

Dear Friends of PAACS:

Merry Christmas!

We serve an amazing God. Over fifteen years ago, PAACS set an audacious goal to graduate 100 surgeons by 2020 – since we had less than 20 graduates at the time and only four programs, it seemed impossible. However, we serve a God of impossibilities! We have exceeded that goal with room to spare and to God goes the glory!

Praise God for the good performance of the Membership candidates on the COSECSA exam and congratulations are due to Arega Fekadu as the first fellow-by-examination in COSECSA for the specialty of cardiothoracic surgery.

As the year draws to an end, please consider a donation to PAACS. Have a blessed holiday season.

The Editor



PAACS PAACS Bulletin Bulletin

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.

Our goal: To train and disciple 100 African surgeons by 2020.

No. 198

December, 2020

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FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Dear PAACS Family:

As 2020 comes to a close, we boast in the Lord that PAACS currently has

- 97 residents in training;
- Over 90 faculty serving;
- Issued 117 graduate certificates;
- 16 surgical training programs ---10 general surgery; 3 orthopaedic surgery; 1 pediatric surgery; 1 cardiothoracic surgery; and 1 head and neck fellowship;
- 8 countries with PAACS programs; and
- Partnerships with 12 mission hospitals.

In addition to the above blessings, PAACS became an independent ministry in 2020. We are depending on the strength of the Lord and on His guidance and wisdom as we navigate being a stand-alone organization. God has definitely been gracious to PAACS. Thank you to all of you, the PAACS family, for walking alongside this ministry in 2020. Your love, support, and prayers have sustained, as well as moved this organization forward.

The prospects for PAACS for 2021 are exciting. Here is what's on the horizon:

- We have **new surgical training programs** opening in 2021. The neurosurgery program will be starting in early 2021 with several new specialty training programs on the horizon--- anesthesia, plastic surgery, surgical endoscopy, and ob-gyn.
- PAACS will be unveiling a new strategic plan in 2021 as the roadmap for the next five year for the ministry.
- Also, PAACS will be **celebrating 25 years as a ministry** in 2021. This is an incredible milestone, and the possibilities for PAACS moving forward is endless with God as our guide.

As we close out 2020, **let us give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever (Psalms 107:1)**. PAACS has seen the goodness of the Lord this year despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic. We give thanks to the Lord for His continued help, provision, and blessings to PAACS. We are especially thankful for the Lord's protection over all of the PAACS family. Many of you have been on the frontline during this pandemic and we are thankful that God has kept you and your family safe. You have all been in our prayers throughout the year.

With a heart of gratitude,

Susan Koshy, JD, MPH

Chief Executive Officer

Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS)

PS: It is not too late to give to the PAACS ministry in 2020. Your gift is tax deductible and will go toward the training and discipling of African physicians as surgeons to care for the poor and those in need.

US DONORS: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E350918&id=5>

CANADIAN DONORS: <https://paacs.net/donate/canadian-donors.html>

ALL DONORS OUTSIDE OF THE US AND CANADA:

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E350918&id=22>

GRADUATION AT MBINGO

By Jim Brown

Mbingo Baptist Hospital held its annual graduation ceremony on November 28, 2020, for the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons and the Christian Internal Medicine Specialists. Dr. Mabanza Kibuka Tresor from the Democratic Republic of Congo became the 17th PAACS graduate from Mbingo. Dr. Epande Richard and Dr. Nkwetaeba Eugene, both Cameroonian, were the Internal Medicine graduates.



Tresor Mabanza holds the floral arrangement while surrounded by PAACS faculty and residents (not all present)

The commencement address was given by Dr. Ron Johannsen, a cardiologist from St. Paul, Minnesota, and a long-term friend of both training programs at Mbingo. He encouraged the graduates to follow the bedside manner of Jesus as He cared for the poor, the sick, and the marginalized of His day. The charge to the graduates was given by Dr. Francine Kouya, a faculty medical oncologist at Mbingo. She used the example of the Hebrew midwives in Exodus who feared God and did not follow Pharaoh's edict to kill the Hebrew male infants, but they valued life and used their skills to save those who were vulnerable and at risk. Dr. Kouya charged the graduates to do the same.

