



# The PAACS Bulletin

Monthly Newsletter • Issue 261 • April 2026



## **MISSION**

PAACS' mission is to glorify God by training and discipling African surgeons and related specialists to become Christ-like leaders and servants providing excellent and compassionate care to those most in need.

## **VISION**

PAACS envisions a growing number of African surgeons and related specialists living out the Gospel and ministering to the sick.

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

**Susan Koshy, JD, MPH**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Dear PAACS Family,

This spring, we are preparing for our upcoming Spring Board of Directors meeting—an especially meaningful time as we mark 30 years of God's faithfulness to the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS).

As part of this preparation, the Governance Committee met in Chicago on March 12–13 to review bylaws, policies, and procedures that support the work of the Board. This work strengthens consistency and helps ensure our policies are sound and serve the ministry. Much of the work of the Board and this ministry happens behind the scenes through committees and councils, including the Governance Committee. Its impact reaches across every part of PAACS. This is not exciting work, but it is essential work. We are grateful for the wisdom and leadership of those who serve faithfully across our Board, councils, and committees.

Our Spring Board of Directors meeting will be held on May 1–2. We will begin with devotion, worship, and prayer. The Board will participate in orientation and training. We will share ministry-wide updates, including program reports and financial overviews. We will also reflect on the growth of PAACS and the continued commitment needed to train and disciple residents and fellows.

Together, we will review our strategic plan, assessing where we are and strengthening the path ahead. We will hear from our councils and committees, and receive updates from our CEO, Founder, EVP, CFO, Academic Dean, Spiritual Dean, and Board Members. This is more than a time for reporting; it is a time for seeking the Lord's wisdom together.

We also want to recognize the more than 200 volunteers who actively support PAACS. They serve across committees, councils, the PAACS Board of Directors, and hospital programs—as prayer warriors, faculty, short-term missionaries, leaders, editors, and advisors. They give their time and expertise generously to this mission. Many serve quietly, yet their contribution is essential to the work of PAACS. We thank each of them for their faithful commitment. We are confident in the Lord's leading as we continue this ministry. This ministry is in His hands, and He is faithful.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan A. Koshy". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Susan A. Koshy, JD, MPH  
Chief Executive Officer



# LLU ACCREDITATION VISITS: BURUNDI AND MADAGASCAR

Keir Thelander, MD, FACS, FWACS, FCS (ECSA)  
Executive Vice President



As part of Loma Linda University's (LLU) accreditation visits to Burundi and Madagascar, on March 29 the accreditation team, Dr. Mark Reeves and Dr. David Row, met PAACS EVP Dr. Keir Thelander and PAACS Academic Dean Dr. Christopher Moir in Bujumbura, Burundi, before embarking on an approximately three-hour drive to Kibuye Hope Hospital (KHH). This young program began in September 2022 with two trainees, growing to 10 trainees as of today. The facility expanded from around 100 beds in the early 2010's

to now over 350 beds, performing over 3,000 surgeries per year. Program Director, Dr. Ted John, welcomed the team and hosted them throughout the visit, which included meetings with administration, faculty members, trainees, and a tour of the facility.

After completing the onsite visit, on March 30<sup>th</sup> the team traveled back to Bujumbura to meet with the Hope Africa University rector. The KHH/PAACS program affiliates with local academic institution, Hope Africa University, which oversees the masters in medicine portion of the combined training program.

The program was found to be highly functioning with excellent education occurring, while providing graduated responsibility to the trainees. The faculty members and trainees contribute to a collegial peace, providing mutual edification both academically and spiritually.



# LLU ACCREDITATION VISITS: BURUNDI AND MADAGASCAR (CONT'D)

The team proceeded to Madagascar, with an extended, unexpected layover in Kenya. From Antananarivo, Madagascar, began the approximate 1.5 hour mission flight with MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) avoiding a possibly 48–72 hour drive (or, better said, intermittent hike!!) to HVMM (Hôpital Vaovao Mahafaly Mandritsara) located in the interior of the country.

While visiting this Baptist facility, which is heavily supported by Friends of Mandritsara Trust, the poverty within Madagascar became evident. HVMM sits as an oasis in the middle of this difficult area, where patients may walk or be carried in a “human supported helicopter” for days to find medical and surgical care.

