

Location

The Africa University campus sits on 1542 acres of land, 17 kilometres north of Mutare city. The University campus is located in a prime farming area. Its valley setting, coupled with a beautiful mountainous terrain, provides a scenic, tranquil and breathtaking environment. Mutare is Zimbabwe's fourth largest city and the provincial capital of one of the country's ten provinces; Manicaland. It is situated about 260 kilometres from Zimbabwe's capital, Harare.

Mutare forms the country's eastern border town with Mozambique and is the country's "gateway to the sea," as it is major overland route to the Port of Beira in Mozambique. The city thrives on agro-forestry, agriculture, horticulture, mining, eco tourism and tourism and is well connected by road and rail to other major towns and cities in Zimbabwe as well as Mozambique.

Historical Note

In the mid-1980s, as United Methodism grew on the continent, African bishops of the United Methodist Church (UMC) began articulating a desire for the church to invest in provision of higher education in Africa. In 1984, Bishop Arthur Kulah of Liberia and Bishop Emilio J. M. De Carvalho of Angola were eloquent, passionate and convincing in their (separate) presentations to annual meetings of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and to the General Board of Global Ministries, agencies of the UMC. Through their efforts, and with a positive response from within the church, the 'Africa Initiative' was born.

Various consultations on higher education needs and challenges in Africa took place between 1985-1986. Church officials explored possible approaches to establishing and financing the initiative and set up a site selection committee which toured seven African countries (Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire), Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe) before deciding on Zimbabwe as the best location for the new university. Zimbabwe was chosen for well-developed infrastructure, peace and stability.

Africa University was the first private university to open in Zimbabwe. The setting up of the University included a national process of consultation. It served as a catalyst for new legislation leading to the creation of the National Council for Higher Education to supervise higher education development in Zimbabwe.

Groundbreaking and Official Opening

Zimbabwe Area United Methodists donated 1542 acres of land in the Nyagambu River Valley, across the road from the Old Mutare UMC Mission Centre, as the site for Africa University and in April 1991, thousands of people converged on that site for the groundbreaking ceremony.

On 21 January 1992, His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, issued an official proclamation declaring Africa University to be established and setting forth the terms of the Charter which gave a legal basis for the existence of Africa University.

Academic and capital development

By 23 March 1992, the University was operational, with 40 young people from six African countries enrolled in undergraduate programmes. At its inception, Africa University offered bachelor's degree programmes in two faculties, Agriculture & Natural Resources and Theology. The latter being an ecumenical seminary for the preparation of persons for ordination in the various denominations.

The University's master plan lists seven faculties at full development. Since 1992, four additional faculties and an institute have been launched. These are Education, Humanities & Social Sciences, Management & Administration, Health Sciences and the Institute of Peace, Leadership & Governance at Africa University. The various faculties and the Institute offer a range of bachelor's and master's degree programmes as well as specific short-term professional development opportunities. Doctoral programmes are being developed and will hopefully be launched in the near future. The only faculty on the University's master plan that remains to be implemented is Science & Technology.

Facilities

Work on the development of a modern, well-equipped campus began in 1992 with the completion of the "Bridge to Dreams", a gift from the Central Illinois Annual Conference, which offered secure access to the site. On April 23rd and 24th 1994, there was joyous celebration as His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Robert Gabriel Mugabe officially opened Africa University, the new buildings were dedicated and the founding Chancellor and Vice Chancellor were formally installed.

Teaching and learning:

There are seven fully-equipped teaching and learning buildings on the campus: the De Carvalho/Kulah Building which houses the Faculty of Management & Administration and the Institute of Peace, Leadership & Governance as well as most of the administrative units; the Ireson/Kurewa Centre for Agriculture & Natural Resources and the Humanities; the Agricultural Engineering Building, the Bishop J. Lawrence McCleskey Faculty of Theology Building; the Jokomo/Yamada Library the Health Sciences Building. And then the Information and Communication Technology Centre.

Services:

There are three services buildings – the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Centre, the Kwang Lim Chapel and the Ndorimana Bonaventure Dining Hall and Student Union Building.

Housing:

The University has 12 residence halls for students with an overall capacity of about 1000 beds. There are also 10 staff houses on the campus.

Spiritual Life**Mission Statement:**

To create an environment where people of different academic, professional, cultural and religious backgrounds from the African continent affirm and live their faith, free to witness in private and public, God's grace and love in Christ, through conduct, devotional living and Christian service..

Vision Statement:

To create a community of faith, hope and love.

Africa University's motto in the Greek language is translated into English to mean: "I am the vine; you are the branches". This biblical text comes from John 15:5 and summarizes the relationship which Jesus wanted to be established between himself as the vine, and his disciples as the branches. In making this analogy its motto, Africa University established its philosophy of higher education on the values of the Gospel.

