



October 18, 2021

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

Our mission – in partnership with your church – is to glorify God by equipping African students for excellent service in God’s kingdom. Despite the challenges around the world, all of us at African Christian College remain focused on our mission of sending transformed students into the world to expand God’s kingdom. **Thank you for being an important part of the important work God is doing in Africa.**

Your church is reaching people in parts of Africa we could only dream of reaching by sending missionaries abroad. Instead, the Gospel is spreading across Africa through students you prepared at African Christian College. Unlike foreign missionaries, the graduates already know the local language, culture, and customs to be effective in sharing God’s message of restoration. Like all good missionaries, they are committed to living out and sharing their faith in their families, workplaces, communities, and in the local church.

You have taught and sent graduates to over a dozen nations throughout Africa . . . including Eswatini, South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and Sudan (highlighted in green).

God is not only at work in your local church and community. God is working *through you* in Africa . . . even today. **Over two dozen students are finishing up their 2021 courses.** Thanks to you, they continue to receive a quality education during the pandemic.



In this newsy-letter, I want to share a few highlights about what's happening at African Christian College. This is so you can share with your congregation about the work you're doing in Africa.

Eswatini Political Unrest

At the end of June, violent protests erupted throughout the entire country of Eswatini. Fortunately, our campus is in less urban area and protected from the destruction and violence of the protesters. Protests are not uncommon in Eswatini, but the magnitude and participation in these protests were unprecedented.

Many of the organizing groups are anti-monarchy and want the king (the last absolute monarch in Africa) to step down and allow the people to form a new government. Opportunists took advantage of the chaos for personal gain – looting and destroying businesses. Other groups and worker unions join the protests with their own demands with unclear links to an overthrow of the government. The stress and poverty heightened by the pandemic also contributed to the unrest.

After a few days of nationwide violence, the military took control of the roads and cities. This allowed some things to return to 'normal.' But the violence continued to erupt throughout the country including the burning of government schools and buildings and a brutal response by security forces. The violence has again escalated this month, effectively shutting down highways, cities, businesses, and offices as anti-monarchy protesters and schools erupt in protest.

There are no easy solutions to this conflict. The complicated and conflicting demands make it difficult to identify any reasonable path forward. Please join us in prayer for peace in Eswatini that honors God and cares for others.



Pray for Peace in Eswatini

Pray for a resolution to the violence and protests that honors God and respects the dignity of all people.

Covid19 Pandemic in Eswatini

Southern Africa took extreme action in 2020 to “flatten the curve” and minimize the impact of Covid19. And it worked. As you know, we had a lockdown on our campus that kept the 100 individuals living there within the campus for 9 months. As a result, our students were able to progress with their studies and we graduated over 20 students in December 2020.

A desire to move on from such tight restrictions lead to a much more difficult year with the pandemic. Early in 2021 the second wave hit Eswatini and then a much bigger and more deadly third wave arrived in July. Covid19 infected more people in Eswatini in July & August 2021 than all of 2020.

African Christian College had zero cases from March 2020 until late June 2021. As expected, once it arrived on campus it spread quickly, infecting at least a third of the residents on campus. None needed hospitalization, though a few have lingering issues that began with their Covid19 infection.

Thankfully, the pandemic is lessening now. Eswatini has among the highest vaccination rates in Africa, but it remains at less than 20%. Access to enough vaccines continues to be a challenge in Africa and the developing world.

Student Transformation Continues

Thanks to your help, students continue to learn despite the challenges brought by Covid19 and local protests. But our teaching and learning process has changed in response to these challenges.

We made a difficult decision in February to send our students back to their home countries. Students and staff were worried about campus safety with the pandemic and were worn out from dealing with the stress of the 2020 lockdown. It turned out to be a great decision. It made it much easier to navigate the two deadly waves of Covid19 that hit locally alongside the violent protests around the country without students on our campus.