HVMM accepted its first trainees, Drs. Rado and Tefy, in January 2022 with eight trainees at the time of this LLU visit. Another well-run and high-quality training program functions in the center of Madagascar. Dr. Ted Watts, Program Director, was joined by Drs. Marco Faniriko and Jeshiah Thiessen to commence training in 2022, now with Dr. Danu Kradolfer. Steady growth in the physical plant continues, with a new lab under construction. The sense of calm and family oozed from the facility, its staff, surgeons, and trainees.

God's work is clearly evident at both HVMM and KHH, each situated in one of the world's poorest countries, where the programs combine compassionate care for the suffering with excellent training and discipleship.

We rejoice with them in a positive debrief from the LLU team at each site, awaiting the final reports from Drs. Reeves and Row.

May the Lord continue to equip and grow these strategically placed training programs, and may their upcoming graduates be empowered to bring the Gospel to new areas with impact.

All glory to God.





## A GIFT THAT REACHES THE HEART

**Ed Scarce, DMin, ThM**  
Spiritual Dean



Here at PAACS, we are grateful for the numerous organizations that partner with us as we train doctors in Africa, both surgically and biblically. One of those organizations is Synergie Francophone, an organization that distributes biblical literature for those whom French is their heart

language. Each year, 8-10 of PAACS' new residents fit the dynamics of that group. Synergie has made a generous donation of four key Christian books and commentaries. This year, Dr. Ed Scarce, Rev. Robert Yanduya, and Dr. Bill Curtis were pleased to hand out sets of these books. Everyone was excited!



## A JOURNEY FULFILLED: FROM CALLING TO COMMISSIONING

**John Kanyi, MD**  
Program Director, General Surgery  
AIC Litein Hospital, Kenya

We give thanks to God as we celebrate a significant milestone in the life of our program—the second graduation ceremony on February 13, 2026, for Dr. Peter Opondo Ouma, who successfully completed his PAACS General Surgery Residency in December 2025.

Dr. Opondo's journey from a medical intern in 2018 to completion of the residency stands as part of the enduring legacy of PAACS—a well-trained surgeon formed not only in technical skill, but in integrity, compassion, and calling.

As he transitions into independent surgical practice, he carries both a responsibility and a commission from PAACS, as aptly echoed by the Chief Guest of the graduation, Dr. Emmanuel Fadipe, PAACS Tenwek GS Program Director.

We celebrate a journey fulfilled—and a mission that continues.



# WHITE COAT CEREMONY SODDO CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL



**Tim Nunn, MD**  
Program Director, Orthopaedic Surgery  
Soddo Christian/CURE-Ethiopia Hospital, Ethiopia



**Rachel Cobos, MD, MPH**  
Interim Program Director, General Surgery  
Soddo Christian Hospital, Ethiopia

On Wednesday, March 18, 2026, Soddo Christian Hospital hosted a memorable White Coat Ceremony honoring three new residents:

- Dr. Sirak (PAACS Soddo / CURE Orthopaedic Surgery)
- Dr. Betsegaw (PAACS Soddo General Surgery)
- Dr. Fitsum (PAACS Soddo General Surgery)

The event was attended by faculty and staff of Soddo Christian Hospital, with participation from Dr. Tim Nunn, Program Director of PAACS Orthopaedics. The ceremony was organized by Dr. Rachel Cobos and Dr. Gezahegn, with messages shared by new faculty members Dr. Natnael (GS), Dr. Yohannes (GS), and Dr. Abenezer (Ortho).



The program began with an address from Dr. Rachel Cobos, who reflected on the Temptations of Jesus and their relevance during training years and beyond. Jesus was presented with temptations to matter, to be impressive, and to have power, all of which He countered with the truth of the Word. The rest of us face very similar temptations. May we remember that our significance comes not from the world, but from our identity in Christ.

Then Scripture was read from the Gospel of John, recalling Jesus's act of foot washing, which senior staff symbolically reenacted by washing the incoming residents' feet. The profession of surgery can tend toward pride, but the foot washing ceremony reminds us that we are called to serve, just as Jesus came to serve, not to be served.

What we do in the process of following Jesus may seem unimportant, unimpressive, and weak to the world (the work of servants). However, we do it not for the praise and admiration of the world, but for the hope set before us. New white coats, jackets, and hats were then distributed.

