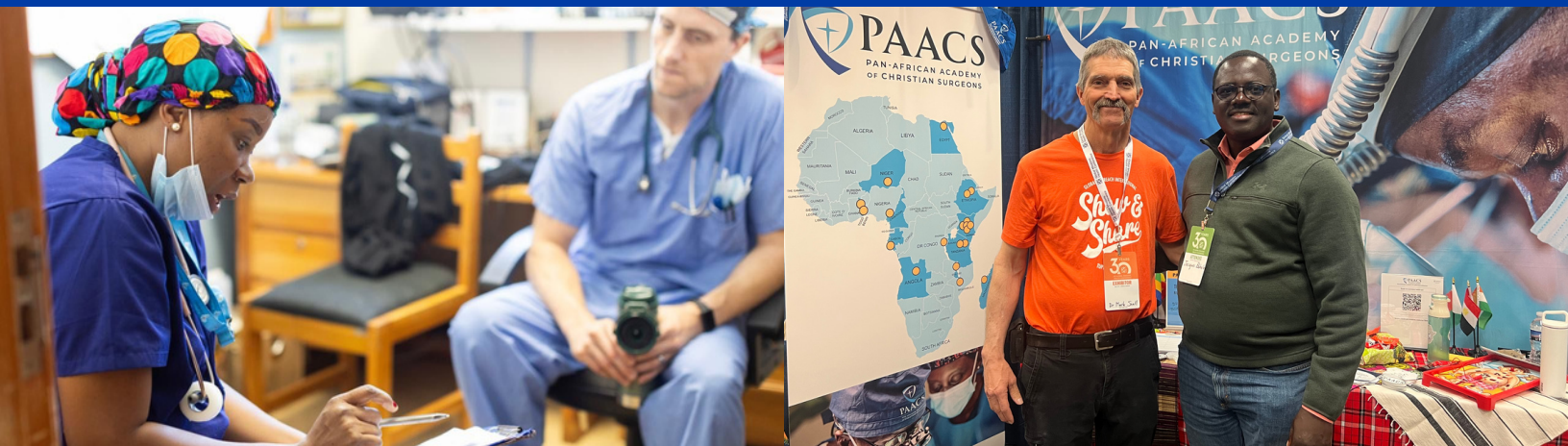




The PAACS Bulletin

Monthly Newsletter • Issue 256 • November 2025



OUR 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.

OUR 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

As we approach the close of another year, I am reminded that gratitude is not bound to a single season. While many in the U.S. will celebrate Thanksgiving this week, across Africa, North America, and beyond, the PAACS family shares a posture of gratitude that is year-round. It is a posture that unites residents, graduates, faculty, and supporters in one spirit of praise to the God who provides for every need.

Gratitude has always been central to the heart of PAACS. It is heard in the whispered prayers of residents and faculty before surgery, in the praise of patients who have been healed, and in the faithful generosity of those who give and pray from far away. Each act of service and each moment of compassion is a testimony to God's goodness and to the shared belief that He is at work in and through this ministry.

When we look at PAACS through the lens of gratitude, it becomes even easier to recognize the ways God has been at work among us this November. Earlier this month, Executive Vice President, Dr. Keir Thelander, and I traveled to Louisville, Kentucky for two significant medical missions gatherings. We are grateful for the opportunities these events provided, to listen, to learn, and to stand alongside leaders who share a similar vision for God's healing work around the world. At the Healthcare Missions Leadership Summit, Keir spoke on the future of medical missions in a presentation titled "Healthcare Missions – A New Paradigm." We then attended the Global Missions Health Conference, where it was deeply encouraging to connect with others committed to advancing Christ-centered healthcare.

We are also pleased to announce that three new publications are now available on our website: the 2024/2025 Annual Report, the latest Alumni Newsletter, and the 2025 PAACS Highlights. Each one reflects God's faithfulness and the continued growth of PAACS programs across Africa. Looking toward December, we will enter an important and prayerful season. Our end-of-year campaigns are set to launch, with a goal of raising \$954,000 in a single month to help support the training and discipleship of our trainees in the coming year. In addition, on December 1st and 2nd, 23 final-year PAACS trainees, and two recent graduates, will sit for their COSECSA FCS exams. We would be grateful for your prayers as they take this next step in their calling.

May gratitude continue to fill our hearts and guide our steps in the year ahead.

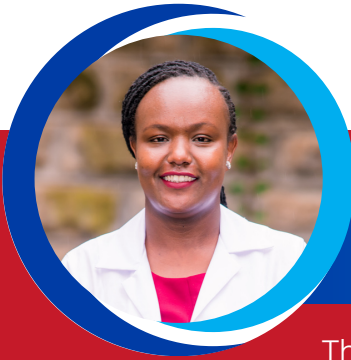
*"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name." — Psalm 100:4*

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan A. Koshy".

