



PAN-AFRICAN ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN SURGEONS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

God is Using Us to Share the Gospel

DR. JAMES JOSEPH



Dr. James Joseph

My name is James Joseph, and I want to share with you my incredible journey. It's a story filled with love, blessings, and faith. I am married to my beloved wife, Margret, and we have two precious daughters, Jessie and Jane. I was born and raised in South Sudan before its independence. I am the second oldest of ten children, with three brothers and six sisters. Our upbringing was firmly grounded in Christianity. Growing up, I often found myself as the sole Christian student in my school, a testament to the path I was destined to walk.

After I completed my education, I prayed for God to help me find my way forward. I became more and more interested in the surgical treatment of disease and started searching for opportunities for more training. While attending a conference in Egypt, I heard of PAACS Founder Dr. David Thompson, and he inspired me. Later, a group of volunteer surgeons visited South Sudan, and Dr. Bob Cropsey was among them. He spoke with me about the practice of surgery and encouraged me to learn more about PAACS. That conversation convinced me to apply for a PAACS residency position, and I was blessed with a scholarship to begin my general surgery training and discipleship at Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Bamenda, Cameroon.

My residency program at Mbingo did not finish as planned. Continued fighting in parts of Cameroon forced a temporary pause in the program. Residents were transferred to other PAACS training sites to continue their training, and I ended up completing my residency in August 2020 at AIC Kijabe Hospital in Kenya. But the spirit of my PAACS training and discipleship continued. I found great value from experiencing and learning to perform so many surgical cases. It was a blessing to get to work with different God-fearing and dedicated surgeons who imparted their skills and wisdom to me along with their love of God.

My family and I are currently serving on the coast of Kenya. As part of my ministry, I am able to pray with my patients, proclaim the gospel to them, and introduce them to our Lord Jesus Christ. Many patients come to know Him and follow His Word. I have seen the way God touches the hearts and lives of these patients to heal them and give them a second chance at life to serve Him.

I recall a young gentleman we were treating for acute pancreatitis. In addition to his medical treatment, he received the message of the gospel. He accepted the challenge to follow Jesus Christ and asked for a Bible. It was a great joy to watch him growing in his faith. **God is using us as his tools to share the gospel and change patients' lives.** I am so grateful for my experience with PAACS and the way they have invested in me, shaped my life, developed my surgical skills, and have given me the privilege to perform surgical procedures that put back smiles and joy into the hearts of His people. God bless PAACS!



The Joseph Family



Dear PAACS Family

We are excited to present to you this edition of the PAACS Alumni Newsletter. In this volume, we are blessed to feature articles from two of our PAACS graduates, Dr. James Joseph and Dr. Etta Ndum.

Dr. James Joseph, originally from South Sudan, embarked on his residency journey in Mbingo, Cameroon. Due to the conflict situation in Northeast Cameroon, which led to the temporary closure of the program, he had to leave Cameroon to continue and complete his residency at AIC Kijabe Hospital in Kenya. Dr. James has since remained in Kenya, faithfully serving as a surgeon.

Dr. Etta Ndum, hailing from Cameroon, shares a similar story. She began her residency in Mbingo, but due to civil unrest, she completed her last year and a half of residency at Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi. Dr. Ndum persevered and today, she is back in Cameroon making a significant impact as a General Surgeon.

As you read this edition, I invite you to reflect on these verses:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

- Proverbs 3:5-6

Yours in Christ,

Lemfuka Dieudonne, MD, Editor
afidulemfuka@gmail.com

Nothing Else Would Do

DR. ETTA NDUM



Dr. Etta Ndum

My name is Etta-Ayum Constance Ndum, and my journey is woven together with love for my homeland, Cameroon. I was born in Shishon-Kumbo, but my family soon moved to the heart of our nation's capital, Yaounde. From my early years, I pursued education with a burning passion that carried me through high school. My quest for knowledge eventually led me to The Gambia, where I earned my MBChB degree.

