



# Church Commissioners Holding Company Limited

## Church House



The journey of the Church House can be likened to the journey of the Israelites (the people of God) from Egypt to Canaan (the Land of Milk and Honey).

The idea and Vision of the Church House (House of the people of God) coalesced when the Church of Uganda House Limited was incorporated on 7th May 1971 to undertake business ventures for the Church of Uganda especially the Church House. In fact the Original name of the company was Church of Uganda Church House Limited but the Church before House was later deleted from the name of the company to fit in with the wider objects clauses of the company.

The Subscribers to the company were Z.C.K Mungonya, Chairman of House of Laity of Provincial Assembly and Erica Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi and Boga Zaire. Each subscribed to one share. The original share capital of the company was Shs 2,000/= divided into 100 ordinary shares of shs 20 each.

Subsequently the share capital of the company was increased in the latter part of the 1990s to Shs 20 billion divided into 200,000 shares of shs 100,000 each and congregations were invited to buy shares in the company through their Dioceses which are the shareholders of record being represented by the sitting Bishops

As is common knowledge, the years 1971 to 1979 were extremely difficult years for Uganda both from economic and political

view points. The Archbishops of the Church of Uganda during this time Erica Sabiti to 1974 and Janani Luwum (1974-1977) tried to raise money for the Church House but the general poverty of the average Ugandan, the very high inflation rates which eroded the value of whatever amounts were collected and the unavailability of goods including building materials on the market meant that nothing much could be accomplished during this time.

As is also common knowledge, Archbishop Janani Luwum was martyred in 1977. The Archbishopric of Silvanus Wani (1977-1983) was a period of mourning and despondency not only for the Church of Uganda but also for Uganda as a country.

When Yona Okoth (1983-1995) was installed Archbishop he re-awakened the Church to refocus on the goal of Church House. His strategy was to collect a cockerel also known as a cock, on average, from every member of his Church. He valued the cock at Shs 5,000/= and computed that with about 7 million Anglicans each on average giving Shs 5,000/= for Church House, the work would be done. He deployed the Bishops to implement his strategy. The strategy was not very successful perhaps because of the unstable times in the earlier part of his Archbishopric and possibly because of the effort of reconstruction every aspect of life in the latter part of his time in office.

Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo (1995-2004) of "The Road to Development is always under construction" hit the road running, to mobilize funds for construction of the Church House.

He personally visited all Dioceses, going down to Archdeaconries and Parishes in his mobilization drive. His efforts brought in a sizable amount of money but not anywhere near what was needed to start construction. He organized the breaking of the ground at Church House by His Excellency the President as Guest of Honour but still the collections were not



sufficient to start the work.

Archbishop Henry Luke Orombi (2004-2012) got convinced that the Church House project was too big to be implemented with collections from individual Christian. He sought out partners and financiers to help undertake the project.

The first most promising partnership was with the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) for either a BOT (Build – Operate –Transfer) or a BOOT(Build-Own-Operate Transfer) arrangement. These discussions fell through.

And then , through the person of the Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Kenya , the Church of Uganda was introduced to Equity Bank , and its indefatigable founder member and Group Chief Executive Officer, Dr. James Mwangi who worked out a financing arrangement with the Church of Uganda.

Construction of Church House commenced during late 2010, early 2011 some 40 years after the Church of Uganda House Limited, the Vehicle incorporated to construct Church House, was formed. The Church (people of God) of Uganda had arrived at mount Nebo and had sight of the Promised Land.

The journey of conquering Canaan has had its own ups and downs principal among which was the mobilization of the percentage of the Church's input into the construction. This lot has fallen on Archbishop Stanley Ntagali (2012 continuing) to accomplish. The building is done but the journey is not ended. That will happen when the Church balances its books with Equity Bank. And the Church is confident that we shall do it soon.

The government of the Republic of Uganda, in recognition of the stand by Archbishop Janani Luwum for Truth, Mercy, Justice and love, the cornerstones of the Christians faith decided to declare the day of his martyrdom a public holiday. Likewise, the Provincial Assembly of the Church of Uganda, at its meeting in 2016, decided to "baptize" Church House, Janani Luwum Church House.

We thank our leaders, the Archbishops and Bishops, the vision bearers for not letting the dream go. And Equity Bank for taking a chance on the Church. The government of Uganda for ushering in peace which encouraged the undertaking of such investments. And together, the members of the Church and the many well wishes, we say, like Samuel, **"EBENEZER. Thus far has the Lord helped us."**1 Samuel 7:12 ,NIV.