drawn to The Apostolic Faith through music. As a young school leaver, he was strolling along a street in Lagos one evening in 1950, when he noticed a woman playing a piano inside a church. He said:

“An usher noticing my curiosity, beckoned on me and invited me into the Church. Although, I neither understood what they did nor realised my need for salvation then, the love shown by the people in the Church made me to attend regularly. They kept coming to my home and asking about my welfare. I finally prayed through to salvation under the love that would not let me go”.

Shortly after, he received the experiences of sanctification and the

baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. He further said:

“I instantly fell in love with going to work in the church office and, apart from a few months in a secular job, God has made me to be a full-time worker since 1951”.

He was also a pioneer member of the Choir and Orchestra. He played many instruments including the piano and conducted the Choir. He taught people how to play various instruments. His students included Sisters Akinboye and Victoria Oshobowale, Brothers Amos Adeoye, Paul Ibikunle and Samuel Odumosu. He was the Elementary Sunday School Superintendent for many years. He is the current Printing Manager of the Church Press.



Brother Shotade's love for the Gospel makes him work tirelessly. He is always seen at the various sections of the Printing Press supervising and working. He also assists in putting the machines in order. He is very time-conscious and punctual at all programmes. He is fondly known as *Oga* (leader), because at various times, he had been the head of the Music Department, Children's Department, Information Centre and the Printing Press among others. His love and care

for those who work under him is exemplary in spite of the fact that he is a disciplinarian. Brother Emmanuel Shotade is a source of inspiration to all.

Wilson Ogbonnaya Machie

Brother Machie joined The Apostolic Faith Church in 1952, and prayed through to the three Christian experiences, at Enugu. After a while, his secular work took him to Owerri. There, he laboured fervently to establish The Apostolic Faith Church. He was a man of faith. He had the divine favour of obtaining whatever he wanted for the Church from the Government officials. The Government gave him a large piece of land at Owerri on which the church was built. He was



also instrumental in the establishment of branch churches at Egbema, Akabo, Ulakwo and Ifakala.

Brother Machie loved the young people and always prayed for them. He often voluntarily counselled and encouraged them on their spiritual welfare. This drew many people close to him. He did not mind trekking long distances to minister to and pray for the sick. Brother Machie was not tired of performing active Gospel work even when he retired from pastoring

the Church at Owerri.

He shall be remembered for the congregational opening prayers he offered in Igbo language during the Lagos camp meetings, often with the familiar words: *Otuto* (Glory), *Bata* (Come in) and *Gozie* (Bless). He worked for the Lord until he departed this sinful world on August 21, 2001.

M' Bengani Kalundandiko

On November 10, 1980, Kuntuala Isala Daniel picked up, at a bus stop, one of the tracts that were distributed in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. He gave it to M' Bengani Kalundandiko to read. M' Bengani then wrote a letter to Portland, Oregon, on November 13, 1980. The letter was sent to Lagos Headquarters from Portland. Lagos wrote M' Bengani and invited him to the camp meeting of August 1981.

At that time, M' Bengani was the President of a church, assisted by Kuntuala Daniel, who found the tract. On August 11, 1981, Mr. M' Bengani came to Lagos, Nigeria, for the first time and took part in the camp meeting of that year. He was instantly healed of a terrible and painful illness that had tortured him for 30 months. He was later saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Brother Timothy Oshokoya, the first Africa Overseer, advised him to stay behind after the camp meeting to learn the doctrines, principles and methods of The Apostolic Faith work. He encouraged and explained to him the duty of winning Africa for Christ, and mandated

him to go home and teach his people the sound doctrine. Brother M' Bengani spent 45 days in Nigeria.

On his return to Kinshasa, he resigned from his former church and started an Apostolic Faith Church on September 28, 1981, with five members of his former church. The six of them were meeting in his sitting room and God added to their number. By 1982, they were sixty. In 1987, a church building measuring 14 metres by 18 metres, was built on a piece of land donated to the Church by him.

As he was mandated, Brother M. Bengani did his best to teach the sound doctrine to his people. He organised the reading of tracts among the youths, women, men, workers and ministers in the language that each group understood best. This arrangement helped his members to understand the doctrines of the Bible.

He organised the Association of Visiting Secretaries (A.V.S.) who teach the Word of God in schools, homes, hospitals and prisons. Within a short time many Bible study centres were started in the city of Kinshasa, which later developed into branch churches. He worked diligently to spread the Gospel in almost all the regions of Congo. He assisted The Apostolic Faith Churches in Angola as well.

Isaac Oluwatade Sokeye

Brother Isaac Sokeye was born into a pagan family in Igbore, Abeokuta, Nigeria on September 3, 1906. As he grew up, he embraced Christianity and became the leader of a church.

By 1954, he was still in search of a higher and better way of serving God in truth and in holiness. Consequently, he came in contact with The Apostolic Faith Church, where he learnt it was possible to live a sinless life through the receipt of salvation. He immediately



embraced this truth and prayed through to the Bible experiences of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The receipt of these Christian experiences was a turning point in his life. He was so enthused about the change in his life, that in 1954, he surrendered the administration of his church — *The Church of the Lord (Aladura)* — which people simply called *Sokeye's Church* at Igbore, Abeokuta, to The Apostolic Faith. He also gave the Mission House, and a piece of land at Ijeja, Abeokuta, as a burial ground, to the Church.



He immediately made restitution of his marital life, stuck to his first wife, and allowed the remaining four women to go.

In 1954, after his conversion, he voluntarily retired from John Holt Nigeria Limited, and from other secular engagements, to devote the rest of his life to the service of God as a full-time missionary. He was mightily used of God at Ibadan, Abeokuta, Cotonou and lastly in Lagos. He was a fearless man of God. He was uniquely used by God in the ministration to the sick. Knowing the urgency involved in saving a life, he would not mind to trek long distances to be of assistance to the sick. He was so caring, compassionate and selfless, that through his prayerful life, many sick people were healed and pregnant women delivered. He slept in the Lord on Friday, November 27, 1992.

Ezekiel Adegboye Ojo



Brother Ojo had served as a pastor of a church for 24 years without knowing what it meant to be a saved soul. God brought him to The Apostolic Faith through the protracted illness of his son. He was invited by a friend who told him that Jesus could heal his sick son.

When he got to Church, however, he too was told that he was also sick spiritually. He prayed for the forgiveness of his sins. God saved him

and gave him the other Christian experiences. He returned to Cote D'Ivoire, where he had the opportunity of starting The Apostolic Faith Church. There are already 13 branch churches in the country. God has helped him to spread the Gospel for 27 years.

David Tella Adewoyin

Brother David Tella Adewoyin, a native of Oyo in Nigeria was born in 1920. He was a member of a church which was very close to the mill, where The Apostolic Faith met at Idi-Ikan in Ibadan, Nigeria. He got acquainted daily with The Apostolic Faith Church while going to his own church. He was invited by the Spirit of God to join that little flock. He visited the Church and heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He prayed and God saved, sanctified and baptised him with the Holy Ghost in 1950.

He worked as a clerical officer at the Kingsway Stores and whenever he was on leave, he spent most of his time going out with the Gospel team or working at the mission house.

He introduced the Gospel to his colleague, Theophilus Ogunnaike, who eventually came to the Church and also prayed through to the Christian experiences.

Brother David Adewoyin was very zealous. He loved music and was a very good baritone soloist. His favourite solo used to be *Never Grow Old*.

He loved planting and nurturing flowers. He was the first person to plant and nurture flowers to beautify the old campground at Onigbongbo. He also started a mini mart and a cafeteria department there.

He lived a useful, humble and exemplary life. He was a member of the Editorial Board that translated the Sunday School lessons into Yoruba language. He also helped in compiling Gospel Songs in Yoruba language. He served the Lord joyfully in His vineyard, until God called him Home on May 6, 1964.



CHAPTER SIX

CAMP MEETINGS AND CAMPGROUNDS

In November 1949, the first camp meeting was held at 69, Ibadan Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos. Delegates came from Ghana, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Republic of Benin, and all parts of Nigeria. They were lodged with the Lagos saints in their houses and in an unused building opposite 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta. The space around the church was also used for accommodation. The delegates were catered for by the Lagos saints, who provided food items, kitchen utensils and sleeping materials, as the Church was not financially strong enough to do so.

Weekday meetings were held as early as 5:30 am, so that people who had to go to their offices could benefit from the Bible teachings. Gospel workers arrived in the prayer room by 4:30 am, to pray down the power of God before the commencement of the meetings.

Later, as the congregation increased, the annual camp meetings were held at 22, Simpson Street. God blessed the Church and very many souls were converted. A strong presence of the Spirit was always felt at each meeting. People rushed to the altars of prayer with tears of penitence. What mighty blessings followed!

Due to the overflow of the crowd at 22, Simpson Street, the Church acquired another piece of land at 49, Moloney Street, Ebute Meta. On August 2, 1959, the first Sunday School of the Annual Camp Meeting was held with a crowd of 1,500. People were lodged in rented apartments and with the saints, while the meetings were held in the new church building, though the construction was not yet completed. Brethren from neighbouring branch churches such as: Ibadan, Ijebu-ode and Abeokuta, joined the Lagos artisans and worked hard to get the church building into shape, so that it could be used for the camp meeting. Many times, the work had to continue into the wee hours of the next day, but the reward was that God made the camp meeting a reality.

There were various activities during the camp meeting. Bible studies were held on Tuesdays through Fridays at 5:30 am. each day. The Lord blessed the services and in the first meeting, a man received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He spoke in Douala, one of the dialects

spoken in Cameroon. The leader of the work in Cameroon was nearby and rejoiced as he understood what the brother was saying, when the Spirit spoke through him.

The altar services after each meeting were blessed of God and many received the blessings their hearts desired. The basement of the new church provided a wonderful place for quiet devotions and study during the day, and many took advantage of this.

Every evening at 6:50 pm, evangelistic meetings were held. Gospel teams visited the prisons, hospitals and many other institutions. They held services on street corners and distributed printed handbills, telling of the camp meeting services. On the second Monday of the convention, the musicians presented the Gospel message in a concert. Heaven came down to earth as the consecrated musicians played their inspiring pieces. Personal testimonies were a vital part of the services. They were given in many languages, including English and French.

In the meantime, the 3-acre campground at Onigbongbo was being developed. Three long dormitories were built, campers were lodged there and transported to 49, Moloney Street, for camp-meeting services. At this time, the Church had moved to the auditorium on the ground floor which was 120ft x 60ft.

The work continued to expand. When city traffic increased and congestion on the road slowed down the transportation of campers to 49, Moloney Street Church, the leaders thought of developing a bigger site at Onigbongbo. They then realised that the 3-acre campground at Onigbongbo was too small. Brother T had started the negotiation for the purchase of a bigger campground. A 10-acre plot at Adam's Village, (now Anthony Village) on Mile 8, Ikorodu Road, Lagos, was purchased. Soon after this, a road was constructed through a thick bush into the Anthony Campground.

Wooden Tabernacle Constructed

A 150ft x 100ft wooden tabernacle was constructed on the Anthony Village campground. The foundation for this wooden tabernacle was laid on May 12, 1966, by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya.

The large tabernacle, the cabins, the cleared paths, the beautiful park as well as the road leading into it, all spoke of the fact that many hours of labour had been expended. Beautifully adorning the ground



A close view of the Wooden Tabernacle on the outside and inside



Campground and the tabernacle in the early days

were the towering palms, gently waving in the breeze.

On August 20, 1966, the wooden tabernacle was dedicated by the General Overseer, Rev. Loyce C. Carver, who came from Portland with his wife. When Rev. Carver inspected the pulpit, he exclaimed, "*Just like home! This is beyond our*

expectation; to see what we see, and hear what we hear of the work of God in this part of the world!" He said that since they left Portland, it was in Nigeria they met the standard of music they left at home.

The dedication sermon was preached by Brother Carver. The text was chosen from Acts 7: 48 and 49:

"The most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands...

"...what house will ye build me? saith the Lord".

He said that those who had built the house had caught a vision of what God would do in the hearts of those present and in the hearts of the generations yet to follow. It was that kind of vision that Abraham had when he looked for a city whose Builder and Maker is God.

The 150ft x 100ft wooden tabernacle looked like the ultimate. This was the answer to the prayers for a bigger church building. But within 2 years, the tabernacle was full to overflowing and plans were made to build a much bigger, permanent structure.

The Great Tabernacle

On March 2, 1972, the foundation of the Great Tabernacle 240 ft x 180 ft with a basement and a gallery 20 ft wide, was laid at Anthony Village, Lagos. A lot of support came from the saints of God in Lagos, the neighbouring states and the Republic of Benin. The building work started in earnest and saints worked with so much enthusiasm that the building of the super structure took only five months. Through the help of God, the Great Tabernacle was first put to use on August 6, 1972, being the opening of the 22nd Annual Camp Meeting.

Only God can give the accurate number of souls that have been saved from their lives of sin and that have been healed from diverse diseases and ailments, since the Great Tabernacle was put into use. Uncountable are the answered prayers and the many wonders and miracles God performed.

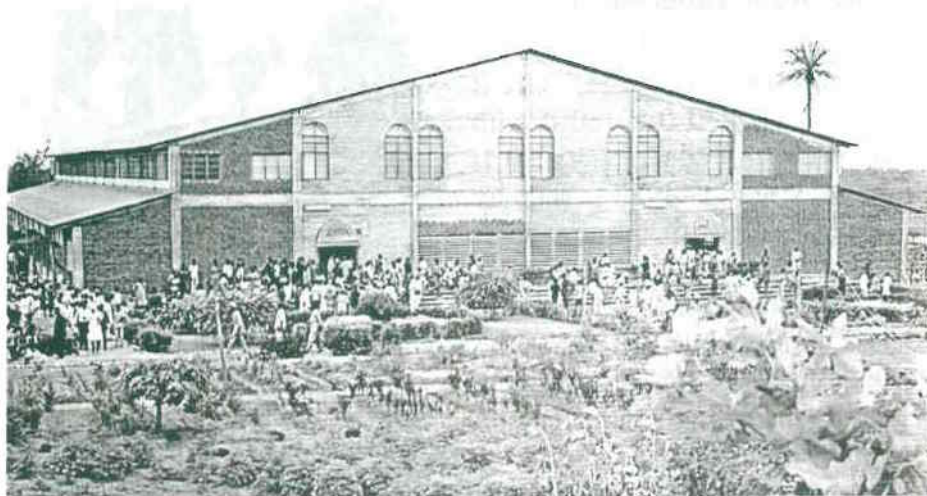
The financing of the tabernacle came from the saints' widow's mite as their obligation to God. All the labour expended on the building project came from the saints who voluntarily gave their time and talents for the work. The



Brother Oshokoya laying the foundation of the Great Tabernacle



Construction work on the Great Tabernacle



The great tabernacle nearing completion



An early view of the Anthony Campground

gigantic task of building the Great Tabernacle was accomplished without collection plates, pastoral dues, special building fund-raising activities, or any soliciting for funds. God supplied all the need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

By human calculation, the amount expended on the building, up to the time of its dedication, (without labour costs) was N2,265,386.50 (Two million, Two hundred and sixty-five thousand, three hundred and eighty-six Naira, fifty kobo). This was a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour, well pleasing to God



Preparing to erect tents for camp meeting

from all the members of Apostolic Faith Church throughout Nigeria, "for the people had a mind to work".

The great edifice was dedicated on Saturday, August 1, 1981, with 8,020 people in attendance. They praised and thanked God with this testimony: "*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it*".

The Anthony Campground

In the early days of Lagos camp meetings, tents and few wooden cabins were used for accommodation. Later, there were several dormitories and cabins that accommodated thousands of people.

On the Anthony Village Campground, there could be found:

- A gigantic and well planned tabernacle with galleries, a large basement, a prayer room attached to it with conveniences at the wings. It seats about ten thousand people. Under the platform in the auditorium is a big baptistry used during baptismal service.
- A two-storey Children's Hall with the conveniences for the children, a decent lawn with flowers and some play equipment for the children.
- A big parking lot in front of the tabernacle.
- A well planned and equipped kitchen and cafeteria.
- The Overseer's Office.
- The General Office; the Printing Department; the Welding/Plumbing Department; the Electrical Department; the Carpentry Workshop; the Mechanical Workshop; the Transport

Section; the Painting Section which houses big generating plants that serve the whole Campground; and well-kept bore-holes.

— A Petrol Station.

The Growth of Camp Meetings

Camp meeting is held each year in several places on the continent of Africa. During the month of August in Lagos, Nigeria, there is an International Camp Meeting which is attended by delegates from all over the continent of Africa and other countries of the world.

Before every camp meeting, two days are fixed for the general cleaning of the campground by saints from Nigeria and the Republic of Benin. The Church holds a Ministers' and Workers' Conference. Prior to this, a meeting is usually held, with the Heads of Departments at the Headquarters, where various aspects of the preparations for camp meeting are discussed.

The countries where annual camp meetings are also held include: Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Ghana, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire, Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Ministers are often sent from Lagos Headquarters to assist at these camp meetings.

A New Centre of Worship



Brother Madeinlo, the Farm Manager at Igbesa

In 1978, it became apparent to the Africa Overseer Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, that the Anthony Village tabernacle which was the main hall of worship, would be filled to capacity within a very short time. He therefore felt the desire to begin the search for a new campground, where a bigger tabernacle would be built. A search party, made up of Brothers Gideon Adeta, Augustus Omole and Solomon Onabolu, found a very big portion of land at Igbesa, a town in Ogun State of Nigeria. Brother T was then informed and in 1982, negotiations were made. With the help of

God, the Church paid N1,000 per acre for 72 acres of land, on March 25, 1982. The land is located at Kilometre 8 Atan-Ota — Agbara Road in Ota/Ado-Odo Local Government Area of Ogun State. More land was later acquired.

Brother T being a dynamic person, immediately constituted a committee of brethren who were experts in agriculture, and mandated them to put the land to use. God prospered their labour and Igbesa became a source of regular supply of fruits and food items such as oranges, lemon, grapefruit, pineapple, tangerine, cassava, maize, rice and palm oil. Some brethren lived on the land and Brother Sunmola Madeinlo was the Farm Manager.

At camp meeting periods, delegates from different states and countries were sent to work at Igbesa. Teams from the Lagos Headquarters go there to work, every Saturday.

However, Igbesa was not meant to be just a farmland. The Campus Association of Visiting Secretaries (C.A.V.S.) (an evangelistic outreach of the Church for higher institution students) organised their first Work-Rally at Igbesa in December, 1995. This gave the students the opportunity of evangelising the surrounding villages. God blessed them in a mighty way and many souls were saved. Igbesa Students' Rally then became an annual event.



Registration in progress at a students' rally at Igbesa



Students at work in the farm

Later, an Apostolic Faith Church was established to cater for the spiritual welfare of Igbesa farm workers and other converts.

After Brother Paul Akazue took over the mantle of leadership of The Apostolic Faith work in Africa, on October 3, 1999, God revealed to him that it was time to move the campground to Igbesa. The severe strain on the available

facilities on the campground at Anthony Village also made the development of a new campground at Igbesa imperative.

The planning and development of the campground started in February, 2000. On March 4, the branch churches in Lagos State and some brethren from the Republic of Benin, came together to clear the site.

The new tabernacle design consists of a six-arm star. It is 260 metres in diameter, free of obstructing columns and would accommodate 75,000 worshippers. The basement and gallery would increase the sitting capacity to about 100,000. Other features include a



Rev. Darrel D. Lee (middle) lays the first block of the International Worship Centre at Igbesa. With him are Reverends Akazue (right) and Aremu (the project manager)



One of the bulldozers working on the site

platform, 120 conveniences located on the ground floor, a music room with a recording studio, and various offices.

The planning involved the children of God who are architects, engineers, surveyors and planners. They worked untiringly day and night in order to submit the masterplan as quickly as possible, to the Government for approval. Fortunately, the approval was given before the end of 2001.

Coincidentally, God in a wonderful way moved the Superintendent General of The Apostolic Faith Church worldwide, Brother Darrel Lee, to visit Nigeria in January, 2002. He was accompanied by Brothers Jack Lee Chasten and Cliff Paulsen. Brother Darrel Lee had the singular honour of laying the first block of the *International Worship Centre* in a ceremony. The service, which started at 10.00 am, was attended by saints of God from all over Nigeria and neighbouring African countries. The choristers rendered inspiring songs to open the service.

Brother Lee exhorted the congregation that the work was great but the Lord is able to accomplish it, just as in the time of Nehemiah, "*for the people had a mind to work*".

The work on the main hall started before the end of 2002. The floor of the platform area which would hold more than 4,000 ministers, choristers and workers, was concreted soon after. Then work began on the terraces in the main hall. The main structure would be supported by six columns, each 100 feet (about 30 metres) high.

There would also be a fire station, workshops, an information centre and residential quarters, among others, on the Igbesa campground.

Preparations for the 2003 Camp Meeting

When it was realised that the main hall would not be ready for the 2003 camp meeting, prayers went up to God. He provided the money for the purchase and freight of two giant tents from South Africa, each of which could accommodate about 10,000 people. These tents arrived



The tent church under construction

just a few days before the meetings began. Some children of God volunteered to set up the tent, though they had never undertaken such a job before, and God supplied the wisdom.



One of the Giant Tents

Meanwhile, six blocks of twenty, 2-bedroom flats had been built for accommodation purposes. These housed the Africa Overseer's Office, the General Office, the French Department, some District Overseers as well as some foreign guests, during the camp meeting.

On the opposite side of the campground is the *Jesus Reserved Area*, otherwise known as the *Faith Community*, where members of the Church who have purchased pieces of land, built their lodgings for the camp meeting. On the campground proper, a large area of land was allocated to different countries and Nigerian districts and states' churches. This was to enable them put up tents and other temporary accommodation for their members, who did not have their own personal accommodation.

A few days before the camp meeting, a temporary kitchen, dining facilities, public bathrooms and other conveniences were quickly erected. Some of the brethren who came for the convention joined hands with other workers to complete many of the structures, during the meetings.

Shortly before the start of the meetings, a 500 KVA transformer was installed on the campground, thus solving the problem of power supply. The



One of the residential quarters under construction

Lord had earlier provided two 20-KVA generators.

For the supply of water, five boreholes were sunk. There is a network of roads in the making, which includes a ring road around the main tabernacle and a dual carriage road from the main highway.

The First Camp Meeting in *Faith City*

In August 2003, it was a great joy for the children of God all over Africa and beyond, to gather for the first camp meeting on Igbesa campground. The services were held under the gigantic tents, each measuring 300ft by 200ft.

The 2003 camp meeting was a wonderful experience in the wilderness! The first week's Sunday School lesson aptly captured the command given to the Africa Overseer, Brother Paul Akazue by the Lord that he should take the congregation to Igbesa and the Lord would heal them. Similarly in the lesson, the Lord commanded Philip, saying, "*Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went*" (Acts 8:26, 27). Philip obeyed and a soul, hungry for God, was saved. Just as Abraham was called to go out into a place, "*and he went out, not knowing whither he went*", the Africa Overseer and the Board of Trustees obeyed the Lord's command to move into the new campground located at Igbesa, Ogun State, near the Agbara Industrial layout. On Thursday, August 7, 2003, The Apostolic Faith, Africa, stepped out in faith into the new campground christened: *Faith City*.

Large expanse of land had been cleared. Two huge, white, multi-domed tents, reminiscent of the Tent Church, pitched in the wilderness by the Children of Israel, in their march to the land of Canaan, were erected. Thousands of plastic chairs had been provided. Improvised thatched structures and tents were erected for accommodation. Saints joyfully took up the challenge because they loved the Lord.

The Ministers and Workers' Conference started on Thursday, August 7. The Camp Meeting Concert took place on Saturday, August 9, at 3.00 pm. Since the concert was to take place in a new location, quite a distance from the Lagos metropolis, and considering the traffic hold-up usually experienced on Lagos roads, it was felt that many of the invited guests might be reluctant to come. It was a pleasant surprise to see a huge crowd in attendance. On the first Sunday of the

camp meeting, August 10, 2003, there was a sea of heads seen inside the tents. Every available space was taken up. The attendance at the devotional service was 20,674.

On Monday, August 11, there was general work for all the



The tent church



Service in progress in the tent church



Brother Baltzell acknowledges cheers from the congregation



Children (recite) Bible verses representing the mnemonics of Baltzell



Brother Baltzell conducts the congregational song



Brother Baltzell preaches at the "Faith City"



Brother Cliff leads in congregational prayers

campers. After the morning prayer, the daily cleaning of the vast compound was embarked upon.

On Friday, August 15, the Head of the Foreign Work in the Portland Headquarters, Brother Dwight Baltzell and Brother Cliff Paulsen, arrived in the *Faith City*. Just as the Church in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to help in the revival at Samaria, the two brothers came to fan the revival fires.

Their plane touched down at the Murtala Mohammed Airport, Ikeja, Lagos, at 5:00 pm. They were received on arrival by the Africa Overseer, and some brethren. The congregation waited after the evening evangelistic service to welcome them. The American National Anthem, as well as the Nigerian National Anthem, were played by the Brass Ensemble. The children from the Elementary Sunday School Department had a short welcome programme in which they recited

verses of the Scriptures, with the first letters of the words forming BALTZELL.

In his address, Brother Dwight said that he was happy to be in the camp meeting. He could see only unity, harmony and love. He praised God for the spirit of the Gospel. The following Sunday, Brother Baltzell encouraged the congregation with a soul-stirring sermon on *The More Excellent Way*.

Water Baptism

The Ordinance of Water Baptism was held on the last Friday of the camp meeting, in spite of all odds. A baptistry was improvised by channeling water into



Water baptism in the early days



Water Baptism in progress at Igbesa

one of the tunnels leading to the main bowl of the tabernacle, to make a pool. The congregation stood and sang inspiring songs as they witnessed new converts demonstrate that they had become dead unto sin, but alive with Christ unto God and godly living. There was joy in every heart.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HOME MISSIONARY WORK

Open Air Service

Open-Air Service, also known as *Street Work*, is a mode of evangelistic outreach which has been an important feature of The Apostolic Faith work since its inception. It usually precedes the evangelistic services held on Sundays and weekdays.

Gospel workers go out in teams to hold the service. Each team is a complete unit. It comprises a leading minister, an assistant leader, instrumentalists, choristers and other workers. They are equipped with different instruments, a portable organ, Gospel literature and hymn books. The teams usually gather in the prayer room to pray for at least an hour, before leaving for the open air service. The organist arranges the hymns to be played by the instrumentalists and the songs to be rendered by the choir members. The different teams then go to their assigned locations. Members of a team going to a nearby location walk to the spot, while those going to far distances go in vehicles. The leader ensures that the spots to be used are not near any house of worship.

On arrival at the spot, the team members quickly arrange



Some workers going for street work in 2001



Workers preparing to go for a street work in the 50s



A sister testifying during an Open-air Service

themselves in form of an arc, with the team leader at one end. The organ is placed in the middle and the choir members stand on either side.



A typical crowd at an open-air service

A prelude of music by the instrumentalists quickly attracts a crowd. Testimonies of team members are interspersed

with singing. At the end of the service, an invitation to the Church is extended to all. Those who could follow immediately are encouraged to do so while those who could not, are given a description of the Church location.

This mode of evangelism has been very thrilling to people and it attracts large crowds. Many times, a good number of the audience join the workers in their vehicles back to the Church and pray through to Christian experiences. Included in the rank of workers today are converts of street meetings.

The Music Director, Brother John Aina, was attracted to the Church through a street meeting. After he watched an organist play, he ran after the Gospel vehicle until they got to the Church. He heard the message of salvation and prayed through to the experience of sins forgiven. He then learnt to play the organ in the Church and became a useful instrument in the hand of God.

Another brother testified:

"I was fed up with life and planned to commit suicide at a set time. Before the time, I strolled out to have a last look at things around. Coincidentally, I saw Gospel street workers whose testimonies gave me hope. When the invitation was given, I followed them to the Church and was graciously saved".

Street Campaign

Street Campaign is another method of evangelism that has yielded good results. The campaign team reports at the prayer room for a



Brother Samuel Odumosu distributing Gospel papers

prayer session before the outing. The team consists of male and female dedicated Christian workers. Gospel vehicles with public address system are used for the campaign.

While the vehicle moves along the streets in a low speed, Gospel music is relayed, and announcement is made introducing the Church

and its location, to the neighbourhood. Other members of the team get out of the bus at convenient points and cheerfully distribute Gospel literature.

The campaigns are organised early in the mornings and in the evenings in areas where the Church is situated. Usually, there are campaigns on Sundays and on weekdays, before and during special events such as retreats, rallies, and camp meetings.

Campaign teams also go into villages and small towns to spread the Gospel news. Eventually, Apostolic Faith Churches are established in such places.

House to House Campaign

This is another method that is used in bringing people to Christ. Like other methods of evangelism, a prayer session precedes the outing. The workers are arranged into teams, and they go out in pairs to visit neighbouring houses, invite people to service, and give them Gospel literature.

Sunday School

In The Apostolic Faith, Sunday School is taken as a very important aspect of evangelism. The Sunday School work is established by the Church for everybody and especially for seekers after righteousness. It is at the Sunday School that the 'Living Seed' is sown in the heart of the young. As the Word of God says:

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

Parents are urged to make sure that their children attend Sunday School regularly, so that the seed of God's Word may be planted in their hearts at an early age. It is also to fortify them against unbelief and denial of the Truth, which they may encounter later in life.

A typical division of classes and the duration of the lessons is as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 4 - 5 years | Primary | 2 - 5 minutes |
| 5 - 7 years | Primary | 5 - 8 minutes |
| 7 - 10 years | Elementary | 10 - 12 minutes |
| 10 - 13 years | Junior | 15 - 20 minutes |
| 13 - 18 years | Intermediate | 25 - 30 minutes |
| 18 - end of years | Adult | 30 - 40 minutes |

A child is admitted to Sunday School as early as the age of four. Children have their own hall, specially built for that purpose. The Children Sunday School building at the Lagos Headquarters contains: a Sunday School hall, a Sunday School Superintendent's office, a sickbay for taking care of children who suddenly fall sick during the Sunday School, a store for keeping Sunday School materials, the conveniences and a general office for teachers.

In addition, notice boards are placed in strategic locations in the Children's Hall, which display the name of the teacher of each class, as well as beautiful pictures illustrating the lesson for the week. Each class teacher has a chart and a class register. These are to monitor the progress of each pupil in the class.

Children have a series of lessons, which cover the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The lessons are arranged in three books, one book for a year. This means that every three years, the children are taken through the whole Bible. At the end of each Sunday School session, children who can read are given pamphlets, where the lesson for the following week is explained. The pamphlet contains the title of the lesson, the Bible passages relating to the lesson and the memory verse. Small slips cut into different shapes containing the lesson title, text and memory verse, are given to little children who cannot read, so that their parents can teach them at home.

Sunday School starts with a pre-Sunday School music session, when new songs are learnt. In some branch churches, where such is possible, there is an additional afternoon Sunday School, usually at



Children's Sunday school review class in progress

2:00 pm. This is for children who are not able to attend the morning session, perhaps, because they attend other churches in the morning.

Music is an important part of Children's Sunday School. The children have their own hymn book of 250 songs, known as *Watch and Pray*.

The children are encouraged, very early in life, to learn how to play a musical instrument such as the recorder, with which they present music during their Sunday School. As they grow older, they are also encouraged to learn other instruments such as the violin, the flute and the organ. There is always a welcome song for new members and a birthday song for children who celebrate their birthdays.

The children are taught with visual aids for easy understanding. These aids include: picture roll, flannel graph, overhead projector, slide projector and lately, computer projector and video machine. In some instances, physical objects such as fruits, tree branches and other items, are also used. Simple vocabulary in accordance with the age of the children is used to teach them. Their lesson is short and straight to the point. Songs which match the lessons are taught from their song book. All these make the lessons interesting and indelible in the hearts of the children.

At the age of thirteen, children graduate into the intermediate class. On such occasion, the remaining children sing a farewell song for the child, a certificate is given to him, he is prayed for by a teacher and then majestically marches out, led by a teacher, to his new class.

Adult Sunday School

Adult Sunday School is based on lessons studied in Sunday School quarterlies. Each quarterly has 13 lessons and each lesson contains the lesson title, text, memory verse, the lesson notes and questions. At the end of each quarter, the book is exchanged for another one. Thus, 4 books are studied in one year. The entire Bible is covered in 36 books, within 9 years. The quarterlies are printed in different languages.

Spirit-filled Sunday School teachers, who hold a conference to review the weekly lesson, are responsible for teaching on Sundays.

The Adult Sunday School classes open at 9:00 am with about three congregational songs led by the teacher. This is followed by a congregational prayer and a song from the choir. An appointed minister asks members of the congregation to recite the memory verses for intermediate and adult, according to the pre-studied lesson in the Sunday School quarterly. Division into classes follows this on the basis of age, language and gender. The nursing parents are given a separate class. There is also a class for the hearing-impaired.

At the end of the teaching, the choir gives a special song and members of the congregation have the opportunity of asking questions relating to the lesson.

The Sunday School has served many generations and it continues to be an effective way of winning the world for Christ.

Collection of Children for Sunday School

In order to ensure that as many children as possible enjoy Sunday School in each locality, the Church has a group of dedicated saints who volunteer to help in collecting the children on Sunday mornings. These Sunday School collectors visit different homes during the week, requesting parents to allow their children to come to Sunday School the following Sunday. As early as 6:00 am on Sunday, the collectors move out into various locations, usually with church vehicles, to collect the children. At the end of the Sunday School, the buses take the children back home. This has been an avenue for bringing to the Sunday School, many children, whose parents are not members of the Church.

