



AFRICA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY



*Abstracts from the 2025 AIU
Biennial International conference*

Glory, Violence, and the Gospel of Peace in Africa



Edited by

Prof. Eric Aseka, Prof. Joash Mutua, and Prof. James Nkansah

Institute for the Study of African Realities

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

This volume is a compendium of abstracts of papers presented at the AIU Biennial International Research Conference, held at Africa International University from 29th-31st October 2025, under the theme "One New Humanity in Christ: Glory, Violence, and the Gospel of Peace in Africa."

Forty-five papers were presented; which were organized into 18 panels and delivered through two plenary and four breakout sessions. The Keynote Paper was, given by Prof Emmanuel Katongole. The panels addressed themes from various interdisciplinary approaches, drawing from Theological and Religious Studies; Conflict Studies and Peacebuilding; Social and Political Studies; Cultural Studies and Anthropology; Human Rights Advocacy in Post-Conflict Africa; Development Studies; and Psychology and Mental Health.

These papers were organized into thematic sections which forms this volume; addressing issues such as Christianity, Violence, and Social Justice; Nexus between Theology, Colonial Legacy, and Law; Church and Reconciliation; Religion, Justice and Peace; Gender, Justice, Violence, and Peace; Politics, Violence, and Peacebuilding; Post-Conflict Recovery; Social Justice, Violence and Peace making; Violence, Trauma and Healing; and Youth, Social Justice and Peace. Two plenary panels were led by the university faculty: one on "Social Justice, Violence, and the Gospel of Peace," and the other on "Social Justice, Violence, and Peace-making which focused on Kenya's contextual experience.

The conference sought to critically engage in a conversation on the persistence of violence in Africa despite a strong presence of Christianity on the continent. It highlighted how denominational, doctrinal, cultural, gender, tribal allegiances and even political partisanship have weakened and undermined the Church's moral credibility in addressing these challenges. In grappling with these questions, from a cross-disciplinary approach, the conference aimed to foster Gospel-shaped, research-informed peace building initiatives.

Africa International University, a Christ-centred Christian institution accredited by the Commission for University of Education (CUE), granted a Charter by the Government of Kenya in 2011, and is committed to forming leaders who transform the church and society.

Editors

Prof. James Nkansah-Obrempong

Prof. Eric Masinde Aseka

Prof. Joash Mutua

Preface

The Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR) was envisioned as Africa's leading Think Tank for Christ-centred interdisciplinary scholarship and innovation, shaping policy and practice to address Africa's pressing challenges. The operational logic of the Institute centers catalyzing academia, industry, and society through dialogical spaces, research, and publications. The 2025 AIU Biennial International Research Conference, hosted by the Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR), constituted a convening space that brought together these three components. This volume is a compendium of the abstracts of papers that were submitted and presented at the Conference.

The purpose of the Conference, under the theme *One New Humanity in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace in Africa*, was to grapple with the paradox that a continent widely acknowledged as the heartland of Christianity in the twenty-first century is also characterised by persistent injustice, violence, and fractured social relations. The Conference was convened through an elaborate process of teamwork, spearheaded by a Conference Steering Committee comprising four sub-committees: Research and Editorial, Marketing and Publications, Finance and Fundraising, and Logistics. Participants at the Conference came from three sectors: academia, comprising AIU's academic community and other scholars from across Africa and beyond; industry, comprising church and para-church organisations engaged in addressing Africa's social challenges; and society, comprising AIU's community and participants seconded by partnering organisations. To ensure effective partnership with industry actors, the Steering Committee held five consultative meetings, fostering synergy between the Steering Committee and partners.

The essays submitted and presented at the conference, whose abstracts are compiled in this volume, offer careful reflection drawn from theology, social analysis, and lived experience, engaging the realities of faith and public life in Africa. Taken together, the 41 abstracts published in this volume of abstracts do not present a single viewpoint or conclusion. They reflect ongoing conversations and different perspectives on faith, justice, and peace in Africa. The contributions examine Christianity's role in African societies from different angles. Some raise concerns about the gap between the church's growth and the persistence of social injustice. Other papers focus on reconciliation as a process that restores broken relationships with God and among people. What emerges is the need to distinguish between Christianity as a religion and the message of Jesus Christ, calling for honesty, repentance, and a return to a faith shaped by justice, love, and integrity. These contributions move beyond theory to examine how healing occurs in real communities affected by conflict. They show how dialogue, forgiveness, and trust-building can support long-term peace and social repair.

The volume also highlights the experiences of vulnerable groups and the urgent social challenges they face. Issues such as child protection, displacement, trauma, and mental health are discussed as central to any serious discussion of peacebuilding. These studies emphasize that peace must be lived and practised through care, protection, and solidarity, especially with those most affected by violence and instability. What they share is a concern for the credibility of gospel witness in Africa's Christianity and the need for deeper engagement with the realities of society. This collection, therefore, serves both as a record of scholarly engagement and as an invitation to continued reflection and responsible action in the pursuit of justice, reconciliation, and peace.

The themes that emerged from the conference reshaped the Institute’s priorities, agenda, and direction. These shifts revealed new areas of focus that demand a broader and more innovative approach. Consequently, the Institute for the Study of African Renewal (ISAR) must be re-imagined to align with what we have called “Re-envisioning ISAR”, which provides for aligning the Institute with these evolving research agendas and programmatic engagements, collaborations and envisaged partnerships.

Eric M. Aseka (PhD), Director, ISAR

D. Zac Niringiye (PhD), Associate Director, ISAR

Acknowledgements

This compendium of abstracts from the 2025 AIU International Biennial Conference reflects the event's academic and institutional success. We are deeply grateful to the diverse scholars and practitioners whose contributions made this collection possible. Their work critically examines why Africa, despite its rich Christian heritage, continues to face injustice, violence, and social fragmentation, drawing on insights from theology, sociology, politics, and related disciplines. We particularly acknowledge those who explore the intersection of institutional Christianity and the Gospel's call to justice, highlighting reconciliation, relational healing, and faith-based dialogue as essential for building trust, empathy, and resilience in divided communities. We also appreciate the case studies presenting practical applications, from child protection frameworks in Ghana to refugee experiences in Uganda, and the integration of state-led and grassroots peace initiatives, which collectively underscore the importance of both structural accountability and relational transformation. The foundational support of the Vice-Chancellor, together with the strategic guidance of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs and Research), provided the vision and framework necessary for the Conference's realization. By mobilizing the University's resources and fostering a culture of collective commitment, their leadership ensured the event was anchored in institutional legitimacy and scholarly purpose. Equally significant was the active involvement of the University Senate, Management Board, Deans, and Heads of Departments, which reinforced the Conference's intellectual and organizational integrity. The Steering Committee, comprising all Deans and Heads of Service Departments, elevated the event's profile across the University, while faculty, staff, and students contributed through participation in breakout sessions, facilitation, and volunteer roles. This broad-based engagement ensured that the Conference was both operationally supported and intellectually robust, providing a platform for critical interdisciplinary dialogue. Central to the Conference's scholarly impact were the authors whose papers are captured in this volume. Their contributions facilitated a rigorous examination of the complex intersections of violence and Christianity in Africa, highlighting both challenges and the transformative potential of the Gospel. Seventeen thematic breakout sessions enabled in-depth engagement with these issues, ensuring the Conference addressed continental concerns with both analytical depth and practical relevance. We are particularly grateful to the content editors, Profs. Eric Aseka, Joash Mutua, and James Nkansah, and the copy editors, Lucy Kiana, Ireen Iguna, and Faith Nyakerario, for making these insights widely accessible. We also acknowledge our partner organizations, whose financial and material support, as well as active participation, were indispensable to the success of the Conference.

Table of Contents

CHRISTIANITY, VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE	1
Reinventing Africa’s Modernity: Embracing The Gospel of Peace in A Social History of Violence.....	2
The Hegemony of Christianity in Africa: Why Injustice, Oppression, Violence, And Christianity Thrive Together	4
Christianity, The Churches, and the Pursuit of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation	6
Truth-Seeking Vs. Grassroots Healing: A Comparative Analysis of a Top-Down Approach and A Bottom-Up Approach to Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Post-Election Violence, Kenya	8
The Justice Deficit: How a Culture of Impunity Undermines Peacebuilding in Nigeria's Christian-Muslim Inter-Religious Disharmony	10
NEXUS BETWEEN THEOLOGY, COLONIAL LEGACY AND LAW	12
A Philosophical Interrogation of "One New Humanity in Christ": Glory, Violence, and the Gospel of Peace	13
Pauline Theology on Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation: A Framework for Ecclesial and Societal Transformation in Africa.....	15
Legitimacy, Rebellion, and the Sanctification of Violence: Rethinking International Law, Theology, and Human Rights in Africa’s Armed Conflicts	17
Biblical and Theological Foundations of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation in the Great Lakes Region: Insights from the Great Lakes Initiative Institute	19
From Rubble to Steadfastness: Gaza, Lived Religion, and the Legacy of Western Christianity in African and Palestinian Theologies	21
CHURCH AND RECONCILIATION	23
The Founding Narrative of Creation, Violence and One New Humanity in the Messiah	24
Agents of Healing or Harbingers of Division? Reassessing the Role of Christianity and the Churches in Africa's Quest for Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation.....	26
The Gospel of Christ and the Persistence of Violence in Christianized Burundi and Rwanda	28
Reframing Mission as Prophetic Action and Holy Disruption: A Framework for Transformative Peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo	30
By the Rivers of Nairobi: Faithful Parenting in Exile and the Church’s Prophetic Response to South Sudanese Families in Nairobi.....	32
RELIGION, JUSTICE AND PEACE	34
Paths to Peace and Justice: Exploring the Role of Religion in Reducing Violence through interconnectedness of African Traditional and Christian Perspectives	35
Intersecting Narratives of Peace and Violence: An Anthropological Exploration of African Traditions, Islam, and Christianity in Africa.....	37
Bridging Faith: Promoting Inter- and Intra-Faith Solidarity between Muslims and Christians in Kenya	39
GENDER JUSTICE, VIOLENCE AND PEACE.....	41

Unhiding Vulnerable Voices: Reading the Parables as a Response to Gender-Based Violence in South Africa	42
Faith-Based Engagement in Transforming Masculinities and Advancing Gender Justice: A Case Study from Meru County, Kenya	44
Gendered Identities, Media Narratives, and Violent Extremism in Kenya	46
The Role of Education, Media, and Leadership in Promoting Peace	48
The Missing Link in the Gospel of Peace: Addressing the Boy-Child Challenge as a Pathway to Justice, Peacebuilding, and Human Flourishing in Africa.....	50
POLITICS, VIOLENCE AND PEACEBUILDING	52
Transforming Nations Approach in Conflict-Affected Kenyan Communities	53
Kenya’s Sword of Damocles: A Critical Review of Volume II of Kenya’s Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) Report.....	56
Reclaiming Dignity and Advancing Peace through Christ-Centered Community Development in Africa: Toward One New Man in Christ	58
Land Eclipse Religion in Conflict Context: A Case of Kenya	60
POST CONFLICT RECOVERY	62
Christ the Prince of Peace in the Eyes of Congolese Christian Refugees in Nakivale: A Theological Reflection through the Lens of Solomon Mukubwa’s Song “ <i>Mfalme wa Amani</i> ”	63
Applying the Study of Matthew 5:38-39 to the Context of Post-War Acholi People in Gulu District	65
Technical, Vocational Education and Training for Sustainability in and Post-Conflict Contexts in the Great Lakes Region: A Case of Uganda’s Refugee Response.....	67
SOCIAL JUSTICE, VIOLENCE AND PEACEMAKING	69
Grafting the Sacred onto the Rogue: The Co-optation of Religious Leaders by Authoritarian Regimes in Africa	70
Social Science and Humanities Perspectives: Tech-Savvy Kenyan Gen-Z Movement Embodied as one Humanity Pushing Back Epistemic Violence.....	72
Faith-Based Peacebuilding in Practice: An Empirical Analysis of Tearfund’s Community-Centered Approaches in Sub-Saharan Africa	74
Reconstructing the Role of Pastors in Addressing Violence in Kenya.....	76
From Code to Conflict: Cyber Violence, AI Weaponization, and the Gospel of Peace in a Digital Age	78
Land Race and Tribe as Complexities of Violence in and Among Nations: A Case of Politics in Kenya.....	81
VIOLENCE, TRAUMA AND HEALING	83
Strategic Interventions to Combat Gender-Based Violence in African Societies: An Interdisciplinary Perspective.....	84
Hidden in Full View: How “Private” Violence is a Public Concern	86
Impacts of Indoor and Outdoor Heat Exposure on Maternal and Neonatal Health in Rural	

