



MAIDEN ADDRESS TO THE MINISTERS AND SAINTS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH NIGERIA, LAWNA TERRITORY BY PASTOR DR. SENIOR GABRIEL OKPAKO – UYEH, the 6th LAWNA TERRITORIAL CHAIRMAN & VICE PRESIDENT OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH NIGERIA, DURING HIS INDUCTION SERVICE HELD ON SUNDAY, 3rd DECEMBER, 2023, AT THE NATIONAL TEMPLE AUDITORIUM, OLORUNDA KETU, LAGOS BY 9:00 AM.

I. PROTOCOL:

The National President, Pastor Dr. S. E. Igwe,
The National President Emeritus,
Territorial Chairmen of our Sister Territories,
Members of the National Executive Council,
Members of the LAWNA Executive Council,
Members of the LAWNA General Executive Council,
Members of the LAWNA General Council,
All Principal Officers of Lagos State C.A.N.,
Heads of our various Sister Churches here present,
All Ministers, Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses,
Gentlemen of the Press,
Brothers and Sisters in Christ.





LET US RAISE THE BANNER OF THAT OLD APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY

II. APPRECIATION:

1. I give all the glory to the Almighty God who kept all of us alive to witness this glorious day in the annals of The Apostolic Church Nigeria, LAWNA Territory.
2. It is not in doubt that history has again been made today with the smooth and divine transition of leadership mantle from the previous administration to this current administration.
3. Christ promised, I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18). The gates of hell truly threatened our unity and corporate existence in LAWNA Territory, but with the prayer of the saints, here we are a victorious people in Christ.
4. Let me sincerely appreciate the fatherly guidance and counsel of our dear National President, Pastor Dr. S. E. Igwe and the mentorship and support of our retired but not tired President Emeritus, Pastor Dr. G. O. Olutola.
5. I must also, appreciate my immediate past predecessor, Pastor Dr. E. S. Awojide, for the landmark projects and polices we embarked on under his watch as the 5th LAWNA Territorial Chairman. Our prayer is that the Lord will perfect His healing work in your life and get you back on your feet to join us again, even in your retirement.



III. OUR ORIGINAL APOSTOLIC IDENTITY:

The Apostolic Church was founded by the Holy Spirit through the Acts of the Apostles. Historically, the Church as a denominational name emerged as one of the earliest Classical Pentecostal denominations in Europe at Penygroes, South Wales, United Kingdom, in 1916; as an aftermath of the 1904-1905 Welch Revival by Evans Roberts, with the Welch Pastor Daniel Powell Williams. In 1918, the Holy Spirit began an indigenous Pentecostal Revival in South-Western Nigeria, among Africans and by Spirit-inspired African leaders without the physical presence of any European or American leader.

This indigenous Pentecostal Revival ignited a nation-wide explosion in 1930, which spread like wild fire across Nigeria, with outpouring of the Holy Spirit, reminiscent of the Apostolic experience as recorded in Acts of the Apostles. As a result of persecution which ensued, characteristic of the early church, the leadership of the indigenous Pentecostal Group in Nigeria, previously called 'Precious Stone' or 'Diamond Society' but then affiliated to 'Faith Tabernacle Congregation', sent a 'Macedonian Pentecostal call' to the authorities of The Apostolic Church in Great Britain through correspondence.

The response to that call by the Authorities of The Apostolic Church in Great Britain led to the coming down of European missionaries to give helping hands to the African indigenous Pentecostal Body, which upon mutual agreement decided to adopt the name of the Classical Pentecostal denomination from Europe. Consequently, The Apostolic Church Nigeria, emerged as the first Classical Pentecostal denomination in Nigeria. The early years of the Church were impactful though not without attendant challenges.



There were issues of break-away that nearly threatened the corporate existence of the church but in spite all of these and other spiritual challenges the Lord stood by His church according to His promise. The Apostolic Church is known for the Word, Prayers, Prophecy, Miracles, Healings, Evangelism, Sound Doctrine and in-depth Teaching on Heaven consciousness, dangers of hell and the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Over the years in LAWNA Territory, the Lord has kept His promise in giving us leaders of His choice. The First LAWNA Territorial Chairman was our respected father, Pastor S. G. Adegboyega; the Second was my own father, Pastor I. G. Sakpo, the third was my dearly beloved father, Pastor S. S. Jemigbon, the fourth was my own tutor Pastor Dr. G. O. Olutola (here present); the fifth was my immediate predecessor, Pastor Dr. E. S. Awojide and I am here as the 6th LAWNA Territorial Chairman. Praise the Lord!

IV. OUR VISION & MISSION:

6. Brethren, the Vision of this administration is to RAISE that old Apostolic Principles, Practices, Fellowship and Power that distinguished us from others.
7. This Vision is captured in a 5 – Point Agenda, codenamed RAISE, and will be implemented under the following policy steps:
 - i) **R – REMOVE:** The Lord has mandated that we should remove uncleanness and impurity that has elevated itself in the Church. We are poised to cleanse the Church, through the help of the Holy Spirit, from all forms of dirt. Unfortunately, we find clannishness, tribalism, nepotism and even occult associations in the Church. The Lord says we should remove them. The temple must be cleansed and sanctity must return into LAWNA Territory.



The Apostolic Church of old was known by her strong stance against unrighteousness. Ungodly practices were not meddled with the worship of God in the Early Church. No wonder the craftiness of Ananias and his wife were easily revealed and disciplined by Apostle Peter.

