

These Christians Are Rejoicing Amid Radical Islam's Deadly Persecution

Christians in Niger are regrouping and passionately worshipping after Islamic militants burned their churches to the ground earlier this month.

"Last night the church members met for prayer as the pastor, who lost everything, encouraged them by flashlight to not only stand strong, but to move forward and to know that this attack will grow the church," wrote the missionary couple to concerned partners, according to *Morning Star News*. "The room was dark on the outside but illuminated by the fire in the hearts of His people, even as stones were being thrown on the roof."

More than 70 churches were burned to the ground across the Niger capital of Zinder—killing at least 10 people—in protest of the way *Charlie Hebdo* depicted Muhammad on Jan. 16.

Evangelical Church in the Niger Republic President Rev. Mai'aki Kadaidai told *Morning Star News* the attacks extended beyond the capital city.

"This is the first time we are witnessing violence of this magnitude against the church and Christians," Kadaidai said. "In all, 68 churches were destroyed across five regions of Agadez, Damagaram, Diffa, Maradi, Zinder and in our country's capital city of Niamey. The Muslim rioters destroyed five of our [EERN] churches, destroyed four homes of our pastors and many of our members were adversely affected."

Despite persecution, the Christians are marching forward, declaring the gospel as they rebuild their communities.