



The PAACS Bulletin

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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: PRAYER IS WOVEN THROUGHOUT THIS SEASON

Susan Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer

Dear PAACS Family,

There are moments when an answer to prayer causes us to stop and simply say, **"Praise God!"** This month, we have a wonderful reason to rejoice. For more than nine months, many within the PAACS family have joined believers around the world in prayer for the safe release of missionary pilot Kevin Rideout following his abduction in Niger. We recently received the news that Kevin has been released and is safe. **We give God all the praise and glory for His protection and for this long-awaited answer to prayer.** We continue to pray for Kevin, his family, and all those who have walked alongside them throughout these difficult months.

Prayer has been woven throughout this season at PAACS. We recently completed **30 days of prayer for you, our donors and friends**, lifting before the Lord the requests you entrusted to us through the prayer cards mailed in June. What a privilege it has been to lift up your families, health, ministries, burdens, and praises. **It has been a joy to intentionally pray for you.**

That same spirit continues as we **complete our 2027 PAACS Prayer Guide**. Each year, this guide connects the PAACS family across continents as we lift one another before the Lord. As this year's guide comes together, **we are grateful for the opportunity to unite the PAACS family in prayer. Prayer is not simply something that accompanies PAACS; it is essential to who we are and how we move forward.**

We are also praising God for the recent **PAACS Spiritual Retreat in Togo**, where PAACS Spiritual Dean Pastor Ed Searce and PAACS Board of Directors Chair Dr. Michael Skinner attended and spoke with residents, faculty, and administrators from Hospital of Hope and Hôpital Baptiste Biblique. It was a meaningful time of renewal and fellowship. Looking ahead, PAACS Associate Spiritual Dean Pastor Robert Yanduya is preparing for a spiritual retreat in Tanzania this October, bringing together the PAACS family from Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre, Selian Lutheran Hospital, and Nkinga Referral Hospital. **Please pray that the Lord will use this time to strengthen and encourage all who attend.**

Even in the administrative work of ministry, we depend upon the Lord. PAACS is currently in the midst of our annual audit. Please pray for wisdom, accuracy, and strength for our Finance team and all those involved. We desire to honor God in every detail as we faithfully steward the resources He has provided through friends like you.

We are also preparing for a very special gathering. From October 8th–10th, the PAACS family will gather at the Hilton Garden Inn Chicago O'Hare in Des Plaines, Illinois, for our 2026 Fall Conference as we celebrate 30 years of God's faithfulness to PAACS. Our theme, "Great Is His Faithfulness: Celebrating 30 Years of PAACS—Remembering His Goodness. Stepping Into His Future," beautifully captures where our hearts are in this anniversary year.

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO: PRAYER IS WOVEN THROUGHOUT THIS SEASON (CONT'D)

Already, **112 people are registered**, and we are looking forward to worship, prayer, fellowship, and hearing stories of God's work through PAACS across Africa. We will celebrate what God has accomplished over three decades while also looking toward the future of spiritual formation, surgical education, partnerships, and the continued work of PAACS across the continent. Registration is filling, so if you plan to join us, please register by **Wednesday, September 9th**.

As I reflect on all that is before us, I keep returning to the same truth: we cannot do this work in our own strength. We need the Lord's wisdom. We need His provision. We need His protection. And we need prayer. Kevin's safe return is a beautiful reminder that even when we cannot see what God is doing, we can continue to bring our requests before Him and trust in His unfailing love.

Thank you for praying with us and for allowing us the privilege of praying for you. May we continue to be a ministry that seeks the Lord first, remembers His goodness, and trusts Him with all that lies ahead.

Great is His faithfulness!

Blessings,



Susan A. Koshy, JD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer





TENWEK CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY: EXPANDING LIFE-SAVING CARE ACROSS AFRICA

Arega Fekadu, MD, FACS, FCS ECSA (CTh), FCS ECSA
Faculty Member, Cardiothoracic Surgery
Tenwek Hospital, Kenya

The AGC Tenwek PAACS Cardiothoracic Surgery Fellowship Program continues to expand its impact across Africa through training, mentorship, and mission outreach. The program now serves Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Tanzania, and Togo, strengthening local capacity to deliver life-saving cardiac care.