The ceremony was followed by a luncheon for the attendees and all the hospital staff.



Dr. Mabanza (third from the right) with the PAACS Faculty (Dr. Ngong not shown).

GRADUATION AT AIC KIJABE HOSPITAL

By Beryl Akinyi Ooro

This was the 8th graduation ceremony for the Orthopedic and GS program at AIC Kijabe hospital and the largest number of graduates for program ever. This brings to a total of 24 graduates for both programs. Graduation was held at Kijabe on the afternoon of 4 December. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic guidelines, the graduation had to be limited to 100 people, with attention to appropriate social distance and lasted 90 minutes only. The speakers were limited in number and time to speak. Attendants included the graduates and their families, residents, faculty and other staff. The graduates from the orthopedic program were Morris KITUA, David JOMO and John MANDELA. From General surgery, there were Morgan OTIDO and James Joseph.

The ceremony started with a word of prayer from the hospital head chaplain followed by a meal for all the attendants.

Guest speakers included Dr. Peter Okalet (Medical Doctor, Head of SIM-Kenya) who congratulated and commissioned the graduates to go out and make a difference and 'let your light shine'. He spoke of the profile of PAACS graduate – they should be high quality and spiritual (have a head, heart and hands like those of Christ). Their behavior should be consistent with a life dedicated to God. He asked them to remember who enabled them to get this far – peers, patients, prayers and the presence of God. He gave the two case studies of Dr. Francis Omaswa and Dr. Emmanuel Taban (who can be Googled) who have made an impact on their field.

Dr. Peter Halestrap, the head of the graduate medical education department at Kijabe, proposed the following ABCs:

- A – Always remember Jesus
- B – Be focused on serving the Lord
- C – Consider your future (teach and multiply)



Dr. Jack Barasa, the program director of the general surgery program, reminded the audience of the big surgical need on the continent of Africa. Five graduates may be a drop in the ocean in meeting the need but it is progress. He read Phil: 2:5-16, and asked the residents to have Christ-like attitude, humility, excellence and servitude.

Dr. Francis Mbugua, the program director of the orthopedic program, pointed out that learning never stops – we should learn from mistakes, and keep reading. He emphasized that it is important to maintain relationships with seniors and juniors. He wisely advised those listening NOT to make money the object of your pursuit, instead make excellence your goal (Proverbs 3: 6).



Dr. Jim Brown, the program director at Mbingo Baptist hospital, joined the graduation celebration because of James Joseph. James had started his residency in Mbingo and later transferred to Kijabe for his final year of training because of the civil war in Cameroon. *(Akinyi adds, “Technically he is a Mbingo graduate but we are happy to add him to our numbers in Kijabe.”)* Brown referenced Galatians 2:10 and told the audience to remember the poor, for we need the poor to have influence on us.

The graduates were presented with their certificates. Cake cutting and photographs followed after.

It was a joyous occasion for the graduates and the faculty for the achievements that have been made. The graduates have not done their oral FCS exam that was postponed to January 23 and 24, 2020 (because of the Covid pandemic) but we are confident they all will pass their exam.



Too many cooks ruin the stew – these many surgeons and only one knife?



Kijabe graduates and faculty

GRADUATION AT PAACS-ARUSHA

The third class of graduates from the PAACS-Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre in Tanzania included Dr. Fred Minja and Dr. Julius Paul. On Saturday, December 19, they became Arusha graduates numbered 5 and 6 and PAACS graduates numbered 108 and 109. Their families were there with beaming smiles to support their graduating loved one.

Bruce Steffes, previous CEO and Chief Medical Officer of PAACS who had been instrumental in helping the program start, was the guest of honor and gave the challenge to the residents.

