



# EXECUTIVE REPORTS

THE PRESIDENT



*'Excellence is not a skill. It is an attitude.'* - Ralph Marston

*"The only disability in life is a bad attitude."* – Keith Harrel

An uncontested truth in life is that success during high points and lowest ebb of our careers as pilgrims rest on **ATTITUDE**. Attitude, which relates to FAITH and TRUST is one of the most important factors in helping you get through the highs and lows of life as a Minister. Since attitude spells how we are able to cope, whatever perspective you may hold will invariably have an effect in your performance and the way you handle rejection. For challenges in Ministry will come – as long as you are a child of God.

Therefore, everything we shall ever achieve in life, is defined by asking God for the right attitude and temperament to do the right thing at all times. Indeed, as the sun rises above the horizon in Lagos, a new dawn begins in the Western Nigeria Union Conference Headquarters. Indeed, for all of us, today, a new dawn has begun.

Beloved leaders and members of the Western Nigeria Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it is a great honour to present to you all the usual faithfulness and goodness of the Lord in our past history, present achievements, and glorious plans soon to be accomplished.

Without doubt, God ALONE deserves all praises and adorations for the tremendous land marks accomplished thus far. Whatsoever we are celebrating today, kudos must be given to the dedicatory services of our pensioners, who through thick and thin prepared the way before us.

Fundamentally, the success story of our Union is a collective effort. The commitment of administrators, pastors, office staffs, institutions, and the faithful members are the secret of our testimonies today.

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

No one should despise the beginning of a little thing... The root of our current status can be traced to 1914 when Adventism came to Nigeria. It is very interesting to note that Nigeria was first organized as a Union Mission in 1930 with headquarters at Ibadan. Another decision was taken in 1946 to review that Union status due to inadequate work force. Hence, the Nigeria Union Mission was realigned back to West Africa Union with headquarters in Accra, Ghana.

By 1972, the work in Nigeria was reorganized into a Union Mission, which marked the second birth of the Nigeria Union. From that year, the Church in Nigeria remained a Union Mission with so many internal reformatations into local mission and conference fields until 2004.

The Church in Nigeria has gone through the hands of dedicated, spiritual leaders. While some are dead, others are still alive. Apart from David C. Babcock, J. S Clifford, J. J. Hady and the host of others that brought Adventism and pioneered the work in various segments of Nigeria.

According to available records, Pastor Williams M. C. Clement was the first President the Church became a Union in 1930. When Nigeria Union Mission was reorganized from West Africa Union in 1972, Pastor S. Gustafson a missionary from Sweden became the President. Later, a Danish missionary called Helge H. Andersen took over the mantle of leadership as President of the Nigeria Union Mission at the point when Gustafson returned back home. After remarkable service of Pastor S. Anderson, he left Nigeria in 1984 and the position of Union President was filled by an indigenous Minister, Pastor Cable O. Adeogun.

As the first National to be the Union President C. O Adeogun did a great and tremendous job. By 1990, he was elevated to the position of Executive Secretary of the Division. Due to this movement, Pastor Luka T Daniel became the Nigeria Union President 1990. Pastor Daniel's contribution to the growth of the Church in Nigeria cannot be quantified. No wonder he was elected as the President of the Division 1995.

The vacuum created was filled by Pastor Joseph Adebisi Ola, the longest serving President of Nigeria Union Mission, who pioneered the North-Western Nigeria Union from 2004 to 2010. His tenure was marked with outstanding success by God's Grace.

From above, we see how the journey that began with just a Union Mission has positively and progressively grown to the current state of which we are all witnesses. For 32 years (1972 - 2004), the Church in Nigeria remained under a single administrative unit as a Union Mission. In 2004, through God's special grace, the Church underwent a reorganization which gave birth to two Unions: **Eastern Nigeria Union Mission and North-Western Nigeria Union Mission** with headquarters in Aba and Lagos respectively. This remarkable achievement took place under the dynamic leadership of Pastor Dr J. A. Ola.

The year 2014 will be forever remembered in the history of the Adventist Church in Nigeria as the year in which three Union Conferences emerged. In September 2013, the North-Western Nigeria Union Mission became **TWO UNION CONFERENCES**. Simultaneously, the Eastern Nigeria Union equally became a UNION CONFERENCE. To God be the GLORY. These unprecedented achievements took place under the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, utilizing human instruments of Pastors Owolabi and Udoh's administrations.

It is noteworthy that out of four Union Conferences in our Division, THREE of them domiciled here in Nigeria. All to the Glory of God! It took us almost forty-two (42) years before we could move from Union Mission Status to Union Conference Status. Our special thanks to all you, and adoration to the Lord of Sabbath for this accomplishment.

In 2010, Pastor J. A. Ola handed over to Pastor Owolabi five Conferences and one Union Mission, namely:

- North-West Nigeria Conference, with headquarters in Kaduna.
- North-East Nigeria Conference, with headquarters in Bukuru, Jos.
- Edo/Delta Conference with headquarters in Benin City.
- South-West Nigeria Conference, with headquarters in Akure.
- West Nigeria Conference with headquarters in Ibadan.

One (1) North-Western Nigeria Union Mission with headquarters in Maryland, Lagos.

Between January 2011 and December 2012, the Holy Spirit orchestrated an unusual phenomenal structural growth. Within this two-year period, the five conferences were reorganized and became 14 functional fields as follows:

- Twelve (12) conferences
- One (1) Mission
- One (1) Region

Namely:

North-West Nigeria Conference with headquarters in Kaduna.  
North-East Nigeria Conference with headquarters in Bukuru, Jos.  
North-Central Nigeria Conference with headquarters in Abuja, FCT.  
Kwara Conference with headquarters in Amilegbe Ilorin.  
Ekiti Conference with headquarters in Ado-Ekiti.  
Edo Conference with headquarters in Benin City.  
Delta Conference with headquarters in Warri  
Oyo Conference with headquarters in Ibadan.  
Ogun Conference with headquarters in Abeokuta  
Osun Conference with headquarters in Ede.  
Lagos Atlantic Conference with headquarters in Yaba.  
Lagos Mainland Conference with headquarters in Ogba Ijaye Agege.  
Ondo Mission with headquarters in Obaile, Akure.  
Kogi Region with headquarters in Lokoja.

Similarly, the Lord visibly moved His Work mightily and, within period of three (3) years the Union Mission (North-Western Nigeria Union Mission) benevolently gave birth to two (2) Union Conferences, the first of its kind in the West and Central Sub-region of Africa (WAD):

- 1. Western Nigeria Union conference with headquarters in Maryland, LAGOS was inaugurated September 7, 2013 at Akure.**
- 2. The Northern Nigeria Union Conference with headquarters in Abuja, was inaugurated November 23, 2013 at Bukuru, Jos. They both officially took off January 1, 2014.**

All these are manifestations of God's faithfulness, goodness, love, and uncommon favour among His People. To Him be the GLORY, our available records show the statistical increase from January 2014 till September 2018 baptized and we return all the thanks to God.

By His Grace, this administration received an unusual cooperation, collaboration, and intentional support of both clergy and laity. For the past five years, there was no single month without evangelical activities going on in our Union. Total Member Involvement included but not limited to my fellow administrators from the Conferences and Union. Our educational and medical institutions are highly commended for the good outreach programmes implemented. Records reveal that every month souls were baptized into the Kingdom of God.

Special recognition goes to our pastors, elders, women, men, youth, and our children for their commitment towards evangelism.

## **FINANCE**

Beloved leaders and members, right from inception of this Union, God had demonstrated His faithfulness among us. Interestingly, Nigeria Union Mission had her first budget at her inaugural session in the year 1973. Records revealed that the total budget was N301,158.73 Naira, of which N291,033 was appropriation from the Northern Europe West Africa Division. The locally generated fund was 10,125 Naira.