The Kwang Lim Chapel, Africa University's chapel, is the spiritual focal point of the University community. The Chapel is a beautiful edifice whose architecture harmoniously combines modernity and African traditions. It was built through the generous donation of the Kwang Lim Methodist Church in Seoul, South Korea. Consecrated on Sunday, December 14, 1997 in the presence of a Korean delegation led by Bishop Sundo Kim, the Chapel symbolises the Christian presence in the middle of the University campus and in the heart of University activities as well. Its main objective is to build a community of faith, hope and love under the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Like any other Christian clergy, the University Chaplain, assisted by an administrative assistant and students, performs ministerial duties such as planned worship, preaching, counselling, pastoral visitation and administration. The programmes of the Chapel, generally initiated by the University Spiritual Life Committee and implemented by the University Chaplain, include a variety of spiritual activities.

Community Worship

Africa University is not only a learning community, it is also a worshipping community. During the academic year there are two regular worship services: Wednesdays at 8:00 a.m. and Sundays at 8:30 a.m. While the Wednesday service focuses on the services of Word, music and announcements, the Sunday worship combines a variety of liturgical elements: music, prayers, proclamation of the Word and, at the last Sunday of the month, celebration of the Eucharist. The end of the Sunday service is usually followed by a fellowship time in the Reeves Wesley Foundation Fellowship Centre where students, staff and visitors gather for refreshments and acquaintance. In addition to these two regular worship services, there are prayer meetings organised by groups of students in the evenings of specific days during the week. The Kwang Lim Chapel is also known as a place for wedding celebrations. While Africa University subscribes to a United Methodist tradition as a United Methodist related institution, its services are ecumenical.

Music

Music plays a significant role in the worship service at Africa University. The Africa University Choir presentations on the campus, in Mutare, and especially during its annual tours in the United States of America, have contributed tremendously to the reputation of the institution. Individual and group singers, especially the Praise the Lord Choir, also add their tone to make worship services a vibrant celebration for the glory of God and edification of the community.

Campus Ministry

In October 1999, two consultants from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Dr. Luther B. Felder III and Rev. Lillian C. Smith, came to Africa University to assist in the development of Campus Ministry programmes. The significant outcome of the consultations with the University community was, among other things, the development of a vibrant Campus Ministry. Spiritual Life Committee oversees and coordinates spiritual life matters on campus by developing a policy framework for campus ministry. It also plays an advisory role to the chaplain. There is also a Chapel Committee, which works with the Chaplain on a day to day basis to run campus programmes.

Student Religious Activities

Students meet regularly during the semester according to their religious affiliations to discuss subjects of spiritual interest. The following are some of the activities students participate in on campus.

a) Fellowship groups gatherings, where students come together as denominational associations to worship, according to their faith

traditions. Currently, there are five of them: FOCUS, United Methodist student movement, Apostolic Faith Mission, Seventh Day Adventist, and Movement for Roman Catholic students.

b) Students come together for worship on Sundays (8:30 – 9:30am) and Wednesdays (8:00 – 9:00am).

c) Students also come together for prayer meetings. Everyday, students gather in the prayer room, (6 – 6:30am, 1:00 – 1:45pm, 6:30 – 7:00pm). These activities provide an environment for the spiritual development of these students. Through these activities, chaplaincy opens opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills.

d) There are committees that assist the chaplain to co-ordinate certain core ministry areas. These are: Worship committee, Finance committee, Entertainment committee, Ecumenical Committee and Bible study committee. The University Chaplain leads weekly Bible Study sessions on Thursday evenings.

Welfare Activities

Chaplaincy co-ordinates and administers the welfare needs for the community. These include celebrating good days with staff and students, and supporting them by visiting the sick and attend funerals for members of their families. Africa University Sunday programme is one such programme where the university goes to the church to persuade it to support the institution. Also, as part of its outreach programme, Chaplaincy has a ministry to the communities surrounding the university where it seeks to make a difference in their lives.

Statutory Instrument 29 of 1992

[ACT 32/90]

Proclamation 1 of 1992**PROCLAMATION****by**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE, G.C.Z.M.,
President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence
Forces of Zimbabwe.

WHEREAS it is provided by subsection (1) of section 19 of the National Council for Higher Education Act, 1990, that if, after receiving an application in terms of section 18 of the Act for the establishment of a private university, together with the recommendations thereon made by the National Council for Higher Education and the Minister of Higher Education, the President considers that the establishment of the university will further the development of higher education in Zimbabwe, the President may grant the university a charter, in which event he shall publish a proclamation in the Gazette: (a) declaring the university to be established; and (b) setting forth the terms of the charter.

AND WHEREAS, in terms of section 18 of the said Act, the Minister of Higher Education has submitted to me an application for the establishment of the Africa University of the United Methodist Church, together with the recommendations thereon of the National Council for Higher Education;

AND WHEREAS I consider that the establishment of the Africa University of the United Methodist Church will further the development of higher education in Zimbabwe:

NOW, THEREFORE, under and by virtue of the powers vested in the President as afore said, I do hereby:

- (a) declare the Africa University of the United Methodist Church to be established; and
- (b) set out in the Schedule hereto the terms of the Charter which I have granted to the said university.

Given under my hand the public seal of Zimbabwe, at Harare, this twenty-first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ninety-two.

R.G. MUGABE,
President.

By command of the President.

**AFRICA UNIVERSITY
CHARTER AND STATUTES**