Dr. Paul Kisanga, general surgeon and CEO of ALMC, welcomed all and introduced Pastor Herman Kweka, the ALMC chaplain for the prayer. Dr. Willmore gave an opening address on the topic of “doing the right thing”. Frank Madinda introduced Dr. Steffes who gave a brief history of PAACS as it approaches its 25th anniversary and emphasized the role of ALMC within it. He then challenged the residents to live as Ambassadors of the King while they sought life-affirming goals for their career. The diplomas were presented by Dr. Willmore before an address was received from a representative of the Lutheran Bishop. After the recession, pictures were taken and a celebratory dinner was held at the Corridor Springs Hotel. There, presents were given to the graduates from the program itself and from the junior residents.



Fred Minja (L) and Julius Paul with young Master Paul – the next generation of surgeons



Frank Madinda and Wendy Willmore, Program Co-Directors, flank Bruce Steffes

The exact location of service for the two graduates is still in debate. It is most likely to be in other mission hospitals within the country.

FIRST GRADUATION AT PAACS-MALAMULO

By Ryan Hayton

The first graduation of the Malamulo Adventist Hospital PAACS program was celebrated on Dec 13, 2020 when Constance Ndum and Lijalem Taya Garba finished their five-year general surgery programs.

The Malamulo PAACS program started in 2014 under the direction of Dr. Ryan Hayton and Dr. Arega Fekadu. It has developed and grown through the years despite obstacles along the way. Throughout, God's leading has been evident and the program has reached its first graduation of Christ-centered, competent, compassionate, and certified surgeons.

The graduation celebration started with a casual Saturday evening speech night in the church. Faculty, hospital staff, friends and families had the opportunity to share what the two graduates and this accomplishment meant to them and the institution.



Lijalem Taya Garba is congratulated by his wife.

Sunday morning's formal graduation event was attended by dignitaries from the Malawi government and Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders. The Malawi Ministry of Health Honorable Khumbize Chiponda addressed the graduates and attendees which included the Member of Parliament Honorable Mary Navicha, Medical Council of Malawi's chair Prof. John Chisi, the Ministry's Director of Clinical Services, and the traditional authority Chief Kwetemule. The SDA church showed its support through speeches and attendance by the President of the Malawi Union & AHL Malawi Board Chair Ps. Frackson Kuyama and Education Director Ms. Emily Egolette as well as participation by several of Malamulo's pastors. The PAACS leadership was represented by the Chair of the Board of Directors Dr. Tom Robey and the commencement address was given by PAACS EVP Dr. Keir Thelander. Dr. Mark Snell attended as Mbingo Baptist Hospital's representative in support of Dr. Ndum, a previous Mbingo resident. Dr. Mark Reeves & Dr. Ryan Hayton attended in demonstration of Loma Linda University's commitment and support of both PAACS and the Malamulo Adventist Hospital.

Dr. Moses Kasumba, as program director of the residency, led throughout the weekend assisted by Dr. Gillian Seton.



The family of Constance Ndum traveled from Cameroon to celebrate with her!



Ryan Hayton, previous program director, and Mark Reeves, the LLU liaison to PAACS.

Dr. Constance Ndum completed her residency training in September, 2020. She began her training at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon in 2015. When civil war and unrest caused the program at Mbingo to pause its training, Dr. Ndum was invited to join Malamulo's program half way through her 4th year in January, 2019. Constance's passion for God, persistence in pursuing surgical education, and perseverance in the face of obstacles culminated in her not only completing her five-year PAACS surgery residency, but more than that developing into an excellent surgeon and dedicated Christian. Constance is a wonderful example for the residents following in her footsteps. She is now returning to her home town in Cameroon where she will be the surgeon at a Presbyterian Mission Hospital and expertly increasing access to surgical care in Cameroon.