At the exit point of Pastor Ola's administration in 2010, the North-Western Nigeria Union the

financial indices were as follows

- 1. Working Capital 67.35%**
- 2. Self- Support 78%**
- 3. Liquidity 54.39%**

However, at the time we reorganized by 2014, the Western Nigeria Union Conference began with the financial parameters as follows

- 1. Working Capital 103.15%**
- 2. Self- Support 152.15%**
- 3. Liquidity 90.75%**

Till date, God's faithfulness has continued to uphold our Union, even when the economy of the Country was in recession, God's abundant grace and provision never departed from us. As we are marking the end of this quinquennium and this administration, I am very happy to announce that all the financial indicators as at September 2018 were healthy - to God be the GLORY.

- 1. Working Capital 10207.8%**
- 2. Self- Support 146.21%**
- 3. Liquidity 101.66%**

It must be noted that the Western Nigeria Union conference witnessed unusual manifestation of God's faithfulness and abundant blessings. When some churches in collaboration with Oyo Conference withheld tithes and offerings with hope to ground and suffocate the finances of the Union, within this same period the financial position of the Union was sustained the providential power of God. Through it all we, gather here today to celebrate the faithfulness of the Almighty God. With all sense of responsibility, I sincerely thank all the members, pastors, administrators for making this possible in our generation.

### **MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT**

We have experienced a commendable growth in human capacity building and manpower development. In 1973, at the commencement of Nigeria Union Mission, only very few workers had formal education. The situation improved between 1990 and 1995 when the whole Church in Nigeria had a few graduate workers.

Fellow leaders and amiable members, there was a total revolutionary ideology in the empowerment of our ministers and administrative workers. Within 10, years the Western Nigeria Union territory has produced almost 20 doctoral degree ministerial workers in the fields and our institutions.

The most recent cohort who graduated from the Adventist University of Africa with Doctoral Degrees were: Pastors Adeniyi Emanuel, Oga Christopher, Senne-Aya Michael, Sunday Ogunsanya, Isaac Oyedele, and Samuel Oyalabu. Apart from the empowerment of the ministerial workers, intentional efforts were made to include workers from the Treasury and Secretariat. Presently non-ministerial staff members are undergoing their Ph.D. programmes. They are: Amos Ibihedu, Folashade Ogungbesan, Yemi Adedokun, Oluwatoyin Owolabi and Sunday Aremu.

Today, our records show that almost 100% of our workers have obtained a Bachelors Degree or its equivalent with more than 30% with Master's Degree in different disciplines.

Furthermore, the Union is sponsoring about 20 students of Theology at the undergraduate level. In our educational institutions, two of our secondary school principals are equally Ph.D holders, while 70% of our teachers are qualified and equipped to handle various subjects in their areas of specialization.

Special recognition to the commitment of Pastors Adeniji, Agboola, Adeogun, Kio, Awoniyi, Alalade, Babalola, Ola and Makinde who went out of their way to bring academic dignity to the ministry. All this put together was less than 15% of the work force.

### **INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

If God does not build the house the builders are labouring but in vain. As a Union we cannot thank God enough. When reorganization began, the major challenge that confronted us was how to get adequate, effective, and efficient infrastructure to sustain the explosive agenda of reorganization. The essential areas of concerns were:

1. Secretariat Complexes for Administrative Activities.
2. Church building to support the growing membership.
3. Accommodation to support the expected work force including ministers and non-ministerial staff.
4. Camp meeting sites for annual Holy Convocation of God's children.

To the glory of God Almighty, the great Provider, our needs were met one after the other. What a Mighty God we serve!

From inception, none of our all 11 eleven fields within our Union, began operations on rented secretariat building. They all took off from church-owned properties. We thank those individuals and churches used by God to make this possible.