In 2026, the program conducted two mission outreaches in Ethiopia in partnership with Gesund Medical and Cardiac Center. More than 100 patients were evaluated, and 11 underwent successful open-heart surgery, while local healthcare professionals received hands-on training and mentorship.

With over 50,000 Ethiopians needing cardiac surgery annually and fewer than 1,000 accessing these services, the need remains great. Through the PAACS Fellowship Program, AGC Tenwek Cardiothoracic Centre remains committed to training future cardiothoracic surgeons,

expanding access to quality cardiac care, and sharing the hope and healing of Christ.

We thank you for your continued prayers and partnership as we transform lives across Africa through compassionate, life-saving cardiac surgery.

Extending Life-Saving Christ-Centered Cardiac Care Across Borders: Malawi Cardiac Mission

In April 2026, our multidisciplinary team returned to Blantyre Adventist Hospital in Malawi for our annual cardiovascular surgical mission. Comprising cardiothoracic surgeons, a cardiothoracic surgery fellow, cardiovascular perfusionists, a perfusion trainee, and a cardiovascular anesthesiologist, the team partnered with cardiac critical care nurses and cardiology specialists from the United States to provide advanced cardiac care while training and collaborating with local healthcare professionals.

During the mission, 125 patients with complex cardiac conditions were screened, with 40 selected for surgical intervention. The team successfully performed 30 life-changing cardiovascular procedures, including 14 open-heart surgeries for rheumatic and congenital heart disease, 12 pacemaker implantations, and four percutaneous balloon valvuloplasties.

TENWEK CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY: EXPANDING LIFE-SAVING CARE ACROSS AFRICA (CONT'D)



The mission also strengthened regional capacity through hands-on training, mentorship, and knowledge exchange. The team's work received recognition from Malawi's Ministry of Health and was featured in national media, highlighting the growing impact of specialized cardiac care across the region.

Malawi continues to face a significant burden of cardiovascular disease, with many patients having limited access to specialized cardiac services. Through this annual mission, AGC Tenwek Cardiothoracic Centre remains

dedicated to expanding access to life-saving care, building lasting partnerships, and equipping healthcare professionals to provide sustainable cardiac services.

Advancing Cardiothoracic Excellence Through Collaboration

In May 2026, AGC Tenwek Cardiothoracic Centre, in collaboration with the Kenya Association of Thoracic Surgeons (KATS), proudly hosted the inaugural Cardiothoracic Surgery and Cardiovascular Perfusion Conference under the theme, "Elevating Cardiothoracic Care and Training in Sub-Saharan Africa." Chaired by our then PAACS Cardiothoracic Surgery Program Director, Dr. Arega Fekadu Leta, the conference brought together leading cardiothoracic surgeons, cardiovascular perfusionists, anesthesiologists, fellows, nurses, trainees, and allied healthcare professionals from across Africa and beyond to share knowledge, strengthen partnerships, and advance excellence in cardiac care.

The conference featured distinguished local and international faculty who presented the latest advances in cardiothoracic surgery, cardiovascular perfusion, anesthesia, and multidisciplinary cardiac care through keynote lectures, scientific presentations, panel discussions, and interactive learning sessions. Trainees and early-career professionals also had opportunities to engage with experienced mentors, present research, exchange ideas, and build relationships that will help shape the future of cardiothoracic care throughout the region.



As the first conference of its kind hosted by AGC Tenwek Cardiothoracic Centre, this landmark event reflects our commitment to strengthening education, promoting collaboration, and developing the next generation of cardiovascular specialists. We remain grateful to our partners, faculty, and participants who helped make this event possible. Please continue to pray for our Cardiothoracic Surgery Training Program as we prepare future leaders to serve with excellence, compassion, and the love of Christ.



CMDA NIGERIA DOCTORS' NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026: EXCELLENCE FOR IMPACT

Louisa Nneka Nwachukwu, MD, MBBS, FCS (ECSA)
Assistant Program Director, General Surgery
SIM Galmi Hospital, Niger

I had the privilege of attending the Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) Nigeria Doctors' National Conference 2026, themed "Excellence for Impact." The conference brought together Christian doctors and dental professionals from across Nigeria for a time of worship, learning, fellowship, and renewed commitment to serving Christ through excellence in healthcare. Drawing lessons from the life of Daniel, participants were challenged to pursue excellence in every sphere of influence for the glory of God.

