

WORLD MISSION CONGRESS
HELD AT NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA
(ANGLICAN COMMUNION) ST MATTHAIS HOUSE
FROM 1ST TO 3RD OCTOBER, 2025.

WELCOME CHARGE BY THE PRIMATE OF ALL NIGERIA

THEME: “ARISE AND SHINE” (ISAIAH 60:1)

Isaiah 60:1-3 – “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and His glory will be seen upon you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

Protocol:

Greetings,

Preamble:

We praise God for His faithfulness that brought all of you to this Maiden World Mission Congress of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). We are persuaded that God has raised and positioned the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to stir the Global Church for the Mission of God. When God brought us to this position, as the fifth Primate of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in March 2020, the Word of God came to us from Isaiah 52:7-10; declaring our primacy as the ‘Decade of the Reign of God’, with focus on Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship, Building Peace and Reconciliation, Discipline in the Church, building the Christian Family, Youth Mission and mobilizing the Global Church unto World evangelization.

It is with deep joy and gratitude to God that I welcome you to this World Mission Congress, where the Lord has gathered His servants—mission leaders, strategists, and labourers in His harvest field—from across the nations, to discern and engage the strategic issues confronting Christian missions in our time.

When God moved John R. Mott, a Methodist American and Joseph H. Oldham in 14–23 June 1910 to call for the first World Mission Conference in Edinburgh little did they know that the meeting of just 1200 delegates with no known African participants and few Asians and Latin America will contribute immensely to the shift in the Center of Global Christianity to the Global South (Africa, Latin America and Asia) today, with those not represented then in 1910 becoming the determinant of the direction and coloration of Christianity in the 21st century. We are daily confronted with the reality of these undeniable demographic, theological, and cultural changes in Christianity since the mid-20th century...Today, a “typical” Christian is now a young African or Latin American woman, not an European male as in the past. For example, the dynamics and momentum of global migration of the different faiths, especially the migration of young Christians from all across Africa and Asia to the Western world, are yet to be fully taken advantage of.

Like never before, we must look beyond our denominational walls and intentionally collaborate for the evangelization of the unreached. This means a paradigm shift from our old mindset and embracing a partnership model that is for Christ's Glory and the expansion of His Kingdom on earth, rather than our paternalistic structures. We are trusting God to move again in our lives and through this gathering to birth a revolutionary mission strategy that stirs the Global Church to prioritize collaboration, engaging and reaching the unreached with the Gospel of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. No one Church or Mission Organization has the capacity to reach the World, hence we must come together if we are to finish Christ's Great Commission mandate. (Matthew 28:19-21)

The prophetic charge of our Congress theme resounds for us today: “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and His glory will be seen upon you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising” (Isaiah 60:1–3).

This scripture is both an assurance and a commission. The mission of God (Missio Dei) is not optional—it is God’s heartbeat for the nations. The urgency of our calling is heightened in an age of global turbulence, wars, cultural shifts, moral decline, persecution, displacement, and the rise of ideologies contrary to the gospel of Christ. Yet, even in the midst of these challenges, the light of Christ shines ever brighter.

Isaiah acknowledges that “darkness shall cover the earth.” This represents lostness, brokenness, false religions, and cultural systems opposed to God. Brethren, we must not underestimate the reality of this darkness. The strength of our light is the Lord himself, who is the Light of the World. In Him we can shine, He is our source, not our skill or strategy, but the presence of God with us. Mission flows from the assurance that “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). We believe that when God’s people arise and shine, the nations respond—“Nations shall come to your light.” The Book of Revelation 7: 9-10 says,

After this, I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne,
and to the Lamb.”

This is a clarion call for the Global Church to arise from complacency, lethargy, and fear, and be renewed in vision and courage for the harvest, and shine with the light of the gospel of Christ in both word and deed, bringing hope to a world in despair and reclaim the missionary mandate of our Lord Jesus who declared, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19).

Brethren, as we deliberate in this Congress, let us wrestle with the pressing issues before us: how to disciple the nations amidst digital transformation; how

to reach unreached peoples and cities; how to mobilize the next generation for mission; how to sustain faithful witness in contexts of suffering and persecution; and how to build partnerships across the global Church for Kingdom advance. We must remember: the glory of mission is not ours—it belongs to the Lord of the harvest. Our task is obedience, for “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14).

Therefore, beloved co-labourers, let us arise with boldness, shine with Christ’s glory, and align our strategies to the unchanging mission of God. May the Lord empower us afresh by His Spirit, so that the world may know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, to the glory of God the Father. Come, let us work while it is day; for the night comes when no one can work (John 9:4). As Paul exhorts: “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you” (Ephesians 5:14). May we, be filled with the Spirit, lead with conviction and shine with the light of Christ until the nations come to His brightness.

Let us, therefore, renew our commitment to the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us stand firm in our faith, knowing that through Christ, we have the strength to overcome every obstacle and fulfill His command to make disciples of all nations. May our hearts be united in prayer and purpose as we embark on this journey together, trusting in God's providence and grace.

We welcome you to “St. Matthias House,” the headquarters of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

May you all have a good time in the presence of God in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thank you, and the LORD be with you.

The Most Rev'd Dr. Henry C. Ndukuba, MA BD, MA (Ed.), DD
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria