



October 12, 2020

Memorial Church of Christ
900 Echo Lane
Houston, TX 77024-2737

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

One of the greatest blessings of this year has been your continued partnership in the work of God in Africa. Your prayers, gifts, and encouragement have kept the mission of God moving forward. Partnering with your congregation is a great blessing to us and the Kingdom ... and I hope it's a blessing for your congregation, too. **Thank you.**

The attached report gives a brief update on the ways God has been at work this past year. Globally, 2020 has not been easy and, like you, we've had to shift our normal routines because of the pandemic. But God is still at work.

Our students, staff, board, and prayer warriors are praying for you. We're asking God to continue to bless you as you bless God's kingdom around the world. And we are thankful for your prayers for our students and leadership.

Your congregation's financial support transforms lives. Thanks to you, graduates return to their home countries to strengthen churches and spread God's love. The number of lives you touch as a result is impossible to measure. Your gifts are important in the work God is doing in Eswatini. I look forward to continuing to partner together with you.

It's important for your members to hear how God is working through missions. So, please share this report with your missions leaders, staff, elders, and congregation. And, again, thank you for being a partner in God's work.

Blessings,

Brad Carter
President

MEMORIAL Report

THANK YOU, Memorial family!

Thank you for your committed support, your prayers, and your encouragement in educating African women and men for excellent service in God's kingdom. Your consistent and generous support has prepared and sent African Christians all across the African continent.

These graduates are living out the Gospel by preaching God's Word and welcoming people into the Body of Christ. Their lives as preachers, Christian teachers, development workers, Christian counsellors, farmers, and mothers, fathers, husbands, and wives are growing the Kingdom of God in Africa. Your generosity is growing the Kingdom of God in Africa!

THANK YOU!!

DEVELOPMENTS & UPDATES

OUR PANDEMIC RESPONSE

As of September 30, our campus remains on lockdown. This strategy has been very successful in maintaining a healthy campus community. To date, we have had no cases of COVID19 on campus. Though cases of the virus continue to increase in Eswatini and surrounding countries, our campus has remained virus-free. Students study online, eat their meals in the cafeteria using social distance procedures, and any gatherings are limited to the allowable numbers. Groceries and other necessary items are delivered weekly. Students can place orders for whatever they want through a campus process. This success is not without struggle, though. Staff and students are weary of remaining on campus. Some battle frustration about the loss of options for coming and going to see local friends, while others are thankful to be in a place where there is less fear of being infected. Studying in front of screens is not for everyone, and the strain is real. Social distancing and limited extra-curricular activities mean more time spent in isolation. Our Covid19 Response Team has begun to discuss options for easing some of the restrictions if circumstances become favorable to do so in the coming weeks.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR 2020- The academic calendar for 2020 was significantly impacted by Eswatini's lockdown and the resulting move to online coursework. Courses had to be re-ordered, with emphasis on the 3rd year students being able to complete their classes for graduation. Thankfully, our 3rd year students will still be able to graduate this

year, though it will be a month later than usual. Graduation will take place on December 12, 2020. It will be shared as a Facebook Live event for any who would like to share in the joy!

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR 2021- Our Academic team has been hard at work to develop an academic calendar for 2021 that can respond to the unknowns about the pandemic. While we can continue online courses indefinitely, these are not ideal for student learning. They are also very costly. At present, we have potential lecturers reviewing an online option and a face-to-face option. Borders remain closed, so face-to-face teaching by some of our visiting lecturers is not yet a possibility. We prayerfully anticipate that travel for visiting lecturers will be possible by early-to-mid 2021.

The significant challenge we face in returning to face-to-face learning is our ability to satisfy the health and safety requirements of both the Eswatini government and our accrediting agency. We have been successful in controlling the health and safety of our campus community through extreme lockdown procedures, including increased handwashing, social distancing, mask-wearing, closed access, and minimal contact on campus. However, re-opening our campus to allow for classroom instruction increases the level of requirements significantly. Our COVID19 Response Team is currently reviewing the guidelines as they discuss and plan for when we can be ready for our students to return to the classroom.

ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION- We continue to work diligently to maintain our accreditation. In June 2020, we submitted our follow-up documentation to the 2019 accreditation process and in the past two weeks we received the feedback on our progress. Our academic team is at work to discern any follow-up that is needed in response to this latest round of comments from ACTEA.

As a reminder, African Christian College was one of only three private institutions to receive recognition in 2017 from the ESwatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC), part of the Eswatini Ministry of Education & Training. For the past seven years, we have been progressing with the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA), an African-wide accrediting body focused on quality, theological education. In June 2019, ACTEA granted full accreditation to our Bachelor of Theology (BTh) programme (our only current academic program), adding tremendous value to the degrees our students receive raising the prominence of African Christian College. And, it provides external verification that African Christian College is doing what we say we're doing and so your investments in that work are benefitting the Kingdom of God and providing students with the highest quality, biblical education possible!

UKWAZI MAKADAMIA – The pandemic interrupted our regular macadamia sales through HEB and Central Market from March through June, resulting in a revenue shortfall of more than \$1million. In late June as Texas began to open back up, HEB began submitting orders again, so we are back to roasting and delivering nuts to HEB. We are thankful for the return of these sales. Still, the pandemic resulted in a significant loss of sales creating a revenue shortfall of over \$1 million that will significantly influence our 2021 budget in Eswatini and the USA.

THE VISION CONTINUES

Though much of our focus over the past few months has been on managing the unexpected issues related to the pandemic, we are committed to continuing the process toward our VISION launched in 2019.

- The Board of Trustees is meeting this winter to discuss and determine next steps with regard to the rename the university as part of moving forward with our VISION. You may recall that our current name, African Christian College, has proven to be confusing in a culture where “college” has different meaning than it does in the US. Launching our new VISION provides us with an opportunity to resolve this confusion with a new name that includes “university” to properly describes the African institution that we are. As we move toward becoming a university that will offer 5 academic programmes and welcome 300 students by 2029, this name will help to communicate more clearly who we are as an African institution.
- Our master plan development process is moving along well and we hope to have a completed plan in the next few months. As previously reported, we are working with a local Mbabane architectural firm to draft a master plan for our proposed growth over the next 10 years. Though local lockdowns have slowed our progress on this, we are committed to a timeline that will provide a master plan by the end of the year.
- Our VP of Academic Affairs, Dr. Alan Martin, continues to research and develop all of the structure and supporting details for the new academic programmes. The first new programme, ***Resilient & Sustainable Agriculture***, is slated to launch in August of 2022.

KEY PERSONNEL

ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We are proud to announce that three of our full-time staff members have completed their Master’s degrees through our ACU partnership.

- **Ndumiso Dlamini** completed his **Master of Education (Med)** in Higher Education and Conflict Resolution
- **Sydney Mhango** completed his **Master of Business Administration (MBA)** in Operations & Supply Chain Management
- **Tsitsi Nherera** completed her **Master of Business Administration (MBA)** in International Business

NEW FACULTY

One new faculty member, **Tendekai Mashaire**, has joined our faculty. A recent graduate of ACC, Tendekai has completed his Master's degree and will teach in organizational leadership and communication.

PANDEMIC ADJUSTMENTS

The pandemic has necessitated adjustments in how we work on campus. Some of our full-time staff are working remotely from another part of the world, some are working remotely for off-campus, and some are working from home on campus. It has been impossible for visiting lecturers to travel to ACC since March. Some of our lecturers were able to adjust to teach online courses to supplement what we purchase from Zondervan. Some full-time staff/faculty have assumed additional courses in order to keep our students making progress toward graduation.

Lecturers working from outside of Eswatini:

Manuel De Oliveira– lecturer and Dean of Students (South Africa)

Lynn Rhodes– counselling lecturer (USA)

Dr Alan Martin – Vice President, Academic Affairs & lecturer (USA)

Celeste Jacobs- counselling lecturer

Staff and lecturers remaining on campus are:

Dr Paul Chimhungwe– lecturer and Academic Dean

Brad Carter – President & lecturer

Ndumiso Dlamini (2014 graduate) – Admissions Coordinator & Recruiter

Tsitsi Nherera (2013 graduate) – Administrator & Registrar

Sikhumbuzo Matisa– Assistant Director of Operations

Rachael Carter – Locavore Farmers Market Manager

Staff working from off-campus:

Vuyo Adams (2017 graduate)- Writing Centre Director

Misozi Mhango – Librarian

Sydney Mhango (MBS graduate)– Director of Operations and Tree of Life

Our USA Team:

Dr Alan Martin – Vice President, Academic Affairs & lecturer (USA)

Dr Jan Meyer- Development Director and visiting lecturer (USA)

Jason Strader- Director of Operations, UKWAZI Makadamia (USA)

STAFFING CHANGES

Mancoba Hlatchwako , our Coordinator of Agricultural Sustainability, left us in the summer. We have adjusted staffing to cover his responsibilities while we discuss a replacement. Since sustainable agriculture is our new academic programme launching in

2022, we will assess this opening carefully with significant regard to the academic partnership we envision.

Lynn Rhodes, a beloved counselling lecturer and counsellor to many on campus, will retired as of this fall. Though he had hoped to complete his teaching assignments in Africa through December, the pandemic forced him to return to the USA. He will teach his remaining courses online. This is a significant loss for the ACC community as well as the Fairview Church of Christ in Matsapha, where Lynn served as an elder. Our students, faculty, and staff honored Lynn's many years of service with a video blessing and a book of collected notes and memories this fall.

STUDENTS

ENROLMENT

We have 57 students enrolled currently: 23 are in their third year; 11 in the second year; 23 in the first year. This is our highest enrolment ever. The students come from Eswatini, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Lesotho, Rwanda, Tanzania, Sudan, and Botswana. They work on campus for to pay their fees in addition to being full-time students.

For comparison, here is the enrolment for the past several years.

Year	Total	Ministry	Couns	Ldrshp	1 st Yrs
2020	56	1	10	22	23
2019	50	4	15	20	11
2018	44	3	10	8	23
2017	35	4	8	9	14
2016	30	4	12	8	6

As we begin the transition process for our new academic programmes launching in 2022, we will not accept any new students in 2021. Our current students will complete their existing 3-year degree programme as we develop and launch the 4-year program recommended and approved by our accrediting agency. We will graduate 10 students in November 2021, and our remaining 23 students in November 2022. Our first class of 45 students studying under our new and revised academic programmes will begin in August 2022.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Our student leaders continue to encourage their peers through weekly Discipleship Groups. In January, we launched an initiative to create small groups (Discipleship Groups) on campus. Faculty or staff members serve as mentors to third-year student leaders as they facilitate these groups each week. Our 10 groups focus on calling one another to deeper

reliance on God, more intentional following of Jesus, and recognition of the Spirit at work in their lives. For some of our students during this pandemic, these groups have proven to be a lifeline.

GRADUATES

All third-year students who graduate this year have completed a three year Bachelor of Theology degree. At this point, we anticipate that 22 of our 23 third year students will graduate in December. Sadly, one of our 23 students in this cohort has fallen behind after dropping out due to health problems during the pandemic and will not be able to complete her work and graduate on time.

Graduation will take place on December 12, 2020. Internet-permitting, this event will be shared on Facebook Live for anyone who would like to share in the joy of this milestone in the life of our students!

Two of our third-year practicum students are conducting an Alumni survey to help us establish a thriving network of contacts for each year's graduates. This will also help us to keep informed about what our alumni are doing in their home countries.

COMMUNICATION

We continue to post videos on our website, emails, and social media telling student stories and sharing the impact of our alumni from throughout Africa. One of the unexpected by-products of our unexpected shift to online learning has been student devotional videos submitted for assignments. We have shared some of these on our African Christian College Facebook page to give a sense of our first-year students' progress.

Over the late spring and early summer, we offered a series of updates on the macadamia harvest on our UKWAZI Facebook page. That series has continued this fall as the macadamia trees have begun to flower. I encourage you to view these and see what's been happening on our campus in Eswatini during the lockdown! You can view these on Facebook at either UKWAZI Makadamia or our African Christian College page.

DEVELOPMENT

As we determined the need to move online to allow our students to continue making progress to graduation, we realized there would be a significant number of unplanned expenses ahead. We communicated these financial needs to our generous donors, and more than \$30,000 was raised for our COVID-19 Relief Fund to offset these expenses. In addition to keeping our students making academic progress, these funds provided ongoing support for many of our local orchard workers who were unable to come to work during the lockdown.

FINANCES

African Christian College seeks to be good stewards of God's resources by building sustainable funding through a diversity of sources including church partners, individual supporters, and earned revenue. On campus, we operate a 14,000-tree macadamia nut orchard that provides most of the annual revenue. In addition, we opened Locavore Market in 2019 to sell produce, baked goods, artisan ice cream, and other goods to local customers.

Donations from the USA in 2019 were down from 2018. Our fourteen congregational partners provide 40% of the donation totals (1a, 1b). Memorial's generous partnership of \$6,000 makes up 1.5% of our 2019 donations!

Once again, we sincerely say....***Thank you!!***

		2019	Jan-Sept 2020	
Donations (USA)	1a	390,000	1b	222,000
Earned Revenue (Eswatini)	2a	588,000	2b	118,000*
Total Income	3a	978,000	3b	340,000
Operating Expenses	4a	1,002,500	4b	720,000

The earned revenue in 2020 (2b) does not reflect this year's upcoming payment on the macadamia harvest. **We expect to receive \$330,000 in Earned Revenue in Eswatini this year by the end of November.*

Our 2018 and 2019 harvests were our best ever, but the 2020 harvest was a third smaller than last year. The gap between income (3a, 3b) and expenses (4a, 4b) is typically covered from profits of UKWAZI Makadamia, our USA macadamia company (not included in the chart). However, closures and changes in supermarkets severely impacted US macadamia sales and we're still far behind previous sales volumes. The pandemic and its effects in the USA will result in more than a \$1 million dollar shortfall in our UKWAZI sales this year. This unfortunate reality will influence all of 2021, and it is something that our Board and President are discussing at present.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also increased costs on campus for things like internet service in moving classes online, safety supplies, and other unexpected items related to safety and health. We've had increased labor costs as we seek to take care of employees who cannot come to campus for work but have no other safety nets or financial stability.

You can see why your support means so much to us, especially this year and in the year to come. Without you and other generous faith communities like you, our students' efforts to complete their degrees and begin their efforts as leaders and change agents for the Gospel back in their home countries would be interrupted. We humbly say ***Thank you!***