



Entrusting the Faith to Those Who Are Handing It On to Others

by **The Rev. Dr Mark Dickson (GWC Principal)**

GWC exists to train students to take the message of the gospel into all of Africa. In this sense, we want to heed Jesus' Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

At its core, the gospel is the astonishing news that though God has appointed Jesus as the judge on the last day of all men and women who have ever lived, he has sent this judge into our world ahead of that day to die on the cross so that anyone hearing about that judgement-removing-death, can believe it and be saved from hell. However, the good news doesn't stop there; we all have the

opportunity to serve our Lord and Saviour in this life. This gospel can easily be understood even by a child, but in the cut and thrust of Christian ministry, the essence of the gospel can be lost by a denomination, its pastors and its local churches.

Three years of training in the gospel can aid future gospel workers to hold fast to the foundations of the Christian faith. A clear grasp of the gospel will aid theological preservation and undergird faithful proclamation. Crucially, those things work together. To preserve the gospel means to preach it, for Jesus came that people might hear, repent and believe. GWC strives to prepare its students to defend and boldly declare the gospel.

The training received at GWC also prepares gospel workers to disciple others. Over the years, that ministry has greatly aided in student recruitment. People converted and built up in the faith through our graduates enjoy a foundational understanding of the Bible. When sent by our graduates to college, these students tend to gain even more in their own preparation for ministry. We praise God for the work he's doing, not only during the three years of a student's undergrad and beyond it but even in the years preceding their studies.

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The Ark Endowment Fund: Investing in the Future of GWC

by **Mrs Alison Lee**

Initiated in 2021, the Ark Endowment Fund was purposed to sustain the gospel work of GWC by filling the R10m operational funding gap that we've struggled to fundraise. Our Ark Endowment target was ambitious: R250m. The interest from that would meet 50% of our annual fundraising target. So, as we write this report, we are praising God because, in 2023, we received a fifth of the R250m target, and we are able to draw R3m from the fund for operational expenses.

To put that in perspective, being able to draw R3m from the fund is the equivalent of finding 30 new donors, each giving R100k per annum in perpetuity. That, naturally, is an incredibly difficult task for our small fundraising team.

The success of the fund has also encouraged us to believe that our ambitious target isn't unrealistic but achievable in time. All of this not only moves the college towards becoming self-sustaining but also forms part of its strategy for growth.

All donations to the Ark Endowment Fund are once-off contributions with a sustained impact on the kingdom work of GWC. Please email Alison Lee on alee@gwc.ac.za for more information

Praise God for the Explosive Growth of Explore in Kenya

by Explore

The past seven months of the year have been some of the busiest months in Explore's history. The Explore Head Office in Cape Town has been flooded with enrolment forms and exam scripts from across the continent, especially from Kenya, and the administration team has had their work cut out for them. Explore's primary means of measuring its reach in Africa is by tracking the number of enrolments received by each student per country. In 2022, there were 2522 total Explore modules studied across the continent, with several students graduating in various countries. Of course, you can read all about this in the Explore newsletter. But in this piece, we want to focus on Kenya.

Our Kenyan Country Coordinator, Misheck Mbevi, has led his small team into various parts of the country, from east to west, from refugee camps to university campuses. As a result, 46% of Explore's 2023 module enrolments have come from Kenya alone. A unique opportunity in Kenya has been serving Somalian and South Sudanese refugees. Though many of those refugees are Muslims and their camps are situated in Muslim areas, such as Garissa, Explore hasn't only had enrolments but even contact from potential facilitators. In areas where the gospel is scarcely heard and the Christian faith is often practised in secret, the growth of Explore is a remarkably exciting kingdom development. We pray that more people might hear of the wondrous forgiveness found in Jesus through faith alone.

To grow the Explore groups and the team, Misheck regularly conducts training for men and women interested in facilitating groups. Although there is still a great need for more facilitators to come alongside students, we have already had fruitful and encouraging training sessions across the country.

Future ambitions for Explore in Kenya include renting an office space in Nairobi in order to centralise Explore activities in the country, maintaining its growth in an organised and sustainable manner. The team also intentionally reached university students with an Explore promotion day and facilitation training at the end of September 2023.

Though we praise God for the explosive growth of Explore in Kenya, we're rejoicing in the evident desire among many of those students to grow in their knowledge of God. This desire is clear from the considerable commitment of those students to their respective modules. God is at work in the hearts and lives of the Kenyan people. He is revealing himself to them through his Word and is enabling them to grow in their love for him and others. Partner with us and pray for the work in Kenya.

Starting in 2024, We'll Be Offering Postgraduate Courses Online

by Graham Heslop

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the South African Council on Higher Education has allowed institutions to offer traditionally contact-mode programmes via online, blended or hybrid learning. So, earlier this year, the college was pleased to announce that all of our postgraduate modules will be available online next year. That is, postgraduate students will be able to choose between attending classes online or in person. This option extends to everyone, from those enrolled full-time to those auditing select modules.

Technically, the college will be offering what's called a HyFlex model for all postgraduate students and courses. Distinguished from online learning, this model allows people to attend classes virtually instead of watching recordings independently. This should retain the classroom feel and involvement for those not present in person. So even though people can study towards their master's or honours degrees without living at college, they won't lose out on classroom participation.

The college has been working hard to ensure that the teaching, support, and technologies associated with such a program don't merely meet the standard but are of a high quality. The Elma Kingswell room is being transformed into a digital classroom supporting this teaching and learning mode. Furthermore, we've conducted staff training for online teaching and curriculum design, developed student information and learning management systems, and conducted feasibility studies and strategic planning workshops.

A lot of hard work, serious planning, and prayer have made this option available for postgraduate students from 2024. Contact the college if you'd like to learn more or, even better, if you are eager to enrol for a course or module.

Celebrating an African Initiative to Train More Female Theologians

by Ms Ikho Poswayo

In August, I attended a conference hosted by the Institute for Excellence, a part of the Overseas Council of Australia, on "Empowering Female Faculty in Theological Education in Africa". I was one of some 60 participants from around the continent who travelled to Nairobi, Kenya. There, we were privileged to hear keynote addresses from Prof. Elizabeth Mburu, Dr Felicity Priest, Dr Esther Mombo, Dr Sophia Chirongoma, Dr Mercy Chukwuedo, Dr John Jusu, Prof. Philomena Mwaura, Dr Verena Schafroth, and Dr Marilyn Naidoo. Each of the five days began with worship and devotions led by women

other than the keynote speakers. The remainder of those days was less the presentation of papers from a podium and more workshop-oriented, providing time for questions and invaluable discussion in smaller groups. Those groups enriched the whole experience, allowing me to meet many other participants as we processed the addresses together.

The topics addressed included:

- Women leaders in the Bible (OT & NT)
- Gender equality in the Bible
- Gendered socialisation in Africa
- Roles of women in African society
- Forging an authentic identity as women in Theological Education
- Manhood and Masculinities in the Bible
- Women and Institutional Culture
- Realities for women in leadership
- Engendering the curriculum

I was excited to hear about the institute's desire to start "The African Women in Theological Education Initiative". This initiative hopes to provide ongoing training for female faculty through online platforms centred on research and publishing, faculty development, and leadership development. While the institute plans to run another conference next year, they strongly desire that these channels result in real action and change. Thus, in 2024, the institute will seek to engage the leaders of various African theological institutions, sharing their findings from surveying women in theological education and discussing ways forward that will develop and utilise female faculty.

The Lord used this conference to motivate me in my current role at GWC, which was an answer to prayer. I rejoiced in the reminders from Scripture that there's a higher purpose to my being here. It was also a delight to be in the presence of so many African women also serving in theological education—some having done so for decades. Their faithful perseverance is a challenging model for me, giving me greater confidence in the work God has set before me here.

The conference made me acutely aware that only four women were in my class of 23 students. It compelled me to be more intentional in ensuring that their voices are heard in class discussions while also being mindful that this may be intimidating.