Sunday School Campaign

Children outreach involves intensive campaign. Occasionally, campaigns are organised by Sunday School teachers and collectors to boost the children Sunday School work. This is usually done on a public holiday. Teams, with their leaders, some wearing placards with the inscription 'Come to The Apostolic Faith Sunday School' or 'I Go to The Apostolic Faith Sunday School', visit various parts of the town. With the use of a public address system, they invite both the children and adults to come around while the instrumentalists are playing.

When a good number of children gather, a short Bible verse is taught to them repeatedly as memory verse. A drilling exercise then follows and any child who is able to recite correctly, is given a gift.

This throws more challenge to the children and makes them more interested. In the meantime, more children arrive. After a large crowd has gathered, a picture roll or pictures placed on a flannel board are briefly shown to illustrate a simple Redemption Story, which forms the core of the campaign. At the close of the meeting, adults in attendance are given tracts or other Gospel literature. Announcement is made concerning the intention to have the children attend the Sunday School. Transportation to and from Church is provided for the children. Sunday School campaign continues to yield a bounteous harvest.



Collecting Sunday School children on a typical Sunday



Children returning home after Sunday School in Ebute Meta, Lagos, Nigeria.

Other Activities for Children

Children, like adults, are involved in many church activities, such as singing, recitation of verses of the Scripture and the regular Sunday



A Sunday School Campaign at Obalende, Lagos, Nigeria, in the early days, and the attracted crowd



Another Sunday School campaign in progress



Sunday School Teachers leading the children in for a programme during the 2003 camp meeting

worship activities. Several activities are also organised for them at Christmas and Easter seasons, when they tell the stories of the events in songs, recitations, flannel graph display and short drama. With similar programmes they also commemorate special events and anniversaries, such as Mothers' Day, National and Children's Days. All these arouse the children's interest in the things of God while they are yet tender-hearted and eager to learn the Word of God.

Visitations

The Apostolic Faith Organisation takes the Gospel message to institutions. The first account of such a visit was made in 1947, when the Church was at 63, Ibadan Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos. The Gospel workers visited the Boys' Hostel of an institution, where there were 29 boys together with

their wardens. The boys joyfully received the Word of God. Since then, visitation to other institutions is a regular event.

Penal Institutions

Selected Gospel teams visit penal institutions. Each team includes a leading minister, musicians, singers and other Christian workers. When the prisoners are assembled, hymns are selected for singing. Testimonies are given by redeemed Gospel workers, male and female, who had been once enslaved by sin, like the prison inmates. They tell of the deliverance they found when they surrendered their lives to Christ, and of the power they received to live above the sins that once had them bound. Following a brief message from the Word of God, the minister asks for their prayer requests. They then have the opportunity to pray for themselves. Their requests are presented at the Church before the workers, who take them to God in prayer.

The Apostolic Faith holds meetings in major and minor penal institutions. There are numerous testimonies of real conversion that took place among the inmates and the prison staff. The Gospel magazines are regularly sent to them and many have become members of the Church.

Hospitals and Old People's Homes

Motivated by the love of God, teams of volunteer Gospel workers, have been taking the Gospel of Jesus to the sick and afflicted for many years. Visitations are made regularly to government and private hospitals where the workers pray with the sick. Gospel literature which had been prayed over, are distributed. Through reading these Gospel papers, many patients in the hospital have been healed as a result of their faith in God. Others had met the Lord right there on their dying beds, and joyfully stepped into the presence of the Lord.

In Old People's homes, the workers present the Word of Life in music and songs as well as by their testimonies. No privilege could be greater than to visit the aged, feeble, sick, sad and lonely people. They look forward to the visitations and are never tired of hearing the singing. These feeble, aged people, with quavering voices, join the workers in singing familiar Gospel hymns. Through dedicated Gospel workers, many of these people have placed their faith in the Saviour and have made their peace with God, before leaving this world. Others

have felt the touch of the Master on their bodies and have been healed. Although seemingly alone or forgotten and often bored by their limitations, many respond with a smile as the workers greet them.

These visitations have yielded results. Patients and the aged have been helped physically and spiritually, through this work.

School Visitation

Many years after the Gospel started in Nigeria, Brother T developed a burden for the work in schools. With the Gospel team, he made quite a number of visits to several towns in the Northern Region of Nigeria, such as Kano, Kaduna, Jos, Ilorin, Ayetoro-Gbede and Kabba. An attempt was made to distribute Gospel literature everywhere, but this was not possible in some northern towns, where the people were predominantly Muslims. In some areas, the Gospel papers were burnt as soon as they were received. Even, the nominal Christians in some places did not receive the team because they did not like The Apostolic Faith.

In 1959, the Church sought for permission to visit schools in some towns, and this was granted. Thus, the door was open to evangelise the pupils and teachers of such schools. The Gospel story was introduced to them and leaflets containing simple Bible stories were often distributed. The teachers and pupils received them joyfully. In the sixties, visits were extended to colleges and Universities in the western parts of Nigeria. This yielded dividends because many people were converted.

Association of Visiting Secretaries (A. V. S.)

After his initial experience in school visitation, Brother T recorded:

"When we visit schools, one of the questions people ask is, 'Which organisation or Church do you come from?' When we say 'The Apostolic Faith', they immediately grow cold and sometimes become hostile. This is because of their bias against The Apostolic Faith. As a result, we had to go to schools sometimes with private vehicles without Church labels at all. Our experience of the fifties and sixties convinced us beyond any reasonable doubt, that we could not make any headway in schools, as long as we went in the

name of the Church. Eventually, it dawned on me that we could choose a name for our school visitors. Hence the name 'Association of Visiting Secretaries (A.V.S.)'

"Small buses and cars were bought and labelled 'Association of Visiting Secretaries (A.V.S.)' for the purpose of school visitation. This has gone a long way to give us open doors in many institutions. When the students see the small buses arrive in the schools, they jubilate and read the words, 'Association of Visiting Secretaries' aloud. This was not the case before".

The School visitors, called *Visiting Secretaries*, are drawn from all walks of life. They are men and women who have got the three Christian



A bus used for the AVS work

experiences of salvation, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and whose daily lives agree with the profession of their faith. Although, they do not parade themselves as Apostolic Faith Church members to the students, they are, in fact, full-fledged members of the Church who uphold all the doctrines of God's Word.

The A. V. S. is the evangelistic arm of The Apostolic Faith among the youth, and the visitation to schools holds once in a week in every institution, where the opportunity is granted. Other places visited by the A.V.S. include artisans' workshops, markets, homes and business centres. The A.V.S. conducts the weekly Bible Study in the Church. It also visits other churches when invited. The results from these institutions are so impressive that the people look forward to having the Secretaries. They realise that only the Word of God can eradicate juvenile delinquency.

The Africa Overseer is the grand Chairman of the Association. He is assisted by a General Secretary at the Headquarters who is the National coordinator of all the activities. In each state or district, the

A.V.S. is headed by the Overseer in charge, assisted by a State Secretary, who coordinates the work in the state or district. All members of the Association are referred to as Secretaries. They meet once a week to review the activities and lessons for the week.

The A.V.S. teaching materials include Bible lessons for school visitations and Bible Study Outlines which are used in the weekly Bible Study. All the materials used in the preparation of the lessons and outlines are derived from The Apostolic Faith Sunday School quarterlies.

After due approval has been granted by the school authority, a convenient day is chosen within the week for visitation. Visitation can be during the morning assembly, at break time or in the afternoon at a time fixed for religious meetings by the institution.

Prior to the visitations, the Secretaries assemble to pray before they set out.

Where the Secretaries are allowed, a short music prelude is presented. Where this is not possible, a chorus session may be held, led by one of the students or teachers in the school. Thereafter, the selected lesson for the week is taught and a few minutes is allowed for prayers. A maximum period of fifteen minutes is normally spent on the lesson during the morning assembly. In some institutions, more time is allowed for Bible Study in the afternoon.

Campus A.V.S.

In the higher institutions of learning, students who were members of The Apostolic Faith, used to meet to read the Sunday School quarterlies and to pray. As the years rolled by, many religious groups sprang up in the institutions. The Apostolic Faith group wanted to be identified, so that they could evangelise their colleagues on the



A school visitor with students on the assembly

campus. Different names such as "Old Faith" and "Africa for Christ" were chosen in different institutions.

Later, it was discovered that students who had enjoyed the teachings of the A. V. S. in their secondary schools, found it difficult to identify these groups. For common identification nationwide, the name *Campus Association of Visiting Secretaries (Campus A. V. S.)* was adopted by the Church, for the groups in higher institutions of learning. The Association propagates the Gospel solely on the campuses. With permission from the authorities of the institutions and the full backing of the Church, they organise activities such as weekly meetings, daily prayer meetings, Bible studies, film shows, evening of music, revival meetings, invitation to Sunday services and end of the year rally. Through these activities, many have been won for Christ and are useful in the vineyard of God.

Retreats

As a follow-up to school visitations, retreats are held twice a year at Easter and Christmas for students and the public. Brother T reported:

"We considered that it would be beneficial if the teachers could have an interest in the Word of God. This would help them pass on the message to their pupils. Hence the first retreat ever was held in 1970, at Aiyetoro, Kwara State for teachers only, to help them pass the message on. It was very successful and it was an eye-opener that retreats could be organised on a larger scale in future.

"In 1973, the first general retreat was organised on the campground in Lagos. The classes of people represented were school teachers from secondary schools, teacher training colleges, primary schools and a number of university students. The total number that came to that first general retreat was about 200. Several of them prayed through to victory. Among the university students were those who came heavily bearded but went from the retreat clean-shaven, having come in contact with the Lord. Retreats have ever since come to stay, holding at the Lagos Headquarters twice or thrice every year."



At a retreat in 1978. Ministers at the centre include: Brother and Sister Loyce C. Carver and Brother Timothy Oshokoya

Attendance increased to thousands of people as publicity, through the aid of banners, posters and handbills, is usually very intensive.

Follow-up letters are written to the students who have attended any of the retreats. General correspondence with them is also maintained. Letters are written to Secretaries to update them on the activities of the Association as well as to encourage them.

A.V.S. retreats have given a boost to the spread of the Gospel and the attendance in many Apostolic Faith Churches increased.

Rallies

The Youth Rally was inaugurated in October, 1975, by the first Africa Overseer, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya. The rally was organised for the

youths of the Church to mark the Independence Day of Nigeria and is usually held on October 1 of every year. The ages of the participants range between 11 and 40. Issues concerning the youth such as: education, marriage, career, and other matters that may be bothering the young people, are discussed.



A Students' rally in Igbesa, Nigeria, in 1999



A students' outdoor programme in progress

Bible Study

Another A.V.S. activity is Bible Study, which is a weekly midweek meeting. It takes place in the evenings. A music prelude precedes the congregational singing before the start of the teaching. Bible Study outlines prepared for retreats are used. It is a spiritually refreshing time of the week, when ministers, workers and the congregation sit together to study the Word of God.

Youth Corps

In Nigeria, the Government has a programme whereby young people, who have gone through the higher institutions, are bound to serve the nation for a year in any organisation to which they are posted. Some of them who are members, are posted to the Church.

The Youth Corps are then assigned to work in different departments in the Church. They are also sent out to branch churches, to help in evangelism, through school visitation.

Sometimes, they have jointly executed projects for the Church in remembrance of their Service Year. Such projects include: a 'Watch-Tower', a Water Fountain and a library at the Headquarters.



A group photograph of Apostolic Faith Corpers in 1999



National Coordinator of the Apostolic Faith Corpers, Brother Soji Oni, inspecting a parade



The 'Watch-Tower' at the Anthony Camp-ground, donated by Corpers

Music

Music is a universal language. It is a language that is understood by the young and the old, the poor and the rich, the lowly as well as the high. Spiritual music is a tonic for the soul. It draws the heart to Heaven, it soothes sorrowful hearts and makes happy hearts even more joyful. Like preaching the Word of God, music is another medium by which God talks to the heart of man. There is, in effect, an inseparable link between music and the Gospel. Music has been a part of The Apostolic Faith work through the years. When Brother Timothy was in the Pentecostal Church, he observed that the type of choruses rendered, as well as the clapping and dancing during the services, promoted carnal displays among the worshippers rather than edified them spiritually. This was very distasteful to him. Therefore, when he started The Apostolic Faith, even before he ever worshipped in any Apostolic Faith service, he decided on his own, based on the

Bible, that he would use only sacred music and instruments that would edify the soul.

In 1946, when the cottage meetings of the Organisation were held at 26, Little Road, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, Brother T started the orchestra with a guitar and mandolin. They were



The four-man early Orchestra of the Church in Nigeria

played by the two leading ministers: Brothers Timothy Oshokoya, playing the guitar, and Lucas Obakoya on the mandolin. In 1947, two more musical instruments: a banjo and an accordion were procured. God provided two violins in 1949 and soon, God called the first eight saints to dedicate their lives to the learning and playing of these instruments. One of them was Brother Emmanuel Shotade, who was a piano and violin teacher for many years.

The International Headquarters in Portland already had a well-established orchestra. In 1951, Brother Timothy visited the International Headquarters. He was pleasantly surprised that the Spirit of God had led him in Nigeria to do exactly what the saints were doing in America. While waiting for the camp meeting to start, he trained in several areas of music. He came back with a good number of instruments, including trumpet, cornet, horn, trombone and violin. He learnt the use of the different instruments and came back to teach others. As a result of this, many children of God were inspired and they developed interest in music. Some had the opportunity of learning how to play these musical instruments. Most of the players, whose ages ranged between thirty and fifty, cherished the privilege. More violins, cellos and a piano were bought.

In December 1952, the first Musical Concert was held in Lagos with eight people performing.

In order to improve the standard of the performance of the Choir and Orchestra, Brother Timothy solicited the aid of both Nigerians and



A Musical Concert held in the early days

Expatriates who were seasoned musicians.

He made arrangements with a Brother, Julius Osidele, for the regular importation of musical instruments at affordable prices. This made it easy for individuals to possess the instruments they used. He got some members of the orchestra trained, to service and maintain the instruments. One of them was Brother Ropo Odumosu who was trained to service the organ.

The Church then started a non-fee-paying music school, that prepared members for the Choir and Orchestra. New students started music from what is known as the *Rudiments class*, from where they proceeded to the *Voice Production and Instruments classes*. There is no



Brother Oshokoya (standing alone) with the Male Choir in 1975



An early Male Quartet. Seated from Left: Paul Ibikunle (Tenor), John Aina (Organist), Amos Adesanya (Bass), Samuel Odumosu (Baritone). Amos Adeoye (Tenor) is standing

Esther Ogunfowomu (left) and Joan Aina performing a violin duet



The Orchestra in 1975

age limit in the music classes. The classes have been restructured in a way that an incoming student spends a year at the *Rudiments of Music* class, where the theory of music is taught, after which a nationally coordinated test must be passed. Successful students then proceed to the *Sight Reading class*, where they learn to read the staff notation. They simultaneously start their instrument class. At the end of the session, students take another nationally coordinated examination which qualifies them to sing and/or play at the Junior level. Such people are eligible to perform during the Sunday School and Bible Study periods as well as the Young People's Services. There is room

for further studies at the *Art of Singing* class, where people study the techniques of effective singing. People in such a class can also proceed to the *Advanced Instruments class*. Passing the examinations at this stage takes such people to the Senior level, which qualifies them to perform in all services and concerts. Although the culture of classical music is not native to Africa, many students have, through these classes, become very proficient in classical music production, both in terms of instrument and vocal rendition.

The musical instruments used in the services include: violin, viola, violoncello, flute, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, French horn, baritone as well as the harp. The organ and the piano are natural additions. Members of the Music Department, youths and adults alike, freely give of their talents, without monetary consideration. In fact, each student is expected to purchase his own musical instrument, books, music stand and other accessories. The binding force on these musicians is sanctification which gives them oneness of purpose to give their best to God.

Children are not left out of the music education. As soon as they start Sunday School at the age of 4, they are encouraged to attend weekly music practices, where they are taught how to sing and play instruments.

These children start with the playing of recorders and as they grow up, they learn to use other instruments such as violin, flute and piano.

On Sunday mornings, they present music at the adult Sunday School class. They also form a choir and orchestra in their own chapel.

A Grand Piano was purchased in 1954. This piano served at the Headquarters Church in Lagos for many years until it was replaced.

The Church started with a small portable organ. Later, a manual reed organ with pedals was purchased in the sixties. In 1970, the first electronic organ, *Solina Model 110*, was



Music presentation by the Sunday school children at the 2003 Camp meeting

installed. This was replaced in 1971 by *Eminent 650 Classique*. On December 18, 1977, a *Concert Model 4700 Wurlitzer* organ was dedicated for God's use at the Headquarters Church in Lagos. The organ served for many years as the principal organ. On Sunday, April 16, 1995, during the Easter Concert, a grand pull-out ceremony was performed for the Wurlitzer. It was replaced by a 4-manual digitally simulated pipe organ, *Opus 485*, manufactured by Johannus.

There are usually three concerts presented annually in Lagos by the combined Choir and Orchestra. They are: Easter Concert on Easter Sunday, the Camp Meeting Concert on the first Monday of the annual camp meeting, and the Christmas Concert on the Sunday before the Christmas Day. Other states in Nigeria and countries in Africa hold their own concerts at convenient dates.

Music lovers attend these concerts and thoroughly enjoy the sacred and semi-classical presentations. Sometimes, up to 21,000 people attend a concert; among whom are: government officials, academics, traditional rulers and diplomats.

The anthems of praise sung from consecrated hearts and music skilfully played with spiritual fervour, have been effectively used by the Spirit of God. Souls have been led to Christ as a result of attending the concerts.

Brother T was a very great lover of music and he did all he could to build up the Music Department. He was very regular and punctual at the practices of the Choir and



Eminent 650 Classique



Wurlitzer Organ



Opus 485 Electronic Pipe Organ



Sister Dorcas Okuyemi, the first Organist

Orchestra. His words of encouragement, instructions, advice and fatherly interest in the personal welfare of every member of the choir were a very great inspiration to the group. The postconcert briefings of Brother T to the members of the Choir and Orchestra was a very pleasant experience indelibly printed in their memory. This helped them to consecrate deeper and be more dedicated to their call.

The principle which was originally established in the beginning of this work still remains. Only those who have the genuine experience of salvation, who are also truly sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, take part in the ministry of music and singing.

Young people have always been encouraged to obtain the best possible education and also excel in music, that they might glorify God with their talents. It has been rewarding to see the progress made by those who have applied themselves to the field of music. Apart from private study of music, young musicians and singers are given group training. Practices which must be attended regularly and punctually are held each week in the Church, under the directive of a competent conductor. Many of the musicians who participate received the call early in life. A number of them who answered that call, are still playing their instruments after 30 or 40 years. Young people, who follow in the steps of those early day musicians, are giving their talents wholeheartedly to the Lord.

Rev. T. G. Oshokoya personally directed the instrumental and vocal groups for a number of years. The present Music Director, Brother John Adelaja Aina, started playing the organ when he was young. He found great pleasure in dedicating his talents and time to the



The Apostolic Faith Choir and Orchestra at one of her annual concerts



Brother John Aina (the Music Director) and his wife, Joan, at a concert



Brother T conducting



Brother John Aina took over from him



Brother Kayode Oje



Brother Dotun Ewumi

service of the Lord. As the principal organist, he has served for almost 50 years in the Music Department. Brother John is assisted by Brothers Kayode Oje and Dotun Ewumi.

The Orchestra performs music written by the Masters including Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn, Schubert and others. Many orchestra pieces and songs rendered by the Choir and Orchestra were composed by different members of the Church who were inspired to give praise to God.

The Founder, the Rev. (Mrs.) Florence Crawford, was a

songwriter. One of her well-loved hymns was composed shortly after she had established the Gospel work in Portland. Under the burden of severe trial, she put into verse the craving of her soul in "The Heart's Cry".

Her son, Rev. Raymond Robert Crawford, also composed a number of Gospel songs. A special burden came upon his heart, to write a hymn which gave admonition for prayer. Then, as now, there was a special need for prevailers, and the Lord gave to him the words of the soul-stirring hymn—"Prevailing Prayer". Others who wrote songs at the International Headquarters included Brothers Philip Brown and Clifford Baltzell.

In Africa, God gave talents to individuals who yielded their lives to compose and arrange music for the Choir and Orchestra in English, French and many local languages. Notable among these were Rev. Timothy Oshokoya, who expressed his burden for the preaching of the Word of God in Africa, when he turned the wordings of 2 Thessalonians 3:1-16 into a song. His successor, Rev. Josiah Soyinka was inspired to give out the words of a song for the dedication of the Johannus organ, the first verse of which was:

*Be with us, gracious Lord, today,
The organ we hallow to Thee,
O hear Thy servants as they pray,
And let Thine ear attentive be.*

Rev. John Aina, the Music Director in the Africa Headquarters, has composed, arranged and adapted many songs and orchestra pieces over the years. One of such is the "A. V. S. Watch Song". His enthusiasm has encouraged many other music lovers to consecrate and develop their talents in this area. Some of them are Brothers E. O. Aina, Kayode Oje, Dele Fakorede, Femi Adeola, S. K. J. Okorie, J. G. Umoh and his son, Attah Umoh.

The Africa Overseer, Rev. Paul Akazue, with a heavy burden for the work of God in Africa, was inspired to write, during an evangelistic trip to an African country, the words of the song: "God, Remember Africa". The first verse is given below:

*Dear Lord remember,
We pray Thee Father*

*Remember AFRICA,
Your own Continent
How she has suffered,
For these many years
Rise up in your power,
To deliver AFRICA.*

The entire world has been blessed through the unique music ministry that God gave to The Apostolic Faith. It is a great treasure that is diligently guarded in all locations and branches of the Church.

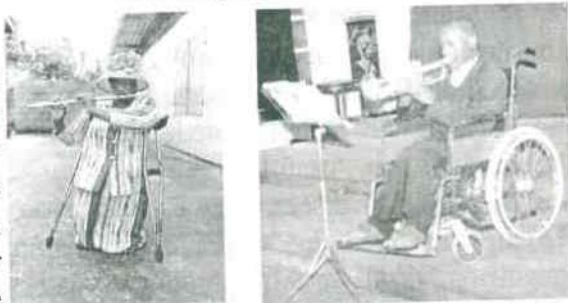
The Handicapped

The Apostolic Faith is mindful of the fact that God reaches His love to all people including the handicapped. The deaf and dumb, the blind and the crippled, need to know of the Saviour who died for them.

At the Headquarters Church in Lagos and in many branch churches, the Gospel message reaches the deaf through the sign language. The blind read Braille Bibles and the crippled are seated in their wheel chairs in a column, where they can pray without the wheel chairs constituting a hindrance to the movement of other worshippers. The Church organises sign language lessons for volunteers among the saved souls to learn how to communicate with the deaf and dumb.



The hearing impaired are not left out



Sister Dupe Omogbayi and Brother John Adeodu on the flute and trumpet respectively

Sunday School classes and the services are also interpreted through sign language for them. The blind have the Sunday School quarterlies recorded in audio tapes for them so that they could also learn the Word of God thoroughly. Many of them are saved and joyfully invite other disabled people to Church.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AT THE HEADQUARTERS

In Lagos, at the Africa Headquarters, various departments were created to aid the spread of the Gospel to every nook and cranny of Africa. Over the years, these sections were manned by dedicated saints. Many brethren who are *of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom*, volunteered to work in these departments, thus, helping the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad.

When The Apostolic Faith work began in Nigeria, there were just a few departments. Later, others were established to cater for the need of the work. In many of the branch churches all over the continent, similar departments have been established.

General Office

The General Office had its small beginnings at 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta, in 1949. Letters were handwritten to correspondents. Later, a portable typewriter was procured. This was used in replying mails. In 1951, when *Brother T* was invited to Portland, Oregon, camp meeting, some standard manual typewriters were given to the Church in Nigeria. They were used in producing newsletters and other Gospel materials until electric typewriters were bought to replace them. Whenever many copies of any material were needed, a manually operated duplicating machine was used.

Some years later, the Office moved from Simpson Street, to the ground floor of *Brother T*'s personal house at 53, Isaac John Street, Igbobi, Lagos. It remained there until the building at Simpson Street was renovated. The Office moved back to Simpson Street in July, 1983. The ground floor of the two-storey building was used as the General Office, while the first and second floors served as residence for full-time workers.

Some of the office staff who worked with *Brother T* were: Sister Dorcas Okuyemi, Secretary; Brother Paul Ibikunle, who later became *Brother T*'s Personal Assistant until 1977, when he was sent to Bendel State (now Edo and Delta States) of Nigeria, to oversee the work there; and Sister Olive Dosunmu, who headed the Dispatch Section. Sister



Brother T in the office



Sister Esther Ogunfowomu

Esther Ogunfowomu, a stenographer, who worked as one of the secretaries to *Brother T* until his death in 1983, joined the office in 1971. Sister Ogunfowomu is the current Office Manager. *Brother Muiyiwa Olamijulo* joined in 1978. He was the General Secretary and National A.V.S. Coordinator. He later became the Office

Manager until 1997, when he was transferred to Oyo/Osun District as the Overseer. *Brother Dealyn George* joined the office staff in 1983. In 1997, he was sent to oversee the work in Liberia.

The Office moved to the Anthony Village Campground in 1984. The work of general administration grew larger and modern equipment were procured. Some volunteers among the ministers take part in replying the letters that come from correspondents all over Africa and overseas. The Dispatch Section is responsible for mailing. Some correspondents write about their personal problems, requesting counselling and prayers. In their quest to know more about the Bible, they ask questions and suitable replies are sent to them, so that they can have a deeper relationship with God. The replies to the letters encourage, guide, comfort and edify the correspondents.

Large quantities of the *Light of Hope* and *HigherWay* magazines come regularly from the International Headquarters. These are sent



Brother Muiyiwa Olamijulo

free to individuals who are on the mailing list. Many part-time workers assist in the dispatch of the magazines.

Letters come from teachers and students who attend the retreats organised by the A. V.S. and from the institutions visited by the Visiting Secretaries. They write to ask for explanation on certain points in the Scriptures, solution to their personal problems in the school, or how they can know more of God.

Newsletters are produced periodically, to tell of the wonderful work of God in the Church, results of revival meetings, testimonies and current events in the branch churches all over Africa, for the spiritual edification of those who are far and near.

French Department

French has been used in The Apostolic Faith in Nigeria from inception, because one of the founding fathers, Brother Ben Abbey, was from the Republic of Benin, where French is the official language. In 1948, The Apostolic Faith work began in the Republic of Benin, thus increasing the interaction with the French speakers. As Brother T increased his efforts to evangelise the French speaking countries, in his plan to win Africa for Christ, he realised the import of the French language. He made efforts to learn it and encouraged young people who had the opportunity, to study it.



Brother Dealyn George



Sister Bola Idowu, Passages officer

In 1965, Sisters Rachel Fakorede and Esther Ibikunle, who were studying French in a higher institution, joined the Church. Brother T



Sis. Rachel Fakorede



French Editors at work

started using them as translators and interpreters. Portland Headquarters had translated some tracts into French and the French version of the *Light of Hope* was printed twice a year. This became inadequate as converts among the French speakers increased. Meanwhile, the number of brethren who studied French increased. The brethren were organised into a committee of translators, to translate into French many Gospel publications that were available in English. This was a challenge for the brethren and many came to contribute their quota.

In the late 70s, an arrangement was made with the International Headquarters in Portland, to send to Lagos Headquarters, French letters from the French speaking countries in Africa, because there were brethren in Lagos who understood French and could take care of the correspondence. This greatly increased the volume of French work.

On March 5, 1983, the French Department was created in the Church Office under the leadership of Sister Rachel Fakorede. *Youth Corpers*, who studied French and came to serve the Church worked in the Department. The functions of the Department amongst others include: coordinating the activities of The Apostolic Faith Churches in the French speaking countries, handling all the French correspondence, supervising the music students who come to the Headquarters from the French speaking countries and translating all materials for publication into French. Some brethren from the Republic of Benin work regularly in the Department. Saints from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote D'Ivoire and Togo also come from time to time to help.

On January 25, 2001, the Department started the teaching of French among the adults in the Church. This has enhanced the knowledge of the French language within the Church and made communication with the people from the French speaking countries easier.

Translation into African Languages

At the start of The Apostolic Faith work in Africa, the pioneers realised the importance of having the Gospel literature in various African languages. Though English Gospel materials were sent regularly from Portland Headquarters, there was still the need to publish the articles in African languages. Therefore, the translation of some of the English publications into various languages was organised. Brother Agbede and Sister Florence Bolurin translated into Yoruba the songs in the *Tabernacle Hymnal*, *Apostolic Faith Songbook*, the children hymn book (*Watch and Pray*), and the Sunday School lessons for the Elementary Department. Sisters Bolurin and Okuyemi began the translation of the adult Sunday School quarterlies. Later, Brother Josiah Soyinka joined the team of translators, and when Brother Agbede died, Soyinka continued the work. He coopted some brethren to work with him until the 36 Sunday School books were translated into Yoruba. Many tracts were also translated.

Brother S. K. J. Okorie championed the translation of English publications into Igbo language. Sister Abigail Udensi is now in charge. Brothers Philip Inyang and Sampson Ekanem translated into Efik, while Brother Timothy Sowunmi effected the translation into Hausa. Translation work has developed with the growth of the Church.

Leaders in other countries emulated the achievement in Nigeria and they translated some Gospel materials into the local languages of their congregation. Brother Marcellin Houmenou in the Republic of Benin translated the 36 books of the Adult Sunday School lessons into *Egun*, while Brother M'Bengani Kalundandiko worked on the translation of Sunday School lessons and the hymn book, *Collected Gospel Songs*, into *Lingala*. Gospel materials were also translated into *Baoule* in Cote D'Ivoire, *Ewe* in Togo, Douala in Cameroon and into Ghana local languages.

At the beginning, Brother T edited the materials translated into



Felicia Oyefeso: current editor of *Imole Ireti*



Brothers Akpan and Uno Unoh Okpo: translate into Efik



Timothy Sowumi: translates into Hausa Language



Marcellin Houmenou: translates to Egun language



Abigail Udensi: translates into Igbo Language

Yoruba. Brother J. O. Soyinka took over from him. When the volume of the work increased, Brother Stephen Adeliyi worked full time on it. Later, Sisters Sarah Adeleye and Felicia Oyefeso joined the team. Others who participated came from the neighbouring Yoruba-speaking states of Nigeria. There are editors for other languages — Efik, Igbo and Hausa — who work full-time or part-time.

Publishing Department

“The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it” (Psalm 68:11).

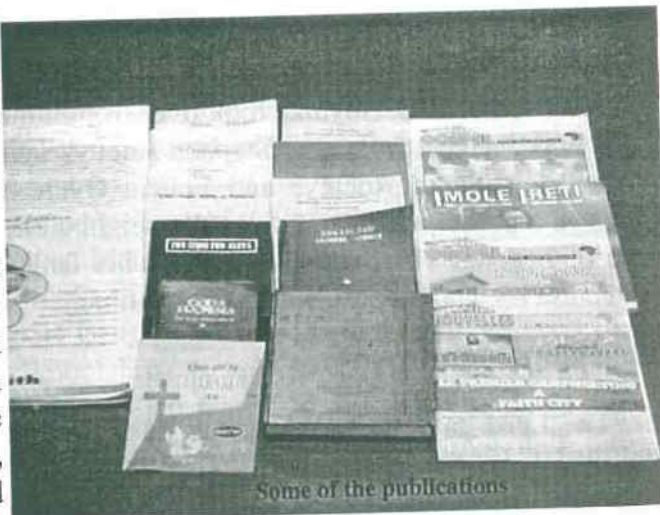
In the seventies, *Camp Meeting Teachings* were produced in

Yoruba language. Some testimony tracts were also printed. Later, a hymn book, *Collected Gospel Songs*, was printed in English and some other languages. The publishing of a Yoruba magazine, *Igbagbo Aposteli* (now *Imole Irete*), started. In 1993, *The Man with a Vision*, a biography of the first Africa Overseer, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, was published. The need to keep the record of the pioneering work of the veterans and to publish it so that it could be an encouragement to the younger generation was felt. Sister Esther Ogunfowomu, the Office Manager, invited Brother Kayode Oje, Sister Rachel Fakorede and a few other consecrated hands to help in the publishing of the materials.

Thus in the year 2000, the Publishing Section was formally established to publish *The Gospel News in Africa* (a quarterly magazine of the Apostolic Faith in Africa). The department also publishes *Camp Meeting Teachings*, tracts and other Gospel materials in English and French. The publications are translated into French language by the French department under the direction of Sister Rachel Fakorede. More French-speaking brethren also voluntarily come regularly from the Republic of Benin and Togo to edit the French versions of the Gospel materials. The French publications have gone a long way in assisting the French speaking brethren in the spread of the Gospel in their localities. The first edition of the *Gospel News in Africa* was published in December 2000, in English and French. The

Camp Meeting Teachings of the Lagos Camp Meeting was also produced in 2001 in English and French.

God raised up consecrated personnel, from the branch churches in some states of Nigeria, who volunteered to join hands with



the workers at the Lagos Headquarters on monthly basis, to work on the materials for publication. These volunteers expend their money, talents and time to ensure that the publishing work progresses. The coordinators are Sister Esther O. Ogunfowomu and Brother Kayode Oje.