The conference featured a variety of enriching activities, including pre-conference workshops, theme expositions, scientific presentations, and parallel sessions. I attended the Whole Person Medicine Training, which was particularly impactful. The training emphasized holistic patient care that addresses not only physical needs but also the emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of health. It reinforced the importance of compassionate, Christ-centered medical practice.

I was also given the opportunity to speak on the burden of SIM Galmi Mission Hospital, highlighting the current needs, challenges, and opportunities for ministry in Niger. It was encouraging to share how God continues to use the hospital as a beacon of hope and healing despite the many challenges faced in the region.

In addition, during the missions opportunities session, I presented on PAACS' impact over the past 30 years, emphasizing the theme, "PAACS: Excellence in Training and Discipling in Christ." This presentation generated significant interest among conference participants, especially medical students and young doctors who desire to serve in missions while pursuing excellence in their surgical careers. Many were encouraged to learn that PAACS provides a unique platform for both high-quality surgical training and intentional discipleship.

I am deeply grateful to God for the opportunity to attend this conference. The experience was both enriching and transformative. Through the teachings, fellowship, and interactions, I was challenged to pursue greater excellence in surgery, discipleship, and Christian service. I return to my place of ministry better equipped and inspired to make a greater impact for Christ in my sphere of influence. To God alone be all the glory.





PAACS LAUNCHES NEW SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS COURSE

Ed Searce, DMin, ThM
Spiritual Dean

In June 2026, PAACS introduced the PAACS Spiritual Leadership Foundations course to all of its faculty members. This is an approximately 18-month study on the art of spiritual leadership. It is designed to lay a strong foundation for leading others in the ministry to which God has called them to.



Purpose of the course:

1. Provide a solid foundation in biblical leadership
2. Encourage the participants on their journey of becoming fully devoted followers of Christ.
3. Help fulfill 2 Timothy 2:2
“And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” — 2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV)
4. Become a resource for answering some of the difficult questions concerning spiritual leadership.

Thirty-eight faculty members have already enrolled and begun the course. We are thankful for the strong interest in this study.

We are also very grateful for the 12 surgeons (many of whom are former PAACS faculty members) who have volunteered to serve as personal coaches.

How: There are four ways to work through the material.

1. Work through the material individually.
2. Work through the material utilizing a coach.

There are a number of former PAACS Program Directors who have volunteered to serve as coaches. The frequency of meetings would be determined by each participant and coach, with a suggested meeting approximately once every six weeks. Contact the PAACS Spiritual Dean at spiritualdean@paacs.net for available coaches.



PAACS LAUNCHES NEW SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS COURSE (CONT'D)

3. Work through the material in partnership with a small group of peers.

We recommend a group of three to five peers. This could be with others serving at your site or through Zoom. This is a great way to invest in the lives of others and to gain their input. Frequency of meetings would be determined by the group. Perhaps every six to eight weeks.

4. Work through the material with a coach and a small group of peers.

"We met up tonight as a group for the first time as faculty for the PAACS leadership course, and it was a blessing—very thankful for your work on this curriculum and organizing the groups!"

— Dr. Peter Collister, PAACS General Surgery Faculty, Bongolo Hospital

The PAACS Spiritual Leadership Foundations course is made up of ten modules, each focusing on various aspects of spiritual leadership.





HOSPITAL OF HOPE AND HÔPITAL BAPTISTE BIBLIQUE SPIRITUAL RETREAT IN TOGO

Jack E. Kehl III, MD, FACS, FCS (ECSA)
Program Director, General Surgery
Hôpital Baptiste Biblique, Togo

Seven PAACS residents from Hospital of Hope and Hôpital Baptiste Biblique, along with three faculty members and two assistant administrators, gathered in Lomé, Togo, for the 2026 PAACS Togo Spiritual Retreat. PAACS Spiritual Dean Pastor Ed Searce and PAACS Board of Directors Chair Dr. Michael Skinner joined the gathering, sharing with and encouraging the PAACS Togo team.

Centered on the theme “The Beauty of a Transformed Life,” the retreat focused on the transforming power of God’s grace in Christ. Pastor Ed led the team through a study of Romans 12, exploring how the Holy Spirit transforms the lives of believers as they follow Christ. Those attending were encouraged by the study and challenged to commit Romans 12 to memory.