# WHITE COAT CEREMONY SODDO CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL (CONT'D)

The ceremony included prayers for the residents and their training, affirming confidence in their successful progression through their programs. The presence of Mr. Ephraim Gabrielle Selassie, CEO of Soddo Christian Hospital, alongside faculty and all cadres of staff, underscored the unity of the hospital community in celebrating this milestone.

This occasion was a profound reminder of humility, service, and dedication, marking the beginning of a significant journey for the three newly invested residents.



“I am deeply convinced that the Christian leader of the future is called to be completely irrelevant and to stand in this world with nothing to offer but his or her own vulnerable self. That is the way Jesus came to reveal God’s love.” - Henry Nouwen

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”  
- Philippians 2:3-8

# AGC TENWEK HOSPITAL RESEARCH DAY

**Bob Parker, MD, MPH, FACS, FCS (ECSA)**  
Faculty Member, General Surgery  
Tenwek Hospital, Kenya



Research Day 2026 at AGC Tenwek Hospital offered a compelling picture of what can happen when rigorous training, mentorship, and mission-driven service are brought together in one academic community. Partially supported through a PAACS grant, the event created space for interns, residents, fellows, faculty, and multidisciplinary teams to present work shaped by the realities of caring for patients in our setting and by a shared commitment to improving that care to the glory of God. The result was not only a day of presentations, but a visible expression of a locally grounded research culture in which Tenwek collaborators are generating practical evidence to strengthen care, training, and health systems. In a faith-based institution, this kind of scholarship is more than an academic exercise. It is part of the work of stewarding resources wisely, serving patients faithfully, and seeking tangible ways to love our neighbors through better care.



The projects recognized this year reflected both scientific quality and practical importance. Dr. Violet Otoki, PAACS graduate and faculty member, was honored for the trauma registry project, a meaningful example of how carefully collected local data can inform better systems of care and strengthen surgical outcomes research. The perfusion team, led by Bob Groom and Philip Koech, was recognized for its simulation work, highlighting the value of innovation, skills development, and team-based learning

in strengthening complex clinical services. The People's Choice Award went to an intern-led case report that captured the interest of attendees and demonstrated that even early-career clinicians are engaging seriously with scholarship and clinical reflection.

One of the most encouraging features of this year's Research Day was the breadth of perspectives represented. Alongside outstanding clinical and surgical projects, presentations also addressed agroforestry, solar implementation, community health, artificial intelligence, and education. Additional work explored cardiac surgery sustainability, virtual multidisciplinary cancer care, triage implementation, infection prevention, and expanded access to specialty training in resource-limited settings. This diversity reflects the reality that meaningful improvement in patient outcomes depends not only on clinical excellence, but also on thoughtful engagement with the wider systems, resources, and communities that shape health. The range of topics on display showed a hospital community thinking broadly, working collaboratively, and asking questions that matter.

# AGC TENWEK HOSPITAL RESEARCH DAY (CONT'D)



The day was also strengthened by the presence of engaged judges, whose thoughtful participation added energy, credibility, and encouragement. Their involvement helped create an atmosphere in which scholarly work was taken seriously and presenters at every level felt seen and supported. That spirit of encouragement remains essential to developing the next generation of surgeon-scholars, educators, and Christian leaders.



We celebrate the collaboration between PAACS and Tenwek that Research Day represents. PAACS' support helps create opportunities for trainees and faculty not only to care for patients, but also to ask important questions, generate local evidence, and contribute meaningfully to the future of surgical care in Africa. Research Day 2026 made visible the kind of academic culture PAACS helps cultivate at Tenwek: grounded in service, strengthened by mentorship, and committed to generating knowledge that can improve care far beyond a single hospital.



# WELCOMING DR. JELY JOSUÉ MASSIMA MOUTANGA TO PAACS

**Petronella Kufa**  
**Data Entry Administrative Clerk**  
**Bongolo Hospital, Gabon**

On January 21, Dr. Jely Josue Massima Moutanga marked an important milestone as he participated in his white coat ceremony and officially began his surgical residency with PAACS at Bongolo Hospital. Dr. Massima Moutanga is from Gabon and brings with him a strong desire to serve both physically and spiritually.