Printing Department

With the expansion of the work, the first Africa Overseer, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, saw the need to establish a Printing Press. A record reads:

“Right from the early times, we saw the need to get the sound doctrine of the Word of God to our people in their own language; for faith comes by hearing. We already had Sunday School books which were written in English, but in order to reach the bulk of the people among whom we work, we saw the need to publish the lessons in our own languages. We started with a Speed-O-Print second-hand duplicator, given to us by the Headquarters in Portland, when I went there in 1951. Sunday School lesson outlines for adults, small slips of paper containing the caption for each Sunday lesson, Bible texts and memory verses and leaflets for primary lessons for children were rolled out on the duplicator”.

In 1952, a *Banda Spirit Duplicator* was bought and was used until 1961 to produce children’s lessons in two or three colours. In the late 50s, an old letter press was bought to print, first, the Senior Sunday School lessons, and later, the Junior lessons. Another item purchased was a manually operated guillotine. Types were composed by hand.

In 1964, an *Ellams Duplicator* with interchangeable ink drums was purchased. In 1965, a *Gestilith Gestetner Offset Printing Machine* was purchased, so that better quality Elementary Sunday School lessons could be produced at a greater speed as the lessons were being used in many schools in Kwara State, and other parts of Northern Nigeria. The machine was also used for various printing works including handouts, newsletters and invitation cards.

In 1955, when Brother Oshokoya was again invited to Portland, Oregon, Brother Raymond Crawford, the General Overseer of the

Organisation, realised that a printing plant was needed in Lagos, to produce a periodical in Yoruba language. Before this time, sermons, testimonies, tracts and other articles which were to be produced in Yoruba were typed out and sent to Portland, where they were set to type and sent back to Lagos for proofreading. Sometimes, the materials had to go back and forth several times before they were produced.

As more branch churches were established, the need for more Yoruba tracts, *The Light of Hope*, *Igbagbo Aposteli* and other Yoruba Christian literature for distribution became apparent. Labour unrest and dock strikes all over the world were causing a lot of delay in the shipping and posting of the literature from Portland.

In 1974, there was a plan to undertake a tour of the Kwara, Lagos and Western States, where thousands of *Igbagbo Aposteli* would be distributed. Since there was no stock, the latest edition had to be reprinted. The plates were prepared at the Lagos Headquarters Printing Plant and the actual offset printing job for 100,000 copies was done by a commercial printer. From then on, Brother T had a burden to have a machine which could print the Yoruba magazines



Brother Tanimowo picking type face for printing



Julius Ozallo on the Lithographic Table



The Printing Manager, Brother Emmanuel Sotade (2nd from right) inspecting some printing job

and other Gospels materials. The saints were told of the project. In spite of inflation and spiralling prices, the Lord gave the saints a will to work, and the amount for the equipment was provided. The Machine, a *Heidelberg Kord 64 Offset Machine*, was purchased with the *widows' mite*, in 1975. It was installed at the old campground, Onigbongbo, where a processing camera and a double-sided exposing unit had already been installed.

On Monday, April 14, 1975, a short dedication service was held at the machine room. Among the 51 people present, were ministers and saints from the branch churches at Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ijebu-Ode.

In his sermon, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya said: "*Our dream of 20 years has come true today. We shall continue to give our praises to the Almighty*". He traced the history of the Printing Plant which developed from a small stencil duplicator. The duplicator had been sent to Cotonou, Republic of Benin, for reproducing Sunday School lessons. He itemised the equipment in the printing plant: a letter press with suction feed, an electric guillotine, a small *Offset Gestetner 201*, the new *Heidelberg Kord Offset* machine, processing camera, exposing unit and a photo enlarger. He then read from the Scripture:

"Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?" (1 Chronicles 29:5).

He asked for those who would consecrate themselves unto the Lord to have a part in the work. He highlighted the various sections involved in publishing Gospel materials: writing, translating, typing, editing, printing, parcelling and posting. He added that, children's lessons and memory verses, which came in various shapes and forms, had to be cut out by hand since there was no die-cut machine. Though the cutting process was slow and painful, yet it was very rewarding.

Rev. Lucas Obakoya, his assistant, then prayed, dedicating the new offset machine to God's glory. He also prayed that many more languages might be printed at the press for the salvation of souls.

In 1978, an *Atlas Edit Writer Compugraphic* machine was bought.



Bunmi Adetunji on the computer



Printing of *Imole Ireti* in Progress at the Printing Press with one of the machines

Two of the saints, Brother John Aina and Sister Esther Ogunfowomu, were trained to use the machine, and this enhanced the progress of the work. Later, Brother Aina trained Sister Grace Anu Ogunlaja, the second daughter of Brother T, as an operator, when she joined the full-time ministry. Shortly after, she too trained

Sister Bunmi Adetunji. The compugraphic machine has been replaced by modern computers and the latest model of printers, with Sister Bunmi Adetunji in charge. Brother Adebola Aina worked together with her until he was transferred to the General Office.

In 1984, a *Solina* printing machine was bought to complement the *Kord 64* already in use. A *Horizontal Camera* was bought in 1990.

The Printing Department at the Africa Headquarters in Lagos has developed into a complete press outfit with Brother Emmanuel Shotade as the Head. Different sections exist. The Lithographic Section is headed by Brother Julius Ozallo; Brother Lateef Kotoye was in charge of the machine room until he went to Glory, while Brother Gabriel Alli supervises the cutting and binding. The finishing section which involves folding, counting, checking, numbering and packaging, was supervised by Sister Kofoworola Obakoya until she answered the Home call in December 2002. Sister Felicia Olufunso Sofodunrin now leads the section.

Notable jobs done at the Press include Sunday School books in seven languages – English, French, Yoruba, Igbo, Efik, Hausa and Egun; elementary Sunday school pamphlets; tracts and hymn books in different languages; *Imole Ireti*; the yearly calendars, posters, invitation cards and programmes for special events.

Pioneer Staff at the Press

At the beginning, the printing of the outlines of the Sunday School lessons in Yoruba was done by Brother H. A. Elebute, who owned a commercial printing press. When the Church established her own press at 22, Simpson Street, Brothers Emmanuel Rowaye, who trained as a printer, Stephen Tanimowo, Isaac Popoola Adegbesan and Olufisan Dahunsi, were setting the types for Sunday School books. At the same time, the elementary Sunday School lessons, and all other printing works, were done at Brother T's residence, on the offset machine, by Brother Emmanuel Shotade, assisted by Brothers Michael Onayemi, Matthew Kunle and Solomon Fatoki. The pictorial memory verse slips, given to the children on Sundays, were cut by a group of devoted women: Sisters Hannah Oshokoya, Alaba Elebute, Oreolu Onanuga, Alice Akodu and Charlotte Awodein. Sisters Joan Adunola, Julianah Olotu and Deborah Adesanya, joined them from Ibadan. A cutting machine, operated by Brother Segun Faleye, is now used to cut the memory verses.

In 1970, all the printing equipment at the two locations, 22, Simpson Street and Brother T's residence, were moved to the old campground at Onigbongbo. Brothers Ezekiel Oshobowale, Lucas Obakoya, Julius Ozallo (a printer by trade), Lateef Kotoye and Segun Sobola, and Sisters Kofoworola Obakoya, Rachel Akinboye and Eunice Oshobowale, joined the staff at this period.

It is note worthy that many veterans of faith have worked and are still working in the press as full-time or part-time workers. From time to time, saints from different states in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin come to work at the press. The young and old, male and female, work round the clock all the days of the week.

Kitchen Department

As Jesus did not allow those who came to listen to His Word to leave with empty stomachs, but said to His disciples, "*give ye them to eat*", Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, like his Master, was always concerned to see that people



Modern Kitchen Boilers



The Cafeteria



Olive Dosunmu



Florence Bolurin



Funso Sofodunrin



Caroline Ajayi



Remi Oyinlola

were well-fed. He started the Kitchen Department of The Apostolic Faith in the early 60's by organising the preparation of snacks at 49, Moloney Street, on Saturdays, for the Sunday School teachers who attended the Sunday School teachers' conference. Sister Henrietta Aina Pearse was in charge.

The department became enlarged as the work progressed. The kitchen services increased during retreats, rallies and annual camp meetings, when the staff of the department from various states, gathered together to work day and night, to cater for thousands of participants. Modern kitchen equipment were procured

to facilitate their work.

Knowing the importance of good food, Brother T encouraged the youths to learn cookery. He organised picnics where he made both male and female to cook. He invited professional caterers to lecture the saints and encouraged those who were trained to teach others. He organised the young people into kitchen teams so that they could learn on the job.

The leaders of the kitchen staff who worked at various times from its inception were: Sisters Olive Dosunmu, Florence Bolurin, Olufunso Sofodunrin and Caroline Ajayi. At present, Sister Remi Oyinlola is the leader.

Bookstore

The Church maintains a large bookstore where all printed materials, are kept for use and distributed to all branch churches in Africa. Brother Michael Onayemi headed the bookstore personnel for many years until he was made the pastor of Agege Church. The present Head of the store, is Brother Zachaeus Idowu. Sister Dorcas Mesioye is in charge of the distribution of the adult Sunday School quarterlies, the elementary Sunday School pamphlets and memory verse slips. Part-time workers also contribute their quota.

Transport

The Gospel must go into the nooks and crannies of Africa.

"...how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14).



Chevrolet, the first vehicle used for evangelism

From time to time, vehicles were purchased. The first set of vehicles to be bought were: *Vanguard Station Wagon 1950 Model*, and a *Mercedes Benz 180D* saloon car with a diesel engine. Big buses were also bought to convey Sunday School children to the morning and afternoon sessions. Vehicles were used for outreach, campaigns, visits to institutions and



E. D. Moses



Emmanuel Ajayi

homes, as well as official outings and tours.

During camp meetings, vehicles were sent to some countries such as: Republic of Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, to transport delegates to the conventions. Branch churches also purchased vehicles. For easy identification, all the vehicles belonging to The

Apostolic Faith are painted with Royal Blue and White colours, and they carry a logo that includes the phrase, "Africa for Christ."

Brother T who was the first Gospel driver, had a flair for driving. He drove many of the vehicles until he found a competent driver. Brother Ezekiel Oshobowale was one of the first set of Gospel drivers, who drove extensively within and outside the country, to bring delegates to camp meetings in Lagos. As the Church grew, other saints who have been licensed as drivers joined. Those who were found worthy professionally and spiritually included: Brothers Patrick Fajan, Francis Akinboye, James Adekoya, Solomon Onabolu, Julius Osidele, Samuel Akinola, Emmanuel Ajayi, Olufemi Olusoga, Amos Ajayi, Samuel Faba, Kehinde Malomo, and E. D. Moses, who later became the Head of the Department for many years, before he went to be with the Lord. Currently, Brother Emmanuel Ajayi is the Head of the Department.

Mechanical Workshop

The Church has a mechanical workshop where children of God, who have undergone training in automobile repairs, volunteer to work together in teams to maintain the church vehicles.

Brother T was a trained



Mechanical Section — servicing one of the Gospel vehicles

mechanic. He made use of some children of God who had the knowledge of automobile repairs. Brothers Olaleye Bernard and Samuel Akinola were among the first group of auto mechanics, who repaired the Gospel vehicles before the workshop was put in place. They were instrumental in establishing the workshop at the campground in Anthony Village, Lagos. Currently Brother Moses Sogunle is in charge of the batteries, while Brother Michael Adekoya supervises the workshop.

The Petrol Station

A petrol station was established in 1984 to supply fuel to the vehicles and generators. Initially, the dump consisted of a 30,000 litre tank for petrol and a 10,000 litre tank for kerosine. Lately, a 33,000 litre tank for diesel was added. Sister Sola Odude, a full-time worker, sees to the procurement of fuel and she manages the petrol station. There are part-time workers who assist her.



Fuelling of a Gospel vehicle in progress at the petrol station

The Power House

The Church maintains three stand-by electric generating sets at the



The power house in the early days at Anthony Village



The Power House now

Anthony Headquarters to supplement the public supply of electricity. This makes the flow of electricity to the offices on the campground steady. There are also generating sets on the new camp ground at Igbesa.

Brothers Isaac Adewale Durotoye and Adebayo Durotoye worked for many years as pioneers in the department. Brother Benjamin Adewale later joined them. The present leader is Brother Ade Ogunnaike. He is assisted by Brothers Michael Opoola, Babalola Olugbade and many other children of God, who are electricians by profession.

Projects and Other Works

The Apostolic Faith Church is blessed with skilled workers and professionals in various fields, such as: Building, Architecture, Land and Quantity Surveying, Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, and Draughtsmanship. They form a team of professionals that constitute the Project Team. They take charge of all the stages of physical development from land acquisition to the construction, renovation and extension of churches, children's halls, mission houses and other structures belonging to the Church.

In the early days, the building work was supervised by Brother T himself. Brother Michael Onayemi, who was a bricklayer by trade, assisted in the work. In 1954, God directed Brother T's attention to Brother Ezekiel Aremu, a young Christian at Ibadan branch church,



Ezekiel Aremu



Olufemi Adepegba

who was a draughtsman. He was encouraged to further his education, which he did. He came to Lagos to work full-time in the Church in 1982. Brother Aremu has been instrumental in supervising the construction of church buildings in various states in Nigeria and other African countries. Other people who worked with him included: Brothers Femi Adepegba and Ojo Davies.

In recent years, God provided some modern equipment, for the department to facilitate their work in the office and on the site. These include computers, a bulldozer, an excavator, a tipper, concrete mixers and survey instruments. Many young men who are professionals in related fields have joined Brother Aremu and they work under his supervision.

There are many sections in the project department:

Carpentry

Carpentry was one of the earliest crafts established on the campground in September, 1966. The department takes charge of roofing and ceiling work for churches and mission houses, and the construction of pews, pulpits, altar benches, office and home furniture, and fittings. There are full-time and part-time workers in the department.

At its inception, Brother M. F. Ajayi was the leader and he was assisted by Brother Ezekiel Adegboyega. After Brother Ajayi went to his reward in September, 1981, Brother Amos Adesanya took up the leadership of the department in 1982. The mantle of leadership fell on Brother Julius Seidu after God called Brother Adesanya Home in 1993. Children of God who helped in the department at various periods



Moses F. Ajayi



Julius Seidu



Adedayo Akure



Albert Aremu
Abiodun



Olukunle Olubode



Ade Ogunnaike
with one of the
generating set

include: Brothers Julius Ajiboye, Samson Adefuwa, Moses Omotosho, Stephen Adeyemi, Israel Akojede, Job Folorunsho, Olatubosun Adeliyi and several others.

Painting

The Painting Department was established in 1972, when the *Great Tabernacle* at Anthony Village was under construction. Apart from painting buildings, the department is responsible for the spray-painting of Gospel vehicles with the unique colour of the Church. Many children of God work in the department after their daily jobs. Brother Albert Aremu Abiodun, a full-time worker, leads the group

Plumbing

Water is supplied to the campground at Anthony Village by three boreholes. The first one, 150m deep, sunk in the 60's, is located at the southeastern end of the camp ground. Two other boreholes were sunk in 2002, to assist the first one, in supplying water to the grounds. The children of God who are plumbers are responsible for all the plumbing works. Brother Adedayo Akure, who heads the department, has put in many years of service. He is assisted by Brother Olu Ajayi and many other faithful children of God.

Other Sections

Brother Olukunle Olubode leads the masonry section. Others in the section include Brothers Liadi Adegoke, James Kazeem with many other children of God, who are in the profession. Brother Anthony Odesanya leads the welding section which is responsible for electric as well as gas welding works on the campground.

All these and many others who have dedicated their time, money and talents are being used of God in all the projects of the Church.

It is worthy of note that children of God have always provided the labour and most of the expertise required in the design and construction of church structures.

Agriculture

In 1982, following the need for a bigger campground, a 72—acre piece of land was purchased at Igbesa. Farming was started on a part of the land. Brother Sunmola Madehinlo from Abeokuta branch

church, became the Farm Manager. The farm work was sustained with daily team work members from Lagos, and weekly teams from Ibadan, Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta. In a later development, a Farm Committee was constituted, made up of brethren who were experts in agricultural fields. The members included Professors M. T. Ige, Wole Alofe, Dele Fakorede and Brother Ade Adesuyi. The committee supervised the work done on the farm and advised on the purchase and maintenance of farm equipment. Some of the machinery procured were: a tractor, plough, mower, harrow and trailer.

In 1985, Brother Remi Asaya started a poultry with the initial stock of 1,500 birds at Anthony campground. A fish farm consisting of 10 tanks each measuring 6m by 2m by 1.5m was started in the year 2000. The capacity for each tank is between 3,500 and 4,000 pieces of fish. Initially, 25,000 pieces were cultured. The fish farm also houses a hatchery, a nursery point and a feed mill. The feed mill caters for the pond as well as the poultry. The fish farm is manned by Brother Dele Opeifa and some brethren.

Several farm activities go on in some other parts of Nigeria. For instance, an oil palm plantation is being developed in Edo State while a 200-acre farm land at Egosi, Kwara State, is undergoing cultivation.

Educational

On October 10, 2002, The Apostolic Faith Secondary School was founded at Anthony campground in Lagos as a model college. This was necessary because the Church wanted another avenue for reaching the children of school age. The school is a community where Divine Love and concern is woven into teaching and learning. Students are trained to achieve academic excellence with the sound foundation of godly principles. The school environment and its outstanding facilities create an atmosphere for students to develop their full potentials. The school children have the opportunity of regularly attending Bible study meetings and Church



Apostolic Faith Secondary School,
Lagos



A section of AFSS Classroom

services. They are also taught how to play musical instruments such as the violin, flute, trumpet and organ. Like the motto of the school — *Let the Light Shine* — The Gospel light is indeed shining among the school children, as a result of which many of them have prayed through to genuine Christian experiences. The Church also plans to establish higher institutions of learning in due course.

The Ondo/Ekiti as well as the Rivers/Bayelsa Districts of The Apostolic Faith have also established Nursery/Primary schools in Akure and Port Harcourt respectively. At Egosi, Kwara State, a piece of land on which school buildings have been erected, was donated to the Church. Another piece of land donated at Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State of Nigeria, has been earmarked for a tertiary institution.

First Aid

We trust in God for our healing and rely absolutely on His power to heal all manners of diseases, and grant safe delivery during child birth. As the membership of the Church increased, there was a need to get people acquainted with how to take care of emergencies. To achieve this, the First Aid Department give lectures, seminars and arrange workshops on health care delivery. They also give first aid to accident victims and people who sustain injuries of any kind.

Among the saints who volunteered to work in this Department are: Brothers Hector Elebute, Solomon Onabolu, Isaac Durotoye, Emmanuel Rowaye, Sister Rose Arawore, and Brother Olukunle Olubode, a very active, kind, energetic and experienced hand, used over the years.



Solomon Onabolu

Sanitation

The Sanitation Department was set up in order to take care of the church environment. The need for this department became more apparent during retreats, rallies and camp meetings, when many people were accommodated on the campground.

Initially, it was a joint responsibility of the ushers and the sanitation officers to maintain a healthy environment. However, in the early 70s, it became the sole responsibility of the sanitation officers. Operations performed by the sanitation group include: fumigating the campground, cleaning the surrounding of the conveniences and the cabins. Brother Elijah Adekoya from Orunwa in Ogun State, was the first leader of the group. He was assisted by Brother Peter Awomoyi, who is the leader at the time of writing.



Elijah Adekoya

Peter Awomoyi

Electronics

The Electronics Department of the Church started as a recording unit with basic valve amplifiers and horn speakers as its hardware materials. Brother Segun Osifeso, who was responsible for documenting events by taking photographs, was in charge.

When the Anthony Tabernacle was to be dedicated, the department acquired a medium public address system comprising a 16-channel mixer, a stereo equalizer, two 200 watts *BI-amp* amplifiers and five 8-ohms, 120 watts speakers.

The recording of songs and sermons started as a hobby by some saints, and this was usually done during the camp meeting in August. The Church later started the recording of the sermons for the purpose of transcribing. In 1969, the Church made its first



The Recording Gallery of the Electronic Department

recording disk. The use of video cameras came into the Church in the late 70's primarily as a closed circuit facility for worshippers who spilled out of the main tabernacle. Later, proceedings of meetings were recorded on Video Cassettes, Video Compact Disks (VCD) and Digital Video Disks (DVD). Today, the music, sermons and other service proceedings are recorded and processed with the aid of computers. The department has a large stock of old time Gospel messages, both local and foreign.



Segun Osifeso

The Electronics Department has the duty of installing and maintaining the computers and other office equipment in various departments of the Church. They also install and maintain the Public Address Systems. The leader of the department at the time of writing is Brother Peter Atoe.

Security

In 1975, The Apostolic Faith security group was inaugurated under the leadership of Brother Michael Onayemi. The group was organised to complement the efforts of the ushers as regards the security of the church premises during meetings. The foundation members were drawn from the children of God who had military or



M. O. Onayemi

Brother Willie Okon and the Security men on Parade

paramilitary training.

The services of the group were needed during the period of national retreats and youth rallies, when there were usually many strange faces and unsaved people. The security services were then extended to every church meeting.

When Brother Onayemi was sent to oversee the work in one of the states in Nigeria, the mantle of leadership, as the Chief Security Officer fell on Brother Willie Okon, a retired Senior Police Officer.

The Treasury

The Apostolic Faith work is financed solely through the payment of tithes and freewill offerings by the saints of God. There is no collection plate passed round, but in every Apostolic Faith Church, there is a chest provided at the entrance, for whosoever wishes to drop his tithes and offerings at any of the meetings.

The Ministry had established a Treasury Department, to keep its account and undertake the disbursement of funds to all the areas of the work, be it evangelism, tours, constructions, vehicle maintenance, general



H. A. Elebute



Paul Adesanya



P. O. Olufowote



J. O. Soyinka



E. O. Temisan



A. A. Adegboye



S.O.A. Odumosu

charity or care of full-time workers.

In the organisation, the Overseer is the Accounting Officer and he designates the assignment to faithful and honest men or women of God. The head of the treasury unit is also the Secretary to the Board of Trustees, as well as the Treasurer of the Church. He is assisted by other brethren.

The first Secretary Treasurer at the inception of the Church was Brother Ezekiel Oshobowale. Other people who have acted in this capacity are Brothers Hector Elebute, Paul Adesanya, Philip O. Olufowote, Josiah Soyinka, Emmanuel Temisan, Albert Adegboye and Samuel Oluyemisi Odumosu. Brother Dapo Ojumu currently heads the Treasury. He is assisted by Brothers Bayo Adesanya, Joel Durotoye and others.

Each branch church also has a treasury that renders accounts to the Headquarters.

Art Studio

There is an art studio established at the Headquarters for art work and graphic designs. In the early 70s, Brother Michael Adebayo Ajayi, an artist, was used of God at the Lagos Headquarters, in the production of the camp meeting and revival posters, as well as illustrations in the elementary Sunday School lessons. He was assisted by Brother Kola Oladipupo, a sign writer.

In 1975, Brother Benjamin Shobande, another artist, joined them. After some time, Brother Ajayi departed for Akure in Ondo State. Brother Sobande was then appointed as the Head of the department. Several brethren with the same knowledge, work hand in hand with him.



Benjamin Sobande

Housekeeping

Beside church buildings, the Church has vicarages located at 53, Isaac John Street, Igbobi; 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta; 12/13, Abiola Close, Maryland Estate, Onigbongbo, and guest houses at Anthony Village. The upkeep of these houses is the duty of the



Brother Pius Onabanjo

Housekeeping Department. Other responsibilities of the department are: receiving and accommodating church guests and supervision of the cleanliness of the campground.

An experienced minister is usually chosen as the Housekeeper. He must be spiritual, humble, hospitable, well disposed to others and readily available. Brother Pius Onabanjo was the Housekeeper until the year 2000, when he was called Home. Brother Femi Falusi was then appointed the Housekeeper.

Information and Accommodation

At the beginning of camp meetings, campers were lodged in the homes of the saints in Lagos. In 1961, when the old campground was ready for lodging campers, the Information Centre was established.

The centre is responsible for registering people for camp meetings, retreats and rallies.

It also disseminates information to campers. During these meetings, there is usually a large crowd to accommodate, and the centre takes over from the Housekeeping Department.

The centre is manned by a team of volunteers among the children of God. Leaders who have worked in the Information Centre include: Brother Emmanuel Sotade, Sisters Felicia Osidele,



Funmilayo Adegboye



Dipo Alla

Rachel Fakorede, and Funmilayo Adegboye. Currently, Brother Dipo Alla is the leader. Representatives from all states and countries work with him and his team, during camp meetings.

CHAPTER NINE

BRANCH CHURCHES IN NIGERIA

The Apostolic Faith work in Nigeria is like the *mustard seed* that grew up to become a giant tree with many branches. Peoples of different tribes and tongues are being converted and more branch churches are being established. As churches are founded, prayer groups and Bible study centres also spring up. Presently, there are about 600 branch churches because:

“...the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2: 47).

The Africa Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, coordinates all the branch churches. There are 15 districts in Nigeria.

| DISTRICT | HEADQUARTERS |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Lagos | Anthony Village |
| 2 Ogun | Abeokuta |
| 3 Oyo/Osun | Ibadan |
| 4 Ondo/Ekiti | Akure |
| 5 Kwara/Kogi | Ilorin |
| 6 Edo | Benin |
| 7 Delta | Sapele |
| 8 Enugu/Anambra/Ebonyi | Enugu |
| 9 Imo/Abia | Aba |
| 10 Rivers/Bayelsa | Port Harcourt |
| 11 Cross River | Calabar |
| 12 Ikot Enwang | Ikot Enwang |
| 13 Uyo | Uyo |
| 14 Abuja | Abuja |
| 15 Jos | Jos |

Each district has a district overseer as the administrative and spiritual head. A pastor, appointed from the Africa Headquarters, heads each church in a district.

Following is a closer examination of the beginnings of some of the earliest locations and district Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith work in Nigeria.

Southeastern Nigeria

Ikot Enwang

The nucleus of the Gospel work in Eastern Nigeria started in Ikot Enwang village. It all began with a man who was hungry and thirsty after righteousness.

The man, Philip Inyang came in contact with an Apostolic Faith tract in 1935. A relation of his gave it to him in the market but Philip did not read it until two years later. When he eventually did, he went over it many times. In order to find the way of salvation that he had read about in the tract, he had a series of communications with the Portland Headquarters. He finally left his former Church to start a prayer group. The group loved the sound doctrine and adopted the name *Apostolic Faith*, which was written in front of their church. He faced a lot of persecutions from his former church members and villagers. However, he determined to maintain the high standard of the Gospel, even if no one joined him.

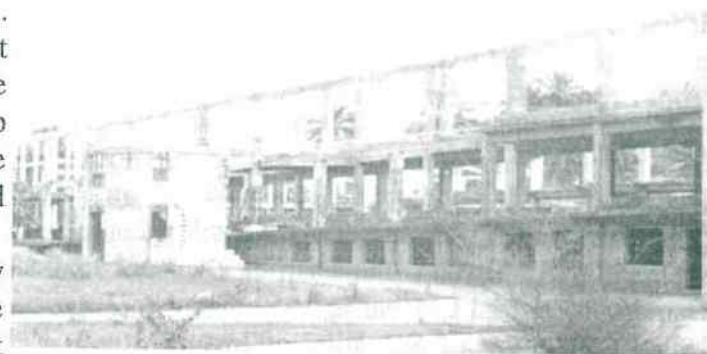


The first permanent place of worship at Ikot Enwang

A letter was sent to the group from the Portland Headquarters, introducing Brother Timothy Oshokoya, and informing them of his impending visit. Brother Oshokoya visited and explained to the group the Christian standard as practised by The Apostolic Faith. The doctrines, though very strange to them, were readily embraced. In 1951, Inyang attended the camp meeting in Lagos for the first time and was highly inspired. He then prayed through to his Christian

experiences. When he got back home, he taught his group all the Bible truths he had learnt.

For many years, the people at Ikot Enwang gathered in a



The New Tabernacle at Ikot Enwang under construction

mud-walled, thatched building to worship the Lord. Later, they toiled hard to erect a new church building with cement block, carrying on their heads, the sand for moulding the blocks, over a distance of three miles. Despite the numerous obstacles encountered, the new church building was almost completed by 1962. Gospel teams visited other towns from Ikot Enwang and many branch churches sprang up.

On September 9, 1969, Rev. Philip O. Inyang passed on to Glory in Lagos. He was buried on September 17, 1969, at Calabar. He was succeeded by Brother Sampson Etuk Ekanem, and the work progressed in leaps and bounds.

In 1977, Brother Ekanem was transferred to oversee The Apostolic Faith work in Oyo State, and Brother Theophilus Ogunnaike took over as the Overseer for Cross River State (1977-1979). In 1982, Brother Paul Ibikunle was transferred from Benin to oversee the Churches in Cross River State. Under his supervision, on October 1, 1985, the foundation of a new church building was laid. The tabernacle was designed to seat 15,000 people during the annual camp meeting held in the area. He worked tirelessly on the project, until he was transferred to oversee the work in Kwara/Kogi States in 1991. The tabernacle has since been in use.

Brother Ekanem was transferred back home to continue the work at Ikot Enwang District. He passed on to Glory in September 1995. Brother Daniel Ikono took over the leadership after him. Brother Albert Adegboye was transferred from Anthony Headquarters to take up the leadership after Brother Ikono's demise in

1998. The following year, Brother Aaron Olumuyiwa Olamijulo was transferred from Oyo/Osun States to take up the leadership of the work from Brother Adegboye.

Calabar

Rev. George Hughes, the missionary from Portland Headquarters, USA, in company of Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, the Africa Overseer and Rev. Philip O. Inyang, the District Overseer in Eastern Nigeria and Cameroon, arrived Calabar in 1952. They held a service with a church called the Mount of Salvation at Inyang Street, Calabar. After the service, Rev. Hughes asked for those who would wish to worship with The Apostolic Faith Church, following the way he had introduced Christ and His doctrine to them. The following brethren decided to do so: Jonathan Bassey, Khaizer Udo Udo Emmon, Ekanem, Ene Effiom, Nakanda Etim, Andong Orok Bassey and the only female, Bassey Akan Akpan, who is still alive. Brother Jonathan Bassey became the first pastor in charge of the branch church under the supervision of the District Overseer, Rev. P. O. Inyang, who was at Ikot Enwang in Ikot Ekpene District. Shortly after, the Church moved to Ekpo Abasi Street, and from there to 10, Mbukpa Road.

When Brother Jonathan Bassey, who was a cashier with the Nigerian Customs Department was transferred to Cameroon, Brother Khaizer Udo Emmon became the leader, with Brother Ekanem assisting. Later, Brother Bassey A. Umoh donated his piece of land at 50, Mbukpa Road, to the Church. A building was set up with wattle walls under cement plaster and with mats on the roof. On April 4, 1964, the church was dedicated. The building existed for a long time and the Spirit of God blessed every effort of the saints. The house was soon filled with worshippers. When Brother Khaizer died in 1966, Brother Nakanda became the leader. The Church moved to 13, Ekpo Abasi Street, in 1973.

The Church was at 13, Ekpo Abasi Street, until through court litigations, it lost the ownership of the premises as a result of a Supreme Court judgment, which was delivered in July 1987. At this point, the Church in Calabar suffered many indignities and reproaches, and having no permanent place of worship, most of its members departed, particularly those not yet strong in the faith. As at then,

Brother P. K. Ibikunle was the State Overseer while Brother A. F. Ufford was the Pastor in charge.

The Church worshipped in a rented hall at the University of Calabar, for a while. When the place of worship became too uncomfortable, the Church moved to the mission house at 50 Mbukpa Road, Calabar, under a storey building. The Pastor and his family lived upstairs while services were held downstairs. In 1988, after much prayers, God provided a location at 73 Mbukpa Road. On November 15, 1988, the foundation of a bigger building was laid by the Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka. The building progressed until a part of the basement was completed in 1990. The Church moved into the tabernacle at 73, Mbukpa Road, and started holding services in the basement.

On September 23, 1987, Akwa Ibom State was created out of Cross River State. Rev. Paul Ibikunle, who was the District Overseer continued to administer the two states until he was transferred to Ilorin in 1991. Rev. Christopher Herbert then became the Overseer for Cross River State, while Rev. Samson Ekanem was transferred to Akwa Ibom State.

On December 5, 1992, the first camp meeting was held in Cross River State. It was officially declared open at 8:00 am, while the first Ministers' and Workers' Conference was held at 2:00 pm. The meeting witnessed 283 workers in attendance. A Ministers' Conference with 34 ministers in attendance was held as well. Attendance was over 2,000 at each devotional service. At this camp meeting, there was a special session to remember the goodness of God to His people at Calabar. The song: "*Now thank we all our God*" was rendered by the general body of worshippers, and prayers were offered by all to thank God, Who took the Church in Calabar through trials and eventually made it possible for them to have



The Church in Calabar under construction

a building to hold a camp meeting.

The Church building at Calabar continued from the basement level and was raised to the gallery level before Brother Herbert was transferred back to the Lagos Headquarters in October 12, 1994.

Rev. Eyo E. Ene arrived in Calabar from Enugu State on October 14, 1994, to take over the mantle of leadership of the work in Cross River State. During his tenure, the land at 82, Mbukpa Road, was negotiated from lease holding to free holding. Brother Ene retired as the Overseer on September 30, 2002.

On October 2, 2002, Rev. Thompson M. Etukudoh was transferred from Port Harcourt to Calabar as the Overseer of the work.

Uyo

The Church was founded in 1966, at 73, Ikot Ekpene Road, in Sister Basse Ekanem's room. She had received the Gospel at Port-Harcourt in 1963. The attendance was about 20 and Brother Edem Offiong from Afaha Udoeyop, was instructed by Brother Philip Inyang to assist the group. At the location, those who were saved included: Brothers E. A. Etuk and Ndarake O. Etim. Later in the year, the group moved to a store along Udo Umana Street, but did not stay there for more than a month, because the landlord complained that the prayers were making his charms powerless, and rendering his *juju* business unprogressive. As a result of this, the group had to move to 2, Eniang Street, in 1967.