Your generous support helped us provide safe and fast return travel for all our students to their home countries. It also helped cancel

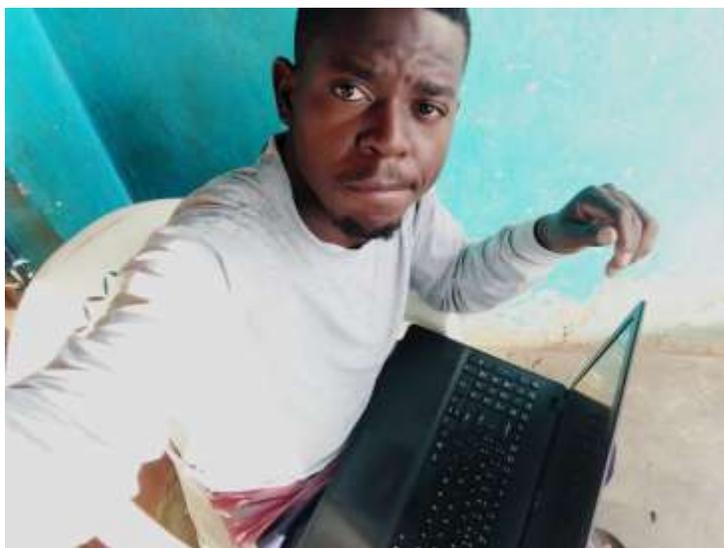
all student fees for 2021 while providing students money for necessities and internet, and a laptop for virtual learning at home.

Thanks to a new partnership with Abilene Christian University, we were also able to provide a much higher quality learning experience for our students at home. We were able to match most of our 2021 courses with courses from ACU Online's new undergraduate programs. Our lecturers used these professionally developed courses to teach our students this year. We've seen higher satisfaction among students and staff in their online learning this year.

Virtual learning hasn't been a total win, however. Providing virtual courses and learning materials is costly. And as we expected, several students dropped who could not manage home expectations with studies. While we've seen good learning outcomes, we've also seen some of our best students struggle academically.

From this we're learning much about the limits and opportunities of virtual learning in Africa. And we're also seeing how valuable it is for students to be able to study in a safe, Christian environment away from the tug of responsibilities and challenges faced at home. On campus, students have a place to live, food at each meal, a job, and their classes and academic resources just steps away. At home, providing food for the family overwhelms the priority of studying.

We continue spiritual formation and student transformation as they study at home as we work with local mentors, ministers, and others to guide our students along with our virtual curriculum and teaching. But we certainly miss the daily rhythms of worship, work, and life together on campus.



Thanks to your help, Zuze has a laptop to complete his studies online in Malawi.

Two Graduates in Leadership

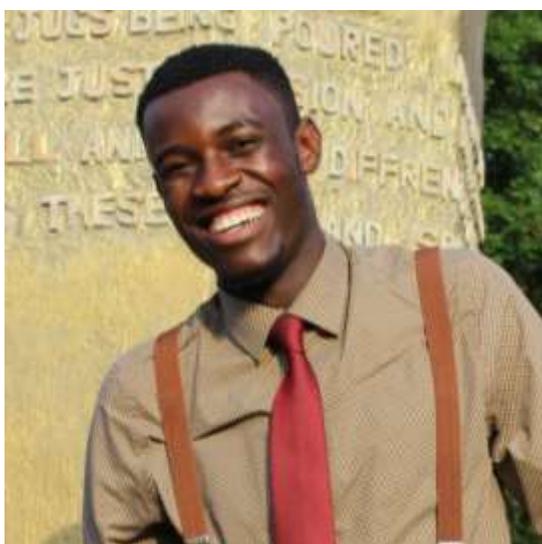
One of the exciting things that has happened this year is the promotion of **Ndumiso Dlamini as Academic Dean**. Ndumiso is a 2014 graduate of African Christian College who also completed his master's degree in education (MEd) in Higher Educational Leadership from ACU in 2020. He plans to begin doctoral studies soon.



Ndumiso Dlamini is a 2014 graduate and 2020 MEd graduate who now serves as Academic Dean.

As Admissions Coordinator & Ambassador, Ndumiso has been a valuable member of our team since 2015. He has overseen the increase in our student enrollment the past five years and has strengthened our relationships with local churches and government agencies. He is committed to ACC's mission and continues to develop his professional, spiritual, and personal skills for leadership.

Another ACC graduate, **Tendekai Mashaire**, joined our team as a lecturer last year. Tendekai graduated in 2017. At home in Zimbabwe, he



Tendekai Mashaire is a 2017 graduate who has returned as a full-time lecturer in psychology.

furthered his studies by earning a graduate degree in organizational psychology while working as a counselor with a local nonprofit organization. Tendekai is currently enrolled in a doctoral program while teaching a full load of our online courses this year.

