

Dear Friends of PAACS:

As PAACS has synchronized to end of the calendar year graduations and matriculations, it adds even more excitement to this already busy time of year. This edition of The PAACS Bulletin introduces you to new residents and fellows, rejoices with Africa's newest surgeons and brings exciting news and updates about other things. Tenwek's graduation ceremony happened only 36 hours before this Bulletin was published and so that story will be in next month's edition (but you can watch it by [Clicking Here](#)).

We hope for 2 things – that 2021 will be kinder to us all and that you will celebrate a second thing on February 14 when PAACS revels in its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Rejoice with us that we begin this year with 24 new trainees!

Please join us on the upcoming webinar and for the worldwide day of prayer – the information is in the Announcements section.

The Editor



# PAACS PAACS Bulletin Bulletin

**Our present goal:**

Impacting 35  
countries on the  
African continent by  
2026.

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**Our vision:** PAACS trained surgeons living the gospel and ministering to the sick.

**Our Mission:** PAACS exists to train and disciple African surgeons to glorify God and to provide excellent, compassionate care to those most in need.

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Dear PAACS Family:

*Thank you! It may be two simple words, but it is meant with deep sincerity. I want to express my gratitude for your encouragement and prayers for the PAACS ministry and our work in Africa. I am humbled by the support of the PAACS family that blessed this ministry so abundantly that we exceeded our budgeted financial goal for December and through the end of 2020. Many of you and your families have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and I do not take your sacrificial giving for granted. May God bless you generously for giving to His ministry. Thank you also for your time, dedication, and prayers for PAACS. We realize that we cannot do all that we do for God's kingdom without you, your prayers, and your help.*

*PAACS is turning 25 on February 14th. Please join us in praising God for 25 years of faithfulness. God has remained trustworthy and constant in His leading and support to the PAACS ministry over these many years. He is the rock on which we stand, and the cornerstone on which this ministry is built. He faithfully prospered the dream that He entrusted to Dr. David Thompson 25 years ago. Over the years, PAACS has grown and flourished because of the Lord. The celebration of the Lord's goodness has begun, and our residents, faculty, leadership, and others have sent in their well wishes for this ministry. Please [click this link](#) to view one video celebrating PAACS 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

*Because of the Lord, in 2021 PAACS has:*

- *Surgical training programs in 8 countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia, Egypt, Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, and Tanzania);*
- *17 surgical training programs (10 general surgery, 3 orthopedic surgery, 1 head and neck surgery, 1 pediatric surgery, 1 cardiothoracic surgery, and a new neurosurgery program);*
- *105 surgical residents in training;*
- *Issued 117 graduate certificates;*
- *Graduates serving in 21 countries in Africa.*

*In celebration of our 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, PAACS will be releasing a book detailing the history and growth of this ministry called Training God's Surgeons, written by Dr. David Thompson and Dr. Bruce Steffes. This book will be available for purchase in February. More details will be sent in the near future. In addition, PAACS will hold a Global Day of Prayer on Monday, February 8th to PRAY for all of our programs, residents, faculty, graduates, and for the ministry. We also want to take time to thank God for blessing this ministry and using it to serve His children in Africa. Join us for this Global Day of Prayer and [click here to register](#) to participate.*

*PAACS will be holding a webinar on Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup> marking our 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. Dr. Keir Thelander, PAACS Executive Vice President, will be interviewing PAACS Founder, Dr. David Thompson and former CEO and CMO, Dr. Bruce Steffes. You are invited to participate. Please invite your friends and colleagues to learn more about PAACS by attending this webinar and register by [clicking here](#).*

*Thank you for being a part of the PAACS ministry. We look forward to seeing what God will do in PAACS during the next 25 years. Join us as we joyfully serve!*

*Blessings,*

*Susan Koshy, JD, MPH*

*Chief Executive Officer*

*Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS)*

## PAACS-GALMI'S 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION & WHITE COAT CEREMONY

By Yakoubou Sanoussi MD



The PAACS-Galmi program had the privilege of combining two ceremonies at the same time – the fifth graduation and the induction of our two new residents.

The regional Director of SIM Niger, Dr. Hsun Chow, opened the ceremony on 9 January with a word of prayer and thanked God for the opportunity to run a PAACS training program in Galmi.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anne-Sophie Rowcroft was delighted with the collaboration between PAACS and Galmi Hospital. She also highlighted the contribution of the PAACS program to the Hospital's bigger vision and mission.

Dr. Katherine Shafer, Assistant PD was excited that our program is now celebrating its fifth graduation and that all our trainees are serving or will soon start serving in Africa. This year's graduate, Dr. Andrew John will return to his own town in Burundi.

The Hospital Deputy Director, Pastor Samuila Yamba shared from Eph 5 :15-17 and encouraged us to discern God's will and plans in our lives. As we plan, God's will should be in the center. Andrew wanted to become a Christian surgeon, and God guided him all the way through 5 years.

For Dr. Yakoubou Sanoussi, the Program Director, Dr. Andrew John is a living example of success through faith, hard work and sense of purpose. The five years of training were not easy, but with faith and perseverance, he was able to finish. Andrew loves his patients and is always ready to share the Good News.





Andrew and PACCS Galmi residents

In his address to friends and family, the graduate praised God for allowing him to go through the PAACS residency training program. He appreciated the PAACS leadership, his teachers and the Hospital leadership for their support until the end his training. He forgot no one, including the local staff who took care of his two young daughters.

We then proceeded with the induction ceremony for the two new residents immediately. Dr Aminat Fagbenro and Dr Louisa Nneka, both from Nigeria. The induction ceremony included the staff washing the feet of the new residents and presentation of white coats to the residents.



Caption: Aminat Fagbenro & Louisa Nneka don their white coats, assisted by Dr. Hummel & Dr. Shafer

Dr. Sanoussi reminded those gathered of the origin of the washing of feet from Jesus' example in John 13, explaining the significance which is a servant leadership. As Jesus asked his disciples to serve one another, Sanoussi asked the new residents to do the same for their fellow residents and their patients. He also clarified

that this is symbolic and there are other ways of washing other people's feet through compassionate care, words of encouragement and concern for one another.