In March 1967, the group was given permission to conduct Sunday services. In 1968, under Brother. E. A. Etuk's leadership, the Church moved to 22, Etuk Street, which is the present location. The building was erected in 1973.

The following men of God led the Church from 1968-1999:

Brothers E. A. Etuk, Isaac Eduok, Daniel U. Ikono, Friday Akpan and Ini Obong Udo Ituen.

In 1999, Uyo became a District Headquarters under Brother S. Innih Emah as the



The Apostolic Faith, Uyo

Overseer. He was succeeded in 2003 by Brother Olusanya Ajayi.

Ikot Osukpong

The Apostolic Faith Church, Ikot Osukpong, Ika was founded in a dramatic circumstance in 1955 by the following seven men: Benson Ikonnah and wife from Ikot Oyo: Thompson John Ukpe from Ikot Akpan Anwa: Solomon Udo Akpan, from Ikot Osukpon: Tommy Udo Udo Esu and wife, from Ikot Esu: and Friday John Ibanga, from Ikot Akpan Anwa.

The Church started with the coming together of Benson Ikonnah, Thompson John Ukpe and Friday John as preachers in Qua Iboe Church in 1954. The above mentioned preachers were friends and classmates.

A *Light of Hope* paper reached Ikot Osukpong, which they read. This motivated them to write

to the International Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon, USA, requesting for tracts and Bibles to help their new found faith. Ukpe first went to the Church at Ikot Enwang and came back to spread the news about the Church. He and the others were invited by Rev. Philip O. Inyang to attend that year's Christmas Camp Meeting held at Ikot Enwang. Before the scheduled time, Solomon Udo Akpan had attended the Church at Calabar and encouraged them on his return.

The seven persons who read the paper attended the revival meetings at Ikot Enwang. All of them went home saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost.

On their return from the convention, they started to spread the good news to the people of Ika community. They organised group worship in their houses on rotational basis. When Rev. Inyang visited them, he advised them to settle down at a place at Ikot Osukpong, which was central to all of them. The Church started in a thatched



Ikot Osukpong Church

house at the present location. Baptismal service was conducted for them at Ikot Osukpong stream.

The group grew and eventually built a church of their own. Brother B.U. Ikonnah became the first pastor of the Church in 1959. The exemplary Christian lives of the members condemned the idol-worshippers in their neighbourhood, which brought in persecutions. It eventually led to the burning down of the church by their persecutors. Undaunted, the Christians prayed for their persecutors and built another church. When the annual special meetings came along a year later, the most active Gospel workers were their former persecutors. The power of God was manifested among them continually. Outstanding miracles such as the healing of ruptured appendices, palsy, blindness, were wrought and even the dead were raised. Many who came into the Gospel in poverty, encumbered with debts, had their debts paid and became spiritually rich.

They embarked on regular cottage and street meetings to extend the Gospel to other people.

On February 6, 1973, Brother Ikonnah went to be with the Lord. Ikot Osukpong has since expanded and many branch churches have sprung up from it. The present pastor is Brother Etim Daniel.

Etinan

The Church sprang up from a family morning prayer meeting held by Brother Isaac Eduok, his wife and children, in their home at Etinan, during the Nigerian civil war in 1967. Brother Eduok had returned home from Port Harcourt as a result of the outbreak of the civil war in Nigeria. Before long, observers of the family's morning prayer meetings were inspired to join them at subsequent prayer meetings. The number of souls interested in seeking the favour of God increased. A mud structure, separated from the main house, was erected in Brother Eduok's compound, for the congregation.

The news of the meetings soon reached Brother Phillip Inyang, the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith Church in the Eastern part of Nigeria. The group increased in number and was formally declared a branch of The Apostolic Faith, on October 6, 1968.

After a while, a piece of land was donated by a member for a church building in the centre of the town. On February 23, 1973, the

foundation was laid. The building work progressed and the Church soon purchased an extra piece of land.

The Church grew from strength to strength, and many revival meetings were held, leading to the salvation of many souls. Many people with diverse diseases, including hernia and mental illness, were healed.

The Church was pastored at various times by Brothers Isaac J. Eduok (1968 to 1982; 1993), Ndarake U. Akpan (1982 to 1984), Daniel U Ikono (1984 to 1987), Eyo A. Etuk (1987 to 1991) and Sampson Abraham Udo (1991 to 1993). Later Brother Dixon pastored the Church and in 1998, Brother Isaac Eduok was transferred back to Etinan.

Port Harcourt

The Church in Port Harcourt was started by Brother John Okon in his sitting room. Brother Okon came across the Gospel in Ikot Enwang, during the revival meetings held there by Rev. George Hughes. He later moved from Ikot Enwang to Port Harcourt. God blessed the work and before long, a larger space was required to accommodate the growing congregation. An apartment, annexed to a beer parlour, was secured on *Man-must-whack* Road, now *Olusegun Obasanjo Road*. God continued to bless the Church, such that, shortly afterwards, a larger accommodation was needed. The beer parlour gave way for the needed space. It was a miracle of God for His Church.

As time went by, the building became too small for the growing Church, which then relocated to 98,



Etinan Church



The Church Building at Port Harcourt, Rivers State

Ikwere Road. Attendance at the meetings soared to about 400 and was constantly rising until the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War in 1966. The war, while it lasted, caused a terrible dispersion of the members of the Church.

At the end of the war in 1970, few members of the Church returned to Port Harcourt. Brother Eyo Ene was greatly instrumental to the revival of the Gospel work there. He kept the flag flying until Brother Christopher Herbert was sent to the Church in 1973. After the war, Port Harcourt experienced a rapid development by virtue of its position as the capital of an oil-producing state. The population grew fast and the number of the souls that joined the Church also increased. This growth led to the establishment of five branch churches within the city metropolis. The Gospel work has maintained a steady growth in the area and there are now 36 branch churches in the district of Rivers/Bayelsa, of which Port Harcourt is the Headquarters. Under the leadership of Brother Herbert, a large piece of land was purchased. The Church Headquarters for Rivers /Bayelsa States is situated on the large piece of land.

Pastors who have laboured in the Port Harcourt Church include: Brothers Christopher Herbert (1976 to 1982), Philip Oludayo Olufowote (1982 to 1991), F. Ufford (1991 to 1997) and Thompson Etukudo (1997 to 2002). Brother Saviour Chukwuemeka Nnodim currently oversees the work.

Aba

The Apostolic Faith started at Aba in June 1960, when Brother Ikpam O. Ikpam was transferred there and he began prayer meetings at 20, Uzoigwe Street. In the beginning, the group was attending devotional services at Umuokatawom, a village near the town, where a group had already started, and prayer meetings at Aba in the evenings. As the Church grew larger, the congregation had to move to other locations.

During the civil war, in 1969, Brother Ikpam left the Church in the hands of Brother Walter Ene and went to his village. Brother Ene also had to go to Oruala the same year.

Brother John Ilechukwu was sent to Aba when the civil war ended in January, 1970. The Church was at St. George's School at that time.

Later, a church building was erected at River Layout, under the leadership of Ilechukwu.

In 1977, Brother Sunday Kalu Johnson Okorie was sent to Aba to assist Brother Ilechukwu, who was the District Overseer for East

Central State.  Inside view of the New Church Building at No. 1, Green Street, Aba

Shortly after, the mantle of leadership fell on Okorie. God provided a vast piece of land for a campground at Oporo-Osa village, where construction work for a tabernacle was then started.

After some years, Brother Okorie was transferred to Enugu and Brother Sampson Ekanem was sent to replace him. Brother Okorie later came back on transfer to Aba. After his voluntary retirement in 1997, Brother Njoku N. Ufere took over the work.

On April 6, 2000, the foundation of a bigger church was laid at 1, Green Street, by the Africa Overseer, Rev. Paul O. Akazue.

In October 2002, Brother Ufere was transferred to Enugu District and Brother Dealyn George was posted to Aba to oversee the Gospel work. There, God solved the long-standing problem of a mission house, through the 4 bedroom flat built on top of the old Church. Other buildings on the compound were renovated to accommodate the full-time workers. A bus was also purchased for evangelism.

Enugu

The Apostolic Faith Church, Enugu, started in 1952, at 21, Nzekwe Street, Enugu, under the leadership of Edward Chibo.

In 1958, a Gospel team comprising of Brothers Ezekiel



Enugu District Headquarters

Oshobowale, Hector Elebute, Paul Ibikunle and Sister Olive Dosunmu, under the leadership of Brother T. G. Oshokoya, visited and held revival services with the group. In 1964, Brother Chukwuji was asked to lead the group, while Brother Ogbonnaya Machie was appointed the Secretary/Treasurer. In 1966, war broke

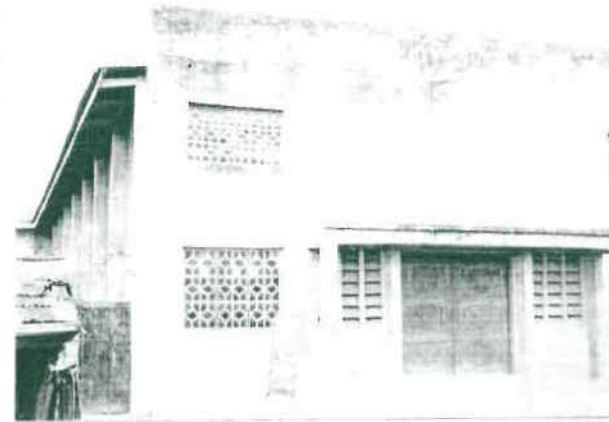
out in the country and this scattered the group. After the war, Brothers Chukwuji and Machie came back to Enugu to start the work afresh in April, 1970. God blessed the group and many hungry souls prayed through to their Christian experiences. In 1974, God provided a property for the Church behind 1, Nkpokiti Street, Ogui New Layout. Later, a piece of land of over 25 acres was purchased for a campground at Akabe-Ugwu, where a big structure is under construction.

Those who have pastored the Church include: Brothers Edward Chibo, S. K. J. Okorie, Eyo Effiong Ene, S. C. Nnodim and N. N. Ufere.

Onitsha

Sister Cynthia, who was the founder of Fundamental Apostolic Faith Church and a member of her congregation, Sister Margaret Okoro, started the Church in Onitsha. On learning about The Apostolic Faith Church, Lagos, they visited the Africa Overseer, Brother T. G. Oshokoya, requesting for the affiliation of their church to The Apostolic Faith.

They were advised on what to do in order to line up with the sound doctrine as preached by The Apostolic Faith Church. They heeded the advice, and stayed back in Lagos for a while, to study the activities of the Church. When they left for home, they were asked to visit Brother Vincent Chukwuji, the Overseer of the Apostolic Faith work in Anambra State, and fellowship with the Church there. Subsequently, the two women left their former church and established The Apostolic Faith in Onitsha in 1973. Sister Cynthia became the



The Apostolic Faith Church, Onitsha

pastor, with Sister Okoro assisting. God blessed the Church in Onitsha, many souls prayed through to the Christian experiences and the sick were healed.

In the course of time, Sister Cynthia was called to Glory, and Sister Okoro took over the church

leadership. In 1983, Sister Okoro handed over the leadership of the work to Brother A. N. Chike, who worked relentlessly like his predecessors, to win souls for Christ.

In October 1991, Brother Robert E. Nnodim was transferred from Enugu to Onitsha to take over from Brother Chike.

God provided the Church with some parcels of land as the congregation grew. These include 2 plots at Ibolu, Obosi, in 1977, and a plot at Ogbomme, Obosi, in 1996.

Southwestern Nigeria

The Africa Headquarters is located in the southwestern part of Nigeria. Many branch churches have been established in the area. The history of some of them goes thus:

Ibadan

Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State, is about 150 km from Lagos, the location of the Africa Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith.

In 1950, Messrs, Michael B. Oduwole and Emmanuel James, who had come in contact with the Gospel in Lagos, went to Ibadan. They held a meeting in the house of Brother Amos O. Ajayi, at Surulere Street, Oke-Ado. Brother Ajayi, his wife and children accepted the Gospel wholeheartedly.

Later, the same year, the group moved, first, to the house of Mr. Falola at Agbokojo and then to another building at Ogunpa. With the

increase in the number of saved souls, the meeting place shifted to Idikan, where meetings were held in a cornmill for several years.

A piece of land, on which the first church building was erected, was acquired at Oke-Bola, with the help of Rev. Lucas Obakoya. Meetings started there in 1954. On January 21, 1961, Rev. T.G. Oshokoya dedicated The Apostolic Faith Church at SW7/155A, Oke-Bola.

On March 30, 1968, there was a great revival at the Oke-Bola Church during the Sunday evening service. Thirty souls prayed through to salvation and other deeper Christian experiences. The revival continued till the following Monday evening prayer meeting, when seventy souls were saved. For many weeks thereafter, people were saved daily, especially the youths, including many children of the church members. The revival spread to many other places, including the Headquarters in Lagos. The work rapidly increased and within a short time, a bigger piece of land was acquired at Oke-Ado.

On October 19, 1968, the foundation of a new and bigger church building at SW8/803A, Lodge Street, Oke-Ado, was laid amidst great rejoicing. First of all, the ground was dug to allow for a basement 100ft x 60ft. Apart from the steel structures erected by a steel



Oyo/Osun District Headquarters, Ibadan



Apostolic Faith Church, Ibadan, Mission House

company, the entire work was done by the saints. On June 27, 1971, the basement of a new church building at Oke-Ado was ready for use, and the Church moved there from Oke-Bola. The work continued on the main building until the auditorium was completed. On December 25, 1975, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya dedicated the Church. The congregation at the service numbered over 2,400. People were later conducted round the building and the premises.

A two-week revival services followed. Souls poured into the Church from different places; students were brought into the meetings from schools and institutions of higher learning. Street meetings were held at different places around the city to tell what the Lord could do, and to invite people to the meetings. A bus fitted with a public address system went round the city with a Gospel team, distributing Gospel papers, and inviting people to come for the meetings. In the services, seekers prayed through to different Christian experiences, and many other blessings were received.

Ibadan has remained the District Headquarters for Oyo and Osun States, with many branch churches springing up throughout the district. Some of the churches are located at Ikirun, Ilesha, Otan-Ayegbaju, Oshogbo, Ogbomosho, Oyedeji, Ila-Orangun, Ile-Ife, Oyo and Eruwa. Among the early converts who were mightily used to foster the cause of the Gospel in the area were; Brother and Sister Amos O. Ajayi, Brother Tella Adewoyin, Sister Adunola Joan, Brother Stephen Adeyemi, and Sister Ogunba. Others include Brother Theophilus Afolabi Ogunnaike, who later became the District Overseer, Sister Susanah O. Ogunnaike, Brother Peter Amore, Sister Felicia Ojuolape Matiluko, Brother Samson Adefuwa, Brother Albert Elugbaju Ogunjimi, and a host of others.

At the early stage, the Church faced some crisis because some people would not line up with the Gospel principle on marriage. Rather than compromising the standard of the Gospel, a few faithful ones stood their ground, while quite a number of people fell out with the ministry. Those who would not line up were allowed to take their leave. Thus, the Church successfully weathered the storm.

In 1977, Brother Ogunnaike was transferred to Cross River State and Brother Sampson Ekanem took over from him. Shortly afterwards, Brother Ogunnaike was posted back to Ibadan. In 1997, when

Reverend Theophilus A. Ogunnaike went to his reward, Brother Aaron Olumuyiwa Olamijulo succeeded him. Brother Olamijulo was transferred to Akwa Ibom District in 1999, and Brother Philip Oludayo Olufowote took over. He was very energetic and full of zeal for evangelism. He travelled from village to village untiringly with Gospel teams comprising musicians, Sunday School teachers and ministers. As a result, more branch churches were established.

There was a vast piece of land procured at Oluyole Industrial Estate in 1985, for a campground. There, some structures have been put in place, including a children's hall, a music hall and ministers' quarters. The foundations for dormitories have also been laid. The Church is using a part of the land for farming. After the retirement of Brother Philip Olufowote, Brother Gabriel Oladejo Osunbunmi took over the leadership.

Ijebu-Ode

In 1952, The Apostolic Faith Gospel Team from Lagos, went to Ijebu-Ode for the first time, to conduct open-air meetings. The following year, the Team went again to propagate the Gospel. When they were about to return to Lagos, Brother J. O. Talabi, one of the team members, was left behind to carry on the Gospel campaign. After a few weeks, he moved to a shop at 5, Prison Street.

In the place, Brother Talabi held services without any congregation. He prayed, sang and preached, all alone. Afterwards, he would kneel down, pray and close the service. That was the situation for months. There were young boys living in the building, one of whom was Amos Adeoye. Along with the others, he made fun of Brother Talabi. However, one evening, two of them, Amos and Oni, became curious. They decided



The Church Building at 7, Molipa Street, Ijebu-Ode

to enter the Church, in order to find out what this man, Talabi, was saying to himself all the time. They entered and joined him in the service. The Spirit of God arrested Amos, who continued in the meetings regularly with Brother Talabi. Later, the church moved to Fusigboye Street, Ijebu-Ode. It was at this place that Amos Adeoye prayed through to salvation, one Sunday morning in 1954. Brother Adeoye later became a musician, as well as a minister in the Church. He also served as the Overseer in many districts for several years. Brother Joseph Olusoga joined the meetings in 1954.

The Church moved to 35, Abeokuta Road (formerly Aduke Stores). There, a prophet from a pentecostal church, Emmanuel Onabanjo Oje, joined the Church in 1955. Akin Ikubuwaje, John Oladepo Omotosho, Stephen A. Adeliyi and Augustus Okesola Omole, also joined the Church.

In 1957, the leadership of the work fell on Rev. Francis Akinboye. Brother T and Brother Lucas alternately went on weekly basis to hold devotional services at Ijebu-Ode, while they proceeded to Abeokuta for the evening service before coming back to Lagos late in the night. This was done to strengthen the groups.

Brother Ezekiel Oshobowale took up the leadership from Brother Francis Akinboye. During his tenure, Ijebu-Ode mission house was built at 19, Odutola Street, Oniworo Quarters. Through the efforts of Brother Akinboye, God had earlier provided the piece of land. The group wanted to use the land for the construction of a church building due to lack of an alternative site, though the plot was too small for the purpose. Miraculously, God provided a bigger piece of land at 7, Molipa Road, on which the church building was constructed.

After Brother Oshobowale, Brother Emmanuel Oluyemi Aina pastored the Church until he was transferred to Ondo State to oversee the work there. Brother John Omotosho took over from him and led the Church for several years. The congregation increased and God blessed them spiritually and materially too. More branch churches were established. Brother Christopher Adebisi Okeowo took up the leadership after the demise of Brother Omotosho in April 1985. When Brother Okeowo retired, Brother Enoch Folorunso Ajayi, who was the pastor at Eruwa, was transferred from Eruwa to pastor the Church at Ijebu Ode.

Abeokuta

Rev. T. G. Oshokoya made the first evangelistic trip to Abeokuta in 1954. He resided with Pa Adekunbi at Oke-Ilewo and organised street meetings in the city.

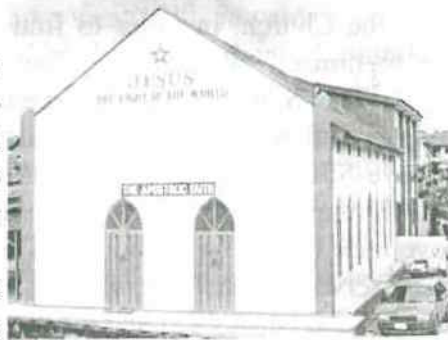
Brother Isaac Olutade Sokeye, who was then the leader of the *Church of the Lord (Aladura)*, Igbore, was opportuned to attend the

meetings. He valued the sound doctrine and insisted that Oshokoya should reside with him, when he came again later that year. The request was granted and an open-air meeting was held at Sokeye's compound, Igbore. Benches from Sokeye's church were used at the service.

Brother Sokeye had another privilege of hearing the sound doctrine at The Apostolic Faith Church, Ibadan. He used to work at Ibadan from Monday to Friday, and return for service in his church at Abeokuta on weekends. Through the Word of God which he heard, he quickly objected to the collection of money from members of his church saying that everything should be free, according to the Word of God.

He also told his members that since God accepted the services of missionaries who ate all kinds of animals and who wore shoes into the church, the wearing of shoes into their church should be accepted. (The wearing of shoes was not permitted in his church). The decisions of Sokeye grieved some of his followers, making them to break away to form another church.

Some faithful members of his church stood firm with him. Sister Hannah Sodiya was the first to pray through to salvation in Abeokuta. When Sokeye prayed his way through to salvation, he shaved his long, bushy beard and looked very different. The group decided to affiliate with The Apostolic Faith and a message was sent to The Apostolic Faith Headquarters Church in Lagos. The affiliation service was conducted by Brother Oshokoya in 1955.



Downtown Church at Abeokuta

For about a month, there were revival services. Gospel teams were sent from Lagos to Abeokuta every evening for the services that were preceded by street meetings. They gave testimonies, distributed Gospel papers and returned to Lagos after the service at about 11:00 pm, each day. After this, revival services were conducted on Tuesday and Friday evenings. There were also morning and evening services on Sundays by the Gospel team and the Lord blessed the meetings with the salvation of souls.

Brother Johnson Aribigbola led the Gospel team to Abeokuta for a period of time. Thereafter, Brother Francis A. Akinboye took over from him as the leader of the work, while Brother Emmanuel Aina worked hand in hand with him. Brother Adekunbi, on hearing information of the establishment of The Apostolic Faith Church at Abeokuta, decided to quit his church to join The Apostolic Faith.

Brother Sokeye readily gave up his land at Ijeja in Abeokuta for the use of the Church as a cemetery. Rev. Oshobowale became the Overseer of the The Apostolic Churches in Western Region, travelling in turns to Ibadan, Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta. At that time, there was no standard mission house at the Abeokuta Church. Oshobowale sold his landed property in Lagos and used the proceeds to build a mission house for the Church. He supervised the building himself. He continued as the Overseer until he died in 1978. Brother Amos Adeoye took over the leadership after the demise of Rev. Oshobowale.

God miraculously provided a landed property for the Church in 1980 at Oke Abetu, to accommodate the large number of congregation, especially during retreats and concerts.



The State Headquarters Church at Oke-Abetu, Abeokuta

When Brother Adeoye was transferred to Kwara State in 1982, he handed over the leadership of the work to Rev. Aina, who was the Overseer in Ondo State. The foundation of Oke Abetu church building was laid on

June 27, 1991. Brother Aina later handed over to Rev. Ayorinde Obatusin in 1998. The ground floor of the tabernacle was dedicated for use on October 4, 1998. In 2003, Brother Michael Omoworare Onayemi took over from Brother Obatusin as the Overseer.

Ikirun

Two young men, Solomon Adegoke Akinola and Abraham Adesina Agboola, who were close friends, with a common goal to serve God in spirit and in truth, left Ikirun town for Lagos on Sunday, January 14, 1945, in search of the *Truth*. Their spiritual hunger took them to many different churches. One of the two friends, Solomon A. Akinola, gave up the search but Abraham continued until he came in contact with The Apostolic Faith at 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta. Early in 1953, he was wonderfully saved, and in 1960, Solomon too was saved.

Akinola's experience with God influenced another friend, Joshua Agboola, and the desire for true service engulfed their hearts. They sought to establish this new way of serving God at Ikirun, their hometown.

On Sunday, September 4, 1960, Akinola, together with a few people, started the first revival service on the platform of The Apostolic Faith, in his father's sitting room. Ten people were in attendance. They were: Brothers S.A. Akinola, Joshua Agboola, Simeon Akinola, and their wives, Brother Elijah Adeniran, Brother Okekunle, Brother Joseph Ajayi and Mr. Bakare.

In 1961, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya paid a surprise visit to the brethren at Ikirun. During the week, he held three revival meetings which were



Ikirun Church is one of the oldest branch churches in Oyo/Osun District



A bigger place of worship at Ikirun under construction behind the former building

well attended. He and the members of his team had to spend the nights in the vehicle in which they travelled. The group had no church building yet and so, many people who attended the revival services could not continue to worship with them. In fact, the inhabitants of Ikirun felt that the Church might not survive, therefore, many of them did not want to lose the membership in their various churches by joining the group.

Before his departure, Brother Oshokoya appointed Brother Solomon Akinola to lead the group while Brothers Joshua Agboola and Joseph Ajayi were to assist him.

Shortly after Brother T's departure, persecution arose. Members of the church founded by Akinola's father, urged Akinola's father to stop The Apostolic Faith from using his house for their meetings. The group had to move to Brother Agboola's house at Ile Oniju, Ikirun. In 1964, the Ozallo's family joined them and the attendance kept increasing.

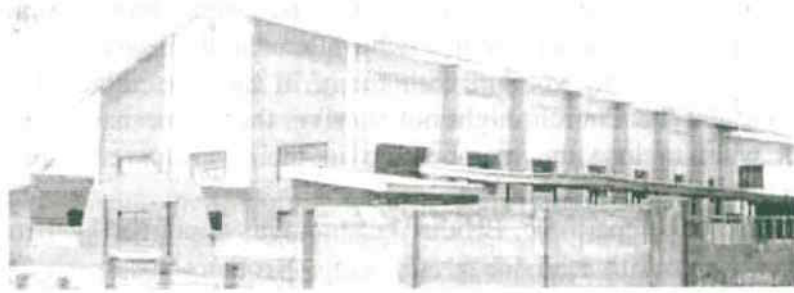
In 1973, a Gospel team, led by Brother Oshokoya, in company of Brothers Paul Ibikunle, Benjamin Kehinde and Sisters Esther Ogunfowomu and Yemi Dahunsi, went on a Gospel trip to Ikirun, for the dedication of a new church building. Thereafter, revival meetings were held for two weeks.

Brother Solomon Adegoke Akinola pastored the Church from 1960 to April 26, 1985, when he passed on to Glory. Brother Joshua Agboola succeeded him. Other people who pastored the Church were Brothers Sanya Ajayi and Gabriel Aborisade.

Akure

In 1967, Brother Gabriel Olorunsola Johnson, a civil servant and member of The Apostolic Faith at Ibadan, was transferred to Akure in Ondo State. During the camp meeting, in August that year, Rev. Oshokoya requested Brothers Johnson and Aduloju, who hailed from Ondo State, to look for a suitable accommodation, where The Apostolic Faith work in Akure could start. In compliance with the directive, an abandoned wooden hall along Oba Adesida Road, was rented. The Church started holding meetings.

Brother Aduloju, before his conversion, had been holding services under the auspices of another Church, in his house. He



Ondo/Ekiti State Headquarters

brought the pews they had used. Six of the members of his former church followed him to The Apostolic Faith. The church started to grow when some members who were living in Ado-Ekiti, led by Brother Bolaji Pelu, started going to Akure for services. A prayer group led by Brother Segun Ogunseye, who was the Divisional Officer for Owo District, had started in Owo. This group also went for services on Sundays at Akure. Later, Brother Francis A. Akinboye was posted to Akure to lead the work. It is gratifying to note that two of those who were present at the inception of the work, Brothers Stephen Ajayi (a minister), and Banjo Ajayi (a minister and the organist), are still in Akure Church.

In 1978, Brother Emmanuel Aina took over the leadership of the work in Akure as the Overseer of Ondo State (now Ondo/Ekiti States). God wonderfully provided a large parcel of land in the heart of the town, where a big church building and a mission house were erected. The foundation of the church building was laid by Rev. J. O. Soyinka.

In 1982, Brother Aina handed over the work to Brother Matthew B. Kunle. Brother Stephen Adeliyi took over in January 1987. When Brother Adeliyi left the state in 1998 on health grounds, as the Overseer, Brother Michael Adebayo Ajayi continued the work. Many branch churches have sprung up in the district. In October, 2002, a nursery and primary school of The Apostolic Faith was established at Akure.

Benin City

In 1963, The Apostolic Faith Church, Benin City, Bendel State, started in the sitting room of Brother Samson Omorodion. He had earlier embraced the Gospel at Ibadan, where he was working in a Federal Ministry. On his arrival in Benin in 1963, he started to distribute tracts and Gospel literature. He turned the sitting room of his family house into a place of worship. Members of his extended family accused him of turning the family house into a church. They subsequently mounted pressure on him to discontinue the use of the house for that purpose. He then rented a vacant store nearby, and the young group moved there in 1964. The store was used by the group till 1966 when the Nigerian Civil War broke out, and the group members scattered.

In January 1970, after the war, Brother Omorodion tried to reassemble the group. He moved into a storehouse along Sokponba Road, and for some time was praying alone. Sometimes, on such occasions, he was stoned by children who mocked him.

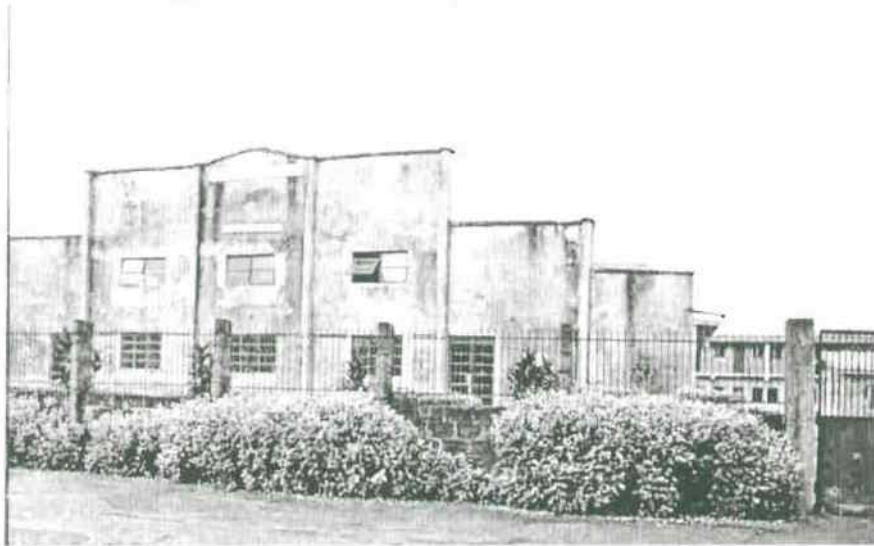
Later the same year, Sister Nkechi Ike, joined him. She became the first violinist in the Church. Brother Ologbo, Sister Roseline Edomwonyi (now Osatuyi) and Sister Beatrice Nwogwonuwe (now Amagor) joined the group one after the other. In 1972, the group moved to Payne Primary School at Upper Mission Road. Brother Israel Abe of Ado-Ekiti was transferred to Benin City by his employers. At that time, Brother Omorodion was sick and Brother Abe was instructed to take over the leadership of the group. In 1974, Brother Abe was transferred to the northern part of Nigeria. He handed over to Sister Beatrice Amagor, who later moved to Osogbo. Then, Brother Augustus Omole from Lagos was sent to head the Benin Church.

The Church was ejected from Payne Primary School in 1976, fortunately, an alternative accommodation was secured in a warehouse directly in front of the Primary School. In 1977, Brother Paul Ibikunle, from the Lagos Headquarters, was sent to Benin to take over from Brother Omole, who had been posted to Cotonou, Republic of Benin.

The Church was again ejected from the warehouse and they started to operate from a rented mission house. In 1978, the Church secured the premises of a disused cinema house at 4, Wire Lane. The

premises were leased free to the Church for ten years.

The Church grew by leaps and bounds. In 1977, evangelism was intensified and the Church membership increased tremendously. The first musical concert was staged by the Benin Church during the Easter season of 1977, with the assistance of brethren from Ibadan. The Church acquired two plots of land, one measuring 200 ft x 200 ft, proposed to house the permanent Church, and the other 100 ft x 100 ft, for the mission house. Many branch churches were opened. Brother Ibikunle assembled materials for the building of the House of God. A change of baton, however, took Brother Ibikunle to Akwa



Edo State Headquarters Church, Benin

Ibom State in 1982 with Brother Christopher Herbert taking over from him.

Brother Herbert started children evangelism, appointed Sunday School children collectors and commenced afternoon Sunday School. He had a great enthusiasm about the physical development of the Church. During his tenure, in 1989, the Church moved to its permanent site at 1, Akugbe Street, off Upper Siluko Road.

In 1991, Bendel State was split into two states — Edo and Delta. Brother Herbert was moved to Cross River State and Brother

Olufowote to Edo and Delta District, with the District Headquarters in Benin City. During Brother Olufowote's tenure, the main church auditorium was restructured to provide side extensions, and the entire building was re-roofed. He also commenced an annual camp meeting during the month of December. A campground measuring 1000 ft x 1000 ft along Benin/Iguobazuwa Road, about 12 km north-west of Benin City, was purchased. Many branch churches were opened in different towns and villages of Edo State.

In 1998, Brother Olufowote was transferred to oversee the work in Kwara/Kogi District while Brother Gabriel Oladejo Osunbunmi was sent from Lagos Headquarters, to take over from him. There was more development and more branch churches were opened. In 2003, Brother Osunbunmi was transferred to Oyo/Osun States and Brother Christopher Herbert took over from him.

Sapele

The Apostolic Faith Church, Sapele, was started in 1957 by Mr. James Edevbie. After a year, Mr. Edevbie left for the United Kingdom for further studies, and the young group ceased to function.

In 1959, Brother Robert Omaretseye who had been saved and was already a Gospel worker in Ibadan, returned to his home town, Sapele. He attempted to reassemble the group but was soon transferred from there. He later returned in 1963 and The Apostolic



Delta State Headquarters, Sapele

Faith work began in earnest in his sitting room. He was encouraged by the Africa Overseer, Brother T. G. Oshokoya in Lagos, and correspondence from the Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, in the USA.