Dr. Lijalem Taye Garba finished his distinguished 5-years of training when he graduated from the Malamulo Adventist Hospital PAACS surgery residency program. Born and raised in rural Ethiopia, he has been a life-long learner, excelling in his academic pursuits since the time he started school. Lijalem has gained respect from his colleagues, his patients and his community during his residency and graduates with high honors of academic excellence unrivaled on the continent. Malamulo is proud of Lijalem and his completion as the first graduate who began and finished his training here. As a humble and compassionate man, he has remained Christ-centered as he has become competent and certified as a surgeon. His excellence in patient care and surgical skills has endeared him to the Malamulo mission. There is deep unrest in Lijalem's area of Ethiopia and as a result, he has chosen to join the new PAACS training team at Kibuye, Burundi where he will continue to grow as a teacher and mentor of the next generation of African surgeons.



This day marked an important milestone in the Malamulo program. The successful completion of the PAACS residency by two wonderful surgeons shows the programs persistence and progress. The Malawi government, church, and hospital attendance and participation in the program demonstrated the appreciation for and acceptance of the residency program. Moving forward this show of support and recognition of the surgical training at Malamulo will do well to advance the foundations already laid.

REFLECTIONS

[Editor's Note: This is the reflection of Ryan Hayton the founding program Director at Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi upon returning for a graduation ceremony. A family medical crisis brought him back to the US unexpectedly in 2019. This reflection was written the week before the graduation exercise).

By Ryan Hayton

The dream that started years ago is coming to fruition this weekend.

I looked back through my emails today, as I am planning my speeches this weekend, and reminiscing how we've arrived at this day.

It was 15 June, 2011, when Dr. Hart first wrote an email to me instructing us to move forward with a PAACS program. I had completed training in 2010 and had only been at Malamulo since 27 Sept 2010. When I arrived, there were no functioning theatre lights, no monitors in the theatre, one functioning anesthesia machine, one non-functioning operating table that had been used by Dr. Jack Harvey in about 1958. I'll admit that I knew I was incapable of starting a PAACS program at that time and said so several times in the email chains.

In April 2012, Drs. Reeves and Giang came to Malamulo and helped us fill out the application papers for PAACS and we met with several entities in Malawi to begin discussions. To complicate matters, in Sept 2012, Malamulo held a strike to send me back to America because I was accused of being 'incompetent and racist' according to the newspapers and radio. That was a low point. Shar and I decided to stick-it-out for 6 more months to see where God would lead us. I'd like to specifically thank those of you who continued to believe in my potential, and encourage me to re-focus and, instead of giving up, create positive progress through perseverance and passion.

It was January 2013 when Dr. Steffes visited Malamulo and gave us the evaluation, including the 6 pages of unmet requirements needed before starting the program and mandated that 'if we are going to even consider Malamulo as a PAACS site, Dr. Hayton needs to stay for 10 years to put his stamp on the program.' It was at that time that we decided that we were 'all in'. In May 2013, the theatre team of Malamulo bought-in to the dream of training surgeons, even though it still seemed like pie-in-the-sky. It seems impossible. At that point, we had one surgeon, one anesthetist, two theatre nurses and several cleaners in the theatre in rural Malawi with extremely low resources. A lot of energy, time, and resources have been expended in the process. We began training on 1 August 2014 with the blessing and support of PAACS, Loma Linda University, and COSECSA.

It has been quite the journey since that moment, with more than our share of ups and downs. Our 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 6th residents did not complete the journey. We have done thousands of surgeries, expanding from 850 per year to >3,000 per year. We have grown in maturity and the team of trainers, trainees, and theater team has



Ryan Hayton (middle) helps Lijalem with his last case as a chief resident.

multiplied. So, now, today we have two graduating competent, compassionate, Christ-like, and certified surgeons: Dr. Constance Ndum (from Cameroon, who did her first 3 1/2 years at Mbingo, Cameroon before the program was closed due to civil unrest; and Dr. Lijalem Taye Garba from Ethiopia, who was brought here at the recommendation of Dr. Fekadu, and has done his 5 years of training at Malamulo and who started 5 months after we started the program.