Kenya.....	88
Faith Communities as Healing Communities for Children in Ghana: Reflections through a Relational View of the Trinity	92
Unbloody Violence and The Bloodied Streets: Genz, The Streets, The Web the Pulpit and the Contestation for a Just Society	94
Prayer or engagement: The skill called compromise.....	96
From ‘Next’ to Now: Empowering Gen Now for Justice, Reconciliation, and Human Flourishing.....	98
Youth, Violence, and the Gospel of Glory: A Secondary Analysis of Gospel-Centered Identity Formation and Resistance to Radicalization in Africa	100
Restoring Identity and Peace: Gospel Witness and Youth Formation in Kenya Through the Lens of the One New Man in Christ.....	102

CHRISTIANITY, VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

**Reinventing Africa's Modernity: Embracing The Gospel of Peace in A Social History of
Violence**

Emmanuel Katongole

University of Notre Dame, USA

Abstract

Given Africa's violent social history, there is no more pressing challenge for Christian faith than the search for a different, non-violent basis for social existence in Africa. The essay argues that for the church to meet this challenge, she will have to move beyond the standard distinctions between

'religion' and 'politics' and embrace the full reality of the Gospel as politics. Kataliko's life and work provide an example of what this concretely looks like. Behind Kataliko's message and pastoral leadership in the Congo is a search for a new vision of society in Africa grounded in the story of God's non-violent and reconciling love.

Key words: gospel, religion, politics, non-violence, reconciliation

Author Biography

Emmanuel Katongole is Professor of Theology and Peace Studies. He holds a joint appointment with the Keough School of Global Affairs, where he serves as a full-time faculty of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. Before joining the University of Notre Dame (Jan 2013), he served as Associate Professor of Theology and World Christianity at Duke University, and as founding co-director of the Duke Center for Reconciliation. He is founder and President of Bethany Land Institute, a program that works with young people to realize the vision, spirituality and practice of Laudato Si' in an African setting. Katongole is a Catholic priest of Kampala Archdiocese, Uganda where he was ordained in 1987. Among his publications are: *Who Are My People: Love, Violence and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*,

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Eerdmans, 2022; *Born from Lament: The Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017; *The Journey of Reconciliation: Groaning for a New Creation in Africa*. Orbis, 2017; *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011; *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision of Justice, Peace and Healing*. IVP Books, 2018.

**The Hegemony of Christianity in Africa: Why Injustice, Oppression, Violence, And
Christianity Thrive Together**

David Zac Niringiye

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

The dominance of Christianity in Africa is often celebrated and positioned by both insiders and outsiders, not only as evidence of the spread of the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, but also heralded as a beacon for social transformation for African peoples and societies; a force for redressing incessant poverty, injustice, violent conflicts, and bad governance that have bedevilled African countries and societies. The paper cites the World Bank-Churches in Africa conference, held in March 2000, at which senior Church leaders from 19 denominations in 21 African countries met with World Bank officials to craft a collaboration to alleviate poverty and its consequences in Africa. This paper shows that the contrary is true: dominant modern Christianity and its institutions in Africa have cohabited with injustice, oppression, repression, and violence – a matter that has vexed him*, as it has other scholars and leaders. Employing narrative methodology to reframe the story of the spread and dominance of Christianity through the lens of ‘empire’, the paper shows that not only is cohabitation a social reality in modern Africa, but it is characteristic of Christianity from its imperial missionary roots. The paper argues that to make sense of this apparent contradiction, it is essential to distinguish between the religion (Christianity) and the Gospel. The paper submits that Christianity in Africa is a performance of the patterns and relations of power of domination, exploitation, and violence, the same as the logic of imperialism. The essay calls for a deep soul-searching, which hopefully will lead to perceiving, naming, lamenting, and renouncing Christianity’s collusion with

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

empire, towards living the story of love, justice, and shalom, embodied and demonstrated in Jesus of Nazareth, crucified on the cross of empire.

Key words: Religion/Christianity, churches, empire/imperialism, power, gospel, injustice/violence, Jesus

Author Biography

Dr. David Zac Niringiye is a bishop in the Church of Uganda (Anglican); a scholar-practitioner and theologian, a peace and social justice activist, and an organisational development consultant. He is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR), Africa International University (AIU), Nairobi, Kenya. He is also a Senior Fellow with *Interface Uganda* - the Institute of Religion, Faith and Culture in Public Life. He holds a Physics degree (Honours) and a teaching Diploma from Makerere University, Uganda; a master's degree in theology from Wheaton College, USA; a PhD in Theology and Mission History from Edinburgh University, Scotland; and an Honorary Doctorate in Divinity from Trinity Western University, Canada. Among his publications are *The Church: God's Pilgrim People* (Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library, 2014) and *The Church in the World: A Historical-Ecclesiological Study of the Church of Uganda with Particular Reference to Post-Independence Uganda, 1962-1992* (Carlisle, Cumbria UK: Langham Monographs, 2016) as well as several papers in journals and chapters in books.

Christianity, The Churches, and the Pursuit of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation

Dorcus Motswadira

Unicaf University, Zambia

Abstract

The theme of reconciliation in Paul's writings offers a vital lens for understanding Christianity's mission in the world and the role of the churches in promoting justice and peace. In Romans 5:10-11, Paul affirms that Christ's death and resurrection not only secure justification but also restore humanity's relationship with God, pointing toward salvation as a lived reality of peace. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, reconciliation is presented as both divine initiative and ecclesial responsibility: God reconciled the world to Himself in Christ and entrusted the church with the ministry of reconciliation. This dual emphasis highlights that reconciliation is not only theological but also practical, shaping the church's witness in contexts of conflict, injustice, and division. Although the Greek terms *katallassein* and *katallagē* appear infrequently in the New Testament, their significance lies in the relational dimension of salvation. Unlike sacrificial terms such as *hilaskesthai* and *hilasterion*, which emphasize expiation and propitiation, reconciliation underscores restored fellowship and communal peace. The Vulgate's use of *propitiatio* and *expiatio* reflects the sacrificial background, yet Paul's preference for reconciliation language points to a broader vision: salvation as the reconstitution of peace between God and humanity, and among human communities. This vision resonates deeply with the church's calling to embody justice and peace in society. Contemporary scholarship, such as Damilare (2024:220), stresses the importance of consistently translating *katallassein* and *katallagē* as "reconcile" and

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

“Reconciliation,” preserving Paul’s relational focus. For the churches today, this means that reconciliation is not merely doctrinal but missional, an active pursuit of justice, healing, and peace in fractured societies. Christianity, therefore, is not only about personal salvation but about communal transformation, where the church becomes an agent of reconciliation, bridging divides and fostering justice as a witness to God’s reconciling work in Christ.

Author Biography

Dorcus Motswadira is a primary school teacher and an experienced educator committed to inclusive and nurturing instruction informed by biblical insight and literary analysis. She holds a Master of Arts in Biblical Hermeneutics from In Christ Bible Institute University and a Bachelor of Education in Special Education from the University of Botswana and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in English Language and Literature at Unicaf University, Zambia. Her research interests include Disability Theology and Inclusive Christology, Biblical Hermeneutics and Interpretation, English literature and literary criticism, and inclusive education methodologies.

Truth-Seeking Vs. Grassroots Healing: A Comparative Analysis of a Top-Down Approach and A Bottom-Up Approach to Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Post-Election Violence, Kenya

Patience Mutie

Peace and Reconciliation Network, Africa

Abstract

One of the enduring challenges that continues to haunt Kenya is the quest for healing and reconciliation in the wake of the 2007/2008 Post-Election Violence, a crisis that left deep scars on communities and raised fundamental questions about the pathways to sustainable peace. While state-led processes such as the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission of Kenya (TJRC-K) sought to deliver justice and truth at a national level, their effectiveness was marred by political interference and poor implementation. In contrast, grassroots and faith-based initiatives such as the Healing Hearts Transforming Nations (HHTN) model emerged as alternative responses, facilitating forgiveness, reconciliation and community-level transformation. The contrast between these approaches raises critical questions about the adequacy of justice-oriented, top-down mechanisms to address trauma and restore relationships, and the capacity of bottom-up, healing-focused models to advance sustainable peace. Anchored in the theoretical frameworks of peacebuilding, transitional justice and trauma, and drawing on qualitative programme evaluation, interviews, and literature, this paper contributes to the ongoing discourse by examining how these two models have shaped Kenya's post-conflict landscape. It further highlights lessons for practitioners, faith communities and governments, while pointing to areas of further research in the search for sustainable approaches to peacebuilding in Africa.

Keywords: Kenya, Post-Election Violence, peacebuilding and reconciliation, Justice and Reconciliation Commission of Kenya, Healing Hearts Transforming Nations, transitional justice

Author biography

Patience Mutie holds a Master of Transformational Development (Eastern College, Australia), where she received the 2023 Excellence Award, and is an experienced project management and peacebuilding professional with over a decade of programme coordination and leadership. She currently serves as a volunteer at the Peace & Reconciliation Network - Africa (World Evangelical Alliance) and as Administrator for Healing Hearts Transforming Nations (HHTN) Global. She has been heavily involved in peace building and reconciliation programmes in many countries in Africa as well as Europe. She brings expertise in reconciliation, strategic leadership, stakeholder engagement and global partnerships.

**The Justice Deficit: How a Culture of Impunity Undermines Peacebuilding in Nigeria's
Christian-Muslim Inter-Religious Disharmony**

Gideon Para-Mallam

Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS), United Kingdom

Abstract

Nigeria has been grappling with recurrent Christian-Muslim ethno-religious tensions which have turned into deadly violent clashes and terrorist attacks. Despite numerous state-led and civil society peacebuilding initiatives centred on interfaith dialogue, sustainable peace remains elusive as the cycle of violence persists with devastating consequences. This paper argues that the primary obstacle to sustainable peace is a profound "**justice deficit**," characterized by a systemic culture of impunity where perpetrators of mass violence are rarely held accountable. If they are, it is often just for the 'camera'! This lack of accountability denies closure to survivors and actively corrodes community trust and inter-religious harmony. Resultant reprisal attacks, ultimately renders peacebuilding efforts unsustainable leading to cyclical violence. (A qualitative case study analysis of key flashpoints in Plateau and Kaduna States will be used) passive sentence. By highlighting the voices from survivors, this paper makes a critical contribution to the peacebuilding literature, demonstrating that justice is not a secondary consideration but a foundational prerequisite for breaking the cycle of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria.

Key Words: Peace, Justice, Christians, Muslims, Violence and Impunity.

Author Biography

Gideon Para-Mallam is an ordained minister with leadership roles at the local and global levels. He is a global mission leader and advocate for social justice. He has served in the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES), the Lausanne Movement and

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Langham Partnership in Nigeria. He is President and CEO of The Para-Mallam Peace Foundation. He advocates for the persecuted church, promotes peacebuilding and conflict transformation. He works to transform hostile relationships between Christians and Muslims. He was conferred an Honorary Doctorate in Missiology, Social Engagement and Advocacy; from the Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS). His contributions to interfaith dialogue are further exemplified by his membership of the Plateau State Inter-Religious Council (IRC). Dr. Para-Mallam holds a BSc in Political Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria and an MA in Communications, Wheaton College, IL, USA. He is a post-doctoral research student, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, OCMS, UK (Guided Research Program).