It's thrilling to see these two young men as leaders among our staff. **You helped equip them into the godly, qualified, and capable young leaders they are today.** Looking at their growth and commitment to being part of the African Christian College mission is one of the clearest signs of God at work this past year.

Celebrating a Record-Breaking Harvest

We completed our 2021 macadamia harvest in Eswatini last month and are thankful to have had our **largest macadamia nut harvest ever!** The Tree of Life produced over 145,000 pounds of ready-to-eat macadamia nuts!

You may recall that the 2020 harvest of macadamia nuts was disappointing – about half of the previous year’s harvest. So, it’s an extra special blessing to have a record-breaking harvest this year.

The Tree of Life Project continues to be our primary financial sustainability effort at African Christian College.

We were blessed that despite a crash in macadamia nut sales in 2020, UKWAZI Makadamia, our US-based macadamia nut brand, managed to remain profitable. Our 2020 and 2021 sales are currently half of our 2019 sales, but we continue to work toward a return to pre-pandemic sales levels over the next 12-18 months.

Practicing Our Values as an Employer

Like you, I want to ensure that African Christian College lives out its Christian values in all areas of our work. It is impossible to teach and transform students effectively if the college is not practicing what it is teaching and preaching. A few months ago, we completed a project begun just before the pandemic related to reviewing our human resources, particularly in Eswatini.

Our professional consultants helped us to update our HR policies and practices . . . including the implementation of salary scales based on local



Macadamias purchases support students!

Our macadamia nuts are available in HEB & Central Market “Healthy Living” sections and online at buyMacadamias.com

(Eswatini) market salaries in all industries. We learned that most of our employees were below comparable salaries and about half of our employees were paid far below salaries for comparable positions. According to board policy, salaries must be fair and reasonably comparable to the local market.

To set this right, we implemented the salary scales in July 2021 and increased all salaries – for the first time since January 2020. This doubled the annual cost of our salary and benefits to our Eswatini-based employees. Like many organizations, salaries are our greatest expense, so doubling this expense comes with a significant cost.

But it's worth it. I believe for African Christian College to fully become the institution that God calls us to be, we must walk our talk of treating others with dignity, love, and fairness. And I believe that this will also help us to attract and retain high performers who will continue to ensure the future good work of equipping students for excellent service in God's kingdom.

Transitions for the Future

Since our 50th anniversary in 2017, we've been planning for the next fifty years of African Christian College. We've taken steps toward implementing this new vision . . . but much of it remains unknown considering recent events. In November 2021, our board and staff leadership will be meeting together to prayerfully discern our future vision. I hope you and your congregation will join us in prayer.

Let me briefly explain what I do know about our vision:

- **We are retiring our current academic programs.** We enrolled our last group of students into our existing Bachelor of Theology degree in January 2020. The current program is scheduled to end in December of this year.



Pray for the Vision

Over the next month, we'll be making important decisions about the future programs and vision for the school. Your prayers will help!

- **We are preparing to launch new programs.** Originally, we planned to launch new academic programs in August 2022, but it will likely be 2023 before they are launched. These changes are driven by accreditation requirements as well as our desire to provide the best and most relevant education possible for our students.
- **We will have a new name.** I can hardly wait to share it with you (and I will soon). “College” in Southern Africa is associated with high school-level learning instead of university-level. Because African Christian University already exists, we had to come up with something new. Be on the lookout!
- **Our mission remains untouched.** We remain fully committed to equipping African students for excellent service in God’s kingdom. What we’re defining now is how to best deliver on that mission as we seek to steward the resources entrusted to us by you, our other supporters, and God.

Financial Stewardship

African Christian College seeks to be good stewards of God’s resources by building sustainable funding through a diversity of sources – including church partners like you, individual supporters, and earned revenue. Our 14,000 macadamia trees provide most of the operational revenue to cover our \$1 million in annual operating expenses.

Your church’s support is transforming students across Africa.
Thank you!!

Donations from the USA have been similar the past few years at around \$375,000. Our sixteen congregational partners provide 40% of our annual donations (\$155,000). Our Eswatini macadamia harvest in 2020 generated \$400,000 in revenue and this year’s harvest is expected to earn \$885,000.