Congratulations to Galmi Hospital's 5<sup>th</sup> PAACS graduate, Andrew John, and to new PAACS residents, Louisa and Aminat! May God bless you as you seek to follow him and serve him through the profession of surgery.

## INTRODUCING NEW RESIDENTS

For the new intake of residents this month of January 2021, PAACS accepted more residents than ever before with 24 trainees starting in our (now) 17 programs (10 general surgery, 3 orthopedics, 1 head and neck, 1 pediatric surgery, 1 cardiothoracic and 1 neurosurgery). We had received over 260 applications for these slots and have already received over 60 applications the next intake in January, 2022! These 24 young trainees come from 8 different countries (Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, and Tanzania). We are excited to introduce these newest members of the PAACS family to you and request that you uphold them in prayer!

### Arusha Lutheran Medical Center, Tanzania



My name is **Dr Baptist Augustino Matonya**, a new PAACS resident at ALMC, before joining PAACS I had worked as a registrar in surgical department for 5 consecutive years in two different hospitals at Nkinga Hospital 3 years and at Malolo hospital 2 years at Tabora region in Tanzania.

I was born on 1987 in Dodoma, The Capital City of Tanzania, after completing my secondary education I went to Medical school at the College of Healthy Sciences in the University of Dodoma then I did my one-year Internship at Nkinga Hospital.

I am the youngest, having two sisters and two brothers, My Father and Mother passed away in 2002 and 2018 respectively. Currently I am married to Sara and we have two children a son and a daughter.

I feel privileged to be one of the residents at ALMC PAACS program, Surgery has always been in my heart, I love it and through PAACS I believe after completion of this program I will be among of the best surgeons to serve the people of God because PAACS is well organized, the Faculty, residents and other ALMC Staffs work in a team manner without discrimination.

PAACS program is really addressing the scarcity of surgeons in Africa as they are outweighed to the number patients that need surgery. I will not forget the grace, happiness and joyfulness that God granted me the day I did my interview and became one of the highly ranked to join PAACS program at ALMC and even more so the stipend that I will be receiving during my studies. I pray to God that this program to continue serving God through supporting physicians to become surgeons who will serve the sick.

I am **Dr. James Justin James**. I am delighted to become a new PAACS resident at Arusha Lutheran Medical Center. I was born on 1992 in Arusha, Tanzania and raised here as a Christian. I am the first born in the family of two children. I attained my primary, secondary and advanced secondary education in Arusha before I joined medical school between years 2012 and





2017 at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College. In 2018 I completed my 1-year internship at Nkinga referral hospital. I later worked at Arusha Lutheran medical center as medical officer (registrar) under surgical department, orthopedics unit where I really enjoyed and learnt a lot in the surgical field.

I believe that PAACS is a right place for me to pursue my medical career in surgery. It is always my dream to become a surgeon. I believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and savior, and his works as a healer and comforter.

I send my special thanks to all of PAACS family for the academic and spiritual support.

## Bongolo Hospital, Gabon

Dr. Armah Toko Wilson, is Bongolo Hospital's newest resident. He was born in Firestone, Liberia. He obtained a BS Degree in Biology from The University of Liberia in 2010 and attended The Medical School of Nanchang University in Jiangxi, China, graduating in 2017. Thereafter, he completed an internship year at several different hospitals in Liberia and then worked as a medical officer at Redemption Hospital in Monrovia. He and his wife, Jestina Salay Wilson, have been married for 5 years and they have 2 daughters. He hopes to return to Liberia to serve as a surgeon after completing residency.



## SIM-Galmi, Niger



I am **Aminat Abiola Fagbenro**. I am from the Yoruba in Ibadan, Oyo state, Southwest part of Nigeria. I had Medical training at Benue State University College of Health Sciences, Makurdi, Benue State, North Central region of Nigeria. I worked at Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and later moved to Bingham University Teaching Hospital, Jos, Plateau State.

I was born into a mixed religion, polygamous family and grew up as a Muslim but I was found by the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who gave purpose and meaning to my life.

I choose to be a Surgeon because I want to be used of God to answer the imbalance in the Christian Surgical care and I choose to train with PAACS

because its focus on training me not just to be a surgeon in Africa but a Christian surgeon who will be well equipped to care for surgical need and preserve the Whole Man - Spirit, Soul and Body – blameless 'til the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a Christian surgeon, I hope to practice where there is need to make Christian disciples and meet surgical need.

**Dr Louisa Nneka Nwachukwu** is the first of five children, born into the family of Mr. and Mrs. Christian Nwachukwu. She hails from Amuvi village in Arochukwu Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria. She was born and brought up in Maiduguri, Borno State where her parents resided at that time. She graduated from the University of Jos Medical School, Plateau State where she obtained her MBBS Certificate. Following that, she proceeded to Ahmad Sani Yarima Bakura Specialist Hospital, Gusau, Zamfara State for her Housemanship training. Her National Youth Service



Corps was in the same state at the Department of State Services Command.

She had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ during her junior secondary school years, precisely in the year 2002, during a fellowship of Christian students. God's grace has kept her since then, and she has been growing in faith. Dr Louisa has a great passion for missions. She has been part of several missions and medical outreaches in the past.

She loves PAACS program for several reasons. One of such reasons is that PAACS program will give her the opportunity to be trained as a Christian surgeon who will not only know how to care for the body but also the spirit and soul of a man. She believes that PAACS program will usher her into a higher level of calling to the service of God and humanity via missions round the world.



### **Harpur Memorial Hospital, Egypt**

**Dr. George Shoukry** was born on August 23, 1993 in Shbeen El Koum, Menofia, Egypt. He attended Medical School at Cairo University from 2011-2017 and graduated with honors in December 2017. During his Internship year (March 2018-March 2019) he developed a liking for surgery.

In January 2019, two PAACS Alumni, Drs. Amgad Amir and Nayer Naiem started working at Harpur Sadat Hospital. George became their Intern and began helping them in surgery and clinics. Through them, he learned about PAACS at Harpur Menouf.

He came to inquire about PAACS in April 2019. We felt that he was a good candidate but he told us that he was supposed to be drafted into the army by Nov 2019. We told him to come see us after he was discharged from the army. Meanwhile as George was being examined by the Army Medics, they decided to give him a Medical discharge from the army in June 2020, though he has never had any symptoms and has been well all his life. At that point in time he wanted to join PAACS but was told that he had to wait till January 2021 for the next available spot.