NEXUS BETWEEN THEOLOGY, COLONIAL LEGACY AND LAW

A Philosophical Interrogation of "One New Humanity in Christ": Glory, Violence, and the Gospel of Peace

Eric Masinde Aseka

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

The pursuit of peace in Africa has long been shaped by external models such as the Roman, British, Arab, German, and French “Paxes,” which prioritized dominance and control rather than genuine reconciliation. These frameworks often disregarded Africa’s unique social structures, spiritual traditions, and historical grievances, resulting in fractured identities and cycles of systemic violence. To achieve sustainable peace and restore Africa’s multifaceted glory, it is essential to dismantle these inherited paradigms and embrace solutions rooted in African thought. Ubuntu, the philosophy of “I am because we are,” (check the place of comma) offers a transformative foundation for peacebuilding. Unlike external systems that emphasize individual rights or state power, Ubuntu centers community well-being, harmonious relationships, and restorative justice. When Christian concepts such as “One New Humanity in Christ” are interpreted through Ubuntu, they shift the meaning of glory from dominance and status to humility, self-giving love, and the restoration of communal honor. This approach directly addresses the honor-shame dynamics that often fuel conflict. Grounding peace in Ubuntu requires strengthening community-led reconciliation, fostering inclusive governance, and engaging deeply with African spiritual traditions. Such a homegrown paradigm empowers Africa to reclaim its authentic identity, heal divisions, and thrive on its own terms—free from lingering colonial ideologies.

Keywords: Ubuntu, African peacebuilding, colonial legacies, restorative justice, African identity

Author Biography

Professor Eric Masinde Aseka is a distinguished political historian and the Director of the Leadership & Governance Hub at Africa International University. With a career spanning over 25 years at Kenyatta University and a former tenure as Vice-Chancellor of International Leadership University, he currently leads the Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR). His academic work focuses on the complex interplay between history, leadership, and governance, specifically within the context of African socio-economic renewal. Professor Aseka's research investigates the tensions between ethnic and national identities and their impact on political conflict. In his influential book, *Transformational Leadership in East Africa*, he traces political evolution from pre-colonial eras to the modern day, championing social justice and ethical commitment as the bedrock of regional stability. Today, he shapes future leaders through AIU's postgraduate programs, bridging historical insights with contemporary public policy and administration to foster authentic African leadership.

Pauline Theology on Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation: A Framework for Ecclesial and Societal Transformation in Africa

Paul Mumo Kisau

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Across Africa, persistent challenges of injustice, conflict, and social fragmentation demand a robust theological response. This paper explores the enduring relevance of Pauline theology in addressing these crises, focusing on the interrelated themes of justice, peace, and reconciliation. Through exegetical engagement with key Pauline texts—Romans 5, 2 Corinthians 5:16–21, Ephesians 2:11–22, and Philippians 4:2–3—the study demonstrates that Paul’s vision is both spiritual and social, encompassing personal transformation and communal responsibility. By dialoguing with African socio-political realities and communal values such as ‘ubuntu’, the paper proposes a holistic ecclesial and societal framework: justice as the reordering of relationships in alignment with God’s purposes; peace as communal harmony rooted in Christ; and reconciliation as the active restoration of fractured identities. This framework equips the African Church to embody God’s transformative work, offering prophetic witness and practical engagement in public life, and contributes to African theology by integrating Pauline ecclesiology with indigenous communal ethics.

Keywords: Pauline theology, justice, peace and reconciliation, African theology, ecclesial transformation, societal transformation.

Author Biography

Prof. Mumo Kisau is a professor of Biblical Studies and Dean of the School of Theology at Africa International university. He holds a PhD in Exegesis from the University of Aberdeen,

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Scotland, UK. He is also a governance expert and was the Vice Chancellor at Scott Christian University for ten years. His short paper deals with Pauline Theology on Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation: A Framework for Ecclesial and Societal Transformation in Africa. This is very interesting read, coming from one who has served in both the academic and development world, having served with World Vision International in the area of Faith and Development.

Legitimacy, Rebellion, and the Sanctification of Violence: Rethinking International Law, Theology, and Human Rights in Africa's Armed Conflicts

Joshua Joseph Niyo

Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

War and violence are fundamentally questions of legitimacy. Who may use force, against whom, and for what purpose are not merely legal questions—they are deeply moral, political, and theological. In the African postcolonial context, this legitimacy is often contested, obscured, or manipulated by state and non-state actors alike. While international law—particularly Article 2(4) of the UN Charter—prohibits the use of force in international relations, the adoption of Article 1(4) of the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions marked a pivotal shift. Though situated within the law regulating armed conflict, it recognized certain wars of national liberation as international in character, granting them legal and moral standing while relegating other uprisings to the status of rebellion or terrorism. This privileging of force has had enduring consequences. Independent states have invoked their liberation credentials to suppress dissent, while communities resisting oppression, marginalization, or structural injustice are often denied legitimacy. Religion—particularly Christianity and Islam—has too often reinforced these binaries. Both state and non-state actors invoke sacred narratives to justify violence and delegitimize adversaries, framing political struggles as cosmic battles. This paper interrogates the legacy of these legal and theological frameworks and offers a threefold response: (1) a deeper analysis of the historical, political, and spiritual roots of conflict in Africa; (2) a critique of the theological and ideological complicity in exclusionary narratives; and (3) a reconstruction of African theological discourse—anchored in 'ubuntu' and human rights—that affirms shared humanity,

restores dignity and resists the use of violence as a tool for resolving grievance. In so doing, the paper seeks to bridge international law, moral theology, and African social imaginaries in the service of a more just and peaceful future.

Keywords: Legitimacy, Armed Conflict, Self-Determination, International Law and Human Rights, Political Theology

Author Biography

Dr. Joshua Joseph Niyo is an international legal practitioner-academic with 15 years of experience in international law, the laws of war, and human rights. He currently serves as the Regional Legal Adviser at the Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre in East Africa. Dr. Niyo has worked across Africa, Europe, and North America in both advisory and teaching capacities, engaging with United Nations bodies, treaty mechanisms, and civil society actors. His research focuses on armed conflict, terrorism and humanitarian action, the protection of civilians, and the role of armed non-state actors in contemporary law and conflict. A published author and member of both the African Society of International Law and the American Society of International Law, he brings interdisciplinary insight into the intersections of law, theology, and social justice. He is actively involved in training, policy development, and advocacy to advance principled humanitarian action and sustainable peace in East and Central African conflict settings.

Biblical and Theological Foundations of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation in the Great Lakes Region: Insights from the Great Lakes Initiative Institute

Marion Ndeta Wasia

Great Lakes Initiative Institute

Abstract

Africa's Great Lakes Region reflects both the vitality and paradox of contemporary Christianity. Despite being one of the most deeply Christianized regions globally, it remains marked by cycles of violence, displacement, and systemic injustice. This tension raises urgent theological questions about the meaning of the Gospel of peace in contexts of persistent conflict. This paper examines the biblical and theological foundations of justice, peace, and reconciliation, with particular attention to the witness of the Great Lakes Initiative Institute (GLI). GLI equips Christian leaders to embody Christ's call to reconciliation in fragile contexts, advancing the vision of "one new humanity" in Christ. Drawing on biblical resources—justice (Micah 6:8), peace (John 14:27), reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18–19), and unity in Christ (Galatians 3:28)—the study explores pathways for confronting violence and nurturing new identities beyond ethnic and social divisions. Engaging African contextual theology, especially Ubuntu, alongside GLI case studies, the paper situates Christian witness as indispensable in transforming societies fragmented by fear and hostility. Methodologically, it integrates biblical exegesis, contextual hermeneutics, and practical theology. It argues that reconciliation, as a Gospel mandate, must move beyond political settlements to embrace holistic transformation—restoring relationships with God, neighbor, and creation. The paper

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

affirms that Africa's Gospel witness lies in embodying one new humanity in Christ, where cycles of violence are broken and God's peace becomes a lived reality.

Keywords: One New Humanity, Gospel of Peace, Contextual hermeneutics, Justice, Reconciliation, Ubuntu Theology, Great Lakes Region, African Theology, Peacebuilding.

Author Biography

Marion Ndeti Wasia is a scholar-practitioner committed to advancing justice, peace, and reconciliation in Africa's Great Lakes Region. She is affiliated with the Great Lakes Initiative Institute, a movement that mobilizes Christian leaders for transformative engagement with the Gospel of peace. She is pursuing a Doctorate in Organizational Change and Administration at California Baptist University. Holding a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership and a Bachelor of Science in Communication and Public Relations, Marion's work integrates leadership, theology, and reconciliation studies. Her research focuses on organizational change, the role of faith-based leadership in post-conflict societies, and the intersections of theology, justice, and peacebuilding. Marion has collaborated with diverse communities to promote cohesion, transformation, and the flourishing of Christian witness, embodying the vision of one new humanity in Christ.

**From Rubble to Steadfastness: Gaza, Lived Religion, and the Legacy of Western
Christianity in African and Palestinian Theologies**

Anthony Khair

Peace Catalyst International

Bethlehem Institute of Peace and Justice

Abstract

The ongoing genocide in Gaza cannot be understood apart from the theological frameworks that legitimize violence and dispossession. Western Christianity and the legacy of White Theology have provided the foundation for Christian Zionist ideologies that sacralize empire, normalize settler colonialism, and sanctify the displacement of Palestinians. These destructive spiritualities, while rooted in the West, have also shaped African churches through missionary legacies, often transforming solidarity with the oppressed into support for the oppressors. Building on research into lived religion in Palestine, this paper examines faith under violence as both destructive spirituality—when co-opted by nationalist and imperial theologies—and liberative spirituality—when embodied in mourning rituals, steadfastness (*sumud*), artistic resistance, and communal solidarity. By placing Gaza in dialogue with African struggles for liberation, the paper demonstrates how theological misinterpretations that once justified colonial domination now sustain support for Israel’s oppression of Palestinians. The argument advanced is that theological education in Africa must confront its colonial inheritance and re-root itself in liberative traditions aligned with lived religion and prophetic witness. Theology is not confined to church institutions but is inscribed in demolished homes, embodied in resilient youth, and revealed in the suffering Christ who laments with the crucified of Gaza and Africa. In this wounded theology, a horizon of liberation emerges as youth are empowered to resist destructive spiritualities and embody a faith that plants seed of justice.

Keywords: Christian zionism, white theology, Gaza, Africa., liberative theology

Author Biography

Anthony Khair is a Palestinian human rights activist and theologian with a multicultural background spanning Latin America, Palestine, and the United States. Born in Honduras and fluent in English, Spanish, and Arabic, he holds a bachelor's degree in biblical studies from Bethlehem Bible College and a master's in theology from Vrije University Amsterdam, specializing in Peace, Trauma, and Religion. Anthony has worked with the Mennonite Central Committee, advocating for Palestine, Latin America, and migration issues at the U.S. Congress and the United Nations. An experienced public speaker, he has lectured at universities and churches across the United States, the Netherlands, and Palestine. He coordinated the Palestine/South Africa Solidarity Pilgrimage with Iziko Lomaqabane, fostering connections between communities of struggle. Currently with Peace Catalyst International and the Bethlehem Institute of Peace and Justice, Anthony focuses on decolonial theology, justice for Palestinians, and global solidarity against systemic oppression.

CHURCH AND RECONCILIATION

The Founding Narrative of Creation, Violence and One New Humanity in the Messiah

Joshua Mwaka

Centre for Jewish and Judaic Studies, Africa International University

Abstract

This paper sets its eyes on the founding narrative of violence in Genesis 1-3 and its expressions in relevant texts in the Hebrew Bible and Jewish midrash. It seeks a fresh reading of these critical texts bequeathed to us by our forefathers. In doing this, we cannot only diagnose our present condition and predicament but find creative solutions to the chaos that surrounds and threatens to sink us, especially in Africa. It examines the foundations of violence; its beginnings, definitions and how it is exercised in its primordial form – as deception. This is explored further by looking at how this perspective is reinforced by those that succeeded their progenitors {Sentence structure ...and passive voice}. This finds expression in Qayin and his seed, in the generation of the flood through the sons of God, in Nimrod and the Babel Generation. This paper examines these texts as the founding narrative of violence directed against the new Humanity God sought from the beginning. This is the One New Humanity God sought as captured in two foundational texts. “Let us make man in our image and in our likeness ...and let them have dominion” and “A man shall leave his father and mother, and they shall become one.” The serpent sought and succeeded in violently dismantling these two expressions of what it means to be like God: what it means to be Adam. We argue that violence consists in the attempt by the serpent to gain dominion for himself through deception and stealth. This act of deception is itself an act of violence; it is violent. This has specific trajectories for Africa and her people (societies), for the church, and for scholars.

