

God's Purpose and Promise

DR. MARK WAITHAKA

I was born 41 years ago in Nairobi, Kenya, and grew up in the small town of Ong'ata Rongai. At 13, a simple invitation from my friend Frank led me to Sunday school, and by 14, I had given my life to Christ. That decision laid the foundation for a faith journey that has guided me through life's challenges and triumphs. In high school, Sunday brunches at Pastor Tim's house were more than meals—they were times of mentorship and spiritual growth. It was there that I met Sarah, who would become my wife. We began dating during my final year at the University of Nairobi in 2008, and our lives soon intertwined in a shared mission of love and service.

After my internship in a government hospital, where I saw the vast gaps in healthcare, I felt called to serve in faith-based facilities. Sarah and I moved to Muthale Mission Hospital in Kitui County, embracing the challenges of rural life with a deep sense of purpose. Then, one evening, while praying for direction, a friend from medical school called with an opportunity: a General Surgery residency at AIC Kijabe Hospital through PAACS. I applied, and God opened the door. Residency was tough, but God's grace carried me through, and in 2016, I graduated and earned a Gold Medal for achieving the highest score on the COSECSA general surgery exams, a testament to His faithfulness.

During my training, mentors like Dr. Tim Berg became pillars of encouragement and support. His calmness during a difficult surgery reminded me that God's grace is sufficient in every circumstance. These relationships have continued to strengthen my career in rural mission hospitals.

Life took an unexpected turn when Sarah received a life-altering diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. Sarah was enrolled in a clinical trial, and today, she is doing well. This experience deepened our faith and reminded us to trust God's higher plan. We moved closer to family for support, leaving behind a stable job to embrace a new chapter.

During this transition, I reconnected with a mentor who encouraged me to pursue further training in plastic surgery. Even though the application deadline had passed, God made a way, and I was accepted into the program. We continue to walk this journey of faith, knowing God's timing is perfect.

Through every challenge, Proverbs 3:5-6 has been our anchor: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart... and He will make your paths straight." God has been our constant guide. As we step into this new season, Sarah, our three children, and I are full of hope, trusting that God's plans are filled with grace, purpose, and promise. This is a season of renewal—a season of trusting God more deeply and serving wherever He leads us. No matter what lies ahead, we know He is with us every step of the way.



Dear PAACS Family

We are excited to present the Fall 2024 PAACS Alumni Newsletter, featuring Drs. Mark Waithaka and Joseph Nderitu.

As you read, reflect on Colossians 3:23 (NIV): "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."

Yours in Christ,
Lemfuka Dieudonne, MD, FCS (ECSA)
PAACS Graduate and Editor of the
Alumni Newsletter



Waithaka Family

Faithful Healing - A Patient Testimony from Dr. Mark Waithaka

I received a woman, one-week post-operative from a radical hysterectomy with advanced uterine cancer. Arriving with a burst abdomen and feculent wound discharge, she was physically stable but deeply distressed both mentally and emotionally. After speaking with her daughters, I felt God calling me to pray with her. At the end of our prayer, joined by her daughters, we all said a resounding "Amen!" The surgery that followed was successful and she knew that the Lord had answered our prayers and delivered her from any complications. Afterwards, whenever we met in the hospital corridors, she would offer blessings to me. These interactions are a testament to the profound impact that spiritual care can have on a patient. It complements physical healing and underscores the unique approach of PAACS to treating the whole person.

Holistic Care From PAACS Resident to PAACS Faculty

DR. JOSEPH NDERITU

Raised in Nairobi's Eastlands area, I grew up in a deeply Christian household surrounded by a loving family of six siblings. My parents encouraged us to develop a personal relationship with God and to make our own faith decisions. My faith, though tested, has remained unshakeable, thanks to Christ's love and grace. Today, I am blessed to share my life with my wonderful wife, Veronica, and our daughter, Nila. As new parents, we are eager to guide Nila in fostering her own relationship with Christ.

This spiritual foundation that my parents helped to lay was crucial as I navigated my educational journey. In the beginning I faced considerable challenges in my academic performance. However, I prayed and asked for God's guidance, and He miraculously intervened and changed the course of my life. I performed well in my primary and secondary school exams, paving the way for my admission to Kenyatta University for medical school.

My commitment to integrating faith and professionalism deepened during an internship at Maua Mission Hospital, where I met a PAACS-trained surgeon. I was impressed by his skills and the compassionate and spiritual nature of his approach to patients. I realized that an ideal postgraduate surgical program is one that will train residents to become excellent surgeons while also developing their full potential through professional and personal growth. They should also be able to greatly contribute to the community they serve. When I did my research, the PAACS residency program was the perfect opportunity.

Throughout my residency at AIC Kijabe Hospital, I experienced substantial spiritual growth and professional development. I graduated in 2023 and today, I serve as a general surgeon and PAACS faculty member. The opportunity to integrate faith into my practice is both fulfilling and deeply cherished. I am passionate about teaching and grateful for the chance to impart knowledge and skills to the next generation of surgeons for Africa.

In our field, we often see individuals when they are most vulnerable, seeking not only medical relief but also comfort and hope. A particularly moving case involved an elderly woman with advanced, rare gallbladder cancer. Despite having been to multiple hospitals she had never received a clear diagnosis. It was under our comprehensive care at AIC Kijabe Hospital that the diagnosis was finally confirmed through extensive assessments and interventions. While the prognosis was dire, the patient and her family were profoundly grateful for the high level of care and spiritual support provided. Her husband, particularly, was moved by the compassionate care she received, noting that it renewed his faith in God and provided the closure they had been pursuing.

This experience illustrates the unique blend of surgical expertise and spiritual care that our PAACS training and discipleship instills in us. We are prepared to meet not only the physical needs of our patients but also their emotional and spiritual well-being. Serving in this dual capacity is a privilege and a powerful reminder of our role in bringing healing and hope through Christ, often answering the prayers of those we serve.



Dr. Nderitu, his wife Veronica and their daughter, Nila.

PAACS Graduates are currently serving in 23 African countries



Angola	Liberia
Burundi	Madagascar
Cameroon	Malawi
Chad	Mali
DR Congo	Niger
Egypt	Nigeria
Ethiopia	Rwanda
Gabon	Sierra Leone
Ghana	Tanzania
Guinea	Togo
Kenya	Zimbabwe
Lesotho	