



**August 2023**

Dear Friends and Supporters,

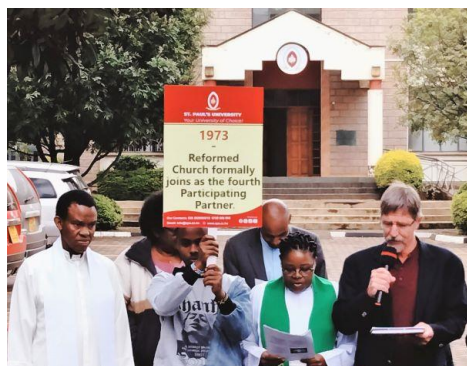
This July marked 120 years since St. Paul's laid the cornerstone of the first School of Divinity building (July 28, 1903). The first divinity classes actually began in 1888 but the school's history goes back even further. In 1876, the school began with basic education for a handful of freed slaves and their wives. As more people became Christians, there was a growing need for training pastors and so the School of Divinity was born.

Originally an Anglican school, eventually other churches began sending their students to St. Paul's including those from Methodist, Presbyterian, and Reformed traditions (and others). With that spirit of ecumenism, St. Paul's United Theological College continued growing.

Around the time of their centenary celebrations, the School of Business was started in recognition of the growing need for Christian higher education. In 2004 when we first came to St. Paul's, Rowland was part of a small team that pioneered the business degree (due to his Economics background) while also teaching students who were studying to be pastors.

In 2007, the government of Kenya granted St. Paul's a charter as a university and the name was officially changed from St. Paul's United Theological College to St. Paul's University.

Since being recognized as a university, many other degree programs have been added. Among them include counseling psychology and social work, whose students Jane teaches. As the Business program has grown, Rowland has shifted his focus back to the School of Theology where he teaches and organizes their weekly fellowship.



*Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at [kgilmore@rca.org](mailto:kgilmore@rca.org) to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.*

Last week, the entire St. Paul's community celebrated its rich history by holding a prayer walk around campus. It has been good to not only think about all the things that have been accomplished in the last 120 years but also about what God has in store going forward for both the School of Theology and the University as a whole.

The future of higher education in Kenya is uncertain as the number of students qualifying for admission is increasing but government funding for all of them is not. Recently, it was announced that 140,000 qualified for admission, but only 40,000 will be given full scholarships. Others will have to take out loans or pay full tuition. That will be very difficult given the current economic situation.



Recently two Reformed Church of East Africa (RCEA) pastors, Daniel and Moses (see them in the picture **above** with us by the cornerstone) approached us for help with tuition as they desire to come to St. Paul's for their Bachelor of Divinity degree. As pastors in the RCEA, they receive a very small salary. Without sponsorship, their dream of further study is next to impossible. There is an RCA-SPU student scholarship fund for needy students, however, we need your support to ensure there is money for these scholarships. If you would like to contribute to that fund you can go to <https://www.rca.org/global-mission/missionaries/rowland-jr-jane-van-es/> for more information.

We are also scheduled for home service this fall (Sept-Dec). If you would like to hear from us in person, please contact us at [jvanes@spu.ac.ke](mailto:jvanes@spu.ac.ke) or contact Kathy at the RCA Speaker's Bureau at [kdekock@rca.org](mailto:kdekock@rca.org). We would love to have a chance to visit you!

Yours in Christ's service,

Jane and Rowland Van Es, Jr.