Susan A. Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer
PAACS

STRENGTHENING SAFE SURGERY AND SHARING THE HOPE OF CHRIST ACROSS AFRICA



Mercy Mitei, MD *
Assistant Program Director, General Surgery
Tenwek Hospital

This December, Kijabe Hospital will celebrate a historic milestone. The PAACS-supported Anesthesiology Residency Program, launched in January 2022, will graduate its first two residents. Their achievement is more than a ceremony. It represents a growing movement to strengthen perioperative care in Africa through Christ-centered, high-quality training.



Across Africa, anesthesia remains a critical gap in surgical safety. Many countries have less than one percent of the recommended number of physician anesthesiologists. The consequences are tragic. Maternal deaths following Cesarean delivery are fifty times higher than in high-income countries, and pediatric perioperative mortality can reach one hundred times higher. “You cannot have safe surgery without safe anesthesia,” explains Dr. Matthew Kynes, the program director. “We are training physicians who can care for the whole patient before, during, and after surgery with excellence, compassion, and Christ-centered care.”

The program currently has nine residents from Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, and the DRC. Two residents will be graduating this year: Dr. Eunice Kageha and Dr. Rebecca Dufe.

Kijabe’s program is distinct for the intersection of faith and medicine. Residents pray with every patient before surgery, recognizing the vulnerability anesthesia brings. As Dr. Kynes explains, “Patients come to surgery afraid and vulnerable, and we teach our residents to meet them with compassion, prayer, and hope in Christ as much as with clinical skill.” Through daily spiritual rounds and weekly Bible study, residents learn to minister to patients and families in moments of fear or suffering. Dr. Eunice reflects on how this has shaped her calling: “Faith is how we care for patients. Whether it’s praying before surgery or sitting with families afterward, I’ve learned that ministry happens alongside medicine every day.”

The impact of Kijabe’s anesthesia residents is already being felt far beyond their training rooms. During an away rotation in Burundi, they strengthened monitoring practices, taught safer techniques, and helped the local team improve perioperative care. Surgeons at the site even commented on the difference, noting that the



** Dr. Mercy Mitei recently joined the PAACS Bulletin Team as a contributing author.*

STRENGTHENING SAFE SURGERY AND SHARING THE HOPE OF CHRIST ACROSS AFRICA (CONT'D)

overall level of anesthesia care improved while the residents were present. Back in Kijabe, senior residents have led CPR workshops for theater staff, trained surgical residents and nurses, and supported pediatric anesthesia teaching in South Sudan. Reflecting on their influence, Dr. Kynes shared, "It was encouraging to hear surgeons say that while our residents were there, the level of care improved. Seeing them teach, supervise, and help others provide safer anesthesia has been one of the proudest moments of the program."

The Kijabe Anesthesiology Residency Program stands as a model of how faith and science can transform healthcare. The team prays for wisdom and provision as they prepare to deploy their graduates. The first graduation in December is not just a celebration of two doctors' success, it is a testimony to God's faithfulness, and a reminder that, when medicine and mission meet, lives are changed, not only in operating rooms, but for eternity.

"We are training anesthesiologists to bring healing with both hands," the program director says. "One hand offers clinical skill, the other offers hope in Christ."

To God be the glory.



Drs. Greg Sund, Rebecca Dufe, Eunice Kageha, and Matt Kynes.

On November 20, Drs. Eunice and Dufe graduated in Mombasa as part of the 3rd class of fellows of the College of Anaesthesiologists of East, Central, and Southern Africa (CANECSA). Two days earlier, they took the CANECSA oral examinations along with 18 other candidates from six different countries. As the first class from Kijabe (and Kenya) to take the exam, they were very nervous about how things would go but did a tremendous job. Eunice scored the highest of all the candidates and was awarded "Top Resident" during the graduation ceremony.

In addition to their program directors and families, two members of the PAACS Anesthesiology Council, Donna Spratt and Kaylyn Sachse, came to Mombasa to celebrate. They all rejoiced together about this major milestone and at what God has been doing through PAACS and Kijabe Hospital to train excellent Christian anesthesiologists for Africa.



GLOBAL MISSIONS HEALTH CONFERENCE 2025

Susan Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer

PAACS was pleased to take part in this year's Global Missions Health Conference (GMHC) in Louisville, Kentucky. It is the world's largest annual gathering focused on healthcare missions. The three-day event brought together thousands of healthcare professionals, students, mission organizations, and church partners who share a common passion for advancing God's Kingdom through medical care.