He shared that his primary motivation for coming to Bongolo was the opportunity to freely share the Gospel while providing surgical care. Although he describes the work as challenging, he considers it a meaningful and rewarding experience to serve within the mission setting.

Dr. Massima Moutanga views PAACS as a rigorous and excellent program that equips surgeons to serve in underserved areas while sharing Christ's love. He emphasized the importance of programs like PAACS in improving access to healthcare in regions where services are limited, ministering to both the body and the soul. His faith plays a central role in his work, guiding him to care for patients with love and compassion and allowing him to witness God's work in their lives. He encourages the Bongolo and PAACS community to continually seek God's strength and love as they carry out the work to which they have been called.

We warmly welcome Dr. Massima Moutanga and pray for God's guidance and blessing as he begins this important journey.





# JUNIOR BOOT CAMP REFLECTION

**Clarisse Girincuti, MD**  
Faculty Member, General Surgery  
Hospital of Hope, Togo

I had the opportunity to travel to Kenya in February, where I attended the PAACS Junior Boot Camp at Brackenhurst alongside two of our first-year trainees. It was deeply encouraging to see these young surgeons being grounded not only in essential surgical skills, but also in the core values of PAACS. The time was rich with learning, prayer, and shared experiences, reminding us that ultimately it is Christ who is building His kingdom: "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain." (Psalm 127:1)

I was also blessed to reconnect with colleagues and former classmates at Kijabe Hospital, a joyful reunion and a meaningful reminder of God's faithfulness over the years and across different places of service. These moments of fellowship continue to strengthen the bonds within the wider medical mission community.

We are grateful for how God continues to provide strength, unity, and encouragement, both on the field and through these opportunities to connect, learn, and grow.



# LAPAROSCOPIC TRAINING IN ETHIOPIA



**Nzanzu Kipata Anatole, MD**  
**Graduate, General Surgery**  
**Adventist Hospital Lilongwe, Malawi**

I recently completed a highly transformative surgical rotation in Ethiopia through MIS Africa. For anyone seeking to bridge the gap between basic laparoscopic skills and advanced case management, this experience is truly exceptional. I traveled from Malawi alongside an Ethiopian OB/GYN colleague who helped me navigate Addis Ababa; together, we are now working toward increasing surgical volume at our home institution—starting with diagnostic laparoscopy and minor procedures—while strengthening our local team’s learning curve.

For a balanced and effective experience, I strongly recommend a four-week rotation, including at least 4-5 days at Bishoftu General Hospital during your time at Myungsung Christian Medical Center (MCM). MCM is a high-standard mission hospital in Addis Ababa with advanced facilities. The operating team handles up to five laparoscopic cases daily, and the skills lab provides an excellent environment for practice. In contrast, Bishoftu offers invaluable hands-on exposure. While resources there are more limited, the case volume is high, making it the ideal place to actively operate and build confidence.

This rotation was initiated by MIS Africa and its dedicated mentors, including Dr. Efeson Thomas, CEO of MIS Africa, and Dr. Segni Bekele, another PAACS alumnus and CEO of Grand Bishoftu Hospital. My clinical experience was diverse and intensive. I participated in over 12 laparoscopic cholecystectomies—assisting at MCM and serving as primary surgeon in Bishoftu. I also assisted in a laparoscopic-assisted right hemicolectomy, six laparoscopic appendectomies, and gained exposure to laparoscopic TAPP inguinal hernia repairs. Beyond laparoscopy, I assisted in a thyroidectomy, a sigmoidectomy, and an ENT case in Bishoftu, while observing specialized procedures like a POEM (Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy) performed there for the first time.

Regarding logistics, staying at the MCM guesthouse is safe and convenient, costing about \$300 per month. Monthly food expenses average another \$300. I strongly recommend this rotation for surgeons who already possess basic laparoscopic skills and access to equipment. It is an invaluable opportunity to refine your technique and elevate your surgical practice.

# GOOD NEWS

## BUILDING A LIFELINE IN HANA MURSI

**Tim Nunn, MD**

**Program Director, Orthopaedic Surgery**

**Soddo Christian/CURE-Ethiopia Hospital, Ethiopia**

In South Omo, Ethiopia, a critical gap in medical access is being addressed through the Hana Hospital Project. Spearheaded by the Wolayita Sodo Kale Heywet Church, the initiative is guided by a Project Board that includes Dr. Abenezer Iyasu, a 2024 PAACS Ethiopia Orthopaedics graduate.