- ii) **A – ADMIT:** While we remove unrighteousness and its attendant evil associations in the Church, this administration will give room for holiness in its practical sense to prevail in the Church. We will admit a rekindling of the fire of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Consequently, our Pentecostal Remembrance Services should be revived.

We will admit constructive ideas from well-meaning sons and daughters of The Apostolic Church Nigeria, LAWNA Territory. We will run an open door policy that gives room for cross pollination of ideas that will lead to the growth, in true sense, in membership of the Church.

We will permit merit and not favoritism to guide our choice of ministers for promotion and this will also serve as a significant consideration for approval for creation of Areas and Districts. We will admit transparency, probity and accountability and demand same from all ministers and Church Officers. Our subsidiaries will also from time to time be demanded to account for their stewardship.

- iii) **I – INSTITUTE:** In creating a robust and friendly Apostolic Family, we will institute a pattern of fellowship that is devoid of dogmatism. The Apostolic Church is a family where every member should be considered a bonafide member. No individual, tribe or race owns the Church. In Acts 2:42 the Early Church continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. We will insist on warmth Christian fellowship in our various



Assemblies. There should be no force. People should be treated with dignity and emphasis should be on teaching the Holy Scriptures for change.

The Holy Spirit, through our glorified fathers has given us landmark institutions in LAWNA Territory. We must ensure that our focus in all our activities and programmes should be for the spiritual development of the saints. There is no room for materialism under my watch.

Our Sectional Movements will be reinvented to give room for dynamism. Our Annual Conventions, especially at the Area levels will be re-examined to reduce the avoidable burden it places on members. Our current approach to Evangelism calls for attention. We will look at every facet of the Church with a view to institute a check and balance system.

- iv) **S – STRENGTHEN:** It is very obvious that there are arms of the Church that has been weakened. There are observable loopholes in the operations of some of our establishments in the Headquarters Compound. Most of our Headquarters staff who work their hearts out needs our motivation and we are going to do so.

We would strengthen and restore the faith of Apostolics to their mother Church in LAWNA Territory. Those of you that are preparing to leave the Church, let me tell you now to rethink your decision. I rather call on you to come back home and join hands with us in actualizing this noble goal of raising again the banner of our old Apostolic identity.

It is a task that must be done and now is the time.

- v) **E – ELEVATE:** Finally, the Lord has asked me to elevate many souls that have been abandoned and suffered shipwreck in the faith. It is going to be a spiritual and physical elevation for



all saints of The Apostolic Church in LAWNA Territory. You will rise up and walk again.

One of our burdens in this administration is to put a smile on the faces of all ministers of the Church and their family members. So, there will be a significant increase in the remuneration of ministers in no distant time. You will be happy doing God's work.

We have also concluded plans to absorb a total of four hundred new ministers into the Territory, to ease the quest for ministers to man vacant Assemblies across the Territory. Immediately after this induction service, I will be giving my approval for the ordination of one hundred Assistant Pastors into the Pastoral Office in furtherance of the work.

Therefore, I challenge our ministers to get focused and truly face the work that the Lord has called us to do for Him. He who has called us is faithful, and He will take good care of us in all ramifications. All we need to do is to serve Him in spirit and in truth.

V. OUR APPEAL:

8. To the Ministers of God in LAWNA Territory: As I have earlier stated, every one of you should see this new era as an opportunity to serve the Lord wholeheartedly. It is your performance NOT any other thing that will guaranty your place in the top cadre of administration.
9. To the Church Officers: My request is for your continual support and prayers for the expansion of the work of the Lord in the Territory. Be reminded too that your advice is not going to be ignored. Every one of you should be a strong pillar in your various Assemblies.



10. To the Youths: In line with the Seven Point Agenda of the National President of the Church, I direct all ministers and church officers to give our youths a chance to manifest the gifts that the Lord has deposited in them. At the Territorial level, we will continue to encourage, develop and give our youths in voice in this Vision.

My administration has been mandated by the Lord to raise youth ministers and this I will pursue vigorously. Let me call on our youths to return home. This Church belongs to you and you must not abandon your rightful home to become strangers in other churches.

11. To Widows of Deceased Ministers: You are the abandoned species of our Church. It is obvious that the level of care given to you, by policy is nothing compared to the sacrifices you have made, alongside with your late husbands in the ministry.

My wife, Deaconess E. E. Uyeh has expressed a great burden to see to the welfare of our late Ministers' Widows in the Vision. The policy on your welfare will be revisited to give her and her team, a framework to work with in putting a smile on the faces of our late ministers' widows. You too must not die in Jesus Name!

12. To our Children Evangelism Unit: We have you topmost in heart. By the grace of God your building in the Headquarters will soon be completed. You will all grow strong in Christ in Jesus Name.

13. To the Men and Women: I hereby call upon all of you to pray and keep praying fervently for the success of this administration. We have laid our hands on the plough and cannot afford to look back. The Lord will help us. We need your unfeigned support in every aspect.



VI. MY PRAYER FOR THE NATION: My prayer for Nigeria is that this Nation will rise again to assume her place as an egalitarian society in the comity of Nations in the world. I pray for a quick revival of the economy of the land. May the Lord make our leaders in this Nation not only to be religious but to be God-fearing.

VII. CONCLUSION: Let me conclude this address, again with an appreciation to the Lord and members of the LAWNA Executive and General Executive Council, for giving me this trust and opportunity to serve the Lord in this capacity. I, also thank all of you for finding time to attend this induction, despite the shortness of the notice. May the Lord lead you safely home in Jesus Name.

*Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria,
Long live The Apostolic Church Nigeria,
Long live The Apostolic Church Nigeria, LAWNA Territory.
Thank you for listening and God bless you.*