GMHC featured a full schedule of breakout sessions, plenary speakers, exhibitor booths, and networking opportunities. Throughout the weekend, the PAACS booth welcomed a steady stream of visitors interested in learning about the work of training and discipling Christian surgeons and related specialists across Africa. Some were hearing about PAACS for the first time; others were longtime friends excited to reconnect.

A special highlight of the conference was a PAACS-hosted dinner attended by more than 100 people. The evening included an introduction to the ministry, and a presentation on the vision forward for PAACS. Next was a panel discussion featuring Dr. Jack Kehl - Program Director at HBB in Togo, Dr. Jacques Ebhele - PAACS graduate, Dr. Ryan Hayton - Past Program Director at Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi, and Dr. Nate Ross - Faculty at Soddo Christian Hospital in Ethiopia. They all shared valuable insights from their experience in PAACS programs.

GMHC once again proved to be an excellent venue for building relationships, engaging with future medical missionaries, and strengthening ties with partners who share a heart for serving the underserved. PAACS is grateful for the opportunity to participate in this global gathering and for all who stopped by to learn more about the ministry.



Panel discussion at the PAACS dinner.



Dr. Mark Snell and Dr. Jacques Ebhele at the PAACS booth.



Dr. Jacques Ebhele speaking.



Joanna Thelander, Dr. Keir Thelander, Dr. Jacques Ebhele, and Susan Koshy at the PAACS booth.

MCS EXAMS 2025



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

On November 12 and 13, 30 2nd year PAACS trainees sat for and were successful on the oral exams of the Membership of the College of Surgeons (COSECSA). Each had successfully passed the written exam in September. Many PAACS faculty members and other volunteers served as examiners for 50% of the exam while the other 50% made use of the Entrust platform developed out of Stanford University. This fully online exam accomplishes the task of COSECSA to validate the first two years of training before trainees differentiate into specialties such as orthopaedics, pediatric surgery, and neurosurgery, among others. Please pray for the upcoming FCS (Fellowship of the College of Surgeons) exams taking place in Burundi December 1 and 2. PAACS will have 23 final year trainees sit the exams as well as two recent PAACS graduates.

2025 COSECSA RESEARCH COURSE WINNERS



**Dr. Bonya
Sharon Cheryl**

4th Year General Surgery
Malamulo GS



**Dr. Radoniaina
Dinamalala Olivier**

4th Year General Surgery
HVMM GS



**Dr. Tiba Dongmo
Jandelle Lavinia**

3rd Year General Surgery
Mbingo GS



Any additional PAACS residents already attending COSECSA are invited to attend the research course on December 2, 2025 - [Register here](#).



NOW AVAILABLE: ANNUAL REPORT, ALUMNI NEWSLETTER & 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Julie Hayden
Communications Manager

We are pleased to announce that three new PAACS publications are now available online: the 2024/2025 Annual Report, the latest Alumni Newsletter, and the 2025 PAACS Highlights. Each of these pieces reflects God's faithfulness across our programs and the life-changing work happening every day through the training and discipling of Christian surgeons and related specialists.

One of the stories mentioned briefly in the 2025 PAACS Highlights has since received a moving update from PAACS resident, Dr. Estifanos Bafa at Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi. It is a story that powerfully illustrates the mission of PAACS and the hope found in Christ.



A 35-year-old man came to our hospital with a severe thigh infection. He was a Type 1 diabetic, and despite antibiotics and multiple surgeries, including a hip disarticulation, the infection seemed unstoppable. His blood sugar was nearly impossible to control, and medically, it felt hopeless.

But his struggle went far beyond his body. During his hospital stay, he was betrayed by a friend who stole his money and motorbikes. His wife had abandoned him, and his heart was heavy with loneliness and pain. Spiritually, he had sought answers from witch doctors but felt lost and empty.

One day, we talked deeply. With tears, he said, "Doctor, I want to repent. I want to accept your God and find peace, even if I die."

By God's grace, he did not die. For ten long weeks, he remained in the hospital, enduring wound care twice daily, multiple surgeries, and endless struggles. Yet alongside the medical care, he received prayer, encouragement, and spiritual support. Slowly, strength returned. Finally, after what seemed impossible, he was discharged—alive, healed, and transformed.

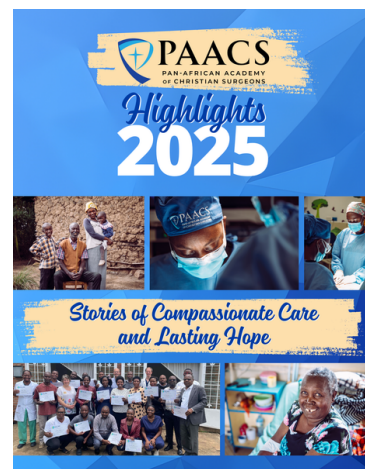
He left the hospital not only as a survivor of a devastating infection but as a redeemed man who had found salvation in Christ.