Malamulo is still training Dr. Aaron Kokulol (PGY4 from Liberia), Dr. Prosper Ngwang (PGY3 from Cameroon who transferred to Malamulo from Mbingo 1 1/2 years ago), Dr. Admire Munjeri (PGY1.5 from Zimbabwe), Dr. Gracious Sankhulani (PGY1 from Malawi), and Dr. Rumbidzai Mlewah (PGY1 from Malawi). We will be adding two new Malawian residents on 1 Jan 2021.

More than ever, I realize now that Malamulo's PAACS program was not originally my idea. We had massive and perpetual help, and the collaboration that created and enacted the training at Malamulo has been more than the sum of its parts.

I have not thanked often enough each and every person and organization that encouraged, empowered, supported, and made-possible the Malamulo PAACS program, but today I would like to give a special thanks to the "giants" on whose shoulders we've stood, to Dr. Arega Fekadu (the co-founder of the program 2014-2017 and graduating this month as PAACS' first Cardiothoracic surgeon), Dr. Casey Graybill (Faculty OB-GYN 2015-2020), Dr. Gillian Seton (Faculty 2020-), Dr. Jim Brown (who trained Drs. Arega, Moses, Constance, & Prosper at Mbingo), Dr. Mark Snell (who helped train our surgeons at Mbingo and then at Malamulo in 2019), and Dr. Moses Kasumba (the Program director of Malamulo PAACS program and my partner since December 2017). Thank you. Your part in this weekend's achievement is recognized and celebrated.

I, for one, couldn't be prouder today.

SPIRITUAL RETREAT AT PAACS-MALAMULO

By Tom Robey

The Malamulo general surgery residency program had its first spiritual retreat December 14 and 15. Dr. Keir Thelander, PAACS EVP, and Dr. Thomas Robey, PAACS Chair, were invited to lead the retreat. Dr. Ed Sceaer, PAACS Spiritual Dean, was able to attend by Zoom and lead the afternoon sessions.

The focus of the retreat was on your identity in Christ Jesus and Christian leadership. The retreat was held at a lovely tea plantation about 30 minutes outside of Malamulo. Dr. Moses Kasumba, Malamulo's program director and Dr. Ryan Hayton, the former program director, and Dr. Gillian Seton, PAACS faculty, were also in attendance, as was Dr. Mark Reeves, the PAACS Loma Linda representative. The Malamulo surgical residents were split into two groups with Dr. Constance Ndum (recent graduate), Dr. Aaron Kokulol (PGY 5) and Dr. Gracious Sankhulani (PGY 2) along with his wife, attending the first day and Dr. Lijalem (recent graduate) and his wife, Dr. Ngwang Prosper (PGY 3) and his wife, Dr. Admire Munjeri (PGY 2) and his wife, and Dr. Rumbi Mlewah (PGY 2) attending the second day. Members of the operating theater staff, including nurses, scrub techs and anesthesia personnel also were in attendance each day.

The beautiful outdoor setting allowed for wonderful conversations and testimonies throughout the two days. The team also enjoyed a lovely lunch at the plantation and a focused prayer time to end the sessions each day. A special thanks to Dr. Sean Reimer, a general surgeon from the U.S., who covered the hospital each day during the retreat which allowed the entire Malamulo team to attend.



Attendees Day One of the PAACS-Malamulo Spiritual Retreat.

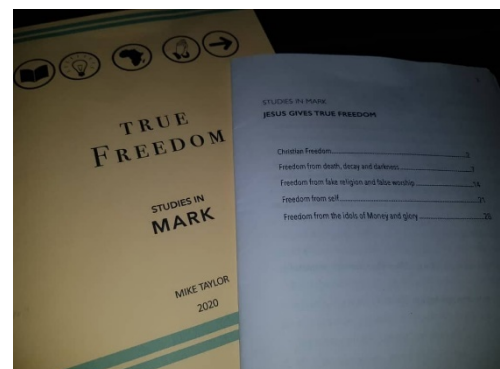


Mealtimes were also a time of great fellowship – and good food!

