



Initiated by action of the General Conference in 1988, Africa University is a flourishing global justice and evangelism ministry of The United Methodist Church with a history of relevance, accountability and impact.

Grounded in the mission of The United Methodist Church—to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world—Africa University equips leaders for meaningful discipleship and service within and beyond the denomination. Through its missional contributions, AU enables African communities to experience hope, peace, sustainable livelihoods, food security and abundant health.

**With steadfast investment, a sustained focus on transformational engagement and commitment to global connection, The United Methodist Church plays a pivotal role in the ongoing evolution and efficacy of Africa University's ministry.**

### Relevance

Since opening in 1992, Africa University has evolved into the cornerstone institution for United Methodist-related higher education efforts on the continent of Africa. Through Africa University, The United Methodist Church offers a high-quality educational experience, provides access through scholarships for financially-disadvantaged students such as orphans and refugees, and nurtures ethically-grounded and proactive leaders. Ground-breaking programs in peace and governance; migration, citizenship and refugee protection; health sciences; child rights and childhood studies; public sector management; and intellectual property have made Africa University the institution of choice for both students and a growing number of international partners.

Young people from as many as 29 African nations access leadership training and gain professional skills in three colleges—Health, Agriculture and Natural Sciences; Business, Peace, Leadership and Governance; and Social Sciences, Theology, Humanities and Education. More than 1,800

predominantly first-generation college students enroll at Africa University each year and are the institution's primary focus. However, as both United Methodism in Africa and the priorities of African communities grow and change, so must the institutions that serve them.

In 2016, Africa University began implementing fundamental changes to address emerging needs and harness new opportunities:

- Africa University restructured its undergraduate programs to include research and internship placements of up to one year in a bid to enhance workplace readiness among graduates.
- The Faculty of Theology, which operated as a traditional seminary, was transformed into the Institute of Theology and Religious Studies (ITRS). The ITRS is piloting a new doctoral degree program for theological educators in Africa in collaboration with Wesley House Cambridge and working on new training options for laity and military chaplains in Africa.
- A campus-based innovation center, the i5Hub, was established in 2018 to support entrepreneurs as they develop and commercialize new products and services. The i5Hub boasts an enviable list of partners and projects in development. As the focus of Africa's young population shifts from seeking to creating employment, Africa University is well-positioned to champion enterprise development.

### Accountability

Africa University has relied on the generous support of The United Methodist Church to grow and sustain its ministry. The support of United Methodists—realized through World Service Special Gifts since 1988, and the recently-completed \$50 million Campaign for Africa University—affirms the church's passionate belief in the worth of Africa University's



mission. Gifts to the campaign surpassed the \$50 million goal and provided crucial funding for teaching and research. Long-term, sacrificial giving by individuals, congregations, districts, and annual conferences has helped Africa University realize a permanent endowment of more than \$78 million, build a well-equipped, modern campus debt-free, and provide scholarships and financial aid to about 70 percent of its students.

The university is profoundly grateful to United Methodist congregations for investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment at 100 percent. The AUF funds learning resources in Africa University's libraries and laboratories, supports salaries, and supplies utilities (electricity, water) and other operational needs. It represents 17.2 percent of the institution's annual budget of \$12 million and is crucial to the university's ongoing financial health. The AUF also allows Africa University to assure friends and supporters who invest in capital projects, endowed chairs, and direct or endowed scholarships that 100 percent of every dollar they give is utilized as designated.

Fiscal accountability and prudent investment are major priorities for the Africa University Board of Directors and for its Executive Cabinet, led by Professor Munashe Furusa, the vice chancellor/CEO. Over the past four years, the AU Board's and senior administrators' efforts, coupled with the institutional advancement contributions of the Africa University Development Office, have led to a right-sizing of the institution's operations, balanced budgets, and investment in new buildings, recreational facilities, and information and communications technology. The results include strengthened teaching and learning and an enhanced quality of life for students, faculty and staff.

### **Impact**

The institution's 26th commencement, in June 2020, is expected to crest the milestone of 10,000 graduates.

With a graduation rate of 97 percent and more than 94 percent of its alumni at work on the continent, Africa University's impact is tangible and ever-growing.

Africa University alumni are entrusted with the implementation and oversight of important United Methodist-related initiatives and development projects in the 13 episcopal areas spread across 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. A growing number of Africa University graduates are missionaries serving under the Global Ministries agency in Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America. Graduates hold key cabinet-level positions in episcopal offices and serve as seminary/university presidents, faculty and administrators of the growing number of United Methodist higher education institutions in Africa.

Beyond denominational settings, Africa University graduates are launching new businesses, founding charitable and service organizations, representing and advocating for constituencies as elected officials, and conducting critical research. AU graduates are sought after, and their impact is being felt in government, business and civil society in Africa.

### **Looking Ahead**

Growth trends in The United Methodist Church, based on GCFA statistics, show the majority of new United Methodists are in Central and West Africa. Africa's rapid growth brings with it a general church responsibility to ensure that the "United Methodist DNA" grows with integrity and in contextually-relevant ways within new worshipping communities.

**Increased investment in Africa University over the next quadrennium represents an extraordinary opportunity for The United Methodist Church to remain engaged in nurturing the leaders on whose shoulders the future of Africa and African Methodism will rest over the next five decades. It has the potential to yield a renewed and vibrant connectional reality.**



Africa University remains “a uniting, United Methodist dream come true.” Together, as a global church, United Methodists envisioned and brought to fruition a university for all of Africa. The reality of Africa University is a testimony to faithfulness in living fully into the Word of God. “This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes”—Ps. 118:23 ESV.

Through its support of Africa University, the church models its ideals in profound ways. Africa University’s value as a source of clergy and lay leaders for Africa *who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world* is unparalleled. Moreover, through Africa University, new people in new places are invited to embrace the social principles, values and mission of United Methodism as their foundation for courageous personal witness and service.