Currently, patients in this region must travel 100 km over poor roads to reach the nearest surgical facility, a journey that often proves challenging for trauma and surgical patients. The new hospital aims to bring specialized care directly to this underserved community.

Construction officially broke ground in October 2025. The project has already garnered significant local momentum; nearby quarries have donated stone, and early contributions have allowed the initial foundations to be poured.

If you would like to support the Khale Hiwot building fund or learn more about the project's progress, please contact Dr. Abenezer Iyasu directly at [abenezer@hanachristianhospital.org](mailto:abenezer@hanachristianhospital.org)



## Held by His Hands

**A Night of Worship and Celebration  
to Raise Support for the Work of the  
Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons**

Celebrating 30 years of God's faithful hands at work through the Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS). Join us for an evening supporting the training and discipleship of African Christian surgeons and related specialists serving the sick and the poor.

### Save the Date

20 June | New Hope Christian Church  
5780 S. Main St.  
Whitestown, IN 46075

VIP Dinner: 5:00 PM  
Concert: 6:30 PM

REGISTER



Invite friends who would be interested in supporting PAACS' mission to join you.  
<https://paacs.net/concert-rsvp.html>



## A BEAUTIFUL NEW LIFE

Congratulations to PAACS Resident Dr. Levis Ndayishimiye and his wife, Florine, on the birth of their second daughter, Lily Neriah Ndayishimiye, on April 4, 2026. Dr. Ndayishimiye is a third-year general surgery resident at Kibuye Hope Hospital in Burundi.

"We give thanks to the Lord for our Easter blessing, a pure and beautiful new life shining with the light of the Lord. 'The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.' Psalm 126:3"

# PRAYER & PRAISE

- Pray for God's favor over all PAACS training programs, that they will glorify God and be used to impact Africa for His Kingdom.
- Pray that all the new residents will be blessed with God's favor and grace.
- Pray for the majority of PAACS trainees as they prepare for their annual PAACS exams, which will be held on June 6.

Each month, we pray for residents by name. Please join us this month by covering these residents in prayer:

- Baptist Augustino Matonya
- Peter Ally Kayange
- Benedicto Mwang'onda
- John Minja
- Frida Kokushubira Fidelis
- Joshua Mbelwa
- Loveness Kimaro
- Ernest Babu
- Lilian Emmanuel Olodi
- Emmanuel Laizer
- Martini Gemuwang'
- Noble Kufa
- Benjamin Hamidou
- Lubanda Tshipuita Junior
- Jacques Maomy
- Glodi Tshipuabua Mulumba
- Massima Moutanga Jely Josue
- Christian Neema Mutunzi
- Fadhili Nelson
- Kulindwa John Manzil



# ARTICLES ON SURGERY, OB/GYN, AND ANESTHESIA

*Compiled by Margaret Tarpley*

- [Digital Technologies in Surgical Training in Africa: Lessons for Sustainable Implementation](#)
- [Colorectal Cancer Risk With Negative Colonoscopy or Nonadherence After Positive FOBT Screening](#)
- [Proportion, etiology, predictors, and clinical outcomes of sepsis in neurosurgical patients: a systematic review and meta-analysis protocol](#)
- [Current Models of Plastic Surgery Training in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Review From 2018 to 2022](#)
- [The Singapore Declaration on Professional Empathy for Surgeons: Rehumanizing Surgical Practice](#)
- [Wrist Splinting versus a Placebo Soft Bandage for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome](#)
- [Robotic and Laparoscopic Inguinal Hernia Repair in Africa: Current Adoption, Challenges, and Future Horizons](#)
- [Barriers to airway procurement processes in sub-Saharan Africa: An exploratory qualitative study](#)
- [The role of in situ simulations in the assessment of pediatric anesthesiologists' non-technical skills](#)
- [How can I be a more compassionate leader?](#)
- [Association between formal preoperative risk assessment and postoperative complications](#)
- [Fertility preservation in surgical training: A call to action](#)
- [Mentee - mentor matching in surgical practice and training - A systematic review of the literature and single-arm meta-analysis](#)

**[Read more articles compiled by Margaret Tarpley by clicking here!](#)**

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GIVE (Other)

## CONNECT