The abstract need refining, it goes to details that would rather be left to the Contents of.

Key words: primordial, one new man, image of God, violence, serpent, dominion – glory.

Author Biography

Mr. Joshua Mwaka heads the Centre for Jewish and Judaic Studies at AIU. He holds a Master of Divinity in Biblical Studies with an emphasis on the Hebrew Bible and a BA in Linguistics and Religious Studies from the University of Nairobi. He is passionate about the intersections between Jewish Studies and African Studies. His research interests are in Jewish midrash and how Jewish midrashic readings provides a creative method of re-opening as well as exploring fresh wells left by the fathers. Joshua is also a PhD student at AIU. Joshua is a pastor with Africa Inland Church and is actively involved in church ministry.

Agents of Healing or Harbingers of Division? Reassessing the Role of Christianity and the Churches in Africa's Quest for Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation

Wanson, Yusufu Bagu

Gindiri Theological Seminary (GTS), Affiliate of the University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria

Abstract

Christianity continues to play a vital role in Africa's spiritual, moral, and social life, offering a message of peace, transformation, and reconciliation. The Church is widely expected to lead in healing, peacebuilding, and the promotion of justice amid persistent challenges such as colonial legacies, political instability, ethno-religious violence, and social injustice. Yet its impact remains mixed: while many churches have served as agents of healing and moral guidance, others have been implicated in ethnic partisanship, political silence, and institutional complacency. This contradiction between the Church's theological commitment to peace and its practical shortcomings undermines its prophetic witness and raises a pressing question— are African churches truly agents of reconciliation, or have they become complicit in perpetuating societal divisions? This study employs a descriptive survey to critically reassess the role of Christianity and the Church in Africa's ongoing struggle for justice, peace, and reconciliation. It evaluates both historical and contemporary engagements, identifies factors limiting effectiveness, and explores pathways toward a more faithful fulfilment of the Church's theological and social calling. Findings indicate that the Church possesses a divine mandate and strong moral authority to promote peace and reconciliation, supported by biblical and historical resources that can guide societies toward healing. However, its effectiveness is hindered by weak theological grounding, institutional

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

complacency, and entanglement in ethnic and political affiliations. The article recommends a theological shift toward a prophetic, justice-driven mission. It calls for the integration of peace education and trauma healing into church programs to address the deep impacts of violence. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of interfaith dialogue to foster mutual understanding and redefine the Church's role as a reconciliatory agent in Africa's pluralistic societies.

Keywords: Africa, trauma healing, harbingers, Christianity, church, justice, peacebuilding, reconciliation

Author Biography

Wanson Yusufu Bagu was born in Ganawuri Chiefdom, Riyom Local Government Area of Plateau State. He holds a diploma in Bible, a bachelor's degree and a masters in Church History. Wanson is a seasoned pastor, teacher and an administrator with the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN). Previously, besides pastoring a local congregation, he at (update to reflect the current Status) the seminary. Among several positions held include Secretary Regional Church Council, Director, Information Communication and Technology Department COCIN Headquarters, Jos. Also, the Secretary of COCIN Literature Committee from 2016 to date. Presently, Wanson is the Executive Secretary of the Plateau State Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, from 2023 to date. He has published several articles, one of which includes: *The Quest for Historical Jesus and its Implication for the African Church*. He also co-authored other articles. He is married with two children.

**The Gospel of Christ and the Persistence of Violence in Christianized Burundi and
Rwanda**

Emmanuel Ndikumana

Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS), Oxford, United Kingdom

Great Lakes School of Theology

Great Lakes School of Theology and Leadership, Burundi

Abstract

The paradoxical coexistence of widespread Christianization and persistent ethnic violence in Africa's Great Lakes region remains one of the most pressing challenges for scholars and practitioners alike. Burundi and Rwanda, often celebrated as exemplary cases of successful European Christian missions during the Belgian colonial era, have nevertheless endured some of the most horrific episodes of ethnic and political violence in modern history. Historical records indicate that prior to colonial intervention, Hutu and Tutsi communities coexisted without evidence of ethnic conflict. Yet, since independence, violent clashes have repeatedly erupted, often involving elites shaped by Western missionary education. This contradiction: between the expected peace associated with Christian transformation and the shocking reality of bloodshed, has prompted critical reflection on the role of Christianity in both fueling and counteracting violence. While much scholarly attention has rightly focused on Christianity's failure to preserve pre-existing harmony, less emphasis has been placed on the gospel's potential to mend the fractured social fabric torn apart by colonialism and missionary entanglements. This paper seeks to bridge that gap by examining the complex relationship between ethnic identity, violence, and Christian faith from historical and biblical-theological perspectives. Drawing on narratives of individuals who endured ethnic violence yet chose

Forgiveness and reconciliation, the study highlights how grassroots acts of reconciliation have reshaped communities and influenced political processes. By uncovering these stories, the paper argues that the biblical gospel, when disentangled from colonial legacies, offers profound resources for healing, reconciliation, and the restoration of social trust. Ultimately, Christianity's transformative potential lies not in its colonial past but in its capacity to foster forgiveness and unity in contexts scarred by division.

Keywords: Christianity in Africa, biblical gospel, ethnic violence, colonial legacy, forgiveness and reconciliation, Great Lakes Region.

Author Biography

Emmanuel Ndikumana holds a Ph.D. in Practical Theology/Mission from the Oxford Center for Mission Studies (OCMS) and the Middlesex University in the UK, an MA in Aspects of Christian Missiology, and a BA(Hon) in Biblical and Intercultural Studies from All Nations Christian College and the Open University in the UK. A native of Burundi himself and a Christian since his childhood from one of the major Protestant denominations in Burundi, he has experienced first-hand ethnic violence. His doctoral research is on how the Christian understanding of forgiveness affects reconciliation in the context of ethnic violence. Dr. Ndikumana is currently the Principal of Great Lakes School of Theology and Leadership (GLSTL) and the Pastor of Partners Trust International Church (PTI-C) in Bujumbura, Burundi.

**Reframing Mission as Prophetic Action and Holy Disruption: A Framework for
Transformative Peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

Barnabe Anzuruni Msabah

Theology and Network Engagement (TNE), Tearfund, East, Central, and Southern Africa

Abstract

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) presents a complex paradox: a nation with over 90% Christian adherence yet plagued by persistent conflict, systemic violence, and structural injustice. In the face of unrelenting oppression, corruption, and the spiritual decay ravaging the DRC, the church can no longer afford a passive, spectator posture. Jesus' words: "the violent shall take it by force" (Matthew 11:12, KJV), summon us not to physical aggression, but to a bold, strategic, and holy militancy that confronts injustice, dismantles strongholds, and reclaims God's purposes for our land. This paper examines how holistic peacebuilding frameworks can address this through a comprehensive approach that moves beyond passive Christian disciplines toward prophetic action and holy disruption. Drawing on biblical foundations of reconciliation, the paper argues for a transformative model of peacebuilding that addresses the four foundational relationships fractured by sin: with God, self, others, and creation. The study demonstrates how community-led transformation, gender justice, and systemic change offer pathways for sustainable peace in contexts of protracted conflict. The paper further argues that Christian mission is not passive or escapist, but a courageous engagement with the pain and injustices of the world. This is a call to spiritual boldness—a passionate, nonviolent force that presses into God's purposes amidst resistance. It is a call to rethink mission—not as charity or retreat, but as holy disruption, as a disciplined uprising of love, as a revolution of truth, as prophetic action.

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Keywords: Democratic Republic of Congo, Christian peacebuilding, prophetic action, nonviolent resistance, mission theology

Author Biography

Barnabé Anzuruni Msabah is a Congolese (DRC) theologian, development practitioner, and ordained minister with over 20 years of experience integrating faith, leadership, and holistic transformation across Africa. He currently serves as Theology and Network Engagement Regional Coordinator for Tearfund in Southern, Eastern, and Central Africa, where he provides strategic oversight for pastoral training and church-led community transformation initiatives spanning 15+ countries. Prior to this role, he led Tearfund's Church and Community Transformation team in East and Central Africa, coordinating large-scale initiatives that mobilized churches and denominational networks for church-led, community-owned transformational development. He holds a PhD in Practical Theology from Stellenbosch University and has trained thousands of church leaders across the continent. Author of [*The Wayfarer: Perspectives on Forced Migration and Transformational Development*](#) (longlisted for the 2023 Michael Ramsey Prize), he publishes widely on theology, migration, and development. He serves as a visiting lecture at Pan Africa Christian University and is actively involved in ministry leadership within CITAM, Kenya.

By the Rivers of Nairobi: Faithful Parenting in Exile and the Church's Prophetic

Response to South Sudanese Families in Nairobi

Victor Fai Hussaini

Africa International University, Nairobi Kenya

Abstract

Armed conflicts across Africa have displaced millions, forcing families into diaspora and reshaping the practice of parenting under conditions of exile. Among South Sudanese families resettled in Nairobi, displacement generates profound challenges for child formation, parental identity, and communal belonging. This study investigates the lived experience of South Sudanese parents navigating parenting in diaspora, situating their struggles within theological discourse on violence, exile, and peace. Framed by the conference theme “A New Humanity in Christ. Glory, Violence, and the Gospel of Peace in Africa,” the paper positions parenting in exile as both a site of disruption and a theological vocation. Drawing on Psalm 137, it explores how cultural dislocation and trauma affect parental roles, while faith becomes a resource for resilience and hope. The analysis integrates Social Identity Theory (SIT) and the Practical Theology of Hospitality to examine how identity is preserved, negotiated, or re-imagined in exile. Ethnographic insights and narrative theology illuminate how South Sudanese parents embody faith, transmit values, and cultivate moral courage under pressure. Attention is given to the role of local churches in Nairobi, whose responses reveal both pastoral limitations and prophetic possibilities. The paper argues that the church's mission must transcend reactive charity, embodying an incarnational presence that empowers parents and nurtures identity in Christ. In this way, the church becomes a witness to peace amid violence, fostering resilience and dignity for displaced families. The study underscores the

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

theological-pastoral imperative for churches to engage parenting in diaspora as a site of redemptive action and a call toward a new humanity in Christ.

Keywords: Parenting in diaspora, practical theology, forced displacement, social identity reconstruction, ecclesial hospitality

Author Biography

Victor Fai Hussaini is a doctoral student of Theological Studies (theology and culture concentration) at NEGST, AIU. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree from ECWA Theological Seminary, Igbaja, Nigeria, where he also served as a faculty member, his research interests integrate inculturation, lived theology, and narrative frameworks to explore faith formation across generations. His current work reimagines parenting as worship, discipline, and missional endeavor. Victor has contributed to interdisciplinary theological scholarship through papers, liturgical design, and church-family partnership programs, exploring themes such as Biblical doctrines, faithful discipleship, ministry empowerment, parenting, and youth worldviews. His approach seeks to weave cultural rituals and biblical principles into a theological reflection that is faithful to scriptures yet relevant to cultural contexts, resonating with both pastoral and scholarly audiences. He is a visionary thinker with an interest in establishing centers that engage faith and societal transformation, especially from the basic unit of society.

RELIGION, JUSTICE AND PEACE

**Paths to Peace and Justice: Exploring the Role of Religion in Reducing Violence
through interconnectedness of African Traditional and Christian Perspectives**

Brian Aggrey Theu

Zomba Theological College, Malawi

Abstract

Religion has long been a cornerstone of societal structure, providing moral guidance and fostering peace and justice in communities. This presentation examines the role of religion, particularly African Traditional Religions and Christianity, in mitigating violence and promoting social harmony. Through an anthropological lens, the paper explores how these two religious traditions understand and respond to the challenges of violence, injustice, and conflict within African societies. African Traditional Religions are rooted in communalism, emphasizing interconnectedness, social cohesion, and restorative justice. Central to these belief systems are rituals and practices designed to reconcile communities in the aftermath of conflict, emphasizing the restoration of balance and harmony. By focusing on indigenous conflict resolution methods such as mediation, ritual sacrifice, and communal dialogue, this paper examines how African Traditional Religions offer alternative models to violence, fostering peace through community involvement and mutual accountability. Christianity, introduced to the African continent through colonialism, has had a profound impact on the religious and moral fabric of African societies. The Christian teachings of forgiveness, reconciliation, and the dignity of human life have contributed significantly to shaping African views on justice and peace. This presentation explores how Christian doctrines of non-violence and peacebuilding intersect with African values, offering insights into the role of

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Christian churches in mediating conflicts and promoting justice within local communities. By contrasting and comparing the African Traditional and Christian approaches to violence and justice, this presentation aims to shed light on their complementary roles in fostering peace. In doing so, it highlights the potential for interfaith and intercultural dialogue to reduce violence and promote a just, harmonious society.