The Church grew and a bigger place of worship was secured near Zik Grammar School, off Ogodo Road, Sapele. While at this site, Brother Oshokoya visited the group in 1975, in the company of Brother Augustus Omole, Brother Paul Ibikunle and Sister Esther Ogunfowomu. The second Africa Overseer, Brother J. O. Soyinka also visited the group in 1985, and again in 1991 in the company of Brothers T. A. Ogunnaike, Christopher Herbert and Stephen Adeliyi.

The Church, which is now at Km 3, New Ogorode Road, Sapele, serves as the Headquarters of the Churches in Delta State.

Aviara

The Apostolic Faith Church, Aviara, was started on August 16, 1960, by Rev. Daniel Abonobu Okolegba. He came across the Gospel at Ijebu-Ode in 1959 when on a theological mission to become a pastor in a different denomination. There, God called him to The Apostolic Faith, where he prayed through to the three Christian experiences. He returned home as a pioneer of The Apostolic Faith Church in Aviara. He prayed much, endured hardships patiently and suffered greatly to found The Apostolic Faith Church, Aviara. He had gathered a little group to pray and worship in a rented room. In 1966 when the number increased, the group moved to his compound where a part of his brother's house in Iyovie Quarters, was freely used for worship. God blessed his ministry and many more people were added. This brought the need for a permanent place of worship.

In 1969, a piece of land measuring 300 ft x 200 ft was acquired for the work of



Front view of the Church
in Aviara, Delta State

God along Bethel Road. The foundation of a church building measuring 80 ft x 28 ft was laid in 1970. The building was roofed in 1973 and has since been put into use. On February 10, 1977, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, with the Gospel Team, visited the Church at Aviara for the first time. More workers were appointed to assist the Pastor. Since then, the Church has grown steadily. A mission house was built and a 16-seater *E. 20 Urvan Bus* was purchased. A church library was established and equipped with materials for the spiritual growth of believers.

Brother Okolegba was called Home on September 16, 1989, after thirty years of active service in the Gospel. Following his passing away, Brother Nathaniel J. C. Orogun, who had been his assistant, was appointed to take over the leadership of the Church.

Middle Belt of Nigeria

Aye-Gbede

In 1953, after a Sunday service at The Apostolic Church, Okoro-Gbede, Brother David Oloruntoba, who had attended The Apostolic Faith Church in Lagos, gave the inspiring news of the Lagos meeting to his people. Those who were present in the after-service meeting that day included Messrs M. A. B. Kunle, Isaiah Aloba, Jacob Tolorunju and Joash Erayetan. He explained how the meeting in The Apostolic Faith Church was orderly and highly inspiring. He urged that he and his colleagues should write to the Church to establish a branch at Aye-Gbede. Brother Kunle was given the address of the Church and mandated to write the Headquarters on behalf of all the others.

The letter from Aye was promptly replied by the Lagos Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith Church, and a date was set for a Gospel tour of the area. Kunle met the team near a brook close to Okoro-Gbede. Observing that a vehicle stuck in the mud near the brook was that of their invited guests, he quickly gave them a helping hand and directed them towards the road to Aye. The Gospel Team which was led by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, spent four days holding services with the people at Aye. The Lagos team was then requested to send delegates who would stay in Aye for a period of time, to teach them the doctrines of The Apostolic Faith Church. The request was honoured. Brothers Lucas Obakoya and Ben Abbey were sent to Aye

for one month.

When the two men of God were about to return to Lagos, M. A. B. Kunle, and another person, went with them to the Headquarters to learn more about the Church and how a branch could be established in Aye. On getting to Lagos, it was learnt that the Overseer, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, had gone on an evangelistic tour and would not return until after three weeks. Brother Kunle waited until Rev. Oshokoya came back from the tour. As he continued to worship with them in Lagos, he got the wonderful experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Brother Kunle spent a total of two months in Lagos before returning to Aye.

Back home, Brother Kunle continued to teach the people what he had learnt. As a result of divergent opinions, an announcement was made that all who would like to join Brother Kunle to embrace the doctrines of The Apostolic Faith should show their interest. A few people did. Among these people were Messrs Isaiah Aloba, Joash Eraiyeetan, Jacob Tolorunju, Abraham Tolorunleke Eyi, Mrs. Comfort Aloba and Esther Anike. The first meeting place was Mr. Aloba's residence. The first congregation numbered about twenty. Thus, The Apostolic Faith Church, Aye, was born.

The Church was pastored from 1953 to 1982 by Brother M.A.B. Kunle and thereafter by Brother Solomon Olorunghon.

Ayetoro-Gbede

A Gospel team led by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, visited Aye-Gbede, a village less than ten kilometres from Ayetoro-Gbede in 1953, for evangelism. As a result, an Apostolic Faith Church was established in the village. Rev. Oshokoya decided, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, that another branch needed to be established at Ayetoro-Gbede, a bigger town on the Ilorin-Kabba Road. His thinking was that Kabba Province, which included Ayetoro-Gbede and Aye-Gbede, was a gateway to Northern Nigeria. Ayetoro-Gbede was also a central town for villages in Gbede, and establishing a Church there would help in reaching the other villages with the Gospel message. Brother Kunle, who was heading the Aye congregation, took Brother Oshokoya to Mr. Israel Ogbonlato, who channelled the Church's request to the *Oba* of



Apostolic Faith Church, Ayetoro-Gbede
One of the earliest branch Churches in Kwara State



Rev. M. B. Kunle

Ayetoro-Gbede, Oba Alla Bello. The *Oba* donated a piece of land to the Church. A land surveyor was employed to mark out the plot and the site plan was signed by the *Oba*. The land was quite big because Brother T's intention was to develop it as a campground for the Northern States.

On May 18, 1961, the foundation of the mission house at Ayetoro-Gbede in Kabba Province, was laid by Brother T. On May 4, 1963, the dedication of The Apostolic Faith Church at Ayetoro-Gbede, took place.

Despite bitter oppositions, God made the Gospel work to progress in the town. Attendance at the Church kept increasing. The people of God who pastored the Church included: Brothers M.A.B. Kunle, F.A. Akinboye, E. O. Aina, P.K. Ibikunle, M. O. Onayemi, E. A. Maiye, S. F. Olowoniwa and Raphael Osatuyi. Branch churches which have sprung up from the Ayetoro-Gbede Church include: the Churches at Kabba, Egbeda-Egga and Isanlu in Yagba East Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Jebba

In 1969, Brother J. A. Adenola prayed through to salvation and started preaching to people in Jebba. In 1970, he had a dream in which he saw the calendar of The Apostolic Faith Church without the address. He stumbled on an Apostolic Faith tract, which he read. He wrote to Portland, Oregon, the International Headquarters, from where

he was directed to Lagos, the Africa Headquarters. He then wrote to Lagos and was subsequently invited to the 1970 camp meeting, which he attended. On his return from the camp meeting, he stopped going to his former church. Later, Brother



Jebba Branch Church

Paul Shidali got converted and joined him. Both of them started using Shidali's parlour for meetings and God added souls to them.

In 1971, six delegates from Jebba attended the camp meeting, for the first time, as a group. On their return, the group moved to a rented Railway building at Oke Dede Street. The pioneer members were Brother Adenola and his wife, Veronica; Brother Shidali and his wife, Phebean; and Brothers Cornelius Erinomo, Jerome B. Legbami and Michael O. Seidu. To win more souls, the group embarked on intensive evangelism which included street meetings and house to house visitations, under the leadership of Brother Adenola. God continued to add more souls *such as should be saved*.

A severe persecution arose against Brother Paul Shidali at his place of work and this led to his transfer to Ilorin, where God helped him to establish a branch church in 1972. During the period, Brother Busoye Brimmo was transferred by his employers from Ilorin to New Bussa. From New Bussa, together with some others, he started attending the Jebba Church, which was the closest church location to him.

In 1978, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya visited the Jebba brethren and advised them to secure a larger place of worship because the place in use then was no longer commodious. He said: "*God can only fill vacant places*".

On March 14, 1977, a piece of land, 700 ft x 300 ft, was purchased at a cost of four hundred Naira (N400.00). Rev. Oshokoya challenged the group to move to the new site as soon as possible.

Through the help of God, a temporary building made of zinc sheets was constructed and in 1981, the Church, under the leadership of Brother Adenola, moved to the new site.

In 1979, Brother Oshokoya visited Jebba and held a revival meeting in the Church. Brother Jerome Legbami travelled in a hired mini-bus to the nearby town of Bacita to invite people for the revival. Twenty people honoured the invitation and attended the Jebba meeting. The people were blessed and a branch church was soon opened in Bacita. Brother Lot Ikusemibe, who prayed through at a Christmas retreat held in Lagos, later became the pastor in Bacita.

On February 6, 1981, the foundation laying ceremony of a permanent Apostolic Faith church building was performed in Jebba by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is now established in Jebba. A new 120 ft x 37 ft church building has been completed, and the old zinc structure has been remodeled into a concrete block for children's services.

Ilorin

Although at Ilorin, there were numerous evangelistic campaigns, distribution of Gospel literature by different evangelists, such as Reverends T.G. Oshokoya, F. A. Akinboye and P. K. Ibikunle, the germination of the seed sown actually started in 1972.

Brother Paul Kadri Shidali, a member of the Jebba branch church, was transferred to Ilorin as a school teacher. God used him to establish the



New Church Building under construction at Ilorin, Kwara/ Kogi District Headquarters

first gathering of people under the auspices of The Apostolic Faith Church, in February, 1972. They held prayer meetings and read the Sunday School book in a two-room apartment along Ibrahim Taiwo Road. Among the early converts were Vincent Akeem, Ezekiel Ali, Dele Suberu and Victor Eganmona. The group continued there till January 1973, when the apartment became too small for them.

God provided an uncompleted building owned by Alhaji Olowo, situated along Ibrahim Taiwo Road. Soon after, they were given a quit notice because the owner wanted to continue construction work on the building.

Through the help of God, it was possible to obtain permission to use a classroom at the United L.G.E.A. Primary School along Ibrahim Taiwo Road. The Education Authority that granted the permission, did so without any rent arrangement attached to the use of the room. The Lord prospered the work. The Church increased in number. Sister Yinka Osunbunmi and Brother Bisi Idowu, who had been converted at Ibadan, joined the group. As God was blessing and things were moving on well, the Authority of the Schools Management Board withdrew the permit, because of the pressure from other groups who were seeking similar permits. A quit notice was given to the Church and an intensive search for another place of worship started. The people of God prayed. God answered the prayers and four plots of land located along Agbo-Oba Street, were secured at a cost of N4,000.00.

In order to cater for the immediate need, a structure of wood and zinc, 110 ft x 30 ft was put up. The structure soon became the Children's Hall. More plots of land in the same location were acquired. At present, the main church building, mission house, offices and the children's hall, are all on the land.

Brother Amos Adeoye was posted to Ilorin as the Overseer of Kwara and Niger States in 1982. Ilorin then became the District Headquarters for the two States. He served in the capacity till September 1991. Men of God who have served in Kwara State as Overseers include: Brothers Francis Akinboye, Paul. K. Ibikunle, Bolaji Pelu, Philip O. Olufowote, Michael O. Onayemi and Titus Ayorinde Obatusin.

Omu-Aran

The efforts of the people of God did not go in vain with respect to planting the Gospel seed in Omu-Aran. Various Gospel teams visited Omu-Aran and left their footprints through tracts and other Gospel publications distributed as far back as the early '60s. Although, there was no immediate fruit of such efforts, God was mindful of their labour.

Brother Julius Ajiboye embraced the Gospel and was saved in the '50s at Ijebu-Ode. He later moved to Ibadan. Under the leadership of Brother T. A. Ogunaike, the Pastor of Ibadan Church, he was allowed to go to Kwara State to hold religious meetings, especially in schools. By the early '70's, God had helped Brother Julius to make an effective impact on young people in various schools, and on some religious leaders. He used the opportunity to invite people, who were mostly students, to retreats, youth rallies and camp meetings organised by The Apostolic Faith in Lagos. Many of them were saved.

The new babes in Christ were drawn together and they started evening and morning prayer meetings at Brother Ajiboye's house in Omu-Aran. Later, Bible studies, based on The Apostolic Faith Sunday School quarterlies, were included in the meetings.

The work soon expanded and more people became regular in the meetings. In 1974, an extension was made to the house where the group met for worship and many converts came to join them. Some of



Omu Aran Church

the young people who made up the congregation were: Matthew Bamidele, Samuel Awotayo, Sunday Awotunde, Deborah Bamidele, Jones John, Matthew Adewumi, Alice Osamo (now John), Janet Adeyemi (now Yisa), Comfort Oyeyipo (now Adebayo), Comfort Ajiboye, Gabriel Babajide, Joseph Akanbi, Joseph Agbaje, Zaccheus Oyedokun, Joseph Adeagbo, Nathaniel Oke, Bisi Oladipo, Bisi Idowu, John Oyedepo, and William Awodele. Many of them grew up in the Church and became workers and ministers in various branch churches of The Apostolic Faith all over Nigeria.

Meanwhile, Brother Julius Ajiboye was still supervising his business at Ibadan and because of that, Brothers Samuel Awotayo and Gabriel Babajide, were asked to co-ordinate the weekday activities at Omu-Aran. The work prospered and Brother Ajiboye had to look for a piece of land to build a church. The land obtained was owned by the Awoyinka's family. Three co-heirs of the property — Ajiboye, Awotayo and Aransiola — decided to sign away the ownership of the land to The Apostolic Faith Church.

In April 1976, the foundation stone of the Church was laid by Rev. T. A. Ogunnaike. In about two years, the church building was completed and was dedicated on February 18, 1978. Brother Ajiboye acquired another piece of land for the Church along Ilorin highway. In 1980, the Lord provided an *E-20* bus for the Church, and in 1982, a *C-20* mini-bus was purchased for the Association of Visiting Secretaries (A.V.S.). The use of the vehicles made it possible to bring people for services from several towns and villages around Omu-Aran.

Several traditional rulers and Obas have associated themselves with the Church, and a number of them have prayed through to salvation. The first among them was the Olomu of Omu-Aran, Oba Suleman Durotoye Abegunde II. Brother J. O. Soyinka invited him to the Annual Camp Meeting in 1987. He came to spend two weeks at the camp and he was saved. On getting home, he did not enter his palace until all the charms and medicines were packed out of the palace. He held the faith until he died in 1993, at the age of 103 years. Other traditional rulers who were saved include: Oba M. O. Adeyeye, the Oludofin of Idofin, and the Elegosi of Egosi, who donated a piece of land measuring 200 acres to The Apostolic Faith.

Brother Julius Ajiboye, passed on to his reward on September 19,

1981. Brother Segun Ajiboye supervised the Church until Brother Gabriel Babajide became the pastor in 1982. He handed over to Brother Joseph Akanbi in 1996.

The Churches at Oro, Offa, Aiyedun, Idofin, Iwo and Osi, developed from the Omu-Aran Church.

Jos

The Apostolic Faith Church in Jos, Plateau State, started in the month of September, 1963, in a rented room at 15, Nassarawa Gwong, Jos. The first Sunday School service had five people in attendance — Brother Timothy Sowunmi and four others. Later, two young men, John Doyen and Paul Nampia, natives of Pankshin, prayed through to salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. These two men learnt music. John, played the trumpet, while Paul played cornet during the services. Thus, the work progressed.

The Church moved to Shendam, a local area in Jos, in 1967, during the civil war, and rented a place of worship measuring 28 ft x 14 ft. Rev. T. G. Oshokoya advised the Church to relocate to Jos, which is the capital of Plateau State.

On March 31, 1973, the Church began worshipping in a three-room apartment owned by Brother Sowumi, who was the leader. By the special grace of God, in 1978, the place was so full that it could no longer accommodate the worshippers. Through the effort of Brother Ojo, a surveyor, the Church secured a parcel of land measuring 1.4 acres. Trouble arose from the indigenes over the land, and the certificate of ownership was revoked. God miraculously provided money for another piece of land, which was later



Jos Zone Headquarters Church

developed. The foundation of the building measuring 50 ft x 22 ft was laid on December 17, 1979. The building was dedicated for use on September 24, 1980.

Jos became the Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith work in the Northwest Zone. Branch churches such as Rukuba and Bukuru have sprung up.

The first camp meeting was held in Jos in 1995. When Brother Timothy Sowunmi retired in 1996, Brother Benjamin Oni was appointed the Overseer of Jos District.

Okene

The Church in Okene started as a family prayer group in Brother Johnson Onuwe's apartment in 1969. Brother Onuwe, who had heard about The Apostolic Faith Church, attended the August 1969 camp meeting in Lagos. He prayed fervently and received the three Christian experiences of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He returned home after the camp meeting and never went back to his former church. He started to conduct family worship in his house. As this continued, interested and inspired observers joined in the family prayer meeting. The number of the group increased and on October 2, 1969, the group held its first service at Okene.

As the Church grew in number, Mr. Mark Icha, a non-member of the Church, surrendered his house in Okene for the use of the Church as a place of worship, from 1969 until early 1976. This was the Lord's doing.

The Church moved to 45, Inike Road, Okene, where iron sheets were used to erect a relatively larger building. Wonderfully, God provided 9 plots of land, at the cost of two hundred and fifty Naira. The church building has been completed on the site. God has also established many branch churches at Kuroko, Ihima, Eganyi, Obangede, Otite and Ajaokuta. In October 2003, the Pastor at Okene, Brother Johnson Onuwe, was transferred to Kabba. Brother Festus Oniyide who was the Pastor at Ajaokuta, took over from him.

Abuja

In 1976, an area was carved out of the former Plateau, Niger and Kwara States, by the Federal Government, as the Federal Capital



Old Abuja Church building at Jabi Village

Territory of Nigeria. The territory, otherwise known as Abuja, received increased Federal Government attention and was proclaimed the seat of the Federal Government on December 12, 1991. Before the seat of the Federal Government moved from Lagos to Abuja, the territory acquired a new political, social and economic outlook. The population increased greatly as people moved in and out of the city to keep official appointments, while others came in on transfer. The emergence of this brand new city in the heartland of the country, gained the attention of the members of the Board of Trustees of The Apostolic Faith. The fervour for missionary work propelled the Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, to submit an application for land to the Government, in January 1985.

While the request for land in the new city was being pursued by Brother T. A. Adewale, the former Pastor of The Apostolic Faith Church in Minna, Brother Soji Olamijulo and his wife, amongst others, were transferred from Lagos to Abuja in August 1987. A group was formed in September 1987. The first meeting was held with the following in attendance: Brothers Soji Olamijulo, Wumi Daramola, William Itok, Akpan Obot, and Sisters Florence Olamijulo, Blessing Itok, Grace Ante, Funke Owopetu, and Ima Obot. Brother Soji Olamijulo led the group. The group met every Sunday in his residence at Block 9, Kaolack Street, Zone 1, Wuse, Abuja. The group prayed for a commodious accommodation and God answered the prayers. The authorities of Garki Village Primary School approved the use of the school by the Church, for religious meetings. The group moved

immediately and the first meeting was held there on October 25, 1987, with thirteen people in attendance.

The congregation grew in number and people prayed through to different Christian experiences. Soon, there was a deep yearning for a permanent place of worship and an exclusive premises for the Church. A fact-finding team was raised to enquire into probable sites for the Church. The team went to the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) for assistance. It gathered that all the land in Abuja belonged to the Government and illegal structures would be demolished. It found a safe haven in Jabi village, where a parcel of land measuring 1.2 hectares, was obtained through the village Head. The foundation of a modest church was laid by the Africa Overseer, Rev. J.O. Soyinka, on November 25, 1988, and the Church was dedicated on March 18, 1990.

In 1991, Rev. E. O. Temisan was appointed Overseer for Kaduna zone. The zone supervised the Abuja Church, among others. Abuja work witnessed remarkable growth at the time. Revival meetings, youth rallies and camp meetings, amongst other activities, were organised to enhance the work and promote the spread of the Gospel. Initially, most of the Abuja church members and workers came on transfer from southern locations, but the Lord has raised a congregation that is composed of Nigerians from different parts of the country. Many buildings, including the main church, children's hall, dining hall, mission house, dormitory for ladies and conveniences were constructed.



The New Church Building on Plot 456, under construction

The A.V.S. arm of the Church visited schools and artisan workshops in various parts of the city. A selected team visited hospitals. An evangelistic group went to remote areas of the city with the Gospel. Gospel papers were distributed from street to street and the attendance increased.

Official document for the Church land had posed a serious problem. Miraculously, Plot 456 was approved by the Honourable Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, on December 31, 1994. The plot, measuring 4,200 square metres, is a few minutes walk from the Jabi location.

The foundation stone of the new auditorium with classical music facilities was laid on September 20, 1996, by the Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, and members of the Board of Trustees.

In 1999, Brother Ezekiel O. Aremu was appointed to oversee the work at Abuja. Later, he was recalled to the Lagos Headquarters.

In 2000, Abuja became one of the Apostolic Faith Zonal Headquarters with Brother Soji Olamijulo as the Overseer.

Gboko

The Church started as a prayer meeting for a group of children of God in the town of Gboko. The saints in Gboko were only opportuned to attend Sunday services in Makurdi, a distance of 100 kilometres away. As a result of the need and hunger to meet as a group to worship God more than once in the week, they started to meet in the house of Brother Jonathan Gbolade Odunsi, in 1987. The group comprised a few families of God's children and some invitees.

The group launched out with full force in propagating the Gospel to all and sundry in the town. Visits were made to various homes, to invite them to attend the prayer meetings. God answered prayers. Meetings were held twice a week, and God prospered the work marvelously as souls were saved and were added to their number.

God provided another venue for meetings at the Central Primary School, Gboko. The membership soared, and the Gboko group became a full-fledged Church on October 18, 1992, with Brother Gbolade Odunsi as the Pastor.

On June 16, 1994, Brother Gbolade Odunsi was called Home. The present Pastor of the Church is Brother Osmond C. Adiele.

Far North

Kano

The Gospel work started in Kano with the gathering of seekers after righteousness, in the room of Brother Umoren, in 1960. Brother Umoren had read a copy of the Light of Hope magazine of The Apostolic Faith Church sent from Portland, Oregon, and was greatly touched by the Spirit of God. He was moved to write to Portland for more information about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He was directed to contact the Africa Overseer of the work in Lagos, Nigeria, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya. This he did, and he was encouraged by Brother T to hold prayer meetings with other interested persons in his locality. Hence, the use of his room in a house at Festing Road, Sabon-Gari, Kano. There were about 10 people present at the first gathering.

Brother Umoren led the group at the start of the work and later handed over the leadership to Brother F. T. Udoh, who faithfully carried on the Gospel work until the outbreak of the civil war in the country, in 1966. The war caused the dispersion of the brethren and Brother Udoh packed the movable property of the Church, including money, and left for Lagos, where he handed them to Brother T.

The war ended in 1970 and the Gospel work was revived with the transfer of Brother Emmanuel Adebisi Ogundipe by his employer to



The congregation at Kano branch Church

Kano in 1972. Due to a strong desire for fellowship with God's children, Brother Ogundipe organised and held prayer meetings in his one room apartment at 65, Abeokuta Road, Sabon-Gari, with about six people in attendance. The Gospel work progressed rapidly and Brother Ogundipe's room soon became too small for the growing Church. In the quest for more space, benches and chairs were arranged outside the premises in the open. The unfavourable weather conditions often disturbed the meetings.

The members prayed earnestly unto God for a larger space and as difficult as it was to have a place of worship in Kano, a predominantly Moslem city, God in His wonderful way, in 1973, provided a classroom at the Holy Trinity Primary School, now called Danware Primary School. The congregation grew to about 50 and God blessed His Church spiritually, physically and materially. Chairs, carpets, hymn books, typewriters, gas lamps and some other items needed for the work, were purchased.

The need for a church land made the saints in Kano to desperately pray for one, and just before Brother Ogundipe left Kano in 1983, a piece of land was secured. All the necessary approval was received from the State Government. When Brother Ogundipe left Kano, Brother Ojo Davies took over the leadership of the work.

The Church experienced some difficult times in 1984, when the Local Government Authority ejected the group from Danware Primary School. The Church, during that period, was only able to hold cottage meetings in members' houses, located in different parts of the city. Such meetings required the carrying of materials such as gas lamps and hymn books over long distances every meeting day. The houses of Brothers George Cole, Fadipe, Ojo Davies and Felix Ogbonna, among others, were used at different times for the meetings.

In 1987, God provided the Church with its permanent place of worship, located at 5, Sanya Olu Street, Sabon-Gari, which at one time was a bread factory. Renovation work was done and the Church was dedicated the same year by Brother Temisan, the Overseer of Kaduna Zone.

The Church suffered much persecution during the 1987 religious riot in Kano. The Pastor of the Church, Brother Davies was beaten to a state of coma, but God raised him up.

A fairly developed property on Egbe Road, Sabon-Gari was purchased and further worked upon by the Church for its use. But to the Church's dismay, the Local Government Authority visited the Church site on an occasion and pulled down the erected structure.

In 1991, another religious riot resulted in the loss of many church property amongst which were a number of church vehicles. The riot also caused many members to relocate from Kano to other parts of the country, leaving only a few, virtually new members, behind. God used these few members greatly to carry on with the Gospel work in Kano.

God revived His Church miraculously from total collapse in the turbulent times. When calm returned to Kano, the church was renovated to a befitting status. Materials and equipment were purchased for use and the congregation increased in number. The Church is marching on. Rather than face extinction, the Church has waxed stronger in Kano, to the extent of breeding two branch churches in Katsina, Katsina State and Dutse, Jigawa State.

When the Pastor, Brother Ojo Davies later relocated to Lagos, Brother Sunday E. Oduobok took over from him.

Sokoto

Rev. Magnus Olusola Adejumo started the work at Sokoto. At the inception, the children of God gathered for worship at the proposed site of the Nigeria Railway Corporation. When the place became too small, Brother Adejumo, a man of prayer, was used by God to procure a piece of land in 1981, where a church building made of zinc was constructed.

A neighbour wanted to snatch the land from the Church by starting a permanent structure on it. However, the people of God prayed, and the man packed all



The Church Building in Sokoto

his materials away from the Church land. In 1994, the foundation of a new, bigger church building was laid. The Church was completed and dedicated to the glory of God

Brother Adejumo went to the nooks and crannies of the state with the Word of God. He took the Gospel to both the poor and the rich. His passion for souls drove him to the Government House to give the Light of Hope magazine to the then Governor of Sokoto State and also to the inmates of the state prison. The effort yielded a bountiful harvest as many of his converts are still in the Gospel in different parts of the country.

When Brother Adejumo went to his reward on December 14, 1997 the mantle of leadership fell on Brother Abubakar Adediran.

Katsina

In the early 80's, children of God who were students of the Federal Advanced Teachers' College (now Federal College of Education) Katsina, started to fellowship at Kano, a distance of about 170 kilometres. One of such students was Sister Comfort Bamidele, who came to the College in 1986. Brother Jacob Ogunfowoke, a staff of the Federal Ministry of Works was also transferred to Katsina in 1989.

The group later decided to meet somewhere in Katsina because of the long distance to Kano. Their first place of fellowship was the transit lodge rented by the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing for its staff along Nagogo Road. Later, between March and April 1989, the group moved to the College of Education with the hope of reaching out to students and others in the academic community. Due to religious riots, the group moved back to its former centre at Nagogo Road, in May, 1989.

After some communication with the Africa Headquarters, Brother Jacob Ogunfowoke was asked to lead the group.

Katsina is a predominantly Muslim town with extreme hostility to Christianity. It was thus very difficult to secure a place of worship. The group suffered forceful ejections and threats. Despite all these, it was able to forge ahead.

The group moved to 6, Ahmadu Bello Way, a room rented by the leader and fellowshiped there. Many souls prayed through to different Christian experiences of salvation, sanctification and the

baptism of the Holy Ghost. Ministers were sent from Kano to encourage the group in the Word of God. Some of such ministers included: Brothers Peter Ogunkorode, Samuel Fadipe and George Cole, under the leadership of Brother Ojo Davies.

On January 14, 1992, Plot 8, Block B6 at Kofar Koura New Residential Layout, was purchased for Katsina group by the Kano Church, at a cost of N12,000. The saints were overwhelmed with joy. Efforts were made almost immediately to provide a structure for services.

God brought Brother Aminu Okaraga, a Youth Corper, and Jacob Odunsi, from the Lagos Headquarters. Brother Odunsi was later joined by his wife. The couple were choristers. This was a boost to the work both spiritually and physically.

In March 1993, the new church building was ready and the group moved from 6, Ahmadu Bello Way, to the permanent church site. Brother Jacob Ogunfowoke was transferred to Abeokuta in 1997, and the mantle of leadership then fell on Brother Jacob Odunsi, who pastored the Church till he was transferred back to Lagos in 1998. Brother Bassey Edet took over and has continued the leadership of the Church till date.

Kaduna

The children of God in Kaduna (about three families) first started to assemble in Brother Oladoyin's room at Mubi close, off Maiduguri Road. Later, they moved to St. Michael Anglican Primary school located at Kigo Road. They had to vacate the school premises when the Government took over schools.

The group went back to meet in Brother Oladoyin's house, and when the space became inadequate, they met under a mango tree. Later, a shed was constructed in the compound as a shelter from rain, sun and the disturbing birds on the tree tops. Despite the environmental inconveniencies, souls were being saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost. In 1981, Brother Michael Bolatito Oladoyin, who had sacrificed a lot to get the Gospel established in Kaduna, passed on to Glory.

The mantle of leadership then fell on Brother Paul Oladimeji Olaniyi. The Church witnessed an increase in respect of newcomers,

and several children of God who were also transferred from other stations to Kaduna. The scheme of posting Youth Corpers from the Lagos Headquarters to branch churches played a prominent role in the propagation of the Gospel in the area.

The frequent harassments from the Local Government Authority (KASUPDA) prompted the saints to look out for a plot of land to build a Church. After a long search, God wonderfully provided six plots of land through the efforts of four of His children — Brothers Ayinde Sobola, Festus Oyeniyi, Victor Odibe and Inumoh. The Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, laid the foundation stone of the main auditorium on October 28, 1988. The work started immediately and the project was eventually executed despite escalating inflation costs.

In 1991, after the demise of Brother Olaniyi, the mantle of leadership was taken up by the first Zonal Overseer, Brother Emmanuel Temisan, who was sent from Lagos. The Church moved to the new site in Sabon Tashan, where a smaller church building was constructed for immediate use, while plans were on to gather sufficient materials to roof the main auditorium. The membership grew steadily, and the evangelistic horizon became brighter and larger.

Brother Emmanuel Temisan passed on to Glory on January 21, 1999. Brother S. B. Adegbite then took up the leadership. Brother Albert Adepoju Adegboye was transferred from Akwa Ibom State to



Kaduna Church

oversee the work in Kaduna Zone, in October 1999.

In February 2001, he was recalled to the Headquarters in Lagos. Afterwards, the Zonal Headquarters was changed to Abuja and Brother Soji Olamijulo became the District Overseer. The present Pastor in Kaduna Church is Brother Olusola Olabode.

CHAPTER TEN

BRANCH CHURCHES IN AFRICA

Ghana

Three key names come to mind in the establishment of The Apostolic Faith Church in Ghana. They are: Rev. Emmanuel Boye Marteye, Mrs. Elizabeth van der Puije and Rev. Peter Otto van der Puije. Rev. Marteye was the founder of an Apostolic Church, which embraced the Biblical doctrines of salvation, sanctification, baptism of the Holy Ghost and divine healing, among others. Mrs. van der Puije had a hunger and thirst for more of God, and this made her leave her former church, where her husband was a Circuit Steward. She joined Rev. Marteye's church and held on to her new faith in spite of all persecutions and threats from her husband. When the pressure and threats from her husband, her extended family and other members of her former church became unbearable, Sister Lizzie summed up her commitment to God in her new-found faith in these words: "*I love my family and my husband devotedly, but my love for God stands supreme*". When her marriage was threatened with divorce, she agonised in prayer with the help of Rev. Marteye, for God to confirm His truthfulness in her new faith.

After failing to win his *strayed* wife back into the fold, Brother Peter van der Puije also prayed fervently for God to prove the authenticity of the Apostolic Church doctrines, especially that of divine healing. For a sign, he requested from God two Scriptural passages, which he would write and hide in his breast pocket. He wanted God to reveal the exact passages to members of the Apostolic Church, who would in turn quote them for him.

God gave him the passages, he wrote them down and drove to the Apostolic Church. Scarcely had he entered the church, when two ladies stood up and quoted verbatim the two Scriptural passages in his pocket. As Brother Peter sat down, he was invited to testify. He attested to the authenticity of the Word of God and testified of his salvation and sanctification, and of his intense hunger for the powerful faith the Biblical Apostles had. Rev. Peter Otto van der Puije, like Paul the Apostle of old, was miraculously converted to the church which he

once vehemently opposed. He later became its leader.

Thereafter, the Apostolic Church and Brother Peter's prayer group at Peniel house, Accra, merged to form a new church by name *Faith of the Apostles*. Brother Peter and his wife consecrated themselves and their property such as house, car, private mailbox, typewriter and money to the work of the new church.

Rev. Marteye gave some tracts he had received from America to Brother Peter, who communicated with Portland, Oregon, the International Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith Mission. In reply, more tracts and literature on the doctrines and the standard of The Apostolic Faith Mission, were sent to Brother Peter. He read and studied them and was highly inspired.