SPIRITUAL RETREAT AT ARUSHA

By Wendy Willmore

After having plans made, cancelled and remade, we at Arusha PAACS finally managed to set apart the time for our 7th long spiritual retreat from December 11-13, 2020. We went a bit farther afield this year to the Uhuru (Freedom) Lutheran Hotel in Moshi. We were treated to great fellowship with one another's families, good food, beautiful views of Kilimanjaro and its waterfalls and some reflection and excellent time in the Word.



Appropriately, our theme was “Freedom is Coming”. We learned a simple theme song from South Africa of that title. Our guest speaker was Rev. Mike Taylor, who works at the local Anglican seminary. He spoke about true Christian freedom, using several passages from the Book of Mark. We also introduced the new PAACS spiritual inventory at the conference. All of us (faculty and residents) filled it out and asked our



brothers and sisters for their input into our lives. On Saturday afternoon, we took a hike down into a gorge to see a nearby waterfall on the slopes of the mountain and then watched and reflected on the movie: “War Room”.

We had a great turnout with 26 adults and 11 children. As always, it was a great time of blessing and much needed refreshment. We ended the retreat by taking communion together. Here in Arusha, we do not share a compound or a church home, so these moments like this are rather rare and irreplaceable. The

opportunity to fellowship together as an Arusha PAACS family as we draw closer to our Father puts more glue on the bonds that shape our brotherhood of Christian surgeons. To those whose generosity makes such events a reality: From the land of Kilimanjaro, a hundred thousand thanks, and may your Christmas be blessed beyond comprehension this year.





NEWS SHORTS:

Arega Fekadu Leta First Cardiothoracic Fellow by Examination of COSECSA: On December 7 and 8th, Arega Fekadu sat two days of examinations and after 11 hours of grueling and extensive testing, became the first fellow by examination of COSECSA in the specialty of cardiothoracic surgery.

Arega is graduating as a fellow the end of this year and plans to stay on the faculty at Tenwek Hospital.



Screenshot of Zoom-based examination



Arega facing the screen & Drs. Groom and Steffes

The examination was largely done via video with only Dr. Robert Greene as an online examiner and Dr. Bruce Steffes as the COSECSA Chief Examiner. Dr. Russ White, panel head for cardiothoracic surgery, led the US-based team of surgeons in the examination.

Tenwek is the site of the first COSECSA-approved training program in cardiothoracic surgery and trains three fellows at any given time. Dr. Agneta Odera is the next to graduate and Dr. Keith Dindi is the other fellow. Justus Lando will become the new fellow in January, resigning from the general surgery faculty at Tenwek to do so.

PAACS Involvement with COSECSA MCS Exams: Sixteen PAACS residents took the MCS exam and all but two passed. The passage rate for PAACS candidates was 87.5%. The overall passage rate for all COSECSA residents was 85.8%. Two additional PAACS residents, precluded from taking the exam due to a positive test for the coronavirus, will be taking a make-up exam on December 28 and if they pass, the overall passage rate for PAACS will rise to 88.8%.

The MCS exam on December 5 and 6 was partially performed for the first time with video-based examiners. There were 105 candidates tested at six sites (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Drs. Lundy, Thelander, Haisch, Kaups, Tarpley and Chew were PAACS-associated surgeons numbered among the 33 video examiners from across the globe.



Steffes hosted a dinner on Saturday night for the majority of the PAACS faculty members. PAACS residents were examined the following day.

Forty-eight candidates were scheduled for Kenya. Bruce Steffes serves as the Membership level MCS exam panel head and for this exam, served as the COSECSA-appointed Chief Examiner in Kenya. PAACS graduates and/or faculty members Michael Mwachiro (COSECSA country representative for Kenya, Francis Mbugua, Mike Ganey, Beryl Akinyi, Jack Barasa, Wairimu Mugambi, Kamene "Mesh" Mwanzia, Agneta Odera, Jana MacLeod, and Elijah Mwaura