Keywords: African traditional religions, Christianity, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, social harmony

Author Biography

Brian Aggrey Theu currently serves as a Campus Registrar and Lecturer at the University of Livingstonia. He previously held the position of Registrar and Lecturer at Zomba Theological University. A dedicated Church Minister in the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, he has served faithfully for 26 years. Dr. Theu holds a PhD from the University of Aberdeen (Scotland), a Master of Theology from Teofilo Kisanji University (Tanzania), and a Bachelor of Divinity from Zomba Theological University (Malawi). His academic and ministerial work centers on the intersection of Christianity and other religions. He is the author of several book chapters and continues to contribute to scholarly discourse in theology and interreligious engagement.

Intersecting Narratives of Peace and Violence: An Anthropological Exploration of African Traditions, Islam, and Christianity in Africa

Kemigisha Susan

Africa International University, Nairobi Kenya

Abstract

This study investigates the complexities of violence and peace in Africa through an anthropological lens, focusing on the intersections of cultural narratives, identity, and structural factors within African traditions, Islam, and Christianity. Despite extensive peacebuilding efforts, violence persists across many African contexts, often rooted in historical legacies, cultural frameworks, and systemic inequalities. The persistence of conflict underscores the need to examine how local communities perceive violence and peace, and how cultural narratives shape attitudes toward conflict resolution and coexistence. Employing ethnographic fieldwork, qualitative interviews, and focus groups on selected African regions, the research explores lived experiences and collective understandings of violence and peace. The study draws on theories of structural violence, cultural anthropology, and peace studies to analyze how cultural narratives and structural realities interact in shaping both conflict and peacebuilding challenges. By foregrounding local voices and cultural contexts, the research seeks to generate nuanced, context-specific knowledge that can inform more effective peacebuilding strategies. The expected outcomes include a deeper understanding of violence and peace dynamics, identification of culturally grounded peacebuilding approaches, and policy recommendations that integrate local narratives and structural realities. The study contributes to existing scholarship by highlighting the significance of cultural narratives in peacebuilding, challenging universalized approaches, and offering insights that can

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

strengthen policy frameworks and capacity-building programs for practitioners. This research emphasizes that sustainable peace in Africa requires more than external interventions; it demands recognition of local cultural narratives, identities, and structural conditions that shape both violence and peace. By situating peacebuilding within lived realities, the study advances a more holistic and culturally responsive approach to conflict transformation.

Keywords: Violence and peace, cultural narratives, peacebuilding, African traditions, structural violence

Author Biography

Ms. Kemigisha Susan is a passionate advocate for Christian apologetics. With a Master of Arts in Theology, which she earned in October 2024. Susan is well-equipped to navigate the complexities of faith and reason, God being her help. Her academic background has provided a solid foundation for her research and ministry interests, which focus on defending the Christian faith and promoting a deeper understanding of God's Word. As an academic author, Susan is committed to sharing her knowledge and insights with others through her writing. Her published work is informed by her studies in theology and her passion for apologetics, making her a compelling voice in the ongoing conversation about faith and culture. Through her research and ministry, Susan aims to empower others by the grace of God, to engage with the world around them, addressing tough questions and challenges with wisdom, compassion, and courage. As a follower of Christ, she is dedicated to living out her faith in a way that honours God and inspires others to do the same. At 40 years old, single, Susan brings a wealth of life experience and academic expertise to her work, making her a valuable resource for those seeking to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith.

**Bridging Faith: Promoting Inter- and Intra-Faith Solidarity between Muslims and
Christians in Kenya**

Josephine Mutuku Sesi

Africa International University, Nairobi Kenya

Abstract

Religious diversity in Kenya, where Christianity and Islam are the predominant faiths, has long shaped the country's sociopolitical landscape, offering both opportunities for collaboration and challenges to national cohesion. While intra-faith unity stresses harmony and cooperation within a single faith tradition, interfaith solidarity is mutual support and collaboration across several religious communities. Intra-faith solidarity, expressed through cooperation among Christian denominations, has played a critical role in advancing peacebuilding, social justice, and development, interfaith solidarity between Christians and Muslims has provided a framework for dialogue, reconciliation, and collective action in times of crisis. This paper explores the historical trajectories of Christian and Muslim relations in Kenya, tracing the influence of colonial legacies, denominational growth, and the emergence of ecumenical and interreligious councils. It examines contemporary challenges such as religious radicalization, political instrumentalization of faith identities, and socioeconomic disparities that complicate both intra-faith and interfaith collaboration. Drawing on case studies—including the role of churches and mosques during the 2007–2008 post-election violence, joint responses to humanitarian crises, and initiatives to counter violent extremism—the article highlights the successes and limitations of solidarity efforts. By synthesizing scholarly research and practical examples, the study underscores the importance of strengthening dialogue platforms, expanding joint development projects, and

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

empowering youth-led interfaith initiatives. The paper argues that Kenya's experience demonstrates how both intra-faith unity and interfaith cooperation can serve as vital mechanisms for fostering national cohesion, resilience, and sustainable peace in multi-faith societies.

Keywords: Religious diversity, Intra-faith solidarity, Inter-faith cooperation, Peacebuilding, Kenya.

Author Biography

Prof. Josephine Mutuku Sesi is a distinguished lecturer at Africa International University and a seasoned scholar in Missions with a strong emphasis on Islamic Studies. With over twenty years of teaching, research, and field engagement, she has built a respected career at the intersection of Christian–Muslim relations, theology, and community transformation. Her academic and practical work focuses particularly on training church leaders and Believers from Muslim Backgrounds (BMBs), equipping them for informed, respectful, and missionally grounded engagement. She is a member of the Network of Centers for Christian-Muslim Relations (NCCMR) and the Founder and Co-Director of Kyeni (Light) International, a community-based organization dedicated to empowering vulnerable populations through education, social action, and spiritual nourishment.

GENDER JUSTICE, VIOLENCE AND PEACE

**Unhiding Vulnerable Voices: Reading the Parables as a Response to Gender-Based
Violence in South Africa**

Charel Daniël du Toit

Abstract

South Africa faces a persistent pandemic of gender-based violence (GBV), deeply rooted in historical, religious, and patriarchal narratives that often render women invisible. This paper introduces the concept of an “unhiding reading,” developed in my published PhD research, as a deconstructive and reconstructive hermeneutical tool that reimagines the biblical parables of Luke through the implicit presence and agency of women. Drawing on feminist theology, social-scientific criticism, and contextual South African theology, I aim to demonstrate how this method not only addresses textual erasures but also offers transformative possibilities for communities affected by GBV. Grounded in engagements with vulnerable communities in Pretoria, particularly through participatory Bible studies held during events like the "Feast of the Clowns" this paper illustrates how reclaiming women’s hidden roles in parables such as the Prodigal Son, the Friend at Midnight, and the Good Samaritan can foster narrative autonomy among marginalized women. Participants, when invited to imagine women as mediators, caregivers, laborers, and healers within these narratives, reinterpreted the texts and their own realities in empowering ways. This paper argues that an unhiding reading is not merely an academic exercise but a vital theological and pedagogical strategy for confronting GBV in religious contexts. It reclaims silenced voices, confronts the complicity of faith communities in perpetuating gender injustice, and equips practitioners with tools for transformative dialogue. The paper concludes by proposing the integration of this method

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

into theological training and community engagement to catalyze justice, healing, and reconciliation in African faith spaces.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, feminist hermeneutics, biblical interpretation, narrative autonomy, social justice.

Author Biography

Dr. Charel Daniël du Toit is a scholar of Early Christianity and Gender Justice and Research Fellow at the University of Pretoria. His doctoral research, completed at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and titled ‘Unhiding’ Female Characters in the Parables of Luke, reimagines biblical texts to uncover the hidden presence and agency of women in first-century Palestine. He has engaged communities across South Africa, the Netherlands, and the U.S. on issues of gender-based violence, faith, and marginality, especially through inter-religious dialogue and trauma-informed pedagogy. A minister in the Reformed Church in Africa, Charel combines rigorous academic inquiry with pastoral sensitivity and public engagement. He contributes to academic and community conversations on violence, hospitality, and peace through inclusive theological frameworks rooted in African and global contexts. He is currently based out of Tennessee, USA.

Faith-Based Engagement in Transforming Masculinities and Advancing Gender

Justice: A Case Study from Meru County, Kenya

Norah Naitore Njoni

Faith to Action Network

National Independent Church of Africa, Kenya

Abstract

Despite increased advocacy for gender equality in Africa, faith spaces remain both influential and contested grounds in the struggle for justice. This paper explores how transformative faith leadership can be harnessed to promote positive masculinities and gender justice, using Meru County, Kenya as a case study. Grounded in the YW4A (Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy and Accountability) model, the study examines faith-based interventions that engage men and boys in interfaith dialogues, promote inclusive decision-making, and challenge patriarchal norms. The methodological approach combines participatory action research with contextual theology, involving clergy, lay leaders, and youth from diverse Christian denominations. Data was collected through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and reflective journaling by faith leaders implementing gender justice interventions. The paper argues that gender-transformative dialogue rooted in scripture and theology enables religious actors to reframe masculinity in ways that affirm dignity and equality for all. Notably, the intervention contributed to increased female representation in church decision-making spaces and the formulation of a diocesan gender policy. Findings demonstrate that faith actors, when empowered with gendered theological tools and strategic advocacy models, can catalyze social transformation. Recommendations include scaling up interfaith masculinities' dialogues, investing in the capacity-building of clergy on SRHR, and integrating gender justice into seminary curricula.

Keywords: Faith and gender justice, positive masculinities, SRHR, YW4A, contextual theology, Kenya

Author Biography

Rev. Norah Naitore Njoni is a Kenyan woman priest of the National Independent Church of Africa (NICA), where she serves as Director of the Capacity Building Department. She is also a Program Officer for Gender Justice and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) at Faith to Action Network. With a master's degree in religious studies, Rev. Njoni integrates contextual theology with community transformation, specializing in faith-based approaches to gender justice, positive masculinities, and SRHR advocacy. Her master's thesis directly influenced the increase of women in church decision-making spaces and led to the development of a diocesan gender policy. She is a key implementer of the YW4A (Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy and Accountability) program in Meru County, Kenya. Rev. Njoni has shared her insights on global platforms, including conferences in Africa, Europe, and North America, highlighting the role of faith in advancing gender justice.

Gendered Identities, Media Narratives, and Violent Extremism in Kenya

Joy Mueni

Riara University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Kenya's evolving violent extremism landscape shaped by al-Shabaab's cross-border operations, localized grievance structures, and digital propaganda intersects with gendered identities and media narratives in ways that can either intensify harm or open pathways to reconciliation. Drawing on an integrative qualitative synthesis combining critical media discourse analysis, secondary evidence from policy and evaluation studies, and African public and practical theology this paper surfaces how gendered scripts (e.g., masculinities of protection/vengeance and feminized roles of mourning/support) are mobilized by both extremist and counter-extremist messaging; analyzes Kenyan media frames that oscillate between alarm and stigmatization, with implications for Muslim communities, refugees, and youth in informal settlements; and proposes a gospel-anchored, gender-sensitive, media-aware peacebuilding praxis rooted in dignity (*imago Dei*), proximate listening, truth-telling, and restorative reintegration. The analysis situates Kenya's National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE) and county action plans (CAPs) within broader regional evidence—especially UNDP's 2023 Journey to Extremism in Africa findings that underscore socioeconomic drivers and the limits of purely securitized responses. We conclude with policy and practice recommendations for clergy, laity, journalists, county CVE platforms, and donors, emphasizing ethical “do-no-harm” communication, women- and youth-led community media, trauma-aware pastoral care, and budgeted, locally owned CAPs that align with the Gospel's call to reconciliation.