Currently, it is a thing of joy to testify to the Lord's doing in respect of the following:

### **LAGOS ATLANTIC CONFERENCE**

This is a 21st century edifice situated at 37, Queen Street Yaba, Lagos State, comprising a block of flats on four floors. It provides accommodation for the President, Secretary, and Treasurer as well as a three-bedroom flat reserved for Guest House. The same complex is hosting functional offices for the directors, and support staff members as well as room for meetings and spiritual events or empowerment. Honestly, this is one of our greatest testimonies of this administration.

As we give all Glory to God, we equally recognize the commitment of our pastors and members, especially to the building committee and other dynamic leaders. The complex was dedicated **December 6, 2016** with the General Conference Associate Treasurer, Elder George Egwakhe and the Division President Pastor Dr Ellie Wick and other officers in attendance.

### **OSUN CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX BUILDING**

Through the providence and the generosity of our brother, Dr Deji Adeleke via Springtime Development Foundation, the foundation of a complete secretariat comprising offices, boardrooms for special meetings and worship halls was laid March 22, 2015. This same secretariat complex accommodates the operational offices for the principal officers and has been dedicated for use.

**THE KWARA CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT BUILDING**

In keeping with God's plans and provision, we laid the foundation of a two-storey secretariat at the permanent site October 18, 2015 at Ganmo, Ilorin. Already, the first level is completed and decked. However, the take-off secretariat at Amilegbe belongs to the Church. Special recognition to Amilegbe Church for its act of Kindness.

**EKITI CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

Work is currently on-going on the Ekiti secretariat complex. So far, a total sum of eight million Naira has been expended. It is impressive to note, however, that at time of take-off of the Conference, the storey building complex donated by Opopogboro Church was not only adequate but very functional. Still, the Ekiti Conference purchased a parcel of landed property for God. Foundation was laid April 2, 2017 by the Union President.

**DELTA CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

From a humble beginning with borrowed apartment belonging to the Late Elder Friday Nwanganga, the Delta Conference was moved after an eight-month period, (January to August 2012), to a semi-permanent building within the premises of the Ekpan Church.

This building accommodates the two officers: The President and the Treasurer as well as functional offices with conference halls. Special recognition to all who went extra miles to donate money, time and skills. We equally appreciate Ekpan Church for their Spirit of generosity. Right now, Delta Conference has acquired a very massive landed property in a very strategic location in Osubi Community for immediate and future development.

**EDO CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

This was an inherited property from the defunct Edo- Delta Conference.

**ONDO MISSION SECRETARIAT COMPLEX BUILDING**

This Mission is currently operating from the defunct South-West Conference Secretariat. However, the Mission has since taken giant steps in constructing her own secretariat. Special recognition to Igbabo church for voluntarily contributing towards the proposed Pastor's three-bedroom flat and the Children's Department under construction to Ondo Mission. The project is 90% completed.

Worthy of mention is the donation of a previous parcel of land besides this building without which it would have been impossible to have the secretariat located there. Appreciation to Pa M. A. Popoola's family.

**OYO CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

The Oyo Conference is the mother of all conferences in Nigeria which took off from the defunct West Nigeria Conference Secretariat Building. This secretariat building was voted to be a Secretariat for the proposed West Nigeria Union Conference. Hence, Oyo Conference moved to their permanent site and constructed a very befitting Secretariat Complex Building which was dedicated by the Union President.

**OGUN CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

During the reorganization process, the take-off Secretariat was built by the defunct South-West Nigeria Conference. Due to membership financial commitment to other projects, the Conference recently laid the foundation of an ultramodern secretariat at the permanent Site by

the Union President. By God's Grace, the project is near completion and will be dedicated by next year.

#### **KOGI REGION OFFICE BUILDING**

The Kogi Region started in the thatched office rooms to Lokoja Church. After sharing, the leadership with the support of the members and pastors, prudently spent the sum of Six Million Naira to erect a twin bungalow of three-bedroom flat. One of the completed flats is now occupied by the Pastor, while the second which is for office use, is roofed with 90% completed.