I was baptized and raised as a Catholic, with parents who never compromised their principles and raised me to do the same. They gave me my first Bible in primary school, "The Bible in Pictures for Little Eyes." As I grew older, my spiritual journey became a deliberate pursuit, a quest to deepen my faith and draw closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

I first came across PAACS on the internet while searching for possible residency programs before coming home. After returning to Cameroon, I dedicated three years of my life as a general practitioner at the Banso Baptist Hospital. It was there that I became acquainted with PAACS-trained surgeons who left an indelible mark on my heart. Dr. Nock and Dr. Yali, in particular, left me awe-inspired. It was at that moment that I knew, deep within my soul, that if I were to become a surgeon, it could only be as a PAACS surgeon. **Nothing else would do.**

As I shared my dream of joining the PAACS program with those around me, I was met with unwavering encouragement from my fellow surgeons, my Chief Medical Officer, and my family. They rallied behind me, acknowledging the arduous journey ahead. Among them, my father emerged as my relentless advocate, constantly ensuring my application was in order. He has always known how to push me to realize my dreams. In 2015, I received the life-changing news of my acceptance into the PAACS program at Mbingo Baptist Hospital, where I found a new family.

Due to civil unrest in Cameroon which continues to this day, I completed my final year and a half of training and discipleship at the PAACS program at Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi. This tumultuous journey shaped not only my medical skills, but also my spiritual growth.

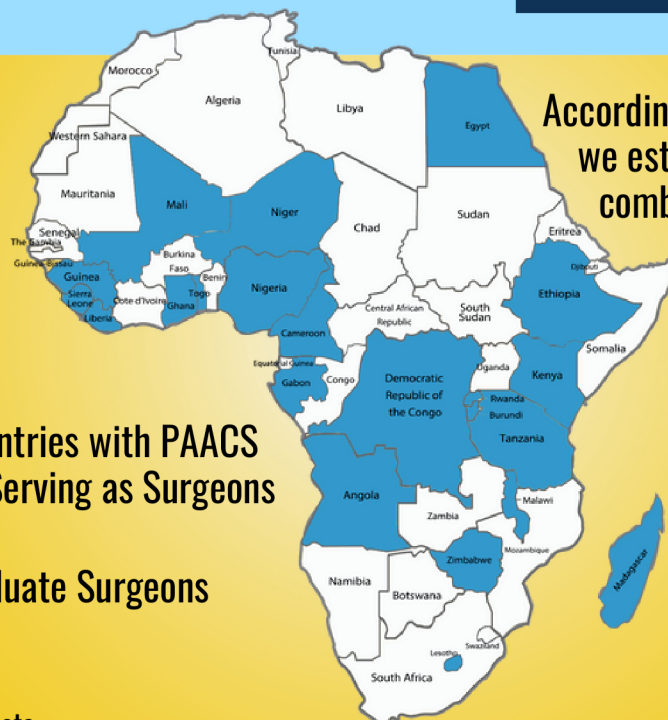
Discipleship was an integral part of our training, fostering the maturation of my spiritual life. **The mission-driven setting breathed new life into my growth as a surgeon.**

My training gave me the gift of seeing other's needs before my own. It instilled in me the importance of intangible things like being available, ready to communicate, doing things properly even when no one is watching, praying for and with patients, praying before procedures, teaching junior colleagues... all these things which we were taught stood out boldly once I was in the outside world. Of course, behaving this way looks like foolishness in some people's eyes. But I realized that this is now my identity. **I am not just a surgeon. I am a PAACS surgeon!** I am a Christian surgeon and I have a responsibility to live up to that name.

I believe showing patients they are loved and cared for makes a big difference. I notice a change in demeanor when they are prayed for. There is always an inaudible sigh of relief and a sense of calm. **It is a beautiful thing to remind people that they are loved by our Lord.**



Dr. Ndum, right, operating on a patient



According to the PAACS 2023 Alumni Survey, we estimate the impact in 2023 from all combined PAACS graduates has been:

356,000
patients seen in clinic

101,000
procedures performed

27,000
people heard the Good News

22 African Countries with PAACS Graduates Serving as Surgeons

144 PAACS Graduate Surgeons

Donate at www.paacs.net/donate