During their time in Togo, Pastor Ed and Dr. Skinner also visited Hospital of Hope and Hôpital Baptiste Biblique. Through their presence and prayers, they expressed their love and support for the surgical teams serving at both hospitals.





ARE WE PRAYING? A REFLECTION FROM PAACS GENERAL SURGERY AT SODDO CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL

Gezahegn Tilahun, MD, FCS (ECSA), FACS
Program Director, General Surgery
Soddo Christian Hospital, Ethiopia

Are You Praying?

When you face a challenge, is prayer your first priority? When people share their challenges with you, do you sincerely pray with them or respond with gossip, rationalization, or other human efforts?

Back when I was an undergraduate student, I used to talk about my concept called the Golden Triangle for success. The idea was simple: if you wanted to be a good student, you had to follow these core pillars. The three pillars of the triangle were: classroom/patient side, library, and cafe. Do not drift away from the triangle. Invest your time and energy there.

Early in my Christian life, after coming to genuine faith in Jesus Christ, I naturally applied that same "Golden Triangle" logic to my spiritual walk. I told myself that to grow in Christ I should focus on the "Golden Triangle": reading the Bible, prayer, and obedience. I believed that to mature as a believer, I needed to consistently study the Scriptures, pray, and cultivate a desire to obey God—the spiritual "Golden Triangle." Prayer, Scripture, and obedience go hand in hand.

Are We Praying Consistently?

We live in a world surrounded by a multitude of invisible spiritual battles. The Apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 6 that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces of evil. In this fight, prayer is not just an extra option or a pious habit—it is a vital piece of our armor. "Put on the full armor of God...pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...." Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

I have been reading a book on prayer by Pastor Tim Keller, where he speaks about prayer not merely as a discipline, but as an experience of deep awe and intimacy with God. One quote from his book recently stopped me in my tracks:

"Prayer is the only entryway into genuine self-knowledge. It is also the main way we experience deep change — the reordering of our loves. Prayer is how God gives us so many of the unimaginable things He has for us. Indeed, prayer makes it safe for God to give us many of the things we most desire. It is the way we know God, the way we finally treat God as God. Prayer is simply the key to everything we need to do and be in life." — Timothy Keller, *Prayer*, p. 18

Looking back at the "Golden Triangle," it's easy to treat spiritual habits like a checklist or a formula for success. But Keller's words remind me that prayer is where our hearts actually get reshaped. It is the place where our desires are reordered, where we truly get to know God.

It leaves me asking myself—and you—that same essential question: In the middle of everything competing for our time and energy, how is our prayer life today? Are we truly making space to pray and know the Lord?



AN INVITATION TO CONNECT: BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR PAACS

Amy Hewitt

Manager of Foundation Relations and Grant Development

Grant funding rarely begins with an application. It begins with a relationship — a program officer who already trusts the ministry making the request, a foundation that has heard the story before a proposal ever lands in an inbox. That quiet, relational work sits behind most of the grant funding PAACS receives, and it is part of my role here.

As the Manager of Foundation Relations and Grant Development, I work to help PAACS secure the resources it needs to keep training and discipling African Christian surgeons and related specialists for Africa. In practical terms, this means researching foundations, corporations, and church-based grant programs whose mission aligns with that work, building relationships with the people who lead them, and writing proposals once an invitation to apply exists. Many of the strongest partnerships, though, do not start with cold research. They start with an introduction from someone who already knows and trusts both sides.

That is where you, as part of the PAACS family, come in.

PAACS has grown through relationships rather than transactions from the beginning, and this next chapter is no different. Somewhere in this readership are connections to people and organizations already positioned to partner with PAACS: a surgical or medical specialty society with a grantmaking program, a corporation with a medical or surgical products division that funds global health work or surgical training, a church whose outreach ministry to Africa includes grantmaking, or a foundation staff member known from a board, a conference, or years of shared ministry.

An introduction from a trusted friend carries more weight than any cold outreach ever could. A brief email connecting two people, a name passed along after a conversation, or a simple note saying, "there is someone at PAACS you should meet," can open a door that months of research never would. This is not a request to solicit funds on behalf of PAACS. It is an invitation to think of PAACS when a conversation turns to grantmaking, and to offer a connection where one already exists.