Quick Highlights

Here are a few more highlights for those who like extra details:

- **We have 24 students enrolled from 9 nations.** This is a significant drop compared to the 56 students we had last year that is a result of not enrolling a freshman class and the pandemic.
- African Christian College remains fully recognized and accredited by both the **Eswatini Higher Education Council** and the **Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa**.
- Staff Changes:
 - **Lynn Rhodes**, an on-campus lecturer since 2012, retired from teaching at the end of 2020.
 - **Dr. Alan Martin**, who served as our VP of Academic Affairs, left our team at the end of 2020.
 - **Dr. Paul Chimhungwe**, an on-campus lecturer since 2014, has been on leave all year to address health challenges.
 - **Enoch Matonsie** retired last year after decades of working with our orchards and operations team.
- Our Locavore Market has continued this year with new team members. The pandemic, protests, and smaller campus community combined to make it difficult to succeed this past year.

Ways to Further Our Work Together

Your church is an important part of what God is doing in Africa. It's easy to get distracted by the challenges we've faced, but God is still at work. And **your work at African Christian College is making a difference across the continent.**

I also want this partnership together to be meaningful to you and your congregation. Here are some of my ideas of how we might do that, but I really want to hear from you about how you think we can best partner with your church and all its members.

Prayer Support

- ✓ Add African Christian College and/or our students and staff to your church's published prayer lists
- ✓ Subscribe to our monthly prayer calendar to pray with prayer warriors around the globe. Contact jan@AfricanChristianCollege.org
- ✓ Pray for peace in Eswatini that honors God; for safety for our campus; for health and well-being; for student transformation; for healthy and productive macadamia trees; for our vision discernment process; and for our leaders, board, staff, and students.

Plan a Church Visit or Macadamia Nut Sale

- ✓ Help us set-up a Macadamia Sales Booth at your worship service. Members can buy for themselves or to give others
- ✓ Invite us to meet with your Missions Committee, elders, or ministry staff to talk about God at work in Africa
- ✓ Invite us to preach, offer the communion talk, or teach a Bible class and share about your church's work in Eswatini
- ✓ Invite us to share in a virtual communion service, preaching, or presentation during your virtual services or classes

Plan a Trip to Eswatini

- ✓ There's nothing comparable to being on-campus. We can help plan an ideal trip for people from your congregation.

Tell Your Church about Your Mission in Eswatini

- ✓ Share our video update before, during, or after your worship service or Bible class.
- ✓ Print or email written updates to all your members
- ✓ Link our website on your church website
- ✓ Share African Christian College social media updates on your church's social media channels.

Contact Us

If we can help you with any of these ideas . . . or if you have ideas or needs of your own that would help to strengthen our partnership together, please contact me or Dr. Jan Meyer, our US-based development director.

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Thank you!

I'm praying God continues to work in and through your church as it glorifies God and makes disciples. And I'm praying for our work together to continue to make a positive impact in God's kingdom in Africa.

Despite the challenges the world has been facing . . . God is at work. I'm blessed with a front row seat at how your work with African Christian College is transforming students . . . results you don't get to see firsthand.

- I get to hear **Anthony** speak up as a student leader even when it's difficult because ACC pushes him to be a person of integrity.
- I get to read **Lee's** papers that show her growing understanding of God's Word and how it is helping strengthen her faith.
- I get to see **Bentry's** garden and pig business replicating our Locavore Market.
- I get to watch as **Tumelo** explains how her learning is helping her to recognize new ways to help young girls in her community avoid poverty and abuse.
- I get to pray with **Mlungisi** as we walk together through the difficulties of life and help each other grow to be like Jesus.



Brad & Rachael Carter with 2020 graduate Mlungisi Moyo who now works as an entrepreneurship trainer with the Zimbabwean government.

- I get to celebrate with **Celeste** as she recounts her students successful counselling sessions with former addicts at a nearby nonprofit.
- I get to taste the fresh mulberry ice cream that **Stallone** learned to make and has inspired him for a business at home in Malawi.

I hope this newsy-letter will get shared with your ministry staff, elders, and missions committee. I've also included more information you can easily share with your members about your mission work at African Christian College.

Above all, I pray that God is glorified in our work together. And, again, if you have any questions, ideas, or need information . . . please don't hesitate to contact me.

Blessings,



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