December 29, 2013

**Eight Adventists perish in Malawi lightning strike**

**'Scores' injured, local media reports**

[**http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/eight-adventists-perish-in-malawi-lightning-strike**](http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/eight-adventists-perish-in-malawi-lightning-strike)

Eight members of a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lilongwe, Malawi, were killed when lightning struck the building in which they were worshipping at the close of Sabbath, December 28, 2013. "Scores" of additional people were injured, according to local media reports. The lightning struck after a day of heavy rains in the capital city.

Conflicting reports exist as to the exact name of the congregation involved. Some reports indicate it was the Area 26 Seventh-day Adventist Church, while another report states it is the Chisiyo Seventh-day Adventist Church, described as "a branch of Area 36 Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lilongwe." (As often happens in developing news stories, some details may change as more information becomes available.)

"I am in Malawi now," Saustin Mfune, Associate Children's Ministries Director for the General Conference and a Malawian, wrote in an e-mail to *Adventist Review*. "Both Adventists and non-Adventists are enveloped in shock."

An eyewitness [told](http://www.nyasatimes.com/2013/12/28/lightening-kills-eight-sda-church-members-in-malawi-several-others-injured/) the *Nyasa Times* newspaper: “People were inside the church attending the service when the lightning struck. I first heard a loud burst which frightened almost everybody and few minutes later I just saw a stampede here.”

Details on the extent of other injuries are scant, although reports indicate several people were hospitalized.

Malawi, a landlocked country in southern Africa, has a population estimated at 16.4 million. A self-supporting Seventh-day Adventist missionary first entered the country, then known as Nyasaland, in 1893, and formal Adventist worked commenced in 1902. As of 2010, an estimated 353,000 Seventh-day Adventists worship in 1,313 congregations there.