#### **LAGOS MAINLAND CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT COMPLEX**

The conference began her journey in a church building. Special thanks to the Pastor and members who graciously accommodated the Conference office. The Lagos Mainland Conference has completed an outstanding ultra-modern Secretariat Complex which has been dedicated by the Union President on May 6, 2018.

This building comprises of offices, guest rooms, boardrooms and halls for both spiritual and social activities.

#### **OTHER PROJECTS**

Under infrastructure growth, the Union experienced the tremendous blessings in all areas of development. During the period under review, the Union has the following usual blessings. First, Osi community in Kwara donated a large space of land measuring 189.46 hectares (1,984, 690m's); similarly, Omu-Aran community extended to us a parcel of land measuring 50 hectares for establishment of Maranatha University of Sciences. In the same vein, landed properties were donated in Sao for Babcock Medical Centre and School of Nursing.

The Union is forever grateful to Dr Deji Adeleke for the donation of 400 plots of land for God's work. Right at now in Estate the Union bought a school with large expanse of land worth over N200million (two hundred million Naira in Moye), the Church equally purchased a parcel of land worth over N50 to N70 million.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH**

To the glory of God, there was a phenomenal growth in both our Medical and educational institutions.

#### **MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS**

The **Seventh-day Adventist School of Nursing Ile-Ife**, is one of the oldest medical institutions in the Western Region of Nigeria. Most of her contemporaries that were established in the early 1940s are no longer functional.

To the Glory of God, this School of Nursing is rated as one of the best in Nigeria today - both in terms of academic performance and character building. For the past 10 years she has not scored less than 80% in the final exams. The latest final exam results were 100%. The School of Nursing has produced great men and women within and outside the country.

In Spiritual activities, right from its inception in 1944, the School has not lost her focus on the primary purpose of her existence. It remains committed to mission of the Church. Every activity and event are mission oriented. She engages in annual week of spiritual emphasis, as well as outreach in the neighbouring villages, including spirit-filled weekly Sabbath worship. It has

become a religious culture for workers to attend daily morning devotion as part of their spiritual responsibility.

To the Glory of God. The result from Nigeria Nursing Council in December 2018, the SDA School of Nursing got full accreditation for the next five years. The quota for student intake was increased by 200% this is unprecedented. To God be the glory.

Similarly, the **SDA Hospital Ile-Ife** is the miracle of this administration. During our Inaugural Board meeting in March 2011, it was evidently clear to all that the Hospital would not survive the next 6 months. The dilapidation of the buildings, old and none functional equipment, low patronage, dissatisfied staff's and non-payment of salaries, allowances and gross exodus of workers were glaring to all. With fasting, prayers and absolute faith in God we handed over the 'sick baby' (SDA Hospital) to God for a Miracle.

Today, we have more than enough reasons to celebrate God for His Faithfulness. Through providence, the Seventh-day Adventist Hospital has grown like the mustard seed into one of the most reputable medical institutions in Nigeria. Currently, it has a total of 207 workers with 49 Nurses and 22 Doctors. The total equipment and capital project stand at over N35 million Naira. The Hospital has also received another full five-year accreditation. The annual operating income is N202,466,423 with a total number of out- and in-patients of 23,303.

#### **HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY**

The hospital is noted for its outstanding spiritual programmes with the presence of a full time Chaplain who oversees the religious life of the Hospital. Many evangelical outreaches were conducted and Churches were planted in villages around like Iyanfoworogi, Oluode, Saga, and Alakoweopa. Daily morning devotion for the staff is mandatory. Mid-week prayer meetings and Sabbath worship are permanent features of her activities.

Special recognition goes to the administration, medical and support staff for their commitment.