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Keywords: Kenya; gender; violent extremism; media narratives; public theology; peacebuilding gospel.

Author Biography

Dr. Joy Mueni is the Head of the Communication and Multimedia Journalism Department. She holds a doctorate degree in Communication and Information Studies from the University of Nairobi (2014), a Master of Arts in Communication (2005) and a bachelor's degree in journalism, Literature and Public Administration (2004) from the University of Mysore, India. Dr. Mueni is a mass communications expert with extensive experience in various mass communication platforms. Her academic interests lie in communication for development, mainstreaming gender through communication, popular media culture like talk radio and soap operas and promoting media excellence and freedom. As a university trainer she acknowledges and labours to ensure that access to basic education is a right enjoyed by all and that those that choose to pursue higher education get a quality education in their chosen field of pursuit.

The Role of Education, Media, and Leadership in Promoting Peace

Josephine Mutuku Sesi

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

In today's era, marked by religious pluralism, global migration, and increasing interconnectivity, fostering peaceful coexistence among diverse religious and cultural communities has become a pressing need. The continued Interfaith conflicts, sectarian violence, and the misuse of religious identity for political ends has continued to threaten societal harmony. Also, in today's globalized and interconnected world, societies are increasingly characterized by religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity. This diversity, while enriching, presents significant challenges in maintaining peaceful coexistence, especially in regions marked by historical interfaith tensions. The misuse of religious identity for political or sectarian gains continues to be a major source of conflict worldwide. As such, there is a pressing need for intentional efforts that foster dialogue, mutual respect, and peaceful engagement among different communities. Against this backdrop, education, media, and leadership emerge as powerful and interconnected forces that can either promote peace or exacerbate conflict. This paper explores how these three spheres function individually and collectively to shape interfaith relations. The paper utilizes the work of recent scholarship and practical examples from contemporary societies. This study offers considerable value to stakeholders engaged in peacebuilding, representing a significant contribution to understanding how peace can be promoted not only within church organizations, but also across government institutions and diverse communities affected by conflict. It highlights both the strengths and the limitations of education, media, and leadership in advancing peace initiatives. As a scholarly contribution, the research addresses an important gap in the

academic literature concerning African churches' use of digital platforms to disciple younger generations as agents of peace. Moreover, it has the potential to serve as a foundation for future studies in this emerging field.

Key words: Educational frameworks, Digital media, digital platforms, leadership community, peace building, agents of peace, interfaith relations, stakeholders engaged.

Author Biography

Prof. Josephine Mutuku Sesi is a distinguished lecturer at Africa International University and a seasoned scholar in Missions with a strong emphasis on Islamic Studies. With over twenty years of teaching, research, and field engagement, she has built a respected career at the intersection of Christian–Muslim relations, theology, and community transformation. Her academic and practical work focuses particularly on training church leaders and Believers from Muslim Backgrounds (BMBs), equipping them for informed, respectful, and missionally grounded engagement. She is a member of the Network of Centers for Christian-Muslim Relations (NCCMR) and the Founder and Co-Director of Kyeni (Light) International, a community-based organization dedicated to empowering vulnerable populations through education, social action, and spiritual nourishment.

**The Missing Link in the Gospel of Peace: Addressing the Boy-Child Challenge as a
Pathway to Justice, Peacebuilding, and Human Flourishing in Africa**

David Mbuvi

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Human flourishing is most fully realized within contexts where peace and justice are intentionally cultivated. Stoic philosophy underscores that peace is not incidental but the necessary consequence of justice. Justice ensures that individuals are treated equitably, valued for their intrinsic worth, and protected in ways that enable comprehensive flourishing social, spiritual, economic, and relational. This vision constitutes the foundation of transformational development, which transcends incremental reform by seeking the restoration of right relationships among persons, communities, and God. Such development reflects the Creator's design for abundance and fullness of life. Theologically, transformational development is grounded in the conviction that God's glory is manifest through justice, peace, and love. It confronts systemic injustices and vulnerabilities, particularly poverty, which extends beyond material deprivation to encompass the erosion of dignity, opportunity, and hope. Addressing poverty requires engaging structural inequities, contextual realities, and empowering individuals and institutions to participate meaningfully in their advancement. At its center lies the Gospel of Peace, wherein reconciliation through Christ's redemptive work dismantles injustice, violence, and sin. Violence and abuse, especially Gender-Based Violence, exemplify fractured relationships and spiritual distortions. These phenomena cannot be explained solely by cultural or patriarchal systems but reveal a deeper departure from divine intention. The biblical vision of "one new humanity in Christ" calls for reconstructing distorted gender identities and advancing biblically grounded strategies that affirm dignity, mutuality, and

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

stewardship. Ultimately, transformational development functions as a wheel stabilized by peace, justice, and human flourishing. Absent harmony among these elements, communities fracture. Authentic transformation requires that both boys and girls be empowered to live in dignity, contributing compassionately to society and embodying Christ's promise of abundant life.

Author Biography

David is a social transformation practitioner whose work is grounded in a commitment to strategic, faith-informed leadership that fosters innovation, problem-solving, and empowerment across Africa and beyond. His professional engagement is situated at the intersection of ministry, international development practice, theology, and family and cultural studies. With over fifteen years of experience in social protection, gender programming, child protection, and community development, David has collaborated with international faith-based and development organizations, including Tearfund and the Canadian Food Grains Bank. His practice reflects a sustained engagement with community-centered and rights-based approaches to development. David served for over a decade as Chair of KE727 AIC Jericho Child Development Center, providing strategic oversight and institutional leadership. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Theology and Development at Africa International University, where his scholarly interests focus on the integration of theological frameworks with development praxis. In addition to his academic and professional roles, David is a mentor, certified parental coach and mediator, visionary coach, and author. He is married to Benny and is a father of three. His vocation is marked by a commitment to cultivating resilient, accountable, and faith-driven communities.

POLITICS, VIOLENCE AND PEACEBUILDING

Transforming Nations Approach in Conflict-Affected Kenyan Communities

Allan Waihumbu¹, Jacob Opara² and Jenninah Kabiswa²

¹Way of Peace, Nairobi, Kenya

²World Renew, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

This paper is authored by a team of distinguished practitioners and scholars whose combined expertise spans peacebuilding, community development, organizational leadership, and resource mobilization across Africa and internationally. Dr. Allan Waihumbu, Executive Director of Way of Peace (WAPE), has devoted decades to reconciliation and peacebuilding, leading initiatives that foster healing and sustainable transformation in diverse contexts. His academic journey includes a Master's in Transformational Development (Community Organization and Advocacy) from Eastern College Australia, a Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management from the Kenya Institute of Management, and a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Nairobi. As the principal author of this abstract, Dr. Waihumbu contributes extensive field-based research experience and a unique blend of advocacy, development, and conflict transformation expertise. Adding to this perspective is Jacob Opara, Resource Mobilization Manager at World Renew, whose career reflects broad experience in resource generation and community project implementation. He holds a master's degree in communication along with diplomas in social entrepreneurship and development. Opara's work emphasizes the strategic integration of communication and resource mobilization to strengthen organizational sustainability and empower grassroots initiatives, thereby advancing peacebuilding and social transformation. Jenninah Kabiswa,

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Senior Country Director at World Renew, brings over 15 years of leadership in organizational development and community practice across Africa. She has directed national and international programs in community development, capacity building, and public health, working with institutions such as the World Health Organization and World Vision. Her expertise in program management and organizational leadership underscores the importance of institutional frameworks in supporting reconciliation and sustainable development. Together, the authors represent a rich convergence of academic rigor, practical experience, and organizational leadership. Their collective insights provide a holistic lens for examining peacebuilding and reconciliation in Africa, offering valuable lessons for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars engaged in the search for sustainable transformation.

Author Biography

Allan Waihumbu is the Executive Director of Way of Peace (WAPE), with decades of experience in peacebuilding and community development, having led numerous reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts across Africa and beyond. He holds a Master's degree in Transformational Development (Community Organization and Advocacy) from Eastern College Australia, a Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management from the Kenya Institute of Management, and a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Nairobi. As the lead writer of this abstract, he brings deep field-based research experience and cross-sectoral expertise in advocacy, development, and conflict transformation.

Jacob Opara, Resource Mobilization Manager at World Renew, is a development worker with wide experience in resource mobilization and community project implementation. He holds a master's degree in communication and double diplomas in social entrepreneurship and development.

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Jenninah Kabiswa is an experienced organizational development expert and development practitioner with over 15 years of work across Africa. She has led national and international programs in community development, capacity building, and public health with organizations such as WHO, World Vision, and now as Senior Country Director at World Renew.

Kenya's Sword of Damocles: A Critical Review of Volume II of Kenya's Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) Report

Enoch Harun Opuka

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

This paper critically examines Volume II of the Kenya Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) Final Report, which documents grave human rights violations committed between 1963 and 2008. Focusing on Part 2A (violations of bodily integrity), 2B (land and historical injustices), and 2C (socio-economic and group-based marginalization), the paper explores the systemic nature of state-sponsored and condoned abuses across successive regimes. Drawing from over 42,000 witness statements and hundreds of memoranda, the report presents compelling evidence of extra-judicial killings, torture, enforced disappearances, sexual and gender-based violence, and widespread impunity—particularly affecting marginalized communities such as the Somali, Turkana, Nubian, and Endorois peoples. The paper contextualizes these violations within Kenya's post-independence history, highlighting the politicization of land allocation, ethnic favoritism, and militarized state responses to dissent. It further examines how socio-economic disenfranchisement and exclusion from basic services have contributed to intergenerational cycles of poverty and disempowerment, especially among women, youth, and minorities. Special attention is given to the Commission's findings on state complicity, patterns of silence, and the erosion of public trust in institutions.

The paper argues that Volume II offers not only an indictment of past injustices but also a framework for accountability, institutional reform, and restorative justice. It concludes by reflecting on the missed opportunities in implementing the report's recommendations and

suggests pathways for reviving national conversations on historical redress and reconciliation. The paper argues that unless the issues raised in the TJRC are addressed then Kenya faces the danger of plunging into violence.

Keywords: TJRC, restorative justice, historical injustices, land rights, marginalized communities, peace.

Author Biography

Dr. Opuka holds a PhD in Development Studies and teaches Development and Peace Studies at Africa International University. He is an experienced peacebuilding practitioner with fieldwork across Somalia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. In Somalia, he contributed to national and regional peace strategies, led humanitarian responses for IDPs and refugees, and built the capacity of local NGOs using participatory approaches. In Mozambique, he worked with ex-combatants, facilitated community peace initiatives, and implemented development programs in education, health, water, and livelihoods. He conducted major research in Somaliland on the contribution of women in peace building in Somalia.

Reclaiming Dignity and Advancing Peace through Christ-Centered Community

Development in Africa: Toward One New Man in Christ

Jonny Kabiswa Kyazze¹, Jacob Opara¹ and Jenninah Kabiswa¹

¹World Renew

Abstract

This paper is authored by a team of experienced practitioners whose collective expertise spans organizational development, community transformation, leadership, and resource mobilization across Africa and beyond. Jonny Kabiswa Kyazze, a Ugandan consultant, has over 17 years of experience in strengthening communities and organizations through leadership and capacity building. He co-authored *Helping Without Hurting in Africa* and has published research on organizational culture. His academic background includes a master's in management and organizational development, a Bachelor's in Community-Based Development, and a Diploma in Business Management. Currently serving as Partnership Coordination Manager for Eastern and Southern Africa at Resonate Global Mission, Jonny brings both scholarly insight and practical experience to the discourse on organizational growth and community resilience. Jacob Opara, Resource Mobilization Manager at World Renew, complements this expertise with extensive experience in resource mobilization and community project implementation. Holding a master's degree in communication and diplomas in social entrepreneurship and development, Jacob has advanced strategies that strengthen organizational sustainability and empower grassroots initiatives. His work highlights the vital role of communication and resource generation in supporting peacebuilding and development. Jenninah Kabiswa, Senior Country Director at World Renew, contributes more than 15 years of leadership in organizational development and community practice across Africa. She has directed national and international programs

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

in community development, capacity building, and public health, working with organizations such as the World Health Organization and World Vision. Her leadership underscores the importance of institutional frameworks and organizational capacity in advancing reconciliation and sustainable development. Together, the authors represent a rich blend of academic rigor, practical experience, and organizational leadership. Their combined perspectives provide a holistic lens for examining peacebuilding and development in Africa, offering valuable lessons for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars committed to sustainable transformation.