Visit to Portland

Brother Peter was corresponding with the Portland Headquarters of The Apostolic Faith, and was so much interested that he wished to travel to the United States to see for himself what the people had. In response to an invitation from Portland, he reached New York on June 14, 1948, and left the following day by train to attend the Annual Camp Meeting of The Apostolic Faith Church, which was to hold from July 4-25. On June 19, he arrived at the campground of The Apostolic Faith in Portland.

He was warmly received at the New York Airport by a group of the church members led by his host, Brother Raymond Crawford, the General Overseer of The Apostolic Faith work at the International Headquarters. The rousing welcome he received at Portland, coupled with the genuine brotherly love extended to him, convinced him that he had really met the true worshippers of God. Brother Peter was taken on a familiarisation tour of The Apostolic Faith Organisation in America. He attended weekday services, Sunday School, Sunday morning and evening services, and visited various Christian homes, where he saw the people leading practical and victorious Christian lives.

This was crowned with his attendance at the camp meeting, which brought him into contact with ministers and members from the various branch churches in America. He saw, learnt and got so spiritually blessed that, like the Queen of Sheba, he concluded that *"the half was*

not told me". He presented the needs of the Africans to the Headquarters in Portland, with a passionate plea for an experienced and spirit-filled minister to be sent to assist the Gospel work in Ghana. Consequently, after his return to Accra from Portland on August 27, 1948, Brother Peter willingly agreed that the Faith of the Apostles' Church in Ghana should be affiliated to The Apostolic Faith Church, Portland, Oregon.

Rev. van der Puije came back to Ghana more equipped spiritually, physically and mentally, to fashion and organise the Faith of the Apostles' Church, along the lines of the old time religion of The Apostolic Faith. To facilitate this, special meetings were held at Peniel with all the leaders of the various branch churches. Some of the leaders and members embraced the affiliation and sound doctrines, while others left to form their own splinter groups.

The affiliation was formalised. Brother Peter was then ordained the Overseer of The Apostolic Faith Mission in Ghana.

Peniel

Brother Peter had called his home Peniel when he was saved, for there he wrestled with God and consecrated his life for service to the Lord. In his study at Peniel, his sister, who was referred to as "the black sheep" of the family, gave her heart to the Lord. Another sister, a "good church member", who was living in adultery, also saw her need, sought, found the Lord and received freedom from sin.

The large living room of his home was converted into a chapel, and for many years, The Apostolic Faith services were held there. Many have knelt in prayer and found forgiveness for their sins, at Peniel. The little chapel was filled at each meeting. Thereafter, the meeting space was extended to both the hall and the veranda of the house. Much prayer went up to the Throne of God that the Lord would provide a larger place for services, in Accra. Suitable landed or building property was difficult to come by, and the converts were poor.

The pioneering little flock in Accra consisted of Rev. Peter van der Puije and his family; Rev. Marteye and his family; Rev. Evelyn Grant, John Nii, Amponsah Wellington, Comfort Sagoe-Payne, and young men, such as, John Wellington, Victor Cole, Augustus Addico Samuel, Ebenezer Baiden-Amisshah and Isaiah Odoi.

Serious evangelistic campaigns were launched and signs and wonders followed the preaching of the Word. Many souls were saved and the small hall of Peniel House got filled up.

Missionary from Portland

In response to the *Macedonian call*, Rev. George Hughes, who volunteered for service in Africa, was sent as a missionary from Portland to help strengthen the work in Ghana. On October 19, 1948, Brother George M. Hughes arrived in Accra, Ghana, on his first missionary tour to Africa, and he was met at the airport by Brother Peter van der Puije.

He brought his immense experience to bear on Rev. van der Puije. Together, they visited all the churches under the umbrella of The Apostolic Faith in Ghana. They held revival services and Bible teachings, and laid a solid foundation for the Church. They began a three-month evangelistic tour to Nigeria in January 1949. They took along with them, tracts, magazines, Bibles, hymnbooks, Bible study books, olive oil, office stationery and a typewriter.

In Nigeria, they met Rev. T.G. Oshokoya in Lagos, Western Nigeria, and Rev. Philip Inyang, in Eastern Nigeria. The four visited The Apostolic Faith Churches in Nigeria, as a team.

On their return to Ghana, several revival services were held with the saints before Rev. Hughes travelled back to Portland. His missionary work brought immeasurable blessings to the Church in Ghana and he was remembered for his spirit-filled sermons and soul-stirring testimonies. Thereafter, annual camp meetings were held in Accra.

Other Visits to Portland

Rev. Peter van der Puije made his second journey to Portland in 1950. At this time, he gave a comprehensive report on the progress of the Churches in Ghana and Nigeria. He discussed the missionary work in Africa extensively with Rev. G. Hughes and concluded arrangements for the latter's second visit to Africa.

On December 24, 1952, Brother Hughes arrived in Accra, Ghana, on his second missionary tour to Africa. He visited all the Churches in order to water the seed which had been sown, earlier. On his way to

Liberia en route to Portland, he was called to Glory while airborne. Rev. George Moore Hughes would forever be remembered for the solid foundation he helped to lay for the Church in Ghana, and Africa as a whole.

In Ghana, tracts were translated to Ga, Fanti, Twi and Ewe languages to help as many people as possible read the Good News in Ghana. They were sent to Portland, Oregon, for printing, and when Brother Peter van der Puije had yet another opportunity to attend camp meeting in June 1953, he brought them back to Ghana. The tracts in the local languages, helped a lot in the propagation of the Gospel in Ghana.

Brother Peter voluntarily retired from his secular work to become a full-time minister. He preached the Word in an unadulterated form and many souls were saved.

Larger Accommodation Acquired

At last, prayers for a larger accommodation were answered. After some legal problems, a six-storey building was purchased. Weeks of remodelling, redecorating, furnishing, labour with sweat, and prayers of eager saints, followed the purchase.

The auditorium of the church could seat 250 persons. There were additional Sunday School rooms and two unused store rooms for expansion when necessary. With the remodelling, came the problem of finances to carry on the needed changes. The Lord however supplied the needs in a marvellous way. When money was needed for installing electricity, the people prayed. That very day, a brother who did not know of the urgent need, brought the exact amount needed. He asked that the money be used for the remodelling work. As the day of dedication drew near, many willing workers toiled hard, cleaning and preparing the church for services. Amidst the hustle and bustle of the work, the perfect love and harmony of the children of God attracted the passers-by, and some of them even joined in the work. Finally, the downtown church, bearing the sign, "Apostolic Faith" was finished.

The new church was located on the busiest thoroughfare in Accra, that is, the Accra — Nsawam highway — on Okai-Mensa Lane, in the heart of Adabraka, Accra. This was a thickly populated area, with a new restaurant nearby, where scores of young men spent much of their

time. Opposite the restaurant was a modern cinema house, where hundreds of people struggled to gain entrance. The busy streets were thronged with pleasure seekers, petty traders, and women hawkers with their wares. Hence, the Church was a *Gospel lighthouse* in the environment.

The Dedication

On Easter Sunday, April 18, 1954, the church was dedicated. The minister, Rev. van der Puije, wrote:

"At last, our much-longed-for dedication had taken place. It was so successful that we were overwhelmed at the way God undertook for His children! Visitors began coming in about 2:30 pm and soon the church was packed full. Our own members had to take their seats in the yard, giving their places in the church to visitors."

Men with their flowing togas draped over one shoulder, and women in their bright-hued dresses, some were in European clothing, while others were in native attires, sat in the congregation alert and eager to catch every word spoken by the minister. A number of Lebanese living in Accra attended the service. They were inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit and the power of God which was felt by all.

A musical concert was presented by the Choir and Orchestra. Songs of praise filled the church and re-echoed in the busy street. Prayers of gratitude were offered to God, Who had inspired these Christians in their service to Him, and for answering their prayers for a new place of worship.

The dedication sermon was preached in English by the minister



Dedication service of Ghana Church in 1954 with Rev Oshokoya (in dark suit) preaching

from Lagos, Nigeria, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, and interpreted into Ga by a young minister. The message went deep into the hearts of the visitors and many inquired into the "way of life eternal". The leader wrote:

"The location of our Church is excellent, and at our special services, the people standing outside were perhaps more than those sitting inside, and the church was full. The hand of the Lord has been greatly manifested in our midst, many have been saved and prayed through to deeper experiences. One young man who stood outside by the window, listening to the service, came in and knelt at a chair, and called upon God for mercy. The Lord wonderfully saved him and he shouted: 'Where are the magicians now? I have no more faith in you, you false professors!' How he thanked God for freeing him from the dominion of Satan and saving his soul! It was the first time he had visited our Church. The next night he testified, 'I spoilt my life by going after magicians and charmers. I thought I would be happy and safe if I practised the magic arts. I wore talismans, rings, and what-nots, but now I have been saved; all my sins are forgiven me. It was in that corner I knelt and prayed and the Lord answered. I cannot describe the wonderful "thing" that took place in me, but I know it was the Lord'.

"Many young people, attracted by the music of the Orchestra, attended the meetings and cried unto God for the forgiveness of their sins. Oh, the joy that illuminated the faces of those who prayed through to a born-again experience with God!

"The Church stands as a monument of faith, for there is never a collection taken, nor soliciting for funds. The Gospel is preached in its purity and power; and at the altars of prayer 'old-fashioned sinners find old-fashioned grace' which enables them to live Christian lives. Ministers and workers are strong in their denunciation of all heathen practices, and in declaring the power of the true God to deliver men and women from sin and enable them to live in purity and righteousness. The testimonies of redeemed souls convince others of the power of the true God".

Choir and Orchestra

The Accra Church had a 20-piece Orchestra and a 16-voice Choir, which performed in the services. It was like a magnet to passers by. Its music drew a mixed crowd to the windows and doors during the meetings. Many of those who listened to those beautiful strains of music were saved. A young man, who was arrested by the music and song as he was passing by the Church, was miraculously converted. He had locked himself in his room, contemplating suicide; but as he lifted the poison to his lips, the tumbler dropped from his hand, and he felt



Early Choir and Orchestra at Accra Ghana

that God had spared his life for a purpose. Later, as he heard the music and went into the Church, the Lord dealt with him. He cried out to God and was marvellously saved from his sins; with God's help, he straightened out his crooked past.

Gospel Teams

The Accra group had four Gospel teams which held services on the various street corners and in the neighbouring villages. These Gospel teams had been instrumental in bringing many people to the services. A number of them who were truly born again, eventually became workers in the Church. In one open-air meeting, more than 110 people gathered to hear the Gospel Story, and at the end of the service nearly every one wanted prayers.

A man heard one of his old friends testify in a street meeting. He attended the next meeting at the Church, and was saved. In his testimony he said:

“On the day I heard my friend testify, I made up my mind that I must get what he had, so that the Lord would make His dwelling place in my heart. Today, I do not need to have a church bell ring to call me to church; there is a bell ringing in my heart. I glorify God for a Gospel that cleanses the drunkard from his filthy habit, saves his soul and makes him lead a clean and sober life”.

At a time, Gospel workers travelled many miles to various groups in Ghana, for revival meetings. At Nsawam, twenty-two miles from Accra, there was a church seating about sixty people, built of mud and roofed with thatch, where a meeting was held with the children of God. The workers proceeded to Koni, where five years before, the natives had built a mile-long road with tools scarcely larger than a hoe, for one of the missionaries — the first white man some of them had ever seen. There, in the mud church, roofed with corrugated iron sheets, was a band of people who were striving to uphold the standard of truth in that fetish village.

Six miles south east of Koni, is Toflokpo. The village is by the side of a salt lagoon. When the lagoon dried up in the dry season, much edible salt was collected and sold. The villagers embraced the truth of God's Word, and it was an inspiration to worship with them.

About sixty miles along the Accra-Sekondi highway, is Asafo village. There, again, was a group who stood true to God's Word. Thirty-six miles farther along was Canaan, a village newly laid, with tall trees towering overhead. There were about 200 houses in the village, and the place was inhabited by only Apostolic Faith people. These people sang God's praises with beautiful voices. It was truly an inspiration to hear them.

Still along Accra-Sekondi highway, is the farthest branch church, Takoradi, which is 186 miles from Accra. A revival took place in the Church and many souls were saved and sanctified, while eight received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There, the people of God built a church with cement blocks and roofed it with corrugated iron sheets. In the

early part of the year, nineteen new converts were baptised by immersion in water.

These and other villages were visited and the Gospel Seed was sown in hungry hearts. In some villages, services were held under a tree. But as souls assembled together, the Lord met with them and answered their prayers.

The testimonies of the precious workers, who went out into the highways and byways carrying the Gospel message, were very inspiring. Some had been brought up in superstitious beliefs, thinking they could defeat the wiles of the devil by wearing charms and amulets. Many laboured in utter darkness, with no one to tell them about Jesus, until the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ came across their pathway. They praised God for saving their souls, and rejoiced that they had the privilege to tell others of the victory in Christ. Other branch churches visited were: Abura-Tayedo, Akim Manso, Tamale and Sege.

The Work Continues

In November 1954, Rev. van der Puije suffered a heart attack. Even on his sick bed, he continued with the Gospel work until he went to his reward on March 8, 1955.

After the call to Glory of Rev. van der Puije, Rev. T.G. Oshokoya, the Overseer of the Apostolic Faith Churches in Nigeria, was appointed the Africa Overseer. He, through the Africa Headquarters, gave immense support to the Church in Ghana. He bought them a Gospel bus, visited the branch churches and sent experienced and spirit-filled ministers such as Revds. H.A. Elebute, E. Oshobowale, Ben Abbey and others, to Ghana on pastoral duties. He also attended the camp meeting in Accra every year with a team of ministers. Each year, he would dispatch a Gospel vehicle to transport members of the Church in Ghana to attend the camp meeting in Lagos, Nigeria. They continued to enjoy the same support from Brother J.O. Soyinka who succeeded Brother Oshokoya.

Whenever a Moses left the scene, God provided a Joshua. On the recommendation of Rev. Crawford, Rev. T.G. Oshokoya, the Africa Overseer, ordained Rev. John Wellington as the Overseer of the Churches in Ghana and he was assisted by Rev. Samuel Harding. The young Overseer, Rev. Wellington, was zealous, aflame for God and an

inspiration to all. Revival fire blazed in the Church and many seekers were saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire. Many consecrated their lives to God's service.

A problem which faced the Church at that time, was the loss of its premises at Okai-Mensah lane in Accra, due to non-renewal of the lease of the land, on which the building was, when it expired. For sometime, the Church moved from house to house until another land at Abbosey Okai, was secured. God provided, and a church was built.

Another problem faced was the rapid turnover of Overseers between 1956 and 1971. There were: Revds. Samuel Harding, Evelyn G. Grant, Jacob Lomo Okaiteye and Emmanuel Boye Marteye.

In 1972, Rev. Victor Cole took over as the Overseer and was assisted by James Adotey Allotey. Rev. Cole resuscitated the Choir and Orchestra and put up the church building at Abbosey Okai, where the Headquarters and the only branch of the Church in Accra was situated. He later renovated it into its present form. During his tenure, Rev. Loyce Carver, the General Overseer of The Apostolic Faith worldwide, visited the Church in Ghana. Brother Carver paid for thirty-five plots of land for the use of the Church. The land however was lost, due to litigation by various factions of the owners of the land, who were demanding for money on the same plot. The Kumasi and Ayisa churches were opened during the period. Rev. Cole retired as Overseer on grounds of ill health in November 1996.

The Africa Overseer, Rev. J.O. Soyinka, under Divine guidance, appointed Rev. Paul O. Akazue, a Nigerian, as the Overseer of the Churches in Ghana. He was the representative sent from Nigeria in September 1996, for the camp meeting in Ghana. He assumed duty in November 1996.

Being a dynamic man, who knows the power of prayer, Brother Akazue revived the prayer programmes, encouraged members of the Church to



The Church on the Hill in Accra, Ghana

pray, and it yielded immense results. A comprehensive prayer request list was prepared. This exercise was tagged "Ghana prays" for the identified numerous needs and problems of the Church in Ghana. It is to the glory of God that He started answering those prayers immediately, and in most cases, beyond the expectation of the Church.

Brother Akazue restructured the church auditorium to make it more commodious. God provided the Church with a brand new standby generator, a modern computer with a colour printer, e-mail facilities and a church bus. A secretariat was organised for effective correspondence and dissemination of information. God provided twelve plots of land at Chapel Hill, Aplaku, where a big tabernacle was erected, with a basement. The 1999 National Camp Meeting was held in the basement.

In answer to the request to win Ghana for Christ, the Church witnessed a novel and monumental milestone in its evangelistic history in the electronic media. The Church held several radio programmes and a televised Christmas Carol service. Two new branch churches were established at Agona Nkwanta and Aveme-Beme. Before he left Ghana, plans were at an advanced stage to establish another branch church at Koforidua, the Eastern Regional Capital. Many souls were born into the Kingdom of God, while the saints were edified.

1999 Camp Meeting In Ghana

Ghana 1999 Annual Camp Meeting, started on August 29 at the Aplaku, Chapel Hill Tabernacle, the new place of worship. Finding themselves in the new tabernacle was a great thrill, and this brought a mighty revival.

Eighteen members of the Choir and Orchestra from Lagos went to Ghana to assist in the revival. Some eminent elders from Lagos Headquarters, Revds. H.A. Elebute, E.O. Aina and S.O. Onabolu, were in attendance. The Overseer from the Republic of Benin also attended with many of his members. Showers of blessings were released from on high and many souls were added to the Kingdom of God.

After the demise of Rev. Soyinka in September 1999, the mantle of leadership in Africa fell on Rev. Paul O. Akazue in October. As a result, another leader was required for Ghana and Rev. Akwasi Badu-Debrah was appointed to carry on the work.

Liberia

In August 1951, Brother Timothy Oshokoya was directed to visit Liberia and meet people who had been corresponding with the International Headquarters, in Portland. He was also directed to visit The Apostolic Faith Church in Monrovia founded by one Mr. Williams. He, however, discovered on arrival in Liberia that Mr. Williams had passed away and that the group had ceased to function. Brother T was introduced to President Tubman of Liberia, who offered him a motorcycle to facilitate his movement around, while there.

In 1953, Brother George M. Hughes suffered a heart attack on his way home after leaving Accra on his second missionary journey. He was removed from the plane in Robertsfield, Liberia, where he died.

Brother Peter van der Puije, who was the pastor of the Church in Accra, Ghana, went to Liberia to arrange for the funeral of Brother George Hughes. While at the airport, he met Mr. Peter Manley. Brother van der Puije told Mr. Manley of the Gospel work in Accra and how The Apostolic Faith Church had helped them spiritually. This sparked up something in Mr. Manley's heart. He desired to have the same type of fellowship for his church. Soon, he began to write to the Portland Headquarters and he was encouraged to go to Accra. This he did, and he became better acquainted with The Apostolic Faith work. On October 9, 1953, Mr. Peter Z. Manley and the Apostolic Church Assemblies of Africa in Liberia, affiliated with The Apostolic Faith of Portland, Oregon.

Mr. Peter Z. Manley visited Accra, Ghana, during the dedication of the Church in 1954, and was greatly blessed spiritually. As he listened to the testimonies of redeemed men and women in Accra, and watched their transformed lives, he realised he did not have what they had. He, therefore, sought earnestly



Members of the Liberia Church

for such, and God blessed him richly from Heaven. He went back home to share his experiences with his people. He wrote back to Liberia about the many blessings he had received, and exhorted those at home to seek earnestly for the experiences of justification, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

When Brother T. G. Oshokoya, on invitation, attended the Annual Camp Meeting in Portland for the second time in 1955, he was instructed to visit Liberia again on his return to Nigeria. In his report Brother T wrote:

"In Liberia, I met Brother Peter Z. Manley. Brother Manley had established an Apostolic Faith Church in Manley Village, near Robertsfield Airport, Liberia. I held two revival evangelistic services with them before I continued my flight to Nigeria. But we kept up contact after that".

In a camp meeting in Nigeria, one of the ministers from Liberia said that the work in his country was not well established until the Lord sent someone from Nigeria to them in 1958. He told of the need to have the Bible in their own language and their need of a leader.

On November 27, 1961, Brother T. G. Oshokoya and a team of Gospel workers left Accra, Ghana, for Liberia. This was his third missionary trip to Liberia. They were there until February 9, 1962. They left Robertsfield, Liberia, for Freetown, Sierra Leone in continuation of the missionary tour.

Brother Peter Z. Manley eventually became the leader of The Apostolic Faith work in Liberia. He led his people to Lagos for the camp meeting in Nigeria, several times before his death. Brother Eddie Dayougar took up the leadership of the work in Liberia after Brother Manley's demise.

Ministers from Lagos Headquarters were sent intermittently to hold Annual Camp Meetings in Liberia. Two of such were: Revs. Paul Ibikunle and Isaac Olufowobi Ajayi.

On January 13, 1988, seventeen Liberians, who had spent 17 months in Lagos on music training, returned home, each with his musical instrument donated to them by Lagos Headquarters.

During the outbreak of civil war in 1989 in Liberia, the Church in Manley Village, Robertsfield, was looted and the brethren were

scattered. They however returned one after the other, when the war ended. God protected His own people.

Monrovia, is now the Headquarters of the work in Liberia. In October 1997, Rev. Dealyn George was sent from Lagos, Nigeria, to oversee the work.

In 1998, God provided a piece of land for the Church on which a mission house was erected. The church building was renovated. Through the Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, God provided a Hiace bus for the Church.

Brother. George was transferred back to Nigeria in 2002. Brother Joshua Robbert, an indigene of Liberia, was appointed to take over the leadership of the work there. Despite all odds, The Apostolic Faith work in Liberia is growing.

Cameroon

The history of The Apostolic Faith Church in Cameroon started in 1950, when Echieh Ndobe Fritx, a school teacher, came in contact with The Apostolic Faith Church Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, USA, through the church literature. He was receiving and reading tracts and other Gospel papers for the purpose of increasing his English vocabulary. From his

reading, he gathered that the members of the Church had their trust in God and would pray for people no matter how chronic the case might be, and God would answer their prayer.

He jokingly communicated this to his brother-in-law, Ntoko Fritz Epie, who immediately demanded the address of these people and asked them for his own copies of tracts and other Gospel literature, accompanied by a prayer



The Pioneer leader of Cameroon, Brother Peter Sone (right) in a handshake with Brother Oshokoya during a camp meeting

request for his mother who was suffering from chronic rheumatism. God gave him the first miracle by completely healing his mother. She lived a healthy life as a child of God for more than 20 years before her death.

As Epie continued to read the papers, a radical change took place in his life and he shared the Good News with many of his countrymen.

By 1951, he, together with a few people, resorted to singing and reading the Bible. With the message in the Gospel papers from Portland and constant prayers, they grew from strength to strength. One day, at about 10:00 am, Brother Epie gathered about seven members of his group in his house, and told them that they were going to ask God to tell them the church they should join — either Faith Tabernacle Congregation or The Apostolic Faith. They were asked to listen for a voice that would talk to their hearts about which one of the two churches was God's choice for them. A pioneer member wrote:

*"At that time we had neither heard nor known about the Christian experiences of salvation, sanctification or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. How then could we have known that God talked to people? In obedience, however, we went on our knees and prayed with all our heart. After a while, our leader raised us up and asked each and everyone of us in a soft but audible voice, **What has God told you?**" We honestly, without prejudice, sentiment or contradiction, gave him our individual answers: **'APOSTOLIC FAITH!'***

"From thence, we embraced the doctrines of The Apostolic Faith and forgot entirely about any other denomination. It was afterwards that God opened our spiritual eyes and understanding to know the difference between The Apostolic Faith and other churches.

"Brother Ntoko Fritz Epie, our leader, made a request to Portland that a missionary should visit us. He was referred to Rev. T.G. Oshokoya in Lagos, who detailed Rev. Inyang from Ikot Enwang in Southeastern Nigeria, to visit us. He was the first missionary to visit Cameroon in 1955 at Ndabekoge—Muambong—Bakassi—Cameroon. His visit was blessed and souls were saved. He baptised two people in water — Brothers Ntoko Fritz Epie and Alobwede Jacob".

Brother Ntoko Fritz Epie was ordained a minister of The Apostolic Faith in 1956. He translated some Apostolic Faith tracts such as, *Ye must be born again* and *Hard to find*, into Douala, a Cameroonian language. Portland too, did a marvellous job, by creating new font types to suit the printing of the translated tracts and copies of the Bible in the Cameroonian language.

After Rev. Inyang, other visits were made by Rev. Bassey from Calabar, who at that time was attached to Customs House in Victoria, now known as Limbe, Cameroon. Brother Bassey's inspired visits brought many souls into the Church. He used a motorcycle given to him by Portland, for the work of the Gospel in Cameroon. The Gospel started spreading like wildfire from its Headquarters, Muambong Bakassi, into the entire country. Though the Bible doctrines of restitution and divine healing were scary to some people, yet, the congregation spread all over the country.

Brother Epie made a very courageous move by destroying most of the ancestral shrines and denouncing "*Muankum*", the most famous idol in the country. During the above episode, The Apostolic Faith members proved the power of God. There was victory as men, women and children openly denounced the idol and its powers. They even disallowed the masqueraders who usually entered people's compounds for fetish ceremonies, from entering their compounds.

At a point, Brother Epie and Brother Ekinde Sone were arrested and detained for about one month because of their stand. The detention camp where they were kept was used for detaining and torturing hardened criminals. But God manifested His power, by making the two to become good friends of the keeper of the detention camp, until they were released.

On January 11, 1968, Brother Peter Ekinde Sone, was asked by the Portland Headquarters, to take over the leadership of The Apostolic Faith work in Cameroon. Brother Sone moved the Headquarters from Muabong to Tombel branch church. A special assembly was held in Tombel in December 1969. By faith, service programmes were announced even before a suitable place for meetings was secured. God answered their prayers and a big store was rented for services. Two houses were rented for use as dormitories for members from the branch churches, and the Tombel congregation

opened their homes to receive the guests. For two weeks the services were well attended with an attendance that ranged between 300 and 450 people every day. The altars could not contain the number that pressed forward to pray. Sinners were saved and others renewed their vows to God. One, who left the Lord eight and a half years before, found peace again with Him. On December 26, a crowd of over 150 people walked to the baptismal pool, which was two miles from the assembly hall. There, thirty two people who had been saved were immersed in water.

On December 9, 1971, Brother Fritz Epie, who was one of the leaders of the work in Cameroon, and had worked selflessly in the service of God, passed on to Glory.

The archenemy of man's soul, who always struggles to hinder the progress of the Gospel, planned to destroy the young Church. All the operations of the Church were suspended by the Government of Cameroon in September 1973, due to a misconception of certain aspects of the doctrine.

The closure, which lasted for 20 years, affected the Church a great deal. It was a stumbling block to the progress of the Gospel in Cameroon. The fickle members abandoned the faith, but the Lord Himself preserved a few, who, in spite of the tempest, persevered, held high the banner of Christ, and made the Church stand on its foundation. Some of the few who took their stand were: Brothers Peter Sone and Thomas Ekane.

In the 9th year of the suspension of the Church, Brother Peter Ekinde Sone died in the Atlantic Ocean in 1982, near Oron, Nigeria, while going to Lagos for the Annual Camp Meeting. After his death, God sent a revival, and some who had drifted into outrageous sins, gave their hearts to God and were restored to the Church.

The leadership of



The Church in Bangem, Cameroon

the work then fell on Brother Thomas Ekane, who was the only survivor in the sea disaster that took away the lives of Brothers Ekinde Sone and Ndone Simon. Brother Ekane was the leader of the Gospel work in Kumba, and shortly after he took over, the Headquarters of the Church was moved from Tombel to Bangem.

While the Church was under suspension, Brother Peter Sone had done his best to see to the re-establishment of the Church in Cameroon, but it was to no avail until his death in 1982. However, Brother Thomas Ekane took over the pursuit of the re-establishment and registration of the Church, with the Government. He also encouraged Brother Anthony E. Epolle to pursue the Church registration, as God had requested it to be done. The registration process was tough, but God's will prevailed at last. The decree for the official recognition of the Church was signed by the Head of State of Cameroon, President Paul Biya, on June 9, 1993, after twenty years of suspension. The papers were finally given to the Church on November 5, 1993.

On lifting the ban, the Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, accompanied by Brother Paul Akazue, visited Cameroon on a missionary tour, in order to resuscitate the work. Great was the revival that attended the missionary trip.

In 1998, the Africa Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, sent Brother Christopher Herbert to assist in the Gospel work in Cameroon. Brother Herbert's stay in Cameroon was a blessing. He introduced school visitation as practised in the Lagos Headquarters. The inaugural meeting of about thirteen members to start the work of the Association of Visiting Secretaries, was held early in 1999, in Bangem. School visitation has since been established in Cameroon to lead the young people to God. On January 10, 1999, cottage meetings were held in Bonamosede quarters, Doula and Yaounde, the country's political capital city. These cities are within the French speaking areas of Cameroon.

There was also a camp meeting held between December 9, 1999, and January 2, 2000, in which God came down mightily and blessed His Church with salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

200,000 Francs (CFA) was paid to the Government as the cost of four plots of landed property for the construction of a bigger place of

worship in Bangem.

Brother Herbert left Cameroon for Nigeria in September, 2000, while Brother Thomas Ekane continued the leadership of the work.

On July 28, 2001, fourteen trainee instrumentalists arrived Tombel, from different Apostolic Faith branch churches in Cameroon, to depart for Lagos the following day. This arrangement had been made by Brother Herbert before he left Cameroon. They underwent training in Lagos for about one year, and returned home with success.

In December 2000, Rev. Paul O. Akazue in company of Brothers John Aina, Ebong Asuquo and Tony Ademuyiwa, attended the camp meeting in Cameroon. Many blessings attended the visit.

Again on December 27, 2003, the Africa Overseer, Brother Paul Akazue, with three other brethren, left Lagos to join the brethren in Cameroon for their Annual Camp Meeting. The two-week camp meeting started on December 21, with about 650 people in attendance. Inspiring testimonies of victories, miracles of healing and mighty deliverance were given at each of the meetings.

The work in Cameroon is moving steadily on. The camp meeting in December 2003 has brought many more souls to Christ. With the prayers of the people of God and the support of God Himself, this *grain of mustard seed* will soon become a mighty tree.

Zimbabwe

The Apostolic Faith work in Zimbabwe started with the conversion of Brother Morgan Sengwayo. He had always had a strong thirst for God.

In 1955, Brother Timothy G. Oshokoya got the directive from the General Overseer, Rev. Raymond Crawford at Portland, Oregon, to visit correspondents in South Africa and Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia). Having completed his mission in Johannesburg, South Africa, he arrived in Harare, Zimbabwe, where he held meetings and services. He mailed letters to invite people to the revival meetings. He also worked in many places including Gwello, Gatooma and finally in Bulawayo. It was at Bulawayo that Brother Oshokoya met Brother Morgan Sengwayo. He was already saved. But he hungered for something more. He had come across a tract of The Apostolic Faith Church and had written to Portland, Oregon. He was sent some Gospel

materials.

He received a letter from The Apostolic Faith in Portland, Oregon, saying that one Rev. Timothy Oshokoya was coming to Rhodesia and he was invited to meet him and help as an interpreter.

He joined Brother Oshokoya and prayed through to sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and interpreted the sermons during the series of revival meetings conducted. At Bulawayo, Brother Oshokoya left abruptly, in the heat of the revival in March 1955, to conduct the funeral service of Brother Peter van der Puije in Ghana. Brother Sengwayo was given the commission to carry on where Brother Timothy stopped.

After much prayer, the elders of the Church where Brother Sengwayo used to worship, sought affiliation with The Apostolic Faith Church of Portland, Oregon. This was granted.

Growth of the Work

The Apostolic Faith work started in 39E, Pelandaba, Bulawayo in a two-room apartment. The neighbours felt that the prayers and services were disturbing them, so they sold their houses to the Church. Thus, the Church got more space for accommodation and expansion. The Church increased in number and acquired a 301-acre piece of land at Green Gables, where there were existing buildings. Movable and immovable assets were provided by God and churches were built in many towns. Some of the assets included Ekukhanyeni weaving factory, Gweru Homestead, Green Gables farm and dormitories, restaurants, lorries, vans and cars.

The pioneers of the work fully consecrated their lives and their all to God. The saints adhered to the truth and practised it. As a consequence, the Gospel work rose to monumental heights. Though the Church passed through a trying period, the Light of the Gospel continued to shine. As news spread that God had started a great revival in Bulawayo, invitations to hold services came from all over the country. Branch churches sprang up in many towns.

The Gospel team, led by Brother Sengwayo as directed by Portland, also went to South Africa in 1961. Hundreds of souls were saved there. The Lord continued to work with Brother Sengwayo and the work grew under his leadership. He was in regular correspondence



The Church at Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

with the Headquarters, in Lagos.

From August 17 to 29, 1981, Rev. Morgan Sengwayo, his wife and four children attended camp-meeting in Lagos, Nigeria. After the campmeeting, Rev. Morgan Sengwayo pleaded with Rev. T.G. Oshokoya to pay a return visit to Zimbabwe to see how far the work had gone. Brother T would also be of further help to them as he had not been oppurtuned to pay another visit since he instructed Brother Sengwayo in 1955 to continue with the spread of the Gospel in the area; they had been in contact only through correspondence. Brother Sengwayo said the children of God in that area were all eager to know Rev. T.G. Oshokoya because he spoke often of him to them. He said he often called Rev. T. G.. Oshokoya his "angel" and the people wanted to know him in person.

God opened the way for the trip to Zimbabwe, and on December 16, 1981, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, Rev. Paul Ibikunle, Brother John Aina, Sisters Esther Ogunfowomu and Bunmi Onabolu (now Adetunji) went to Zimbabwe for the camp meeting. Many of those who were at the 1955 revival had become staunch members and useful instruments in the Lord's vineyard.

God blessed the work in Zimbabwe to the extent that there are branches in Harare, Gatooma, Kwekwe, Hartley, Salisbury and many other places. There are over 40 branch churches in Zimbabwe alone, as well as many others in South Africa, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana and Namibia.

On April 1, 1982, news of the death of Rev. Morgan J. Sengwayo, Overseer of South and Central Africa was received. Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, Rev. J.O. Soyinka, Rev. Paul Ibikunle and Brother Segun Osifeso, attended the funeral in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.



The Apostolic Faith in Orlando, Johannesburg, South Africa

On December 7, 1986, Rev. J.O. Soyinka and his wife left Lagos to attend the camp meeting in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, from December 12, 1986, to January 4, 1987. They were joined later by 16 workers from Lagos. The work continues to progress and visitations continued as workers from there attend camp meetings in Lagos too.

In December 2001, the Africa Overseer, Rev. Paul Akazue, accompanied by Brother Kayode Oje, visited Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, to join the brethren in their annual camp meeting. The visitors spent about a week.

In a conference with workers on the Friday preceding the camp meeting, Brother Akazue encouraged the workers to continue to help seekers who are seeking the face of God, so that more people can be won for the Kingdom.

Brother Richard Sibanda now leads the work in Zimbabwe.

Zambia (Central Africa)

A small group of people were meeting in the name of The Apostolic Faith Church under the leadership of Mr. Isaac Chizuma Banda in Mazabuka. Nobody in the group could fully explain the three Christian experiences of salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The group was aware that there was an Apostolic Faith Church in Southern Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe), and

decided to send some members there in 1968, to see what it was all about. Those sent returned with good news and the group decided to dedicate themselves in prayer, so that God would raise up a person who could show them the truth of the Gospel.

In February, 1971, God answered their prayers. Rev. Robinson Sanana who had been converted in Zimbabwe, returned to Zambia, his home country, to undertake the Gospel work. He arrived in Mazabuka where he stayed for awhile before moving to Lusaka. At Lusaka, a brother offered his small house on plot 161:12, Chawama, to the man of God and his family, and it became the mission house where the Gospel work started in Zambia. An extension was made to the house and a small office was built within the mission house. As Brother Sanana continued preaching, the attendance increased so much that the house could not accommodate the people.

A Young People's Choir was formed to spread the Gospel. Later in 1972 the main Choir comprising of 12 people was formed. The work suffered persecution in its infancy, but the Church survived the hardships. God has undertaken to establish, strengthen, and settle His Church.

Some members, who could not line up with the Gospel standard, decided to oppose the work of the Lord. They incited people by falsely accusing Brother Sanana of many wrongdoings. The incited group threw stones on the roof of the house so as to disturb the meetings. At one time, Micah, the son of Brother Sanana, was hit by a stone and had a cut on the head. At another time, Brother Sanana was taken with his wife to the police station for questioning for seven hours, by the Governor. All these happened in order that Brother Sanana might be discouraged. However, since God had prepared him for the work in Zambia, he was not discouraged and God fought on his behalf. The Ministry of Home Affairs wrote a letter to Portland to enquire about him, and whether or not he was sent to lead the work in Zambia. Upon Portland's confirmation, the conflicts came to an end and the Church was registered with the Government in 1972. The work of the Lord progressed so much that in 1973 it became imperative to ask for a classroom in a primary school for services, due to the ever increasing number of people.

From 1971-1973, Easter meetings were held in the Town Council

Welfare Hall, while the camp meeting for 1974 was held in the tents borrowed from Zambia Railways. In September 1974, the Church was given a temporary plot on which to build. The church was built and was dedicated in April 1975. Since that time, church membership continued to increase and the church building had to be extended every year, in order to accommodate the increasing number of people. In 1976, the Church was given a plot to erect its permanent building in John Howard Compound, on plot 400/89. Brother Sanana made many trips to Nigeria to participate in the Lagos camp meeting. His first visit gave him a direct contact with the Bible doctrines as taught by The Apostolic Faith, as well as principles and methods of work of the organisation. On several occasions, he stayed behind after the camp meeting to interact with the saints and learn more. He made efforts to pattern the Church in Zambia on the standard of The Apostolic Faith.

On March 25, 1984, Rev. J.O. Soyinka, his wife, Nike, and Sister Dupe Ogunbiyi, left Lagos for Zambia to attend the two-week camp meeting. On March 2, 1986, the Lusaka Church moved to its permanent site, in John Howard Compound. From March 23 - April 6, 1986, Brother Soyinka, with six other missionaries, visited Lusaka, for their camp meeting.

Since Brother Sanana started spreading the Gospel in various places, a number of branch churches were opened. The Ndola branch was the first to be opened in 1971, Monze in 1974, Kitwe in 1976, while branches were later established in Gwembe, Choma and Zimba in 1977. As God continued to bless His Church, other branches were opened in Mazabuka in 1978, and in Kalomo, Petauke and Isoka in 1980. Thereafter, more branch churches were opened in different locations in the country. Besides the growth of the Gospel work in Zambia, and the establishment of many branches, the Church reached out into the neighbouring countries of Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola and Malawi.

On April 22, 1992, the founding father of the Gospel work in Zambia, Rev. Robinson Sanana, was called to his reward by God and Rev. Timothy Kaibula was appointed as the leader to continue the work.

In August 1995, a group of five Nigerian volunteers left for Zambia on an exchange programme. The brethren, Brothers Denola Ayanlaja,



The Apostolic Faith, Lusaka, Zambia

Tayo Ojaleye, Francis Ojo, Ebenezer Aje and Sister Mabel Odunsi, stayed in Zambia for almost two years. God used them to develop the ministry of music for the Church in Zambia.

Three of the brethren who lived in Lusaka and its environs took charge of the theoretical aspects of the music class. This later developed into the musical instruments' classes. The challenge confronting the music classes then was how to acquire musical instruments. God miraculously provided an instrument for each one of them.

In April 1996, on the first Monday of the Lusaka camp meeting, there was an evening of music where instrumentalists featured prominently. There were flutists, clarinetists, violinists, violists and a pianist.

This sparked off a revival in the camp meeting. The Choir and Orchestra feature prominently during the services of all the branch churches.

On Friday, April 6, 2001, the Africa Overseer, Rev. Paul Akazue in the company of Brothers John Aina and Kayode Oje, went to Zambia, where a camp meeting started on Sunday, April 8, 2001. Brethren from Lusaka enthusiastically received the visitors at Lusaka International Airport on Saturday afternoon. There were Bible teachings, and there was a musical concert on Monday, April 9. The high point of the concert occurred during the last item in the

programme, when the choir knelt down and sang a song about meeting Jesus at the altar of prayer. Before the third line of the song could be completed, members of the audience left their seats and rushed to the altar with tears streaming down their faces. Many choristers could not complete the singing as they broke down and also staggered to the altar. The Gospel team returned to Lagos on Friday, April 13.

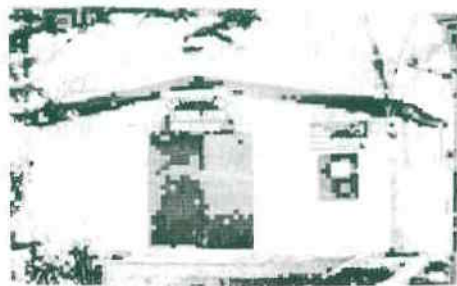
Republic of Benin

In 1948, the Africa Overseer of The Apostolic Faith, Rev. T.G. Oshokoya, accompanied by Revds. Lucas Obakoya and Hector Elebute, went to the French Governor in Porto-Novo, Dahomey (now Republic of Benin), to obtain permission to set up a place of worship. The permission was granted on August 13, 1948. Rev. Ben Abbey was appointed as the leader of the work. He and other saints started the Church by holding revival meetings in a small room situated at Dantopa Street.

In 1949, the group built a small place of worship on a piece of land which they obtained through Mr. Bonaventure Agbodo in Misebo, Carre 143, Cotonou. God blessed the work mightily and many people joined the Church. When the place became too small, God provided a bigger piece of land at Jericho, Carre 497.

A piece of land, about the third building to Carre 497, was leased to the Church to construct a mission house for lodging the pastor and visiting Gospel teams. Two plots of land were donated to the Church by Brother Abbey and his wife, at Apapa, on which the construction of a mission house was started in 1983. It was completed in 1985.

After Brother Abbey, the first pastor, passed on to Glory in 1967, Rev. Lucas Obakoya, a Nigerian, who had been in Cotonou since 1964, succeeded him. He worked until 1977 when the mantle of leadership fell on Rev. Isaac Sokeye. Brother Sokeye was transferred to Lagos in 1978. He was succeeded by Brother Augustus Omole, who served until 1980. In 1981, Brother Hector Elebute took over as the Overseer of the work until 1991. It was during his tenure that a standard mission house with a boys' quarters, was erected. Brother Amos Adeoye was transferred from Kwara State, Nigeria, to Cotonou in 1991 as the Overseer. He led the work until 1997, when he was transferred to Lagos, Nigeria. He was succeeded by Brother Marcellin



Old Church Building at Misebo street,
Cotonou, Republic of Benin



Church at Jericho Road, Cotonou,
Republic of Benin

Hounmenou.

Brother T made several trips to Dahomey. Two of the trips were very remarkable. In 1967, for the burial of Brother Ben Abbey, Brother T led a team of choristers, instrumentalists and workers from Lagos Headquarters to Cotonou. As usual, he turned the occasion into an evangelistic outreach by sending some evangelists out early in the morning on the day of the burial, to invite the whole city to come and witness the befitting burial organised in honour of a deserving Soldier of the Cross. Many people attended the service and as a result, the Church in Cotonou had a very rapid growth. The second remarkable trip was on January 25, 1973, when Brother T laid the foundation of the new church building at Jericho, Cotonou.

God showered His blessings upon the work and many branch churches sprang up. The first set of branch churches were opened in Bopa in 1963, Akodeha in 1979 and Porto-Novo, in 1987. Other branch churches established were Calavi and Parakou in 1988; Doke, Azove, Sehouè and So-Ava, in 1992; Sèmè and Owode in 1996. Adjohoun in 1997 and Zogbodomey in 1998.

Cote D'Ivoire

The Apostolic Faith Church started in Cote D'Ivoire in 1976, in Yamoussoukro, in the living room of Rev. Ezekiel Adegboye Ojo. Brother Ojo had just returned from a trip to Nigeria, his native country, where he had met some members of The Apostolic Faith Church at Ilesha. His meeting with these children of God brought a great change into his life. In fact, the Word of God which he heard, revealed to him

that sin was the cause of his problems. He approached God with a repentant heart and he was saved, sanctified and later baptised with the Holy Spirit.

God called him to do His work in Cote D'Ivoire and he accepted. On his return to Cote D'Ivoire, he started The Apostolic Faith Church in his living room in 1976. Before this time, he had pastored a church for about twenty four years. He continued to head the church, seizing the opportunity to bring to the members, the good news of salvation through repentance. This, however, gave rise to opposition in his old church and he was driven out in 1978.

The Apostolic Faith Church started to meet in a school building. Some of the members were Brothers Matthieu Alaje and Sunday Ade Oyeyemi, who had prayed and obtained the three Christian experiences. They attended the camp meeting in Lagos with Brother Ojo in 1978. On their return from the camp meeting many other people, especially members of Brother Ojo's former church, joined The Apostolic Faith Church. A great persecution arose in 1980 and this led to their being driven from the school premises one Sunday night, during a revival meeting. They were given only a quarter of an hour to move their belongings from the school premises. Worried about where to hold the service the following Sunday, they prayed and within 48 hours, God provided a parcel of land on which they built a church.

The construction of the church building lasted four days because all the children of God were mobilised for the work. The following Sunday, a service was held in the new church building. It was believed that with the persecutions, the Church would not last for three months but to God's own glory, the Church worshipped on the same site for



New church under construction in
Yamoussoukro

several years. The number of believers continued to increase not only in Yamoussoukro, but throughout many towns in Cote D'Ivoire. There are thirteen branch churches and some Bible study centres, where the Lord manifests His presence.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The history of The Apostolic Faith work in Congo could be traced to the Colonial era.

The Apostolic Faith Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, printed some tracts in *Magala* and *Kisakata*, two native languages spoken in the East and West of Congo. The distribution of these tracts with "Belgian-Congo" inscribed on them was the first introduction of The Apostolic Faith work in Congo. There was no visible result of this effort.

In 1971, when Brother Robinson Sanana returned from Zimbabwe to Zambia to help propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, many Congolese who were living in Zambia, embraced the sound doctrine. Messers Bilolo Andre and Kalala Basua Bintu were the first set of people who introduced the sound doctrine in Lubumbashi. Katanga District in Congo is very close to Zambia, and is linked to it by railway. This makes it easy for the Congolese in that region to travel often to Zambia. Thus, in 1973, Mr. Kalamba Kubuluwa Mutshipayi, Mr. Mulumba Malamba Louis and Mrs Ngalula Marie, went from Lubumbashi to participate in the first camp meeting organised at Lusaka, Zambia. On their return from the camp meeting, they started an Apostolic Faith Church the same year.

In 1977, Rev. Robinson Sanana travelled to Kinshasa Congo in order to obtain an official recognition for The Apostolic Faith from the Government. He was accompanied by Kalamba Kubulwa Mutshipayi and Mukadi Jean. His mission did not succeed because of strict administrative procedure. He left Kinshasa, instructing Mukadi Jean to organise a group there. A group was formed in Masina Zone, Petro-Congo Quarters.

In 1978, Rev. Mbuyamba Kasenga Ntambwa, a pastor of the Church of the Disciples of Jesus Mission, came from Mbuji-Mayi to participate in the camp meeting at Lusaka, Zambia. On his return to Mbuji-Mayi, Mbuyamba introduced The Apostolic Faith.

However, the members of these two groups knew very little about the doctrines, principles and methods of work of The Apostolic Faith. As a result, there was neither evangelism nor progress.

Through the plan of God, in 1978, Brother James Sunday Olaleye, a minister at the Africa Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria, and his wife, Hannah, came to Congo Brazzaville, to work at the Nigeria Embassy. The couple embarked on an intensive evangelism in Brazzaville and Kinshasa. Every Saturday, they crossed River Congo to distribute Gospel literature and make personal contacts in Kinshasa. Unfortunately, within a short time, they were transferred to the Nigeria Embassy in Washington, USA. However, God prospered their labour; what they sowed continues to bear fruit.

On November 10, 1980, Brother Kuntuala Isala Daniel, picked up at a bus stop, one of the tracts that were distributed in Kinshasa. He also gave Mr. M'Bengani Kalundandiko to read. M'Bengani then wrote a letter to Portland, Oregon, on November 13, 1980. The letter was sent to Lagos Headquarters from Portland. Lagos wrote Mr. M'Bengani Kalundandiko and invited him to the camp meeting of August 1981.

At that time, M'Bengani was the President of a church called *The Church of Hope in Christ*, assisted by Kuntuala Daniel, who found the tract. On August 11, 1981, Brother M'Bengani came to Lagos, Nigeria, for the first time and took part in the camp meeting of that year. He was instantly healed of a terrible and painful illness that had tortured him for thirty months. He was later saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Brother Timothy Oshokoya, the Africa Overseer, advised him to stay behind after the camp meeting, to learn the doctrines, principles and methods of The Apostolic Faith. He encouraged and explained to him that it was his duty to win Africa for Christ, and mandated him to go home and teach his people the sound doctrine. Brother M'Bengani spent forty-five days in Nigeria.

On his return to Kinshasa, he resigned from his former church and started an Apostolic Faith Church on September 28, 1981, with five members of his former church. The six of them were meeting in his sitting room and God added to their number. By 1982, they were sixty. In 1987, a church building measuring 18m x 14m was built on a piece

of land, donated to the Church by Brother M'Bengani.

As he was mandated, he did his best to teach the sound doctrine to his people. He organised the reading of tracts among the youths, women, men, workers and ministers, in the language that each group understood best. The arrangement helped his members to understand the doctrines of the Bible.

He formed the Association of Visiting Secretaries (A.V.S.), who teach the Word of God in schools, homes, hospitals and prisons. Very soon, many Bible study centres were started in the city of Kinshasa, which later developed into branch churches. There are now six branches in Kinshasa alone. Similarly, efforts have been made to reach the different regions of the country.

The Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, accompanied by his wife, Nike, Sister Rachel Fakorede and Brother James Olaleye visited the Church in Kinshasa in December 1992 and December 1993. This gave him the opportunity to assess what had been done for over ten years, and to put the members right on some points.

In September 2001, the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the work of The Apostolic Faith in the Democratic Republic of Congo was celebrated. In spite of the war, the annual three-week camp meeting had been held regularly for the past seventeen years, in Kinshasa. Easter retreats, youth rallies, Christmas concerts and Children's programmes are regular events. The war, having badly affected the economy and thus creating unemployment, Brother M'Bengani decided to motivate the youths. He introduced projects in agriculture and small scale industries to help members make a living.

When the war broke out in Angola, many refugees fled into the Democratic Republic of Congo. There, they came across the Gospel, got converted and became members of The Apostolic Faith. When they went back to Angola, they started an Apostolic Faith Church.

Through the influence of



The Apostolic Faith Church building at
Congo Kinshasa

Kinshasa, there are Apostolic Faith Churches in six out of the eight provinces in Angola. Brother M'Bengani, the leader of the work in Congo, went on a missionary trip to Angola from October 26, 2000, to January 20, 2001 and there was a mighty revival. The work continues to grow.

Niger Republic

In 1979, Brother Adrien Houngbeme, a Diplomat, was transferred from his country, the Republic of Benin, to Niger Republic. In 1980, he started studying the Sunday School lessons with a couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jean Kindoho, in their house. Later, Gnahoui A. Albert and Ganfled Antoine, joined the group. In 1981, three people came to the Lagos camp meeting for the first time. One of them could not pray for her salvation because she was ill to the point of death. The ministers of God prayed for her and she was perfectly healed. When they returned to Niamey, Niger Republic, the testimony of her healing inspired many people to join the group. Then morning and evening services began. Marcus Amegandji joined the group in 1982. He later went to his country, Togo, and started The Apostolic Faith Church.

In 1983, after the camp meeting in Lagos, there was a revival in which many people prayed through to different Christian experiences.

The Government directed that those who wanted to start churches should send in their application, giving detailed information about themselves and their location address. In 1983, application for authority to establish The Apostolic Faith Church was sent in, without realising that this was a devise to prevent the founding of churches. The following Sunday, policemen came to the group with the application. Eighteen people were arrested, locked up in the cell for three days and made to pay a fine each before they were released. The group was banned.

The three days in cell were spent praying fervently. After the release, many people were interested in the group. The couple in whose house the group was meeting, moved to another house. The members met to study the Sunday School lessons and to pray, without singing, for a period of three years. They went regularly to Lagos for camp meeting.

In 1988, the constitution of Niger made the country a secular state

and freedom of worship was granted to all religions. This made it possible for the Church to be fully registered in 1994.

On May 1, 1988, a university student, Brother Housseini Na-Allah, was saved. He was the first native of Niger to embrace the Faith. When he finished in the University, he decided to settle as a farmer in Dutche, his home town, so that he could preach the Gospel to them. God prospered his effort. There is a branch church in Dutche

The Church in Niger Republic passed through several internal problems. Some people did not conform with the standard of the Gospel. This led to separation.

The Church was re-established on a solid foundation in 2002. In 2003, the Government invited all Churches to evangelise the country so that the crimes in the society will diminish. This opened the door for evangelism in the schools, hospitals and prisons. Brother Jean Kindoho is the Overseer.

Gabon

In September 1986, Brother James Olaleye arrived Libreville, Gabon, accompanied by his wife, Hannah, on Federal Government posting to the Embassy of Nigeria.

There was no Apostolic Faith Church or group in the country, when they got there. They embarked on cottage meetings every Sunday in their living room. They had Bible Studies every Sunday morning, and street meetings every Sunday evening. They distributed Apostolic Faith publications such as tracts and magazines in French in the predominantly French-speaking country. Through the impact of the distribution of Gospel materials in Libreville, two different church denominations made overtures to absorb The Apostolic Faith group but the little group refused. The churches later sent delegates to attend The Apostolic Faith meetings and study the mode of the Church operations. It eventually led to the visit of fifteen Gabonese to Nigeria, during the 1988 Lagos camp meeting. Most of them were saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire.

The return of the Gabonese delegates to Libreville after the camp meeting, sparked off a great revival in Gabon. The Church relocated its meetings from the living room of the Olaleyes to a rented open space, where Sunday morning and evening services were held. As it

was compulsory for churches to be registered with the Government, efforts were made to prepare the Constitution of The Apostolic Faith Church in Gabon. The Africa Overseer, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, gave approval that the Constitution be translated into the French language. Sister Rachel Fakorede and her team produced the translation within a short time and it was printed. The Constitution, with a covering letter seeking Gabonese Government's approval for The Apostolic Faith Church registration, was presented to the Gabonese Government. When Brother and Sister Olaleye got a hint that they were to be transferred from Gabon, they prayed for a successor who would continue the work which God had started in Gabon. God miraculously answered. A brother who held a University degree in French, and was based in Lome, Togo, but who had been jobless, was miraculously employed by the Embassy of Nigeria in Gabon.

The approval for the registration of the Church was still being awaited when Brother John Taiwo Oladele Oladiran arrived Libreville in January 1989, to take up his first employment with the Nigerian Embassy in Libreville. He had the privilege of understudying the Olaleyes for about three months before taking over the leadership of the work. This eliminated transition problems for the Church, as there was a smooth handover. Brother John has since been working at the Nigeria Embassy and continued to oversee The Apostolic Faith Church work in Libreville, Gabon. The Church has been fully registered, and has its own building in Gabon. At the camp meeting every year in



Brother John Oladiran, sitting fourth from left
and some members of the congregation in Libreville, Gabon

Lagos, there are always delegates from Gabon.

Reports from Gabon have revealed that the Gospel work keeps growing from strength to strength.

Togo

The founding of The Apostolic Faith in Togo dated back to the month of May 1986, when a group of people under the leadership of Brother Marcus Amegandji, started to assemble in Lome. Brother Amegandji was converted in 1982, in Niger Republic. He returned permanently to Togo in 1985 after his resignation from his secular job as an accountant. Furthermore, some people were brought to the Gospel by Brother Emmanuel Alagbo, a minister in Cotonou, Republic of Benin, between 1965 and 1970. The group used to gather in the house of Brother Amegandji, who later became the pastor of the Church. The members prayed and read the Bible study lessons of The Apostolic Faith. They also prayed for the Christian experiences.

At the Annual Camp Meeting of The Apostolic Faith which was held in Lagos, Nigeria, in August 1986, God visited in a special way between the Wednesday and the Friday preceding the opening Sunday of the camp meeting. Twenty-three out of the twenty-six delegates from Togo were saved. Majority of them were sanctified and some were baptised with the Holy Ghost.

After returning from the camp meeting, the Church became well-organised with a branch in Lome and another one in Kouma-Adame. The branch in Kouma-Adame was headed by Brother Jean Alagbo, who had been saved in 1965 in Cotonou and had remained in the Faith, even after his return to his village in 1969. In 1987, a third branch church came into existence in Kara, through Brother Siegwad Alagbo. One thing that characterised The Apostolic Faith in Togo since it started was the zeal for prayer which revived and continued to revive the congregation. This prevented the flock from being scattered by the series of hard trials that had shaken the Church in Togo.

Trials

The Church suffered from false brethren who found their way into the Church. Through much prayers, however, God gave complete victory. The social and political problems of the state into which The

Apostolic Faith was born, also constituted a trial for her. There was actually no freedom of religion in Togo until 1991. Only a few churches and religious organisations which were officially recognised could function publicly. The Apostolic Faith held services secretly in private houses: two houses were in Lome, one in Adame and another in Kara. The situation in Togo became worse from September 23, 1986, when an abortive coup was staged. This brought the country into a state of emergency and consequently, tight security was intensified on all unauthorised societies and associations. The police, on two occasions, said that they were ordered to arrest all church leaders in Lome. The first time they came, they only succeeded in participating in the service and the second time, they went away not knowing why the saints should be arrested.

In 1991, the creation of the National Human Rights Commission helped the Togolese Government to allow the functioning of associations. The Togolese Association for Defence and Religious Liberty was also formed and the Lord used it effectively for the growth of His Church. The Apostolic Faith in Togo belonged to this Association, which was registered with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Security on February 17, 1992. As soon as the negotiations between the Association and the Government started, the Church was able to go about her activities without fear.

The security lasted but for a short while. On November 16, 1992, Togo found itself again in a very serious socio-political crisis which made the larger part of her population seek refuge in other countries or hide themselves in villages in the interior part of the country. All activities of The Apostolic Faith in Togo ceased because the congregation had scattered. Brother M. Amegandji went into exile in Cotonou with his family. His assistant, Brother K. Assiamoua, went to Kouma-Adame with all the brothers and sisters living with him. The displacement made it possible for those who went to Cotonou to acquire more experience from the Church there, since Cotonou Church had been in existence for about fifty years. Those who went to Kouma-Adame were also able to reinforce the congregation there. As all activities had ceased for students and civil servants, the saints gave themselves more to prayers. A minister, Brother Emmanuel Alagbo, who was present most of the time in Kouma-Adame, gave them

spiritual encouragement.

Brother Marcus Amegandji came back to Togo in September 1993. Before then, in April 1993, his assistant had returned to Lome and religious activities had started in his house. Because of the insecurity at Lome, the pastor and his assistant had agreed that there would be services in only two locations, Togo-Gaz and Totsigan. The saints were encouraged to find a place of worship and to discontinue meeting in private houses, so that a progressive church could be established in Togo. God again answered their prayers, despite limited means. He provided a rented villa where the Lome congregation could worship.

Due to persecutions between 1986 and 1991, the saints had to hide in bushes to worship God and they used passwords to find each other. The place of worship was not usually the same. An old chief scout, who got converted, gave the testimony of how he was asked to arrest the church leaders but he failed because God was with His people. The use of earrings was made compulsory for girls before they could be allowed in schools. Boys and girls, were beaten because of their faith in God. They were also suspended from school because they would not attend officially recognised churches in the village, on Sundays. The children of God were molested at the least opportunity. Their place of worship was set ablaze by a villager. In all these things, the Lord was with His people to strengthen and deliver them. The Apostolic Faith is now well-established in Togo. Victories had been gained through Jesus Christ, Who fought the battle. After the passing on to Glory of Brother Marcus Amegandji in 2000, the mantle of leadership fell on Brother Victor Assiamoua

CHAPTER ELEVEN

GOSPEL TOURS

Gospel tours were undertaken by various missionaries to establish The Apostolic Faith work in the continent of Africa.

The Fifties

In 1951, Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, on his way from the Annual Camp Meeting in Portland, Oregon, paid a short visit as directed by the General Overseer, Rev. Raymond Crawford, to the people in Liberia, who had been corresponding with the International Headquarters. Brother T was also expected to find out whether the church founded in Monrovia, Liberia, by one Mr. Williams was still in existence. Deepen Lee, in Liberia, was requested by the International Headquarters to arrange for Brother T's lodging and transportation to Monrovia from Robertsfield International Airport. He complied and also arranged for Brother T to see the Liberian President, who offered Brother T a motorcycle for use within the city. However, it was not easy to obtain a permit from the immigration office in Liberia for Brother T to stay for five days. He therefore could not meet all the expected correspondents, but on his visit to Kakata, he met Mr. Charles Cheeks, and his wife, who introduced himself as the son-in-law of the late Mr. Williams. Mr Cheeks showed Brother T the stamp and seal of the organisation that had folded up. A meeting was held in a church that Hellen Brown pastored and the church expressed the wish for affiliation with The Apostolic Faith, Portland, Oregon. The wish did not materialise because most of the leaders were living in adultery and some were full of strife and position-seeking.

In 1948, Rev. George M. Hughes volunteered to visit Africa. He visited Accra, Ghana,



Brother Oshokoya in Portland, Oregon, for Camp Meeting in 1955

to meet Rev. van der Puije and observe The Apostolic Faith work in Ghana. He also visited Nigeria to meet Rev. T.G. Oshokoya for the same purpose.

In 1953, Brother Hughes, on a Gospel trip round the world, visited Africa the second time. He died in Liberia on his way back to Portland, Oregon, and was buried in Robertsfield, Liberia.

On April 2, 1954, Brother T went to Saki in Oyo State, Nigeria, through Ijebu-Ode and Ibadan. He returned to Lagos on April 6, 1954, after spending three days in Saki. In the same month, he flew to Accra, Ghana, for the dedication of a new church. He lodged at Rev. Peter van der Puije's house. On Good Friday, April 16, 1954, the morning devotional service took place at 10:00 am and the dedication of the new church at 3:00 pm.

After the Lagos Camp Meeting in 1954, a Gospel team made a tour of Ijebu Province. The tour started from Ijebu-Ode town and the team visited Aiyeye, Odogbolu and Idowa, where street meetings were held. Gospel papers were distributed. In the Church at 35, Abeokuta Road, Ijebu-Ode, meetings were held, where several souls prayed through to different Christian experiences. On the last Sunday of the trip, the team visited Isonyin and Erunwon. They also held a revival meeting at the Baptist Church, Ogbogbo. The following day, Monday, August 30, 1954, the Gospel team returned to Lagos.

On November 12, 1954, Brother T with a team of six, left Lagos for Ibadan, on the way to Okoro-Gbede in Kabba Province. The following day, they left Ibadan with the hope of getting to Kabba on the same day, but a damaged bridge at about a mile to Kabba made this impossible as they were unable to drive through. They took another route via Ayere and got to Kabba at 7:00 am on Sunday morning. They drove straight to Okoro-Gbede where they met David Oloruntoba. At 3:30 pm that day, a wonderful evangelistic service was held at Okoro-Gbede, and many souls prayed through to salvation. On November 16, the Gospel team travelled to Aye-Gbede in the company of David Oloruntoba.

On December 9, Brother T went to Enugu via Ikeja Airport. Mr. Maxwell Monecho escorted him to Abakaliki to meet the group Monecho was leading there.

On Saturday, January 29, 1955, Brother T went on a missionary

trip to Johannesburg, Union of South Africa, and Northern and Southern Rhodesia. Initially, he was delayed in Kano for lack of a valid visa to stay at Johannesburg. Eventually, he was cleared and he left Kano on February 3, at 4:00 am. Brother T was amazed that the brethren in Johannesburg had been expecting him two weeks earlier. On his arrival at the downtown office, he met Brothers T, Mamabalo and Shadrack Makoba. The next day, Brother T sent cablegrams to Portland and Nigeria, reporting his safe arrival in Johannesburg. He visited the immigration office for a visa but he was not allowed more than seven days' stay in the country. Brother T held revival meetings for the seven days and expounded the Scriptures to the people before travelling to Southern Rhodesia on February 10.

The immigration officer in Southern Rhodesia gave him a permit for sixty days. Mr Katandika from Gatooma, arrived with some members. In Salisbury, Sunday services were held on February 13. The initial attendance of twenty increased to thirty at the end of the meeting. The manifestation of the Lord was felt in the meeting and in the afternoon of the same day, about fifty people came to worship. On Monday, the group from Gatooma returned. Brother T typed letters and reports of the events from morning till about 4:30 pm. The reports were posted to Sister Ruth Green, in Portland, Oregon; Rev. Oshobowale in Lagos, Nigeria and Rev. John Maluka in Nyasaland.

On February 15, a meeting was held with a company called *Neon Sign Coy*, to order an ensign for The Apostolic Faith Church in Lagos, Nigeria. In the evening of the same day, a service was held at East African School at 7:45 pm. Twelve people were in attendance because others had gone to their farms.

On February 22, under poor aerial condition, Brother T flew to Gatooma. He obtained permission to hold services in Nzezi from the Municipal Superintendent, at a cost of one pound a week. Meetings were held between



Brother Timothy (in black suit front row) with some brethren in Ghana

6 and 8 pm but the attendance was poor, because many people closed late from their secular jobs. On February 24, another evening meeting was held with improved attendance and two people prayed through to salvation. A Police Officer and another young man were at the meeting. The Officer informed Brother T that he was on an errand from the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D.) and he asked Brother T to meet the Commissioner of Police the following day. On February 25, Brother T was escorted to the C. I. D. Headquarters for interrogation on his mission in the country. He was later allowed to go.

In March 1955, while still in Southern Rhodesia, Brother T received the news from Portland Oregon, of the death of Rev. van der Puije of Ghana. He had to leave the country abruptly for Ghana and he asked Brother Morgan Sengwayo, his interpreter to continue with the Gospel work in Southern Rhodesia. Later that year, he was invited to the camp meeting in Portland, where he was requested to visit Peter Z. Manley in Robertsfield, Liberia.

In May 1958, at the instance of Rev. Crawford, Brother T visited Ghana, Liberia and Freetown in Sierra Leone. He held revival meetings in Manley's village and a lot of people were blessed, among whom were Isaac Jackson and Ben Logun. That same year Peter Manley, and some other brethren, came to Lagos where they learnt how to read and write. They also learnt more about the Gospel work.

The Sixties

In November 1961, a team of four people from Nigeria went to Cotonou, Republic of Benin; Accra, Ghana; and Liberia.