On April 12, 2018; he married Marina, his childhood sweetheart. Marina is a medical doctor and is starting her residency in Radiology at Menouf General Hospital. They were blessed by the birth of their daughter Holly who was born on Sep 1, 2019.

We are delighted to welcome George, as a first-year resident into the PAACS-Harpur program effective January 11, 2021

### **AIC-Kijabe Hospital, Kenya**

**Jeremiah Philbert Nangale** is a first -year orthopedic resident. He is single and hails from Tanzania. His hobbies are travelling and wildlife photography. He sees PAACS as a way to both develop his career and grow spiritually.



**Anita Kawira Gitundu** is an orthopedic resident from Kenya. She is also single. Her hobbies include listening to music, watching movies and making new friends. Kijabe has offered her an opportunity to train and serve God.



**Leahcaren Oundo** is a general surgery resident from Kenya. As is true of all the incoming residents this year, she is also single. Her hobbies are swimming and reading. She is passionate about surgery and wants to serve in a low-resource area after residency. She joined PAACS to grow both spiritually and academically.

**Vallery Ilusa Logedi** is a GS resident who is also from Kenya and Single. She loves to listen to music, read and cook. She has always wanted to do surgery and PAACS has offered her an excellent opportunity that incorporates training and the chance to grow in her faith.



## AIC-Litein, Kenya

**Dr. Peter Ouma Opondo**, the third resident at Litein Hospital in Kenya, writes, “I am 28 years old born-again Christian currently privileged to be a first-year resident in the department of General Surgery at AIC Litein Mission hospital. I completed my internship in 2009 and was serving in a local facility as a Medical officer prior to this. I thank God for His guidance upon my life, leading me to where I am. For the past eleven years, I have been raised by a single mom after losing my Dad to leukemia. God has truly been my Father. Despite the challenges of life, He was there with me through it all. I am grateful for the ultimate opportunity He has granted me to be trained in order to be of help to my community wherever He sends me. Having been born again during my earlier years, the journey of salvation has been made possible by His grace. I am the major breadwinner of my family comprising of my mom and four siblings. By God’s divine providence, we have been able to get all we need. I have been surrounded by Godly friends, mentors, and teachers who have played a vital role in shaping me into who God wants me to be. I look forward to five years of growing in the surgical field and becoming the doctor that my patients need. Additionally, getting to know God more is my great desire as I await His day. To God be the glory.”





## Malamulo Adventist Hospital, Malawi



**Sharon S Bonya** is single and 26 years of age. Sharon states she chose to join the PAACS program mainly because it is Christian based. Being in a Christian institution during this training is vital for her as it will help keep her faith through all the challenges that come with training.

Sharon grew up in a Christian home so God was always essential in her life and still is. She was baptized into the SDA church at a young age and hasn't regretted her decision. God keeps showing His love for to her in different aspects of her life

Upon completion of her training Sharon envisions staying and serving at any Adventist hospital in Malawi or alternatively at any other denominational hospital in need

**Joseph Newton Mkandawire** is 29 years of age and is married to Patience Mkandawire, with a 1-year-old daughter Hadassah Kaso Mkandawire.

His denomination is the Christian Reformed Protestant. He wanted to study surgery with PAACS for three main reasons: Firstly, ever since, he fully understood the gospel and how important the Message of Salvation is for many to hear, he has made it an important component of his work. This has resulted in him wanting to study and practice while equally emphasizing the role of salvation through Jesus Christ. PAACS allows him to practice medicine and serve the Lord without worrying that his faith in Jesus will offend any of his superiors or result in his expulsion from the training or workplace. Secondly, the PAACS program covers his training fees, an issue of great concern. Lastly, the rural setting of the PAACS program will allow him to focus on studies, help the needy and become part of a community that would greatly benefit from his clinical and leadership contribution. Joseph hopes to serve at a mission hospital in Malawi upon completion of his training.



## Mbingo Baptist Hospital, Cameroon

I, **Paul SHU**, am from a Christian home where religion was routine until I received a clear revelation from God about hell after my mother preached to me. That is how I gave my life to Christ and made living for God my way of life. After I completed my advanced levels, medicine was not my wish. But on the other hand, being a missionary was the call of God for my life. After prayer and discussing with my spiritual authorities, it became clear to me that meeting the practical (physical and biological) needs of individuals was a good means to also have an opportunity to reach them with their

spiritual needs. With this in mind, I studied and passed the entrance exam into the Faculty of Health Sciences University of Buea to study medicine. While there, I participated actively in our church activities in the health sector which gave me the opportunity to travel to interior villages of Cameroon such as Nomedjoh where we

have the Barka Pygmies, a community with no potable water, electricity, or accessible roads. In one of such health campaigns, we had many surgical consultations but none of us present could perform surgery. Consequently, our ministry to this needy community was limited. This experience was my first prompting to become a surgeon. After graduation, out of obedience to God I decided to work with the Cameroon Baptist Convention, precisely in Banso (one of the heated zones in the current crisis in our nation). There I met a PAACS graduate, Dr. Ben Malikidogo, whose surgical skills were over the charts and his patience and humility in service was overboard. This was different from the picture I had seen in medical school and other hospitals where surgeons are arrogant and demeaning. I approached him and decided I wanted to be like him. I read more about PAACS, the vision, mission and various activities, which made me more enthusiastic about being part of such community where I am trained and disciplined. I am passionate about working in communities with limited access to healthcare such as our setting of ongoing crisis. This led me to work in other inland communities like Yokadouma, Batibo, Nziou amongst others. I believe I am called to be a cardiothoracic surgeon. The training is tough and demanding. But I am counting on God Who has started the good work to bring it to completion. All Glory to Him!!!



I am **TANYI John Tanyi** born in Limbe, a town in the South West Region of Cameroon. I completed medical training from the Faculty of Health Sciences University of Buea, Cameroon, in 2019. In 2016, I married my lovely wife, Elisabeth Tanyi, who works in a private mission institution as Monitory & Evaluation project analyst. We are blessed with a son, Josiah Tanyi, and expecting another baby by March.