Here is a helpful way to think about it: if you know someone on staff at a foundation, donor-advised fund, corporation, or church that offers grants aligned with medical missions, surgical education, or Christian global health work, a short introduction is more than welcome — it is deeply appreciated. This work is not about pursuing a transaction. It is about finding alignment and partnership with organizations that share a calling to increase access to quality surgical care for the underserved and share the love of Christ across Africa.

AN INVITATION TO CONNECT: BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR PAACS (CONT'D)

Ephesians 4:16 (NIV) offers a fitting picture: "From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." The body of Christ grows stronger through relationship, not isolation, and the same is true in this work. **God has built the PAACS mission over three decades through a network of faithful people who cared enough to make an introduction, open a door, or simply mention a name.** We believe this next season of foundation and grant partnership can grow the same way.

If a name or organization comes to mind while reading this, please reach out. A short email is enough to start the conversation, and every connection, however small it may seem, is welcome.

Please accept this
Invitation to Introduce

Know someone whose organization may share PAACS' mission and offer grant funding? Contact Amy Hewitt, Manager of Foundation Relations and Grant Development, at amy.hewitt@paacs.net to make an introduction.



GOOD NEWS TO SHARE

PAACS 2026 FALL CONFERENCE

**GREAT IS HIS FAITHFULNESS
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF PAACS**

REMEMBERING HIS GOODNESS. STEPPING INTO HIS FUTURE.

**DATE: OCTOBER 8-10, 2026
LOCATION: HILTON GARDEN INN
CHICAGO O'HARE**

Join us as we remember God's goodness and look ahead with faith to what He will continue to do through this ministry.

Registration is filling quickly. If you plan to join us, in-person or virtually, **please register by Wednesday, September 9th.**

**[CLICK HERE TO
REGISTER](#)**

**IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL
REGISTRATION AVAILABLE**

Questions? Email
peggy.ndlovu@paacs.net

NEW PAACS STORE

**[Click here to easily shop our store for
PAACS-branded items.](#)**

[Print Your Cause](#) – featuring 30th anniversary apparel and scrubs.

[Queensboro](#) – offering a wide range of apparel and accessories across various price points.

[Lands' End](#) – providing premium business-casual styles and accessories.

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 God will guide Pastor Robert Yanduya and use the October Spiritual Retreat to strengthen and encourage all who attend.
- Pray for the October PAACS Fall Conference, that God will guide every gathering and use this special 30th anniversary celebration for His glory.

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

- Nishimwe Alain
- Levis Ndayishimiye
- Manishimwe Daniel
- Dickson Gusugusu
- Ineza Nsabiyumva Fine
- Olga Leila Muhimpundu
- Raoul Mbango
- Bukuru Salomon
- Boniface Amani Kandokane
- Christian Gbema Edidi
- Baraka Drakangba Michaël
- Mick Kipchirchir Kimutai



ARTICLES ON SURGERY, OB/GYN, AND ANESTHESIA

Compiled by Margaret Tarpley

- The Role of Faith-Based Organizations in the Pharmaceutical Systems of Low-and-Middle-Income Countries – A Scoping Review
- Leadership - An Essential Objective of Professional Development in Surgery
- SBAS Presidential Address: A Surgeon-Scientist's Journey from Haptic Science to Digital Performance Metrics
- The Importance of Equitable Research Collaboration and Community Participation in Global Surgery
- Impact of Intraoperative Ergonomic Microbreaks on Surgeons' Well-Being and Performance: A Systematic Review
- Patient Blood Management: A Systematic Review of Current International Guidelines
- Intraarterial Dexamethasone for Pain Relief After Uterine Fibroid Embolization
- Laparoscopic Deskinning—The Hidden Risk of Robotic Dominance
- Reporting and Analysis of Sociodemographic Characteristics in High-Impact Perioperative Medicine Studies: A Scoping Review
- Nasogastric Tubes—Indications, Placement, and Management: A Review
- Challenges and Factors Affecting Safe Anesthesia Provision in Hospitals of the Adamawa Region (Cameroon): A Cross-Sectional Study
- Postoperative Anemia and Long-Term Survival Following Cardiac Surgery: A Multicenter, Retrospective, Observational Study

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

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CONNECT