In 1964, Brother T made missionary trips to Ibadan, Ile-Ife and Ilesha. The team comprised of Brothers Paul Ibikunle, Francis Adeyemi, Peter Amore and Sister Olive Dosunmu. After a brief stop at Ibadan, on January 5, 1964, the team visited Ile-Ife, Apomu, Ikire and Gbongan, distributing Gospel tracts and magazines. In some places, film shows were organised with large crowd in attendance. The team lodged in Government Rest Houses in Ile-Ife and Ilesha. During the day, they went round the towns for campaign and in the evenings, they showed Christian films. On January 22, the team left Ilesha on their return trip to Lagos.

On Thursday, February 6, a team of three – Brothers Timothy

Oshokoya, Paul Ibikunle and Sister Olive Dosunmu — went to Eastern Nigeria. Brother T drove the vehicle and they went through Ijebu-Ode to Benin City, where they spent the night. The following morning, they travelled to Enugu and arrived there by 5:30 pm. After settling some matters at Enugu, they left for Ikot Enwang with Rev. Philip Inyang on March 21.

On March 27, at Ikot Enwang, during the Easter season, slides on the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, were shown. Over 1,000 people were in attendance. On April 1, the team arrived Calabar at 11:00 am. Services were held at Calabar, Okopedi Akubo, Ndon Ebom, Ikot Udota, Eket, Ikot Abasi, Etinan and other places where Apostolic Faith Churches had already been established. On April 13, the team held another service at Ndon Ebom and departed for Ikot Osukpong, in Ika area, from where they visited Utu Ikot Ekpo, Ikot Ukpong, Eren and Ekpat Abwa. They went to Urukata, Obtua Ndoki and returned to Ikot Osukpong, on April 19. They travelled to Obigbo and Port Harcourt in Rivers State on April 24. On May 4, the team returned to Enugu on their way to Lagos, and slept at Ijebu-Ode. The following day, Tuesday, May 5, they arrived Igbobi, Lagos, at 10:30 am.

The Seventies

In September 1970, Rev. Robinson M. Sanana, a Zambian who was working in Zimbabwe, visited the group in Mazabuka. He held revival meetings and 17 people were saved during the meetings. After the meetings, he paid visits to the people who had written letters to The Apostolic Faith Churches in Zimbabwe and America, using their contact addresses. Brother Sanana later visited other towns such as Lusaka, Kabwe, Ndola, Kitwe, Kalulushi, Chingola and Chililabombwe in the company of Brothers S. Jalabani and M. Hingahinga, who were assigned to take him round. During the visit to Ndola, they found some backsliders whom they helped to return to God. A branch church was also opened in the town. After the tour, Rev. Sanana returned to Zimbabwe.

The same year, the Good News Crusaders, a group of Gospel workers, led by Rev. Morgan Sengwayo from Bulawayo, Rhodesia, embarked on a missionary trip to Malawi. They travelled north across



Lagos Gospel Team in Ghana with Brother Carver



Brother T and his team with the church members at Aiyetoro-Gbede

the Rhodesian border into Portuguese East Africa, and crossed the Zambezi River. On arrival at Blantyre, Malawi, they distributed *The Light of Hope* magazines and tracts in anticipation of holding a series of meetings. They journeyed on to Nsanje (formerly Port Herald), where they found a big crowd of Christians and non-Christians awaiting them.

The Lord started working among them as soon as the meetings began the next morning. There was a great spiritual awakening and many hungry souls were satisfied. As the meetings continued, people



Gospel Team in the 70s



The Gospel Team at Idanre Hill in Ondo State

were born again, others were sanctified, and some received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The crowds of people were so large that not all could get inside the Church, but the Lord blessed those who were outside too. During the altar services, people flocked to seek the Lord. Members of the Good News Crusaders helped them to pray through to definite Christian experiences and many who were sick were healed. They went home rejoicing.

In 1973, a team consisting of Brothers Paul Ibikunle, Olufemi Olusoga, Sisters Olive Dosunmu and Esther Ogunfowomu, left Lagos for Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), under the leadership of Brother T. G. Oshokoya. The journey took them three days by road. They slept wherever they could. The map of Upper Volta was used as a guide.



The Sengwayos visited Nigeria in 1981



Brother Sengwayo welcomes Brother T and his team to Zimbabwe in 1981

God directed them and they had a successful mission. They held several revival meetings in Ouagadougou and many souls were blessed. Some of the young people were taught music and the use of musical instruments. The team was in Upper Volta for over two months.



Brother T and the Gospel team at another time in Zimbabwe

The Eighties

In August 1981, Rev. Morgan Sengwayo and his wife, Rhoda, with four of their children, attended the annual camp meeting in Lagos, Nigeria. Towards the end of the camp meeting, Brother Sengwayo pleaded passionately with Brother T to visit Zimbabwe to see the progress of the work entrusted to him since 1955, when Brother T left suddenly on receipt of the news of Brother Peter van der Puije's death.

In December 1981, Brother T and a team consisting of Brothers Josiah Soyinka, Paul Ibikunle, John Aina and Sisters Esther Ogunfowomu and Bunmi Adetunji (Nee Onabolu), travelled to Zimbabwe. Many ministers came to meet the team in Salisbury Airport with their leader, Brother Sengwayo. The reception on arrival in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, was very warm. The saints were excited to see the Gospel team. The following Sunday in the service, Brother Sengwayo was so thrilled that after introducing Rev. T. G. Oshokoya, whom he had called his 'angel' to the congregation over the years, handed over the work to Brother T and went down from the platform.

During the visit, the team travelled to many branch churches which had sprung up over the years, in Gwelo, Gweru and some other towns. It was a visit of great consolation to Brother Morgan Sengwayo.

God manifested Himself in the meetings and there was a mighty revival. The team returned to Lagos early January, 1982.

On March 25, 1984, Rev. J. O. Soyinka, his wife, Nike, and Sister Dupe Ogunbiyi (nee Oluyomi), went to Zambia to attend the two-week camp meeting.

In December 1984, Brother J. O. Soyinka undertook missionary journeys to many of The Apostolic Faith Churches in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The Nineties

In December 1992, Brother Soyinka went on a missionary trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo in the company of his wife, Nike, and Sister Rachel Fakorede. On arrival on December 20, the Overseer in Kinshasa, Congo, Brother M'Bengani Kalundandiko, quickly organised an impromptu camp meeting which lasted for two weeks. The Scriptures were expounded in the mornings and revival services were held in the evenings.

In December 1993, Brother Soyinka made another trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo with his wife, Nike, Sister Rachel Fakorede and Brother James Olaleye. Branch churches in Kinshasa were visited. Later, the team visited Congo Brazzaville where they distributed Gospel papers. The team returned to Lagos, Nigeria, in January, 1994.



From left are Sister Rachel Fakorede, Brother Soyinka, Sister Soyinka and Brother Olaleye, during a tour of the Democratic Republic of Congo



Brother M'Bengani Kalundandiko is the Overseer for Democratic Republic of Congo

Brother Soyinka also went on missionary trips at different times to Cote D'Ivoire, Republic of Benin, Cameroon and Zambia for evangelism and to encourage the saints. He also visited many Churches in Nigeria.

In December 1999, Brother Paul Ogechukwu Akazue undertook a missionary trip to Zimbabwe for the annual camp meeting.

The Turn of the Century

On Wednesday, March 22, 2000, Brother Paul Akazue with Brothers Albert Adegboye, John Aina and Sisters Esther Ogunfowomu, Rachel Fakorede and Joan Aina, made missionary trips to the Republic of Benin and Togo. In the Republic of Benin, they were met by Brother Marcellin Hounmenou the Overseer, and conducted round the Church in Cotonou. The team also visited the Church in Porto Novo, the administrative capital of the Republic of Benin; Parakou, Aja Asove, Bopa, Akodeha, Ouidah and Abomi-Calavi. At Parakou, which was the northernmost point The Apostolic Faith had reached, the saints wished that Isaiah 9:2, "*The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined*" would be fulfilled in them.

At Togo, the team visited Lome and Kouma Adame. At Kouma Adame, Brother Akazue expressed the wish to see the Church. Kouma Adame is about 200 kilometers from Lome. The road was narrow, going up on to a mountain, with very deep gorges right and left. The team got to the town at about 8:30 pm and went straight to the church which was on a hill top. The church was empty and there was no electricity in the town. A message was sent to the pastor to inform him of the team's arrival. Surprisingly, within a short time, the church was packed full.

Brother Akazue encouraged the congregation to get ready to meet the Lord, Whose coming would be as sudden as the visit that night. Nobody would be sent to call anyone. The archangel would sound the trumpet and to be able to hear the sound, a person must be saved, sanctified and baptised with the Holy Spirit. He must live above sin and be in perfect unity with other saints of God. If they were in that state of mind, they could pray for the salvation of Togo and of Africa.

The sermonette ended with a short prayer and they all went on their knees to pray. A mighty revival sparked off and the people were left praying. The team returned to Lome at about 12:45 am. Later, news came that the people prayed throughout the night, and that many souls prayed through to different Christian experiences.

On Friday, April 6, 2001, the Africa Overseer, Rev. Paul Akazue, in the company of Brothers John Aina and Kayode Oje, went on a missionary journey to Southern Africa. The journey started at about 7:30 am and the first port of call was Lusaka, Zambia, where a camp meeting started on Sunday, April 8, 2001. Delegates to the camp meeting included Brother and Sister Eddie Sadike, the Overseer of the work in South Africa; Brother and Sister Nakasala from Botswana; Brothers Molise and Mofad, also from South Africa. Other delegates came from Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania and many branch churches in Zambia. Brothers Richard Sibanda and Mahashi from Zimbabwe joined before the end of the first week.

From November 29 to December 3, 2002, Brother Akazue, his wife, Jane; Brother Albert Adegboye and Sister Rachel Fakorede, went on a visit to the Republic of Benin. They visited the following branches: Cotonou, Porto Novo, Calavi and So-Ava. The villages around So-Ava conduct their businesses and social activities on water because it is a riverine area. The brethren at So-Ava decided to build a church boat for evangelism. The boat was painted in the colours of The Apostolic Faith Church with the *Africa for Christ* logo. Later in 2003, Brother Akazue went back to So-Ava to dedicate the boat. The dedication ceremony stirred the whole community, and there was a mighty revival. As a result, many people started attending the Church.

All the people of God as directed by Him, keep going on missionary trips, to fulfill the vision that Africa must be won for Christ.



Brother Paul Akazue in Lusaka, Zambia

THIS BOOK OF THE LAW

(A Sermon Delivered By Revd. T. G. Oshokoya)
During The Watchnight Service On January 1, 1979.)

We are thankful unto God that we are starting the year, 1979, with God. Our prayer and wish is that we may end it with God. Should Jesus tarry, permitting us to see another year, we pray that He helps us to remain in Him.

In the history of the Israelites, when a chapter closed and another was about to be opened, God gave their new leader this word of exhortation, which is going to be the subject of our admonition this morning.

At the time the ministry of Moses came to an end, God called Joshua, the servant of Moses, who succeeded him, and gave him the secret of what was going to make him and his ministry successful. We do not know why God decided to highlight those points to Joshua once more, because Joshua was not ignorant of the precepts already given to his master, Moses. He knew all the injunctions and commandments of God.

The time of Moses was full of trouble. It was a time when the nation was, as it were, at a crossroads. Due to the importance of the commission given to Joshua, God wanted him to know the way he ought to take, and the principle he ought to follow, so that his own time would be good and peaceful. God also wanted him to know that as He was with Moses, so He would be with him.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:7, 8).

These verses were words of encouragement and exhortation from

the very lips of God unto Joshua. It could be that Joshua at that time was full of trembling and fear, and could have thought that God talked to Moses face to face but he was only an ordinary servant. He must have been full of anxiety as to how he would be able to accomplish the gigantic task before him. He perhaps could have been so fearful that he would wish to go into a corner and hide himself there, waiting for God to appear to him face to face in the same way in which He used to deal with Moses. But God made Joshua understand that He was not going to deal with him in the very manner He dealt with Moses. All he had to do was to take heed unto the laws and precepts, which were written by Moses. 'You must make sure you read those laws meditate upon them and be diligent in teaching them to other people. It is only when you do that, that you will succeed and prosper'.

There may be those who argue today, that the particular revelation God has given them are so wonderful, and may not be in accordance with the precepts in the Word of God, but that as God dealt with Paul the Apostle personally, so God is dealing with them too. However, these verses of the Scripture have made liars of them, because God told Joshua that he must meditate upon the law, and not turn to the right or to the left. If we examine carefully the Scripture, we would see that it was because Joshua made every effort to keep the law, that he was successful and prosperous. He ruled so well that he was the one who divided the Land of Promise unto the Children of Israel.

"The just shall live by faith", was the summary of the sound doctrine that was propounded by Martin Luther. This was a testimony of the change of heart, the regeneration, which he experienced through the saving grace with which God endowed him. He experienced this after the Dark Ages which came after the departure of the Apostles. Luther opposed the ceremonies and forms of worship which those who were supporters of false religions of his own day, were practising. He was against their idolatrous rituals and all their godlessness, which did not enable people to practise the sound Word of God. Because of his stand for the Truth, he was persecuted and his official rank within the church was reduced to almost nothing. He, however, preached the Word of God that it was necessary for people to be born again, and have a new heart. This is made possible through the grace of God, by the application of the Blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the Cross of

Calvary, upon the heart of the believer after the confession of his sins. That was what brought about a mighty revival worldwide at the time. It was the origin of Protestantism. A lot of people embraced his teachings, God changed their hearts, and they became new creatures in the Lord. Those who supported him experienced the new birth, but those who opposed his teaching continued in their false teachings and belief. At that time, the Bible was not common because it had not yet been translated into many languages as we have them today. After the revival, people started searching the Scriptures. They wanted to know more about God. They found that, 'it is by grace we are saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God, lest any man should boast'.

We also heard as years went by, of another man in the continent of Europe, by the name, John Wesley. He was the son of a pastor and also a chaplain in their church. He bravely preached the Word of God which the Lord had revealed unto him concerning the death of Jesus Christ, His resurrection and ascension. He went further to proclaim that it was only the pure in heart who would see God. He made them to understand through the Scripture, that it was necessary after one had been regenerated, to press on and pray for an experience, whereby the "old-man" is destroyed and the sin principle eradicated. One is then entirely sanctified and becomes pure in heart. Wesley had followers who believed him. Some people, however, did not feel happy about his preaching and he was expelled from the church.

He continued to preach what was revealed to him. As a result of the teaching of this man of God, there arose groups that preached against drunkenness, smoking, and many other vices of the society. They also preached the need to dress modestly. All these teachings were from the Word of God. Later, many sanctified people all around the world, started praying their way through to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It was after this that there arose a lot of revivalists, and those who preached on restitution.

God enjoined Joshua that he must make sure that he observed and patterned his life after all the ordinances, precepts, and commandments of the Word of God, not turning to the right or to the left. It is necessary for you also to resolve within yourself, never to turn to the right or to the left. If you do, obviously, it will not be well

with you. I am praying God that He will enable every one of us to be so resolved, that we shall not diminish any jot from the ordinances of the Lord.

Some people may say that the Word of life was meant for men of ancient times only, and that time has changed. They do not believe that the Word can apply to those of modern days. However, the Word of God says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. You should know that it is human beings who change, God never changes. The laws of the land, which were given by the lawmakers, had for one reason or the other, been changed. Events had overtaken such laws, and they have had one cause or the other to be changed. It is the same with the textbooks used by students in schools. Some science books, which were in use five to ten years ago, because of some new discoveries or theories, have had to be revised. Thanks be to God, the Word of God never changes! Some people may say that the teachings they have heard in the Church these many years, are Brother T's version of the Scripture; but I want you to understand that it is not anybody's making, it is the Word of God that is ever sure.

God says that if you dare to change or alter it, if you dare turn to the right or to the left, He says that you are not going to prosper, it shall not be well with you. The standard that has been upheld since 1944 at the inception of this work in Nigeria, is what we want to continue to embrace.

“My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

“Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

“For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

“Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

“Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

“Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be

established.

“Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil” (Proverbs 4:20-27).

The Word says: *“My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings”*. This was God's Word unto Solomon and the Word which he was told to incline his ears unto, was the Word of God, the precepts of God. He was expected to meditate upon it, to make sure that he understood it, to think about it and put it into practice. He should incline his ears unto the Word and make sure that when the Word entered his right ear, it did not escape through the left. If he obeyed the Word, it would be health unto him, it would grant him peace and it would be an everlasting treasure unto him.

“Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart”.

God enjoins us here to make sure that we meditate upon His Word. In the case of the treasure mentioned in the text, we are told that it should not depart from our eyes. We should keep it in the midst of our heart, making sure that everywhere we go, it is planted within our very eyeball. We should meditate upon it and make it uppermost in our thinking at all times.

You remember that at the time you were seeking salvation, you had no desire for any other thing than to obtain the experience. It was uppermost in your heart. If you had sought God half-heartedly, you would certainly not have received any blessing from Him. That is why we are told to meditate upon the Word: to speak, think, and ponder on it. The Scripture says you ought to fix your eyes upon the Word, not only to put it upon your doorposts, so that it would be a reminder unto you from time to time. Let it be found within your house, make sure you put it in your pocket and in your heart. Meditate upon it from time to time, not like a memory verse which you just recite.

“For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh”.

No sinner has the breath of life. The breath of life is that breath which God breathed into Adam, and he became a living soul. He had the image of God and all round him was the perfection of God. When Adam disobeyed God, he became a cursed person. The image of God was taken away from him, and that was why he had to be driven away

from the beautiful Garden. All the seed of Adam, who were born by women, were also born in sin. They are only capable of doing evil. But the moment one reconciles with God and believes all His Word, God dwells in him. The glory and beauty of God show on his countenance, and from that moment, he has a change of heart, a change of personality. He is a new person because he does not steal any longer, nor tell lies, and he does not fight. God removes the desire to indulge in sin completely from him. Old things have passed away and he is now a new creature in Christ.

If the person has been ill before and feels very wretched with ailments, afflictions or diseases, the moment he embraces the Word of God, he will see that the Word brings peace and good health. This is the health that the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ brings to us. The breath of life that has been given unto that new creature in Christ is what makes the newness of life to come into him. If he had been having bad dreams before, he will not experience them any longer, he will not suffer from nightmares any more. If he had been living in the fear of witches and wizards before, from that moment the fear will go. This is because he has made a covenant with God and he is a new creature in the Lord. He may not recognise the power that is working all those miracles because he is still in the flesh, he is a human being. However, the power of God is around him, transforming his life, changing him and performing many wonders in him. The power and protection of God around him, which he cannot see, is very effective in his life. When we go to God in penitence and make peace with Him, good things happen to us. When a person becomes a new creature in this way, he finds that God is able to talk to him, and he is also able to talk with God. All his crooked past he would, by the grace of God, straighten.

This new spirit, the new breath of life, must be guarded very jealously. The work of grace that has been wrought has got to be kept very judiciously. Do not give room to lying, or anything which is going to tarnish your testimony; make sure you keep your heart from evil or from any wrong thing. Make sure you do not open yourself to the temptation of the devil; do not give allowance to the flesh, evil, or the world. Do not give any allowance even to your friends; do not allow anything to come between you and God. Deceit should be removed far

away from you. Say exactly where you are going. Do not fail to take heed according to the Word of God to make sure your ways are plain. You may say, well, my husband does not want to hear about my going to Church and therefore, when you are going to Church, you cover it up with a story that you are only going to a neighbour, or a friend or a family member. Say exactly where you are going; do not cover it up, do not paint it, call a spade a spade. If you refuse to do that, you will find yourself going back to the things of the past, and the old life may overtake you again. Yet you may think that you are still in grace. At this point, you are heading for a downfall. You are in trouble, you have allowed the enemy of your soul to cheat you, you are in a deplorable spiritual state, and on the verge of destruction.

“Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

“Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

“Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil”.

Some people embraced the Gospel and were up and doing for the Lord, very fervent in the work of God. But because they looked to the right and to the left, they are no longer fervent for God. Without actually repenting and doing the first works, making sure that they turn away from all the past wrongdoings, so that they can move close unto the Lord, they may find out that it will be trouble on every side. Every day, one problem or the other will continue to overtake them and affliction upon affliction will be their lot. The worst of it is that, some people who will not change and line up with the Word of God and retrace their steps, crave for money, children, houses, and the material things of this world. They are very crazy in their desire for a husband or wife, and those things constitute a weight, which will not allow them to line up with all the precepts of God. My prayer is that God will deliver us from such a deadly situation!

“STAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

False brothers may come to you and say that before you can actually embrace this Gospel very well, you have to add fasting. Some

others may tell you that what you need to do is to call some holy names in your prayers; they wonder why we do not call on holy names in our Church. I want to tell you that the holiest name is the name of Jesus Christ. There are some who would also want to entice you. I warn you, do not accept such things from anyone, because if you do, you are entangling yourself with a yoke of bondage. The freedom which you have today, could not have been given to you except through the life-giving breath of Jesus Christ. This freedom lies in the simplicity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is very simple; it is very plain; it lies in the power of the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Blood of Atonement; and it lies also, in living a holy life. If you do not believe this, you will find yourself daily in a yoke. You need to beware!

Be warned, do not entangle yourself unnecessarily again with any affairs of either a new religion or of the world. You may be one of those who want to go from one Bible study centre to another because you have the conception that there are some righteous people there as well. These people you want to go to, are the people who the Scripture describes as **“ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”**. Do not attach yourself to crooked teachings. Let the sound Word of God, with which you are being fed, suffice you. When you go and attach yourself to a false teaching, the little which you have got, will be taken away from you. You will become an unbeliever, and find yourself at a cross-roads, not knowing which way to take any longer. You will be one of those who are like a wave of the sea being tossed here and there, not knowing where they stand. Therefore, you have got to stay in the freedom which Christ has given unto you. Do not go here and there, because if you do, you will make a shipwreck of your faith. God has given us the Scripture we embrace here, therefore, make sure you attach yourself to the sound Word of God.

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

“For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he

shall set me up upon a rock” (Psalm 27:4, 5).

These were the words of the Psalmist, and they were so uppermost upon his heart, that he pled with God to do so for him. God wanted Joshua to have good success, and therefore God told him that the law which He gave unto Moses was what He wanted him to read, and meditate upon, so that he would prosper and have good success. God said further that He would be with him wherever he went. I want to believe that, that is what our heart is yearning for. We all wish that God's presence may be with us. That was the thing that David was asking and pleading for from God.

There would be some whose sole purpose would be to pursue wealth. Some may want to pursue the world, and some may want to follow the fads and fashions of the world. There are those whose affections would be after property, and there are others who would have other ambitions. But David avowed to God that, the one thing he desired of the Lord was to be in the temple of the Lord, not just for one year nor for a moment of time, but all the days of his life. There may be those who, in their prayers, ask for children, money, houses or some other things of the world. But David prayed for one thing and only that one thing: that he might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life. It is those who dwell in the house of the Lord who will be promoted by God, and blessed of Him. The Scripture has made us to understand that we should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto us. These are the people who dwell in the secret place of the Most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. It is those who are living in the secret place of the Most High and who are abiding under the shadow of the Almighty, who will not be touched by the hands of the evil one. It is those whose eyes are fixed upon the beauties of the Temple of God, whose eyes will not be employed by Satan. It is those who are living in the House of God and dwelling in His Temple, who are going to be covered by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is such people who will be sheltered by Him. It is from among them that He would call and send on errands. When He comes back, He would rapture and take them unto Himself, so that they would live eternally with Him.

My friend, do not forget that Satan does not want you to dwell in the House of God, he does not even want God to dwell in you. David's

prayer is my wish this year. When this world would come to an end, it is only God Who can usher me into His Home. Won't you come to the altar of prayer and make a vow unto God as to what you want your life to be? God is ready to go into a covenant with you, only if you wish. He is ready to help your desire to serve Him to the very end. **"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple"**. May God make this the desire and heritage of everyone of us. Amen.

CHRONOLOGY

1942 Brother Timothy Gbadebo Oshokoya received the first parcel of Gospel tracts from The Apostolic Faith International Headquarters, Portland, Oregon, USA.

1944 On October 14, at 1.00 pm, Brothers Timothy Oshokoya, Lucas Obakoya and D. T. Robins met and adopted the doctrines of The Apostolic Faith, thus The Apostolic Faith began as an Organisation in Nigeria.

Meeting started in Brother Obakoya's house at Mushin.

Wednesday, November 8, the first evangelistic service of The Apostolic Faith was held with eight people in attendance.

1946 The Church moved to 26, Little Road, Yaba, Lagos, in the sitting room of Sister Julianah Shenbanjo

1947 November 2, The Church relocated from 26, Little Road, Yaba, to re-organise The Apostolic Faith work.

November 5, morning prayer meeting started at 80, Denton Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos.

November 16, the Church moved to 63 Ibadan Street, Ebute Meta.

First visit to an educational institution.

1948 On June 19, Brother Peter van der Puije went to Portland for camp meeting.

In August, permission to establish The Apostolic Faith work was granted in Republic of Benin.

The Faith of the Apostles Church in Ghana was affiliated to

The Apostolic Faith Church of Portland, Oregon.

In October Rev. George Hughes, who volunteered himself for Africa work, arrived in Accra, Ghana on his first missionary tour to Africa from The Apostolic Faith, Portland, Oregon, USA.

- 1949 Rev. George Hughes arrived Lagos on January, 8 in the company of Rev. Peter van der Puije of Accra, Ghana.

Brother T.G. Oshokoya and Brother Lucas A. Obakoya were both ordained as ministers by Rev. George M. Hughes.

Brothers Hughes, van der Puije and Oshokoya undertook a tour of The Apostolic Faith churches in the southern parts of Nigeria. They were joined by Rev. Philip O. Inyang.

In July the Church was authorised to observe the ordinances.

The first water baptism was held, and 17 saints baptised at 5.00 am.

General Office has its small beginning at 22, Simpson Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos.

- 1951 Tour of the Eastern part of Nigeria by Brother Oshokoya.

Brother Oshokoya attended the Camp meeting in Portland, Oregon, for the first time.

- 1952 First Camp Meeting held in Lagos, Nigeria, from July 1-22.

The first musical concert in Lagos, Nigeria, with eight people performing.

Rev. George Hughes' Second Missionary trip to Africa.

- 1953 Rev. George M. Hughes died at Robertsfield, Monrovia,

Liberia and was buried there.

The Apostolic Church Assemblies of Africa in Liberia, under the leadership of Rev. Peter Z. Manley, affiliated with The Apostolic Faith.

- 1954 Missionary tour to the Eastern province of Nigeria by Brother T in January.

April 18, dedication of The Apostolic Faith Church in Accra, Gold Coast, by Rev. T.G. Oshokoya.

Camp meeting time in Lagos, Nigeria was changed to August.

- 1955 January to March, Rev. T.G. Oshokoya undertook a missionary tour of Southern Africa.

March 8, Rev. Peter O. van der Puije passed on to Glory.

Rev. T.G. Oshokoya's second trip to Portland, Oregon

November 8 - Construction work started on the new church site at 49, Moloney Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos.

- 1957 The first Yoruba edition of The Apostolic Faith magazine titled *Igbagbo Aposteli* was printed.

A 3-acre piece of land for campground at Onigbongbo purchased.

Missionary tour to Ghana by Brother T.

Missionary tours to Liberia and Sierra Leone by Brother T.

November 30, first service held in the basement of the new church at 49, Moloney Street, Ebute Meta, Lagos, with 657 people in attendance.

- 1959 Brother T toured the Eastern Nigeria in company of his daughter, Matilda and Sister Olive Dosunmu.
Attendance at Lagos camp meeting rose to 1,500.
- 1961 Campers lodged at Onigbongbo for the first time.
Missionary trip to Cotonou for a one week revival by a Gospel team led by Brother T. Oshokoya.
The Gospel team proceeded to Ghana and Liberia.
- 1962 The Gospel team left Liberia for Sierra Leone on their homeward journey.
Tour of Northern Nigeria by Brother T.
- 1963 Dedication of The Apostolic Faith Church at Aiyetoro-Gbede, Kabba on May 4
1964. February 4 to May 5, Brother T.'s missionary tour of Eastern Nigeria. During this time on April 4, Apostolic Faith Church at 50, Mbukpa Road, Calabar was dedicated. Sermon by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya
- 1965 The Light of Hope was translated into the French Language.
- 1966 Dedication of the Wooden Tabernacle on the Campground, Anthony Village, Lagos on August 20.
Rev. & Mrs. Loyce C. Carver took part in the Lagos Camp meeting.
- 1967 Revival meetings held in Accra, Ghana by Brother T and team.
- 1968 Rev. and Mrs. L.C. Carver, Sister Ruth Ashwell and Rev. Reuel Green toured some African countries and attended the Lagos

- Camp meeting.
- 1970 Brother Willie Cargo, leader of the Apostolic Faith work in Kenya, attended the Lagos Camp meeting.
Rev. & Mrs. L.C. Carver attended Lagos for Camp meeting and visited Accra, Ghana.
- 1971 Missionary trip to Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso by Rev. and Mrs. Forrest Damron from the Portland Headquarters.
The Apostolic Faith work started in Zambia.
Dedication of an electronic two-manual organ in Lagos.
- 1972 Foundation of the Great Tabernacle at Anthony Village campground laid on March 2.
- 1973 Missionary trip to Republic of Benin and Burkina Faso by Brother T and his team
- 1974 3-month Extensive missionary tours of Ogun, Oyo, Ondo, Kwara Bendel, Anambra, Cross Rivers and Rivers State. The team also visited Accra, Ghana .
- 1975 A new Heidelberg Kord Offset printing machine purchased.
The Sunday School book series translated into Igbo language and published.
- 1977 Another Gospel campaign in South Western Nigeria.
- 1978 Modern Kitchen equipment installed in the Anthony Village campground kitchen.
- 1981 Morgan Sengwayo, and family from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, attended Camp meeting in Lagos, Nigeria.

Brother M'Bengani from Kinsasha, Congo, came to Lagos camp meeting.

Saturday, August 1, dedication of the Great Tabernacle of The Apostolic Faith on Anthony village campground.

The collected Gospel Songs book currently in use by the Church was published

Missionary trip to Zimbabwe by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya and a Gospel team.

1982 Missionary tour to Liberia by Brother T.G.. Oshokoya and Brother Ibikunle.

A GEC Telephone Equipment with 4 external lines and 25 extensions was purchased.

Brother Peter Sone, leader of the work in Cameroon, passed on to Glory.

1983 Rev. T.G. Oshokoya, the Founder of The Apostolic Faith in Nigeria and first Africa Overseer, passed on to Glory on November 16 and was succeeded by Rev. J. O. Soyinka.

1984 Brother and Sister Soyinka with Sister Dupe Ogunbiyi attended the camp meeting in Zambia

Missionary trip to Zambia and Zimbabwe by Brother J. O. Soyinka and his wife.

1985 Missionary trip to Accra, Ghana by Brother Soyinka.

Brother Soyinka attended the camp meeting in Zambia

1986 Missionary tours to Liberia and Ivory Coast by Brothers Soyinka and Ibikunle.

The Church in Lusaka, Zambia, moved to permanent site in John Howard Compound on March 2.

1987 Missionary trip to Ghana by Brother and Sister Dealyn George,

Missionary trip to Ghana by Brothers E. E. Ene and S. K. J. Okorie.

1992 April 21, Rev. Robinson Sanana, Overseer of Zambia passed on to Glory.

Missionary trip to Democratic Republic of Congo by Brother Soyinka and team.

1993 Missionary trip to Democratic Republic of Congo and Congo Brazzaville by Brother Soyinka and team.

1996 The Orchestration Book for the Collected Gospel Songs was published.

Missionary trip to Ghana by Brothers J. O. Soyinka and Paul Akazue; Brother Paul Akazue was left behind in Ghana to oversee the work

Missionary trip to Cameroon by Brother Christopher Herbert and a Gospel team.

1997 Rev. D. L. Baltzell and his team visited Nigeria.

1999 On September 4, Brother J. O. Soyinka passed on to glory

Brother Baltzell and his team arrived Lagos for the funeral of Brother Soyinka.

October 3, Rev. Paul Akazue was introduced as the new Africa Overseer.

October 17, Brother Akazue introduced Rev. Akwasi Debra as

the new Overseer for Ghana.

December, Brother Paul Akazue attended the camp meeting in Zimbabwe.

2000 March 15, Brother Paul Akazue with a Gospel team toured the francophone countries in West Africa.

June 26, Brother Paul O. Akazue's first trip to Portland, Oregon, for the camp meeting.

2001 October 22, Sister Ruth Ashwell, the African Correspondence Secretary, was called to Glory.

2002 January 23, Rev. Darrell Lee's first visit to Nigeria in the company of Brothers Cliff Paulsen and Jack Chasteen.

January 28, foundation laying of the International Worship Centre at Igbesa campground by Brother Darrell Lee.

January 30, Rev. Darrell Lee with his team including Rev. Paul Akazue left Lagos for Ghana.

Brothers Darrel Lee, Cliff Paulsen and Jack Chasteen went back to the US

February 1, Brothers Paul Akazue and John Aina left Accra for Monrovia, Liberia, for the camp meeting.

October 10, the official opening of The Apostolic Faith Secondary School (AFSS), Lagos, Nigeria took place.

2003 April 8, The Apostolic Faith Web site for Africa www.apostolicfaith-ng.org, was launched.

April 13, The first Radio Broadcast of The Apostolic Faith, service was aired on Eko FM 89.5, Lagos Nigeria.

August 10, the first camp meeting at Igbesa was held under two giant tents air-freighted from South Africa.

August 15, Brothers D. Baltzell and Cliff Paulsen arrived Igbesa for the camp meeting.

August 28, Brothers Baltzell, Paulsen and Akazue travelled to Ghana for the camp meeting.