Finally, roughly nine out of ten women at the conference were PhD holders. This was both intimidating and a wake-up call for me to continue my studies.

Ministry That Exalts Jesus Enjoys the Greatest Fulfillment

by Tumelo Matsitse – GWC Honours Student

GWC's foundation is based on the authority of God's divine Word. Every module and program is established and guided by the revealed Word of God. Along with the college's desire to remain faithful to the Bible is their aspiration to send out men and women for ministry. As countless men and women are equipped and sent out with a firm theological education, they must aspire to have a joyful and fulfilling ministry—in addition to a faithful one. I was recently given the opportunity to preach to the college and turned to the example of John the Baptist to make this case. For, among other things, we learn two things from him, which will help gospel workers to have a joyful and fulfilling ministry.

Firstly, theological education equips us to be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ. And that is our calling. John was divinely called to be a witness of Jesus Christ (John 1:6-8, 15, 19, 23, 32; 5:33). Likewise, we're called to be witnesses to Jesus Christ as those who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). What is that calling? What is our role as Christian witnesses? It is to testify to the world about the truths of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming. So, theological training prepares us to be faithful witnesses.

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Secondly, faithful witnesses don't make much of themselves but another. That is, a witness testifies to something; in our case, someone. John the Baptist exemplifies this by exalting Jesus and directing people away from himself (John 1:19–21, 29–30). This other-person-centred message is vital for theological students because it is easy to become self-centered and competitive in academic and local church settings. Let's not forget that John's disciples enticed him to compete with Jesus (John 3:25–26). But faithful witnesses point away from themselves. In doing so, they are liberated for joyful and fulfilling service rather than being trapped by self-obsession. Like John, let us rejoice in making much of Christ and little of ourselves (John 3:28–31).

GWC provides students with an essential grounding in the faith, but faithfulness that lasts beyond college will say with John: "He must increase," while "I must decrease" (John 3:30). A joyful and fulfilling ministry is one that always remembers that we are equipped to exalt Christ, wherever he sends us.

Meet Our New Vice-Principal Development, Rev. Dr Vuyani Sindo

by Mr Graham Heslop

Earlier this year, the college announced that Dr Vuyani Sindo would be the new Vice-Principal Development. This raised questions for many people who enjoy a relationship with GWC—from alumni to supporters. Underlying most of those questions was why we need two Vice-Principals. To answer that question and show why the institution of this role is an important step in the college's larger strategy, we need to answer two related questions.

Firstly, what does the Vice-Principal Academic, Dr Jonathan More, do? In his own words, "My role is to oversee and monitor matters as they relate to our curricular activities. I chair the Faculty Board, which is responsible for planning and implementing our curricula across four accredited programmes. As the chair of the Faculty Board, I lead and manage the faculty. I am also the chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee, a sub-committee of the Faculty Board which is responsible for monitoring the college's quality assurance processes."

Secondly, what is entailed in Dr Sindo's role as Vice-Principal Development? As our Principal, Dr Mark Dickson puts it, the Board of GWC instituted this role with the "purpose of creating both dedicated oversight and leadership for key strategic external and internal development initiatives, which will always be arising as the college responds to its environment and also seeks to constructively influence the same."

Such a role, admits Dr Sindo, carries a "heavy responsibility." Yet after much prayer and counsel, he accepted it, saying, "It allows me to serve GWC at a different level that also aligns with my strengths." While Dr Sindo will continue with his present teaching commitment and serve as the Head of Biblical Studies, the new role includes oversight of faculty onboarding and development.

Furthermore, another responsibility of the role is the development of external stakeholders. Dr Sindo will work closely with Dr Dickson in representing GWC to key strategic networks, partnerships, and associations. This extends to exploring new networks while developing existing ones. Finally, the Vice-Principal Development works as part of the college's ambassadorial team in building targeted donor-stakeholder relationships at the global level.

As you can see, there is much to do, and the institution of a second Vice-Principal role is crucial for the college's internal and external growth. So please join us in praying for Dr Sindo as he steps into this role and takes on its various responsibilities and challenges.

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