#### **ADVENTIST MEDICAL CENTRE INISHA**

This was established in 1952; following the MoU between the Church and the Community for a 100-year lease effective from 2007 and a staff strength of 18, the Centre has grown. Special recognition to our medical evangelists and missionaries who laboured for the Lord.

Most source of income is laboratory diagnostic Centre and Mortuary services. The average yearly operating income is between N8 million and N9 million. Recently, the Babcock University Teaching Hospital adopted the Inisha Medical Centre as site for Rural and Community out-posting for Ben Carson Medical students.

#### **ADVENTIST MEDICAL CENTRE AYETORO EKITI**

This was closed down for over a period of 10 years before this administration came on board. To the glory of God Almighty, through the help of ADRA NETHERLANDS, there is a brand-new medical centre standing now ready for commissioning in place of the ruins of the past.

#### **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

All our educational institutions are faith-based. With the Adventist philosophy of Education, at its core, it operates a holistic system in which every teacher walks the talk. Every school is headed by an experienced Adventist Educator. There is an impressive increase in the percentage

of Adventist teachers in our schools from the 51.8% in 2010, the percentage rose commendably to 85.7% by 2018.

#### **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH**

For the past five years, our institutions have maintained an above 80% pass in their performance in both State and National Examinations. Almost every teaching staff is academically and professionally developing with many teachers holding degrees from the Bachelors to Doctoral levels to the Glory of God.

#### **INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Similarly, there is a tremendous growth in the area of infrastructural development. Each school is striving hard to enhance learning by creating enabling infrastructure. Without any appropriation from church or government, the average investment for the past five years can safely be put at about five hundred million Naira.

With due respect and heart of gratitude to all our donors, special recognition to our US-based dear Sister Jammy. Her contribution alone cannot be less than 90% of the total donations received by COMAC. This acutely runs to millions of Naira. To God be the GLORY.

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

With a total of 24 primary and 11 secondary institutions, one of the outstanding features of our educational system, is the annual Teacher's Convention. Since its inauguration in 2011, the administrators and organizers have kept this annual program alive.

Special recognition goes to our Union and Conference Education Directors, Principals and other administrative Heads and Teachers as well as support staff and board.

#### **DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES**

Today, we celebrate God's grace and the collective effort of all our Departmental Heads.

#### **AYM**

The Women's Ministries are wonderful Daughters of God. Your empowerment programmes among women indeed has liberated many from the cycle of both spiritual and physical bondage. Mrs. Omodan and her team, the Lord will forever appreciate you.

#### **EVANGELISM, SABBATH SCHOOL, AND GLOBAL MISSION**

It is no longer news in our Union that evangelism is not a programme or event that come and go, but it has become a way of life. Thousands of different outreaches and in-reach initiatives have been continually implemented on a round-the-clock bases: Operations Global Rain, Mission to Cities, Total Members Involvement, Comprehensive Health Evangelism, and Pentecost 2018.

There were also other initiatives from the local Churches, Districts, and Conferences such as: small groups, community services, breakfast prayers, prayer-chain ministry 24 hours before the Lord. All these put together are part of our testimonies today. Special recognition to Pastor Obebe and his team for excellent job done.

**STEWARDSHIP AND TRUST SERVICES**

God's faithfulness was magnified by positive attitudes of our members towards giving. Even, when some individuals, and churches, and one of our conferences refused to return their tithes and offerings, the Lord still met us at the very points of our need.

Notwithstanding all these challenges, we were able to meet our financial obligations to the Glory of God. Special recognition to all members who gave sacrificially for the furtherance of God's works. We equally appreciate Pastor Alabi and team for their commitment to stewardship awareness.

**PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT**

The arrival of Pastor Augustine Ojoma and his team, this department was revived from an almost comatose state. Today, there is a functional publishing department with great potential for growth. The lack of books for both Literature Evangelists and members is now a thing of the past.