This testimony reminds me of Psalm 147:3, which says, "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

Medicine has its limits, but God does not. Where our efforts failed, His grace abounded. This man's journey is proof that Jesus is the Great Physician not only of bodies but also of hearts and souls.



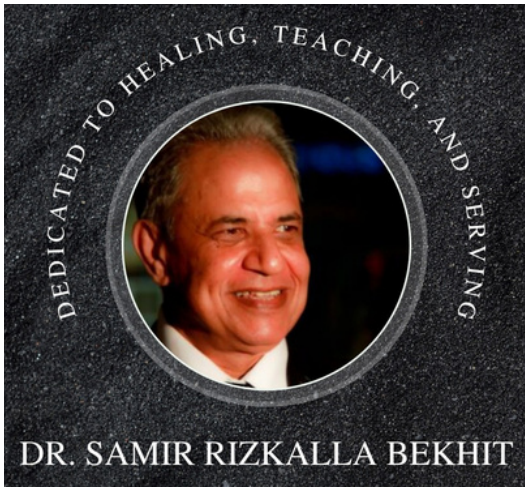
Dr. Estifanos Bafa
General Surgery
Malamulo Adventist Hospital, Malawi





WEDDING AT LITEIN

Congratulations to Dr. John Ngili, a 4th-year General Surgery resident at AIC Litein Hospital, and his bride, Silvia, who were married on 31st October 2025. We wish them God's blessings as they embark on their new life together.



We are deeply saddened by the passing of Dr. Samir Rizkalla Bekhit, the Director of Harpur Memorial Hospital in Egypt. Dr. Samir was instrumental in the success of the PAACS General Surgery Training Program at Harpur Memorial Hospital, faithfully supporting the work of training and discipling Christian surgeons and related specialists to serve across Africa.

Please pray for our residents, faculty, and the entire Harpur Memorial Hospital community during this difficult time.

PAACS Global Day of Fasting and Prayer

Peggy Orlando Ndlovu
Executive Operations Coordinator

On November 10, 2025, the PAACS family came together for one of our three annual Global Days of Fasting and Prayer. More than 70 people joined us online throughout the day, united in asking God to guide, strengthen, and provide for this ministry. We spent time in Ephesians before our time of corporate prayer and reflected on the hope and power we have in Christ as we carry out the work He has entrusted to us.

We thanked God for His faithfulness, prayed over our residents, faculty, graduates, leadership, and programs, and asked Him to continue directing our steps in this next season of ministry. It was a lovely reminder that PAACS is a ministry built on our knees and God continues to show up as we seek His face for the future. We are grateful for everyone who joined us in prayer and grateful for the way God continues to lead PAACS.

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 for PAACS residents sitting for the COSECSA FCS exams December 1st and 2nd.
- Pray for Ethiopia and the outbreak of the Marburg virus. Pray for protection over healthcare workers and comfort and healing for affected families.

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

- Joseph Mkandawire
- Sharon Bonya
- Emmanuel Kyobe
- Matthew Kolleh
- Estifanos Bafa Babulo
- Trymore Sithole
- Francis Donda
- Joela Hayibor
- Caleb Mzati Kapengule



ARTICLES ON SURGERY, OB/GYN, AND ANESTHESIA

Compiled by Margaret Tarpley

- [Practice of Paediatric Anaesthesia in Abidjan: One Year's Experience at the Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Obstetrics Centre of the Cocody University Hospital](#)
- [Faith-Based Organisations Provide Surgery for Africa's Most Vulnerable](#)
- [Religious partnerships can strengthen health delivery](#)
- [Exploring how surgeons employ empathy in clinical practice: a qualitative study](#)
- [SURGhub Drives Effort to Make AI Work for Surgical Care in Remote Settings](#)
- [Beyond the Scalpel: Supporting Healthy Romantic Relationships in Surgical Life](#)
- [It's worse than it seems: Our experience with childcare costs during surgical residency](#)
- [Breast cancer overall survival, annual risks of death, and survival gap apportionment in sub-Saharan Africa \(ABC-DO\): 7-year follow-up of a prospective cohort study](#)
- [Clamshell Corticotomy: A Technique to Address Challenges of Narrow Medullary Canal during Intramedullary Nailing of Tibial Shaft Fracture Fixation](#)
- [Proactive vs Reactive Treatment of Hypotension During Surgery: The PRETREAT Randomized Clinical Trial](#)

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

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