On a faithful Friday evening of 1998 after the evangelistic message by Professor Z.T. FOMUM, I acknowledge I was a wretched sinner and that only Jesus could guarantee me freedom from the bondage of my sins and liberate me totally. I confessed my sins to Jesus, repented sincerely and begged Him to forgive me. I was filled with great joy knowing that JESUS had forgiven me.

Upon graduation from medical school, I was posted to a rural enclaved underprivileged village in SW Cameroon called Konye. Access to health care was very difficult and expensive for the average villager. Worse still, access to surgery was almost impossible. It was in this setting that the call of God for my life to become a surgeon was clearly revealed. Surgical training in PAACS where I will be professionally trained and disciplined in good Christian values is the means by which I believe God will fulfill His call on my life to become a surgeon.

I am **N. Marius Jordan TCHINDE**. I originate from the grassfield part of the Republic of Cameroon. I am the third child in a family of six children. I grew in one of the slums of the capital city, Yaoundé where most of the youth are destined to failure in their lives. The Lord was gracious with me; He made me encounter the right people who spurred my growth toward hard work and success. Through this period, my Christian life was very fragile and I really did not understand what it meant to be a born again until the year 2012 when the Lord visited me and transformed my life completely. This was followed by my baptism that same year.

After graduating from the medical school (University of Buea) in 2018, I sought specialization where a physician could be God fearing and offer



compassionate care to patients. Through the guidance of the Lord, I got to know about PAACS. The training offered in PAACS embodies all that I ever dreamt to have as setting for training. I pray that this training program will make me an ever-true disciple of Christ and also strengthen my relationship with Him.

## Soddo-CURE Orthopedics, Ethiopia



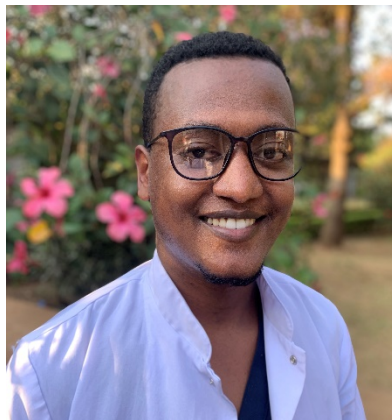
**Dr Ebsa Bekako** is the first-year orthopedic resident entering the MCS program at Soddo/CURE in Ethiopia

He writes, “I was raised in a happy Christian family in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. My wife, Feven, and I have two young beautiful daughters, Marsil and Siheryan. I wanted to become a PAACS resident because the program would prepare me to become an excellent surgeon, as well as a minister of the Lord. In Ethiopia, there is an extreme shortage of orthopedic surgeons and I want to reach many patients in need.

“I am grateful to the PAACS family and fellow residents. Please pray for God’s strength and empowering me as a Christian surgeon.”

## Soddo General Surgery, Ethiopia

**Dr. Yohannes Debebe** [General Surgery] joins the PAACS-Soddo program from Addis Ababa where he graduated with distinction from Saint Paul’s Millennium Medical College. Yohannes was raised in a home that followed Christ and is the second of three brothers. As a child, he wanted to become an astronomer but there was no path in his country to pursue this endeavor so he chose medicine. It was not until medical school that he witnessed the power of loving people through caring for them. He has been a leader amongst his peers in his church from a young age and was the fellowship leader during medical school. During university, there was a season of doubt but the Lord brought him through and gave him a passion for apologetics. As he stated in his application essay, “People do this and that, go here and there; but I see I understand the meaning of living, if there is any, as letting God manifest His only Son through my existence.” After medical school, he wanted to gain surgical training as he plans to go to the eastern part of Ethiopia to reach challenging people groups and provide surgical care in areas where nearly none exists. He is a true missionary at heart. Dr. Yohannes would never say it but he is an exceptionally talented and hard-working person. We look forward to watching him grow into a surgeon that brings glory to the Lord.



**Dr. Natnael Temesgen** [General Surgery] is also from Addis Ababa where he graduated from Myungsung Medical College where he received the award of “Best Clinical Trainee of 2019”. Natnael is the oldest of four children and was raised in a Christian home. He decided to pursue medicine through his family’s many experiences with hospitals. Having a



younger sister with Down's Syndrome, there were repeated hospital admissions with little information provided to his family. This changed one day when a doctor sat them down and explained everything: What was happening, what to expect, and answered their questions. It was that day that Natnael "vowed to myself and God that I will be like that doctor and heal the patient and the family too, to heal not just the physical disease but also the spiritual and emotional pain." It was through working with two previous PAACS graduates that Dr. Natnael saw an example of both excellent surgeons and true disciples of Christ. He hails from humble origins and hopes to use his training through PAACS to help those most in need in Ethiopia. Dr. Natnael is a truly remarkable man and we expect the Lord to use his life experience, humble heart and sharp mind to make a substantial impact in the surgical landscape and kingdom of God for Ethiopia.

## Tenwek Hospital – Kenya



**Justus Lando** is the latest trainee in the cardiothoracic surgery program. A graduate of Tenwek-PAACS program the end of 2019, he has been serving on the general surgery faculty at Tenwek since that time.

Dr. **Emmanuel Wafula** joins the PAACS Neurosurgery program as an FCS 2<sup>nd</sup> year resident, having done his MCS years at Tenwek and then spent the last year full-time on the neurosurgery service. Emmanuel was born in western Kenya though grew up in Lamu on the coast and later in Taita Taveta. He is married to Daphine and they have one-year old daughter, Ivanna.



Dr. **Ivy Barasa** joins the PAACS Neurosurgery program as its first official resident starting at the MCS level. She comes to Tenwek from Nairobi, having done her medical officer internship at Tenwek in 2019.

I am **Ian Simel**. I believe all things are possible through Christ. As a Christian, God has led me through different seasons of life. I have desired to be a surgeon from my first year of medical school. The desire to



make a difference in society through quality health care is my goal. Be it in the ward, theatre, or clinic. I desire to represent Christ in everything I do.