Similarly, the clearing process has been made easier than before with relative stability of the exchange rate of the Naira against the Dollar. This department experienced a steady increase in the number of Literature Evangelists, which resulted in increased sales and availability of funds for both the department and LEs. Currently, the total number of LEs are 108, while total sales over the past five years was N69, 456, 128.43. The total number of the books sold thus far 22,624.00.

Apart from financial stability, the Publishing Ministry has indeed become a powerful means of evangelism. As part of its missionary activities, the Literature Evangelists offered 16,632 bible studies to their customers and gave out a commendable number of 112,220 free literature. All these yielded 495 baptisms.

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT**

This department is very much alive and vibrant with the wealth of experience brought in by the Union Director, who is a teacher and school owner. The engagement of the children in both public and small group evangelism, as well as various Bible studies and conventions, have positively impacted the children's spiritual growth. Today, we have many children preachers and evangelists. There was massive production of Children Bible Study and Evangelism materials. Sister Nkechi and her team are highly appreciated.

**CHAPLAINCY MINISTRY DEPARTMENT**

Within the Union territory, we have 65 campuses with a total population of 1775 students. Today, we have six completed worship Centres and 12 uncompleted and three landed property for Chapels. The Public Campus Ministries in the Union is structured into 10 Zones. This group of people are mission and purpose-driven with an exemplary dedication to service. With them the church has a great future. Special recognition to Dr. Abiodun Oludayo and all the field PCM Directors. Appreciation to all. God is proud of you.

**YOUTH MINISTRY**

To the Glory of God, the youth wing of the Church was actively involved in Mission. Their energies have been diverted into soul winning initiatives.

The youth has highest population in the Church, and the Church was using that to enter the unentered areas. Most of the Church planting projects were executed by the Youth. Their various progressive classes have been mission-oriented endeavours. They have engaged in different empowerment programmes, which include skills acquisition.

It is important to mention that the retention rate of the youth in the Church increased from 48.9% in 2010 to 74.89% on 2018 - to God be the glory. Right now, a lot of young people occupy various positions in the Church in preparation for future leadership. Special recognition to Dr. Oyedele and his comrades.

#### **MINISTERIAL AND FAMILY LIFE**

Through series of seminars and workshops, the family life of the Church has been strengthened. The rate of divorce is almost zero, and there is a commendable increase in marriages among church members. Attrition rate resulting from Adventists marrying non-Adventists is gradually reducing.

There were many in-service trainings to revitalize the ministers. Similarly, the department held several pastoral retreats and seminars to reawaken the spiritual fervour and boost ministerial professionalism.

Special recognition to Dr and Dr (Mrs.) Okonkwo and their team for the good job.

#### **COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT**

The Department of Communication is saddled with the responsibility of overseeing the strategic communication needs of the Union. It coordinates all its communication, advocacy and public policy initiatives. It works to present an accurate, attractive and substantive view of the Union to a wide variety of constituents to advance its goals and garner community support for its Global Mission.

Thus, one can rightly say the department is the live-wire and the centrifugal point of every activity of the Church. The packaging of this quinquennium report was fully supervised by the Communication department.

Through series of seminars and workshops, it greatly impacted the communication skills of the administrators, pastors and membership at large. Now, information dissemination and accessibility are enhanced with the existence of many social media platforms. Special recognition to Sister Nellie and her specialist team members for initiating a framework for Union Communication Program – including the 5-year development plan which should see our Union having her own Communication Media and Center for propagation of the Gospel Message.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion Beloved Leaders and Members, the journey has not been easy, but God has been faithful. As the race began, the darker the darkness became, the more magnified the Divine Light from the Throne of Most High God.

I want appreciate God the Almighty for seeing us through. I cannot but thank all who are not known, but daily prayed for us. Every member of this great Union is highly appreciated. The commitment of the faithful Pastors was highly commendable. Teachers, Headmistress,

Headmaster and Principals you were the pillars of our success story today. Conference and Institutions Treasurers, Secretaries, and Directors, I say **A Big THANKS** to you all.