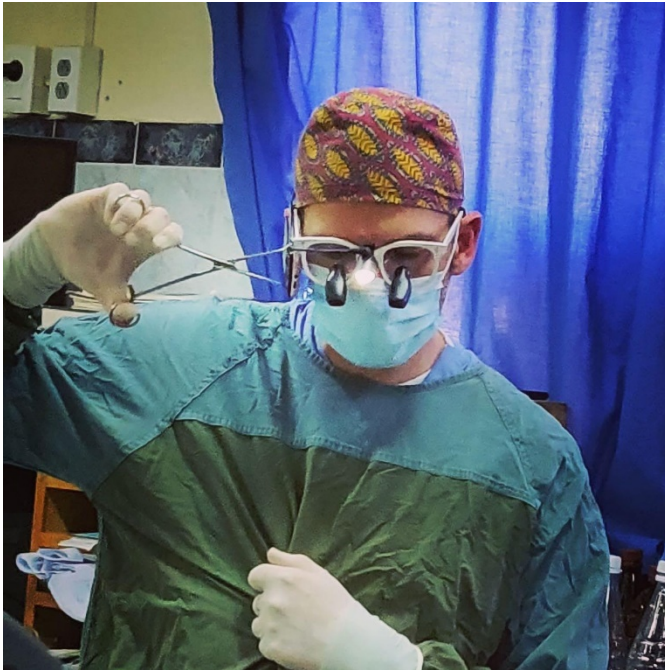
took an active role as examiners. Mwachiro arranged all the logistics for the exam.

The FCS examination for general surgery and orthopedics is scheduled for 23 and 24 January, 2021, each being held in three countries simultaneously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **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 if you are interested and able to serve in either 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



Soddo Hospital general surgeon, Tim Love, demonstrates his facility with a Babcock clamp when the nurse is out of the room and the phone needs to be answered.

- **Address for Donations to PAACS:** All end-of-the-year donations should be sent to:

PAACS
PO Box 735262
Dallas, TX 75373-5262

- **New websites:** PAACS has recently rolled out their newly revised website (www.paacs.net) and now COSECSA has rolled out their revamped website (www.cosecsa.org). Visit them!

- **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.

- **African Colleges Exams & Conferences:**

- COSECSA MCS and FCS oral exams in General Surgery have been scheduled for the weekend of January 23 and 24. The General Surgery exams will be held in Kenya, Ethiopia and Zambia. The general Orthopedics exams will be held in Kenya, Zambia and Rwanda.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Pray for the two residents taking their make-up MCS exam on December 28. Pray for the general surgery and orthopedic residents taking their fellowship exams on January 23 and 24.
- Pray for the new graduates -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.
- Pray for the new residents and their families as they plan to make the transition – give them peace and open the necessary doors.
- 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.
- 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 that God will make it possible for the short-term missionaries to return to service in the mission hospitals.
- Peace and stability in the PAACS countries. Pray especially for the ongoing tribal unrest in Ethiopia and the recurrent of 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.
- Ask God for success and needed help for all of the 16 current PAACS programs.
- Praise God that governmental approval of the plastic surgery program was given. Pray as they now complete the COSECSA submission.
- Pray for approval of the anesthesia and surgical endoscopy programs from the government of Kenya.
- Praise God that the Neurosurgery program at Tenwek has accepted two residents for this coming year.
- Pray for the programs hoping to open in early or mid-2021: Plastic Surgery at Kijabe Hospital, Surgical Endoscopy at Tenwek Hospital, and Anesthesiology training at Kijabe Hospital.
- Pray for the present manpower shortage at 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 Orthopaedic training program which has a great need for additional faculty members. Praise God that Marvin Wekesa, a PAACS-orthopedics graduate this year, will be joining the team in January 2021.

- Pray for those faculty members on home assignment – the Parkers, the Whites and the Birds – for their rest, for the times of medical work and for the largely impossible task of meeting with their supporters and raising funds. Pray for the faculty members that must cover their absence.
- Pray for the Laverys who are in Cairo getting further Arabic language training, which is one of the most difficult languages to learn.
- 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