God led me to Tenwek initially as a student, for my elective term, then as an intern. In that period, I was able to interact with the missionaries and PAACS residents at Tenwek Hospital. I noted their devotion to the Lord, compassionate care to patients, and excellent surgical skills and knowledge. My family and other Christian doctors encouraged me to apply to join the program. The program has a godly and missional emphasis on transforming surgical care in Africa, which aligns with my goal of making a difference.

I feel very privileged to be part of the PAACS program at Tenwek. I hope to grow into the surgeon the Lord wants me to be.

My name is **Oscar Rotich**. I was born and raised in Olenguruone, one huge underserved and less fortunate region in Kenya in terms of surgical care where the need is huge.

God has been intentional with my life. I went to Tenwek High school where I was a first aider and thus had multiple encounters with doctors from Tenwek Hospital, including surgical teams, this motivated me to work hard in school, and inspired me to one day become a surgeon.

God answered my prayer; after medical school I went to Tenwek Hospital as an intern and during my 1 year of internship, I saw how PAACS residents were being trained both to follow and serve Jesus Christ while being trained in surgical skills and knowledge, and that reinforced my desire to be a surgeon. Being able to pray for a patient and tell them about the love of Jesus Christ while providing surgical care is not easy to come by; but PAACS residency provides this opportunity.

I hope to, after completion of my training, go back to where I was raised and share the Good News about Jesus Christ while providing surgical care. I trust God to give me strength and wisdom to pursue this residency program and I thank PAACS for this opportunity.



## THE NEW YEAR IN ARUSHA-PAACS

By Wendy Willmore

There is a song that the Dutch Reformed sing (by Ken Medema) about going to church: “Out of Need and Out of Custom, We have Gathered Here Again.” Maybe that best describes the New Year for us at Arusha PAACS. As usual, we began the New Year with Orientation week for junior residents (we include 2<sup>nd</sup> years in case they were asleep the 1<sup>st</sup> time around) with a week of hands-on and lecture sessions designed to ensure that they have adequate clinical skills for the safe care of surgical patients on call. We read the resident policy manual together and discuss it to ensure that we are starting with the best understanding of how we ought to work together. Then we invite outsiders to join us as we prepare ourselves spiritually for the New Year.

On the first Wednesday of each New Year, Arusha PAACS takes over the daily chapel service to induct new residents. This year, the assistant Program Director, Dr. Emmanuel Lema, gave us the charge for the New Year challenging us about being the prayerful salt of the earth and considering the truth of Matthew 25:40 every day in our practice. Co-Program Director, Dr. Frank Madinda, reminded us about the history of how Halsted brought the barber surgeons into fellowship with the gift of white coats, and we had the joy of robing our new residents with their PAACS’ crested coats. Our education coordinator, Dr. Benson Lyimo, led all of

the clinical staff in PAACS surgeon's prayer. Faculty member, Dr. Catherine Mung'ong'o, read us selections from John 13. Co-Program Director, Dr. Wendy Willmore, commented on the urgency that Jesus' displayed in making sure that the disciples should understand this important lesson before He went to the cross, before we got on with obeying (John 13:14). We prayed for our new residents before final words from faculty and Director of Clinical Services, Dr. Geoff Kibira.

On Sunday afternoon, we brought our families together at my house for our short spiritual retreat. We ate wonderful food, watched our children play together and, led by Dr. Catherine, discussed how love changes all our relationships. Then, we ate portions of Dr. Minyali's wedding cake and ended as we always do, as Our Lord taught us: "Baba Yetu uliye mbinguni, Jina lako litukuzwe.....kwa kuwa ufalme ni wako, na nguvu na utukufu pasipo ya mwisho, Amen." So, until out of need and out of custom, we gather again....



Baptist Matonya and Dickla Mollel practice their skills with a Doppler ultrasound during the surgical skills week.



Reception at Dr. Willmore's home for residents, families and faculty.

## AIC-KIJABE HOSPITAL WHITE COAT CEREMONY

By Beryl Akinyi Ooro

The AIC Kijabe Hospital White Coat Ceremony was held on 25 January to welcome 4 new residents: Jeremiah Nangale, Anita Kawira, Vallery Logedi, and Leahcaren Oundo. For the first time, the women outnumber the men in the incoming class.

It started with a word of prayer and address of welcome, followed by faculty members Dr. Jack Barasa, Joseph Theuri and Joy Robinson. They emphasized that we are lifelong learners. In addition to academics and surgical skills, we must learn to be leaders and teachers, too.

The chief residents, Domingo Gomez and Eva Lang'at, informed them that PAACS is a family. They were advised to get at least one or 2 residents for accountability and to share their troubles. Everyone, especially the 2<sup>nd</sup> year residents, are very happy to have 1<sup>st</sup> year residents on the team (less workload and someone new to run around chasing labs!).

The Guest speaker was Dr. Keir Thelander, PAACS's executive vice president. He challenged them by saying that the Lord brought them here at this specific time for a purpose; it's not by accident. There is a lot to learn



but one cannot do it by oneself. It needs a team approach in order to succeed. He emphasized the need to develop internal and external discipline. Internal discipline comes from within, requiring a sound mind. One has to start small and keep the right form. Once attained, one's thoughts become trustworthy and it is evident through the fruits that one bears. It requires endurance. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tim 1:7

External discipline comes in the form of accountability. It may not be pleasant at the time but it is for the residents' good. There is always lots of entanglement on the way but they should keep their eyes on Jesus and the ultimate goal. Heb 12: 1-11.

The new residents were presented with Schwartz's textbook of surgery and they were charged to read it. The ladies received a PAACS necklace; the gentleman received a necktie. All were given PAACS hats, pens and badges.



They breakfasted together and later met for an evening meal together after work.

Please pray for the residents and the PAACS program at AIC-Kijabe!

## BONGOLO WHITE COAT CEREMONY

By Jen O'Connor

The Bongolo-PAACS general surgery residency program held a white coat ceremony for its newest surgery resident, Dr. Armah Toko Wilson, on January 6th during the hospital's morning devotions. He received a new white coat, the newest copy of Schwartz textbook of surgery, and prayer.

Please pray for Dr. Wilson and his family as they adjust to life in the jungle at Bongolo Hospital and face the rigors of residency training. We look with hopeful anticipation towards the impact he and his wife will make for Jesus.