Author Biography

Jonny Kabiswa Kyazze is a Ugandan consultant with over 17 years' experience in community and organizational development, leadership, and capacity building across Africa and internationally. He co-authored *Helping Without Hurting in Africa* and authored research on organizational culture. Jonny holds a master's degree in management and organizational development, a Bachelor's in Community-Based Development, and a Diploma in Business Management. He is Partnership Coordination Manager for Eastern and Southern Africa at Resonate Global Mission.

Jacob Opara, Resource Mobilization Manager at World Renew, is a development worker with wide experience in resource mobilization and community project implementation. He holds a master's degree in communication and double diplomas in social entrepreneurship and development.

Jenninah Kabiswa is an experienced organizational development expert and development practitioner with over 15 years of work across Africa. She has led national and international programs in community development, capacity building, and public health with organizations such as WHO, World Vision, and now as Senior Country Director at World Renew.

Land Eclipse Religion in Conflict Context: A Case of Kenya

Festus Mukoya

World Vision

Abstract

In Kenya, land has long eclipsed religion in conflict contexts, serving as a visceral source of identity, power, and survival. Drawing on social identity theory and qualitative analysis, land disputes, rooted in a lack of title deeds and weak tenure systems have led to contested claims and community invasions. Wealthy elites exploit these vulnerabilities, grabbing communal lands and displacing residents, which fuels violent confrontations. Colonial alienation of fertile land from indigenous communities, followed by politicized and uneven post-independence redistribution, deepened ethnic grievances that persist today. During elections, these unresolved injustices are reignited as land becomes a powerful tool for political mobilization and ethnic alignment. Christianity, despite its widespread presence, lacks cohesive institutional influence in mediating entrenched land conflicts. Church doctrines and political affiliations vary, and in some cases, religious institutions have acquired contested land or aligned with divisive interests, undermining their moral authority. Within faith communities, tribal loyalties and survival needs often outweigh spiritual values, further reducing religion's role in conflict resolution. Thus, land, more than religion, serves as Kenya's primary axis of tension embodying historical grievance, daily livelihood, and political leverage. Faith can foster reconciliation and justice, but only if it confronts the socio-political realities surrounding land. Religious efforts must be rooted in historical awareness, ethical integrity, and grassroots empowerment to contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding. Addressing land-related conflicts demands comprehensive reforms that integrate legal policy, institutional accountability, and inclusive dialogue. Religious voices can amplify these

efforts, but only when they advocate for social equity and resist political co-optation. Ultimately, land remains the dominant driver of Kenya's conflicts and collective consciousness, challenging faith communities to engage more deeply with the structural forces shaping injustice.

Key Words: land conflicts; religion; Kenya; land injustice; Social Identity Theory.

Author Biography

Dr. Festus Mukoya is a research, development, and peacebuilding professional with over 15 years of experience advancing social justice, resilience, and conflict transformation across Africa. He holds a PhD in Information and Communication Technology for Peace from the University of Oslo, master's degrees in Conflict Management and Project Planning and Management and BA in Sociology and Geography. He has undertaken advanced leadership training in peacebuilding at the Geneva Centre for Security Studies. His research focuses on ICT-enabled conflict early warning systems, intergroup conflict, climate change and peace, transitional justice, and the health impacts of conflict. He has published in *Peace Studies Journal*, *COMPASS*, and *IFIP*, with additional work under review in leading international journals. He has also authored policy-relevant reports and is currently developing a book on homegrown peace recovery processes among communities in Kenya. Beyond academia Dr. Mukoya has led multi-sectoral peacebuilding, resilience, and livelihoods programs across Kenya, Ethiopia, and Togo, designing ICT-enabled early warning and response systems and facilitating reconciliation processes. He has served in senior roles with World Vision Kenya, FPFK, and Peace Rights Programme, and has taught and supervised postgraduate students at Daystar University. He is a recipient of the Head of State Commendation (HSC) for outstanding peacebuilding contributions in Kenya.

POST CONFLICT RECOVERY

Christ the Prince of Peace in the Eyes of Congolese Christian Refugees in Nakivale: A Theological Reflection through the Lens of Solomon Mukubwa’s Song “*Mfalme wa Amani*”

Elie H. Nataka

Abstract

This study investigates the portrayal of Christ as the Prince of Peace through the lived experiences of Congolese Christian refugees in Nakivale Refugee Camp, Uganda. Drawing inspiration from Solomon Mukubwa’s gospel song *Mfalme wa Amani* (“King of Peace”), the research explores how faith shapes responses to trauma, displacement, and suffering. Twenty refugees, both men and women, from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were interviewed, all of whom have endured the devastating effects of war and forced migration. By focusing on Christian refugees, the study highlights how their faith informs their understanding of suffering and peace in the midst of adversity. Despite facing immense hardship, the participants demonstrate remarkable resilience and a profound theological grasp of redemptive suffering. For them, Christ’s peace is not simply defined as the absence of conflict but as a source of inner hope and eschatological assurance. Their reflections reveal a theology that does not evade present pain by focusing only on future heavenly peace. Instead, their faith actively engages with the realities of displacement, loss, and uncertainty, enabling them to confront suffering with courage and trust in Christ. The findings affirm that the theology of suffering among these refugees is deeply embodied and incarnational rather than abstract or distant. It shapes their endurance, strengthens their communal identity, and deepens their reliance on Christ as *Mfalme wa Amani*—the King of Peace. This study contributes to theological discourse by showing how refugee experiences enrich understandings of peace, reconciliation, and the transformative presence of Christ. It

underscores the importance of integrating marginalized voices into theological reflection, demonstrating that lived faith in contexts of conflict and displacement offers vital insights into the meaning of suffering, hope, and peace.

Author Biography

Elie H. Nataka is a Congolese theologian and French educator currently based in Malindi, Kenya. Since 2019, he has pursued theological studies at Africa International University (AIU), earning both his bachelor's and master's degrees. Beyond theology, Elie teaches French — an experience that has deepened his insights into Africa's linguistic and metaphysical landscape, especially given the widespread influence of Francophone culture across the continent. He was recently awarded a regional trophy for French singing and creativity in literature by *Kifaransa Village Organisation*, along with a few of his students. He also runs a growing TikTok page that celebrates African languages and culture.

**Applying the Study of Matthew 5:38-39 to the Context of Post-War Acholi People in
Gulu District**

Ocen Walter Onen

MTD Facilitator (Africa)

Abstract

This research of applying the study of Matthew 5:38-39 to the context of post-war Acholi people in Gulu district was motivated by increased violence amongst the Acholi people in Gulu district, which is alarming despite the several traditional reconciliation efforts that have been applied in the context, as discussed in chapter three. The method used for collecting data was through reading and critical analysis of several pieces of literature that are related to the topic, as discussed in chapter one under methodology of the research and for the exegetical study of Matthew 5:38-39, biblical interpretation methodologies of historical and literal criticism were used to get what the text meant to the original audience. The researcher argued that the Acholi people in the post-war context in the Gulu district should integrate the non-violence approaches to conflict resolution as elucidated in Matthew 5:38-39. First, they should release the perpetrators from their minds and hearts under the compulsion of Jesus' gracious love (Matthew 5:38a), secondly, they should accept to reconcile with their perpetrators without compensation (Matthew 5:38b), thirdly, they should not retaliate (Matthew 5:39a), and finally, they should emulate the victim-driven approach to reconciliation elucidated in Matthew 5:39c. This will then lead to an effective reconciliation and sustainable peace to be realized in the context.

Key Words: traditional reconciliation, Acholi people, Gulu district, historical and literal criticism, and sustainable peace

Author Biography

Rev. Ocen Walter Onen is a Researcher at Uganda Christian University and the coordinator of Master of Transformational Development at Eastern College Australia –In charge of Africa Stream –. His research interests are Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Biblical Theology of Non-Violence, Peace and Sustainable Development, and Traditional Justice Systems and Practices.

**Technical, Vocational Education and Training for Sustainability in and Post-Conflict
Contexts in the Great Lakes Region: A Case of Uganda's Refugee Response**

Tusiime Grace,

Department of Technical Teacher and Instructor Education,

Kyambogo University

Abstract

The armed conflicts in the Great Lakes region have caused displacement of masses from their homes and communities creating a refugee and IDPs crisis. These displacements interfere with livelihoods and educational programming causing unemployment, and vulnerability for refugees. This state of powerlessness and fluidity deters them from attaining stable education, dignified employment and livelihoods, leading to an unending cycle of poverty, economic insecurity and delinquency. This paper adopted a documentary analysis type of study to understand the role of TVET in rebuilding livelihoods in and post conflict context, the legal frameworks, the challenges and strategies for successful TVET implementation among refugees, IDPs and hosting communities using Uganda a case study. Findings indicate that resolving this is hinged on adopting a form of education that emphasises hands-on labour market-driven skilling for employability and life-long sustainability. Thus, TVET emerges as a strategic tool that will culminate into economic empowerment through imparting of employable hands-on skills among refugees. TVET is able to deliver labour-driven, hands-on skills, contribute to reconciliation and social cohesion, improve livelihoods leading to national development. Despite the challenges facing TVET including reduced funding and poor infrastructure, it can be successfully implemented if there is strong will and intention. Thus, this calls

for policy frameworks tailored for TVET in emergencies, public-private partnerships and leveraging data to inform programming among other interventions.

Author Biography

Tusiime Grace is a dedicated teacher and researcher affiliated to Kyambogo University, Uganda with over ten years of experience in teaching focusing on Curriculum Design and Development, Teacher training and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). She has actively contributed to the advancement of education through her work in developing responsive and inclusive curricula and programs for youth skilling and education in emergencies (EIE). She has led and participated in the design, development and implementation of TVET skilling programs tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations, including out-of-school youth, OVCs and learners affected by conflict and displacement. Her research interest centres around competency-based education, skills development for employability, and curriculum innovation for sustainable livelihoods.

SOCIAL JUSTICE, VIOLENCE AND PEACEMAKING

**Grafting the Sacred onto the Rogue: The Co-optation of Religious Leaders by
Authoritarian Regimes in Africa**

David Andrew Omona

Uganda Christian University, Mukono, Uganda

Abstract

This paper investigates the ways in which authoritarian regimes across Africa strategically enlist religious leaders to reinforce their authority, suppress dissent, and regulate public life. Drawing on desk research and case studies from Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Sudan, the study analyzes the implications of these alliances for religious institutions, civil society, and democratic governance. The central questions explored include: how regimes succeed in co-opting religious leaders; the mechanisms through which religious discourse is aligned with state propaganda; the consequences of this co-optation for political legitimacy, religious independence, and citizen resistance or compliance; and whether variations exist across Christian, Islamic, and Indigenous traditions. The analysis is guided by three theoretical perspectives: Gramscian hegemony, which explains how regimes manufacture consent through religious authority; political theology, which interrogates the interaction between religion and politics; and neo-patrimonialism, which highlights informal patronage networks and alliances. Together, these frameworks illuminate the subtle yet powerful ways in which religion is instrumentalized to sustain authoritarian control. Findings suggest that religious co-optation functions as a form of soft power, enabling regimes to justify repression while offering reciprocal benefits to religious leaders, such as access to resources or political protection. However, this dynamic undermines the credibility of religious institutions, erodes their moral authority, and weakens their prophetic role in advocating for justice and reconciliation. While co-optation may secure short-term stability for regimes, it ultimately diminishes democratic

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

resilience and compromises the independence of faith communities. In conclusion, the study highlights the complex interplay between sacred authority and political power in African governance. It underscores the importance of understanding these dynamics for assessing prospects for democratization and for safeguarding the integrity of moral institutions in contexts of authoritarian rule.

Author Biography

Omona Andrew David is an Associate Professor of Ethics and International Relations, and Director of Africa Policy Centre at the Uganda Christian University. He holds a PhD in Political studies with focus on International Relations and Diplomatic Practice, MA in International Relations and Diplomacy, MA in Theology, plus several bachelors, diplomas, and certificates. He has authored several journal articles, book chapters, and books in his area of expertise. He looks forward to collaborating with like-minded academics and practitioners.