The Union Directors and Executive Committee Members (*Eyin ni Aso ipora mi*) You are my cover-clothes. My special gratitude goes to my own Field's Presidents (*Hummm, Eyin ni ejika ni ti koje ki aso mi jabo*) you were my shoulders that didn't allow my clothes to drop.

All employees of the Union, what can I say than to say **"A BIG THANK YOU"**. To my brothers, friends and counsellors, Pastor Ezekiel Adeleye, Elder Amos Ibihedu, their wives and children, I salute your courage for living above victimization, intimidation, and accusations. Your united efforts are what we are celebrating today. To my teacher and big brother Prof. JAK Makinde, thanks for believing in our Vision and Mission. My spiritual fathers, the retirees, I am thanking you all using Pa Johnson Ajagbe Adediji the President and Chairman of Western Nigeria Union Conference Retirees Association as point of contact. My Mentor and Predecessor Pastor JA Ola, your fatherly advice brought us this far.

I want to salute the unwavering support and encouragements of AWM, AYM, AMO, NASS, and Children.

My deep appreciation goes to the Emilagba family, my twin brother Egbonooo. PROF. SUNDAY AJAO OWOLABI. The Deputy Senior Vice-chancellor Babcock University.

To my counterparts Boy and Mame, Pastors Udoh and Daria, you are the best to walk around with. Elder George Egwakhe thanks for your blood-like love.

To my wife and Children: Oluwatoyin Yetunde, Tobi, Layomi, and Bamise you are the best blessings that God gave me. Thank you.

I cannot sign off on this document without thanking a few minority elements who never saw anything good in me. Honestly, they are my good friends who made me to be more careful, diligent, and remained focused. They became a propelling force that kept my knees always on the ground seeking the face of God in season and out of session. I say a Big Thank You. When the struggle began, they were "concerned brethren, that were faceless"; later they became "Western Nigeria Union conference Laity" and recently they call themselves the "Reformers". During the period of struggle many things happened that led to the Glory of God at the end. Allegations were written, investigation were conducted, and vindication was obtained the Grace of King JESUS. I, along with the Church, were sued to different High Courts in Ibadan, Akure, and Warri. At the end, the courts vindicated us of all their charges.

As if that was not enough, again, I, along with the Church were taken to Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). After a year of investigations, the EFCC REPORT EXONERATED US TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

May I therefore recommend, that we put all our differences behind and be reunited as ONE BODY OF CHRIST. I want all of us to work together, for the coming of the Lord is very imminent. What is dividing us is almost Zero compare with what can Unites us. One of the best things I have learnt in life is that everyone is not supposed to be for you; not every person is supposed to like you. You can't reach your destiny without opposition, without negative conflicts or criticisms.

Joseph would have never have been successful and become a Prime Minister if his brothers had not betrayed him and sold him into slavery. Also, David would never have become King without battling Goliath in the Name of God of Israel. The betrayal of Jesus Christ by Judas brought to the fore the key lesson that the fact that people are close to you is not evidence of affection and trust. However, **ONLY JESUS CAN BE TRUSTED WITHOUT FEAR**. Through all these persecutions, Jesus has proven that **HE IS THE BEST FRIEND TO BE TRUSTED**. Jesus **NEVER** Fails!!!

As Ministers and Leaders, let us quit worrying about who is not for you. Some enemies are designed as a part of your destiny. Now, keep running your race not looking to the left nor to the right, not bothered by who's not celebrating you and who's not cheering you on.

Your gift may seem small but if you develop it, it will open big doors. You don't have to have a great gift for God to use you in a great way. **GOD IS IN THE BUSINESS OF USING the FOOLISH THINGS OF THIS WORLD TO CONFOUND THE WISE**. I want to be that 'foolish thing' in His Hands for Mighty Works. May all Glory, Honour and Adoration be ascribed only the Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath!

God bless you all.

Than you.

**Pastor Oyeleke Alabi Owolabi**