Bongolo faculty and residents welcome their newest member.



## NEWS SHORTS:



**Homegoing of Professor Adisa:** Professor Adeyinka (Adisco) Charles Adisa was born in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, on January 5, 1965 and passed on December 28, 2020 after several months of illness. He graduated from Nigeria's premier medical school, The College of Medicine, University of Ibadan in 1988, where he also spent time for surgical training. Professor Adisa completed his surgical training at University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Enugu in 1995. His schooling was marked by many honors and awards, culminating in the best graduating surgeon at the Finals of the West African College of Surgeons Examinations. Adisa married Chizoba and they have 2 children. Inquiries were made on behalf of Professor Adisa to train at Howard University in the USA, to which then Dr. Adisa asked, "If all the good doctors leave Nigeria, who will take care of the poor, the indigent and the downtrodden?" In 2007, Adisa became a full

professor. During his career he held many positions, including Dean of Clinical Medicine, Abia Campus; Chairman of the West African College of Surgeons Surgical Outreach Committee and National President, Nigeria Christian Graduate Fellowship.

Born of Muslim parents, one of his colleagues, Kaiser Reni Tarafdar, spoke about his conversion, "I remember when you became a Christian, you were so elated and had that glow of purity; there was always something special about you and your sublime smile spoke of a gentleness rarely seen."

Professor Adisa was a man of many talents, writer, farmer, and academic researcher. Professor Adisa was first exposed to PAACS in 2007 at the Bethune Round Table in Toronto. He continued to follow PAACS throughout the ensuing decade. In 2017 Professor Adisa became the African Representative for PAACS and served faithfully with keen and astute input. PAACS appreciates Professor Adisa's contributions to PAACS, Global Surgery, Surgery in Nigeria and to the community of believers in Nigeria. May the Lord bless and protect his wife Chizoba and his 2 children.



**New Resident Housing at Soddo –** Laura Love, serving at Soddo Christian Hospital in Ethiopia, writes:

From the hospital, walk straight down the sidewalk past the outpatient department and radiology building, through the metal gate, and stop at the three-story building on your right. Walk up the stairs around lunchtime, and you're sure to smell delicious food simmering, hear talking and laughing, and see PAACS residents gathered around a large plate of injera (Ethiopian flatbread) topped with spicy lentils, greens, or vegetables.

When Soddo Christian Hospital (SCH) and PAACS agreed to start a training program here, part of the agreement was that SCH would provide housing for the residents. Seven years ago, a two-story building consisting of seven apartments was built, which last year reached its capacity housing five general surgery residents and three orthopedic surgery residents. As such, work began around one year ago to add a third floor of apartments to the existing building--apartments which were completed on Christmas Day.





Providing housing could sound like a cold and sterile task--making inventory lists, dealing with maintenance and repairs, etc. Those things do exist, but the PAACS building is so much more than that. It is a living, vibrant community of Ethiopian doctors who love the Lord Jesus Christ and want to use their lives and gifts in service to Him. Providing this housing is so much more than handing over the keys to an apartment--it is handing over the opportunity to enter the resident and missionary community at SCH, the opportunity to be close to the hospital and respond more quickly to patients, the opportunity to grow closer to their co-residents both professionally and personally.

Even with the third-floor apartments completed, the PAACS building again reached capacity when the new class of interns moved in on January 1. As they walk to the hospital each day, they walk past the new foundation being poured for a second PAACS building. This building will allow our training programs to operate at full capacity in the coming years, training more surgeons to serve in Jesus's name. Over half of the \$450,000 needed to build this building has been raised, and we trust that God will provide the finances to house these men and women who will care for the least of these in Ethiopia. If you're interested in contributing to this building fund, visit [www.soddo.org](http://www.soddo.org) for more information.



**COSECSA MCS Make-Up Exam:** On December 28, five COSECSA residents who were Covid-positive at the time of the MCS Exam on December 5 and 6 were allowed to take a completely internet-based make-up exam. Two of the five were PAACS residents. Four of the twelve examiners were active PAACS faculty (Carl Haisch, Tim Nunn, Agneta Odera and Michael Mwachiro). Bruce Steffes was again the chief examiner. John Tarpley, presently working in Botswana, also participated in the exams.

The addition of the five examinees affected the results reported last month. These are the updated figures. Eighteen AACS residents took the MCS exam and all but two passed. The passage rate for PAACS candidates was 88.8%. The overall passage rate for all other COSECSA residents was 85.8% (79/92).

**COSECSA FCS Exams:** This year, 15 general surgery graduates, 1 pediatric surgeon, 1 cardiothoracic surgeon and 4 orthopedic surgeons sat the FCS exam. Because of the COVID19 pandemic, the usual format was changed to a combination of on-site local and offsite video examiners. On the fourth weekend of January, the general surgery exams were held in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia. The Ethiopian exam had one PAACS resident who trained in Malawi and one from Cameroon, both of whom were unable to get visas in their originally assigned countries. Those two wrote the exam in Ethiopia. Ten of the twenty candidates being examined in Kenya were from PAACS programs and include the programs in Kenya, Niger and Gabon. Three of the 13 being examined in Zambia were from PAACS programs in Tanzania and Malawi. The passage rate for 86.7% for all COSECSA and PAACS residents. The individual results will not be announced until after the publication date of the newsletter.

The four orthopedic residents from Kijabe and Tenwek took their exams in Kenya, joining 36 others. They had a 100% passage rate compared to 83% for the other COSECSA residents. The overall passage rate was 85%.

Arega Fekadu Leta was the first PAACS fellow to sit the newly formulated cardiothoracic fellowship exam and therefore the first COSECSA fellow in that specialty. Alain Jules Ndibanje sat the pediatric surgery examination in mid-December and also passed.

Russ White, Bruce Steffes, Keir Thelander, Michael Mwachiro, Elijah Mwaura, Kamene "Mesh" Mwanzia, Agneta Odera, Jack Barasa, Beryl Akinyi Ooro, Seno Saruni, Wairimu Mugambi, Damaris Mbalu, Tim Love and Zach O'Connor are all PAACS personnel who took part in the on-site examinations (the last two in Ethiopia). Carl Haisch, Krista Kaups, Adrian Park, John Mellinger, John Tarpley were all PAACS-related examiners who took place in the video examinations. Surafel Mulatu (now a surgical trainer at Yekatit 12 Hospital in Addis Ababa) was an observer of the Ethiopian exams (in person) and Andrea and Robert Parker were video observers.

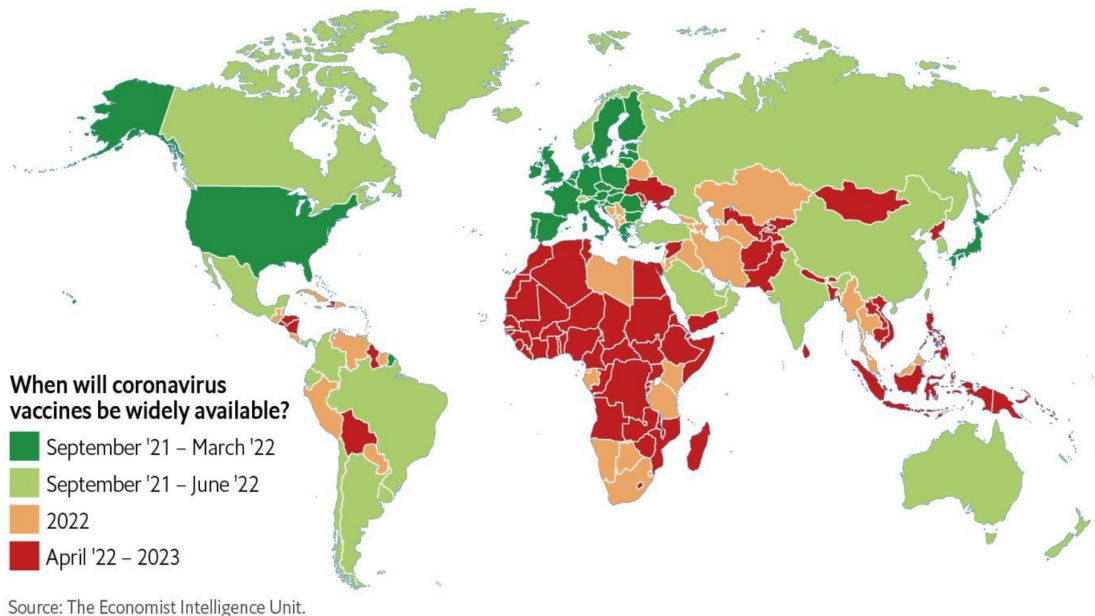
**Article Published:** An article entitled "Establishment of an endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) program in rural Kenya: a review of patient and trainee outcomes" authored by Michael Mwachiro, Nyail Chol, Ian Simel, Justus Lando, David Ngetich, Robert Parker, Philip Tanner, John Mellinger, Jeffrey Hallett, Mark Topazian, and Stephen Burgert was published in the journal "Surgical Endoscopy" on January 4.

The article concluded, "An ERCP service can be successfully developed at a rural African hospital, with acceptable success and adverse event rates. Biliary obstruction due to stones or tumors are the most common findings. While a previously trained endoscopist should initiate and champion the service, staff endoscopists can be successfully trained despite limited case volumes."

This is encouraging news for the pending start of a PAACS surgical endoscopy training program at Tenwek Hospital.



### Rich countries will get access to coronavirus vaccines earlier than others




**What We Are Facing with COVID 19:** The above infographic was shared with us and is about the slow worldwide rollout of vaccination and is very sobering if true. Just looking at the US, we are behind these projections already so perhaps it will actually be worse than this. We need to continue to pray, tighten our belts and support our partners in Africa.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:


# PAACS Live

## CELEBRATE PAACS' 25th BIRTHDAY




Join us for this special 35-minute webinar to commemorate 25 years of PAACS and God's faithfulness to this ministry.

Please invite others to join this special event to share the work and impact of this ministry since 1996.





with Dr. Keir Thelander  
PAACS Executive Vice President



PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS

US/Canada: Thursday, February 11, 2021  
8:00 PM ET | 7:00 PM CT | 6:00 PM MT | 5:00 PM PT

**Special Interviews with:**  
*Dr. David Thompson and Dr. Bruce Steffes*



Dr. Thompson is the founder of PAACS, and Dr. Steffes is the former CEO and CMO of PAACS. They will be available during the webinar to answer questions about this ministry.

**PLEASE SHARE**



- **Webinar Celebrating PAACS's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** PAACS' is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday this month with a live 35-minute webinar on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 8PM ET / 7PM CT / 5PM PT to commemorate all that God has done over these past 25 years.

Dr. Keir Thelander, PAACS Executive Vice President, will be hosting the webinar, and he will be presenting a special interview with Dr. David Thompson, the founder of PAACS, and Dr. Bruce Steffes, former CEO and CMO of PAACS. Drs. Thompson and Steffes will be available on the webinar to answer questions from participants. Their perspective on the past, present, and future of PAACS will be both informative and inspiring.

The entire PAACS family is encouraged and welcome to register for this live Zoom event and to share it with others who may be interested in learning more about PAACS. The 35-minute webinar will be held on Thursday, February 11. Please [click this link](#) to register.

*"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." Matt 18:20*

- **PAACS Global Day of Prayer:** Three times a year, the PAACS family around the globe gathers online to unite in prayer to ask God to bless, prosper, and protect our ministry. On Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, near the date of the 25<sup>th</sup> birthday of PAACS, we will be gathering to praise and celebrate God's faithfulness to us for the past 25 years. We will spend time seeking His guidance and will for our future. We want to walk in step with the plans of the Lord for the next 25 years. We will also be seeking His protection, provision, and blessings over our PAACS residents, faculty, graduates, supporters, hospitals, partner organizations, and the PAACS ministry. Because of technology, we can now meet "face to face" on Zoom and be connected to one another regardless of location.



We will be holding two prayer gatherings on Zoom at two different times on Monday, February 8th. One of the Zoom calls will be midday and the other in the evening. We want to give as many people as possible from around the globe the opportunity to join together to pray. Please see the link below for details about each of the call times, the registration link, and the prayer points. Please choose the most convenient prayer gathering time and **register to participate** on the prayer call. We hope to see many of the PAACS family in one of the prayer gatherings as we come boldly before the throne of God to ask for His divine mercy and grace. Learn more and register by [Clicking Here](#).

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- **Ethiopian Resident Wed:** Temesgen Zelalem, a 5th year resident in the Soddo-CURE orthopedic program, married Miheret Teshome in Addis Ababa on Saturday, December 9. She graduated as an electrical engineer with special interest in IT communications and they met in Soddo.

The wedding was a very happy event, full of joyous Ethiopian worship music and prayer in addition to the vows, ring ceremony and address by the pastor. One of the most interesting aspects which is often part of Protestant Ethiopian weddings is the candle



lighting ceremony. The bride and groom each light a separate candle and then using their separate candles symbolically together light a much larger candle. The old candles are blown out and discarded. This signifies the passing of their old lives and start of their new combined life together.

- **ALMC Resident Wed:** Dr. Minyali lomnyaki, third year resident at Arusha Lutheran Medical Center, married Jehova Julius in a wedding which blended cultures and families. On December 26, they were married in their home church in their village of Losikito. They were adorned by both their “western” and their Maasai finery, each of which showed the bride’s beauty. Jehova is a human resources officer.



- **Birth Announcement:** Yves Yankuze, a second-year Tenwek general surgery resident, and his wife Alida welcomed their first-born child, a boy named Eben Aziel Yankunze, on December 16th, 2020 at 4:20 PM. His birthweight was 3.15 kg (6.9 lbs.). Both mother and baby are doing well.



- **Birth Announcement:** Ivan Seno Saruni, 2016 graduate from Tenwek and his wife, Dr. Betty Sirera Saruni welcomed a set of twins, Matthew Lekishon (2100 grams birthweight) and Nathan Leiyan (2200 grams) born on December 18. They arrived at 34 weeks of gestation and were admitted to the NICU, being discharged a week later on Christmas Day. Seno writes, “2020 was a double blessing to our family. We found out we were expecting twins amidst the trouble that was the Covid-19 pandemic. This was our toughest pregnancy yet, but also the one where the Lord’s grace has definitely been sufficient. We have had many admissions with threats to the babies but each time we still got to go home and continue hoping. We got and survived Covid while expecting. And also, we continued to work the front line. We got to live God’s abundant grace and realized that He cannot give us a load that is too heavy to bear.” Their other girls are named Ella Namaian and Hannah Naanyu.



- **Short-term and Long-term Surgeons Needed at Bongolo:** The Bongolo Hospital general surgery residency program needs a general surgeon who is able to serve under a sending agency for at least 2 years starting in 2021. Please contact [bongolopd@gmail.com](mailto:bongolopd@gmail.com) if you are interested and able to serve in that time frame.
- **Short-term and Long-term Surgeons Needed at Harpur:** Dr. Sherif Hanna has returned in September to Harpur Memorial Hospital in Egypt to serve for several months before retiring. The PAACS program at Harpur Memorial Hospital in Menouf, Egypt needs a General Surgeon for long term (preferably) or short term (several months) service starting in April 2021. For further information please contact Sherif Hanna via email: [dr.sherif.hanna@gmail.com](mailto:dr.sherif.hanna@gmail.com)
- **PAACS Basic Science Conference Cancelled:** The Basic Science Conference scheduled for Brackenhurst on March 1 – 12, 2020, has again been cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. This is the second time that the disease has forced a cancellation of the conference that is usually held biennially. No date or venue to replace it has been announced.
- **Mark your calendar** for the following events you may wish to attend or uphold in prayer:
  - **PAACS Biannual Board Meetings**
    - Spring 2021 PAACS Board of Directors Meeting Friday and Saturday, April 23-24, 2021. The venue and nature of meeting (in-person or video conference) is still undetermined.

## PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Praise God for His faithfulness over the previous 25 years!
- Praise God for the new graduates. Pray that God will lead them to the place of employment that He would have and that they will make the new transitions in a way that brings honor to Christ.
- Praise God for the performance of the PAACS residents who passed their examinations and pray for comfort for those who did not.
- Pray for the new residents and their families as they make the transition – give them peace and open the necessary doors.
- Pray for comfort for the family of Professor Adisa.



- Pray for physical and spiritual healing for this world in the face of this repeat surge of the pandemic.
- Pray for internal peace, in light of the pandemic, as the PAACS family faces the continued uncertainty of separation from family, of unknown medical demand, and limited medical resources.
- Peace and stability in the PAACS countries. Pray especially for the ongoing tribal unrest in Ethiopia and the recurrent civil unrest in Cameroon.
- Pray that PAACS will glorify God and be used to impact Africa for His Kingdom. Plead that many lives will be saved through surgery and many people will come to know the love of Jesus.
- Request strength, stamina, wisdom, and blessings upon the PAACS faculty as they seek to train and mentor PAACS residents. Pray that God will bring His chosen long and short-term missionary and national surgeons to help train African residents in the PAACS training programs.
- Pray for PAACS graduates that are serving God's people. Pray for God's grace, protection, provision, strength, and blessings to cover the PAACS graduates.
- Pray for approval from the government of Kenya for the anesthesia, plastics, and surgical endoscopy programs.
- Pray for the present manpower shortage at the mission hospitals.
- Pray for all the PAACS faculty members and the hospitals – for personal health and safety and for financial viability of the charity hospitals in this tough time.
- Pray for wisdom on when to hold the usual PAACS conferences.
- Pray that God will make it possible soon for the short-term missionaries to return to service in the mission hospitals.
- Pray for the ongoing need for general surgery faculty at Kijabe, which is most necessary between now and July 2021.
- Pray for the ongoing need for general surgery faculty at Bongolo, especially from now until mid-2021.
- Pray for the Tenwek Orthopedic training program which has a great need for additional faculty members.
- Pray for those faculty members on home assignment –the Birds – for their rest, for the times of medical work and for the meeting with their supporters and raising funds. Pray for the faculty members that must cover their absence.
- Pray for those surgeons who are planning to join PAACS in the next few years – as they complete their residencies or fellowships, as they find a sending agency, as they raise the necessary money and as they prepare for the major cultural shifts.

Editor: Bruce C. Steffes, MD