Social Science and Humanities Perspectives: Tech-Savvy Kenyan Gen-Z Movement

Embodied as one Humanity Pushing Back Epistemic Violence

Charity Kirigo

Africa International University, Nairobi Kenya

Abstract

Conflict and violence in Christianised Africa have historically been characterized by bloodshed, destruction, arson, and loss of life. Such unrest is often instigated and sustained by political, community, and even church leaders, exploiting divisions of ethnicity, religion, class, nationality, and gender. Weapons ranging from stones and machetes to bows, arrows, and firearms are commonly deployed, while mainstream media is frequently manipulated to spread propaganda. Leaders seeking political or social advantage mobilize resources, distribute weapons, and craft narratives that escalate violence. In contrast, Kenya's 2024 Gen-Z movement drew international attention as a non-violent uprising against economic oppression and political mismanagement. This youth-led mobilization was distinctive in its nameless, tribeless, faceless, and leaderless identity. Rejecting traditional instruments of violence, participants carried the Kenyan flag and used mobile phones as their tools of resistance. Through social media platforms, they organized peaceful demonstrations, demanded accountability, and articulated aspirations for economic liberation. This study, framed within Social Sciences and Humanities perspectives, explores the Gen-Z movement as an embodiment of "one humanity" and as a credible alternative to historically violent struggles for social change in Africa. Using case study methodology, it examines the role of social media in enabling mobilization, solidarity, and visibility. The paper also engages with the concept of Techno-Theology, reflecting on how digital tools intersect with moral and spiritual visions of justice and peace. The findings confirm that non-violent movements

such as Kenya's Gen-Z protests can provide viable pathways to socio-economic and political transformation. Moreover, technological innovations—particularly mobile phones and social media—emerge as powerful enablers of collective action, offering African societies new models of resistance that prioritize dignity, accountability, and peaceful change over destructive cycles of violence.

Author Biography

Charity Kirigo is a budding theologian, a purpose-driven people development professional with over 15 years' experience in training, leadership development, coaching, mentorship and human capital growth. She is a seasoned communicator experienced in working independently and collaboratively.

**Faith-Based Peacebuilding in Practice: An Empirical Analysis of Tearfund's
Community-Centered Approaches in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Barnabe Anzuruni Msabah

Abstract

This paper explores the peacebuilding practices of Tearfund, a faith-based international development organization, across conflict-affected regions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing on interventions carried out between 2022 and 2024 in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, and Nigeria, the study assesses the effectiveness of Tearfund's multi-layered approach to reconciliation and social transformation. Using a mixed-methods design, the research integrates program data, evaluation reports, and community feedback to analyze five central strategies: empowering local changemakers, mobilizing churches as agents of peace, advocating for structural justice, implementing trauma healing initiatives, and mainstreaming gender justice. Together, these strategies reflect Tearfund's holistic model, which seeks to address both relational and systemic dimensions of conflict. The findings reveal measurable improvements in community cohesion, significant reductions in gender-based violence, and stronger cooperation across divided groups. Empowering local leaders fostered grassroots ownership of peace processes, while church mobilization enhanced moral authority and trust. Advocacy for structural justice helped address systemic inequalities, trauma healing initiatives provided psychosocial support for communities processing grief and violence, and gender justice integration promoted inclusivity by challenging harmful norms and ensuring equitable participation. By documenting these outcomes, the study contributes to the growing scholarship on faith-based peacebuilding. It offers empirical evidence that community-centered, spiritually grounded interventions can achieve tangible impact in fragile contexts where state-led mechanisms often fall short. The research underscores the importance

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

of weaving together faith, justice, and healing in peacebuilding strategies, providing valuable lessons for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars committed to reconciliation and sustainable transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Author Biography

Barnabé Anzuruni Msabah is a Congolese (DRC) theologian, development practitioner, and ordained minister with over 20 years of experience integrating faith, leadership, and holistic transformation across Africa. He currently serves as Theology and Network Engagement Regional Coordinator for Tearfund in Southern, Eastern, and Central Africa, where he provides strategic oversight for pastoral training and church-led community transformation initiatives spanning 15+ countries. Prior to this role, he led Tearfund's Church and Community Transformation team in East and Central Africa, coordinating large-scale initiatives that mobilized churches and denominational networks for church-led, community-owned transformational development. He holds a PhD in Practical Theology from Stellenbosch University and has trained thousands of church leaders across the continent. Author of [*The Wayfarer: Perspectives on Forced Migration and Transformational Development*](#) (longlisted for the 2023 Michael Ramsey Prize), he publishes widely on theology, migration, and development. He serves as a visiting lecture at Pan Africa Christian University and is actively involved in ministry leadership within CITAM, Kenya.

Reconstructing the Role of Pastors in Addressing Violence in Kenya

Edward Aligula¹ and Joyce Lihemo Kedemi¹

¹Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Kenya has in recent years faced recurring and troubling outbreaks of violence, ranging from political unrest and ethnic clashes to domestic and youth-related conflict. While social, economic, and political factors are often highlighted as underlying causes, the role of the church—whether as a promoter of peace or a contributor to violence—has received limited scholarly attention. This paper critically explores the dual role of Christian institutions in both perpetuating and addressing violence across Africa, with case studies drawn from Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The study demonstrates that churches have, at times, intentionally or inadvertently fueled conflict through politicized theology, ethno-religious loyalties, and inadequate pastoral training. In these contexts, religious leaders have occasionally aligned with divisive agendas, reinforcing cycles of hostility. Yet, paradoxically, churches have also emerged as influential agents of peace, justice, and reconciliation. Through their moral authority, grassroots presence, and theological resources, churches have facilitated dialogue, promoted forgiveness, and supported healing in fractured communities. The paper argues that church leaders and community leaders hold significant transformative potential to counter violent trends if they are adequately equipped for peacebuilding ministry. Strengthening pastoral formation and reorienting theological reflection can enable churches to move beyond complicity in violence and become proactive agents of reconciliation. By integrating theological reflection with contextual praxis, the study bridges academic discourse on religion and violence with practical strategies for equipping pastors and faith leaders. Ultimately,

this research contributes to the broader conversation on the intersection of faith and conflict in Africa. It underscores the need for intentional frameworks that harness the church's moral authority and community presence to advance peace, justice, and reconciliation in contexts marked by persistent violence.

Author Biography

Edward Aligula is an educator and ordained minister from Western Kenya; he holds a PhD in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). Edward also has a background in Bible and theology training. He previously worked as training coordinator at Open Doors International, Kenya, where he developed contextualized training resources. He currently serves as a Lecturer at Africa International University and is actively involved in training pastors nationally and globally. Besides his other passions in teaching and training, he embraces dialogical methods in his training endeavours. Edward is also actively involved in conducting research. He is married to Joyce, and they have three children.

Joyce Lihemo Kedemi is a Lecturer and School Administrator for the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) of Africa International University. Born in the Rift Valley region, Kenya, Joyce has served the church in various capacities. With her training in leadership, she is actively involved in training church leaders. In higher education, Joyce has served for several years both in administration, teaching capacities and research. She is passionate about transformative learning and promoting cultural shifts toward adaptive and flexible thinking in her academic endeavours.

From Code to Conflict: Cyber Violence, AI Weaponization, and the Gospel of Peace in a Digital Age

Shija Shilunga Lucas¹ and Monicah Hinga¹

¹Africa International University Nairobi Kenya

Abstract

The digital era has brought remarkable advances in technology while simultaneously opening new arenas of violence driven by artificial intelligence (AI). From drone strikes directed by algorithms to deepfakes that incite unrest, AI has become a disruptive force that erodes trust, intensifies division, and fuels cyber conflict. This paper applies Johan Galtung's conflict triangle—attitude (hatred), behavior (violence), and contradiction (injustice)—to analyze how AI-enabled aggression distorts the relational, structural, and perceptual dimensions of conflict. In societies already marked by inequality, misinformation, and surveillance, AI technologies magnify destructive tendencies and reinforce systemic injustices. Grounded in a biblical theology of peace (Ephesians 6:15; Isaiah 2:4), the study explores how Christian ethics and the Gospel of Peace must respond to these emerging forms of digital violence. It considers how drone warfare distances human accountability, how AI surveillance undermines communal trust, and how deepfakes destabilize truth, a central theological value. By the time attitudes are hardened, behaviors militarized, and contradictions entrenched, digital violence has already reshaped social trust and human relationships. The paper proposes a threefold Gospel-informed response: first, cultivating reconciliation and empathy through theological education; second, resisting embedded patterns of violence by advancing digital ethics and policy; and third, addressing contradictions through prophetic advocacy and justice-oriented innovation. It further calls on African theologians and churches to critically engage with technological tools, neither rejecting them outright nor embracing them

uncritically, but discerning their potential for both harm and redemption. Ultimately, the study argues that the Church must serve as a moral compass in a conflicted digital age, proclaiming peace that resists weaponized intelligence and restores the dignity of the *Imago Dei*.

Author Biography

Shija Shilunga Lucas Shija Lucas is an evangelist and a Theology student at Africa International University. He is also pursuing a Master of Arts in Bible Translation from Barclay College, KS and currently finalizing his thesis. He holds another Master's in Life Sciences, majoring in Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management from The Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology, Arusha Tanzania. He also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education, concentrating on Biology and Geography. He did some additional courses in Agriculture, data analysis, disaster risk management, monitoring and evaluation basics and gender equality and social inclusion. He has worked in the Agricultural sector for over five years, and has written several articles aiming to help farmers, policymakers, and stakeholders make informed decisions in agriculture. He is currently building his new research niche on God and emerging technology. He is interested in developing frameworks that can guide the ethical use of emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Nano Technology and CRISPR-Cas9.

Monicah Hinga A Graduate Teaching Assistant in the School of Computing and Emerging Technologies at Africa International University, where she teaches courses in Artificial Intelligence, Human-Computer Interaction, and Information Technology. She is currently completing her Master of Science in Information Technology at Kabarak University, specializing in Artificial Intelligence. Her research interests intersect emerging technologies and theological reflection, particularly the implications of AI for Christian ministry. As a

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

machine learning practitioner and educator, Monicah is committed to shaping AI literacy within African faith-based institutions and guiding ethical adoption through biblically grounded frameworks. She actively contributes to curriculum design that integrates ethical AI into theological education and facilitates digital literacy workshops for youth and ministry teams. Her broader academic mission is to equip the Church to lead—not lag—in technological conversations, ensuring that innovation is always tethered to wisdom, justice, and the Gospel.

**Land Race and Tribe as Complexities of Violence in and Among Nations: A Case of
Politics in Kenya**

Joash Mutua Wambua¹ and Faith Nyakerario¹

¹Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Land has been an emotive commodity among groups of people over the centuries. Many people have died because of the land issue in Palestine, Israel, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Russia, Ukraine, Guinea and even in Kenya before and after independence. In England, historically, land has been the source of personal wealth over the centuries. Race and tribe are two markers that define humans along color, culture, ancestral and sometimes linguistic traits. Stronger allegiance to these traits has been the source of land conflicts over the ages. Racism and tribalism have been sources of favoritism. It can influence who gets jobs, according to politicians and heads of departments in Kenya, who gets citizenship in America according to President Trump, and who lives next to you in most countries of the world. This paper reviews land in the context of these traits as sources of conflict and recommends methods of dealing with them in a bid to infuse peace in countries and villages of the world. It further examines land and the future of these traits to influence ownership in view of future generations and what urbanization will mean contextually. The word “tribe” seems to be deliberately overused for Africans than any other continents. The genesis of conflicts and wars can be traced to when the Europeans created what they saw as their own boundaries and even grouped different groups together, regardless of languages, cultures and people who owned and lived on these lands. Racism and tribalism share the same DNA: both are ideologies that use perceived differences to justify ‘unequal’ and to maintain power structures.

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

The Rwandan Genocide was a tribal conflict that exemplified what tribal hatred could do between tribes. This paper explores peace building methods that can be used among nations and tribes.

Key Words: race, tribe, culture, African traditions, violence, conflict, Africa.

Author Biography

Joash Mutua is an Associate Professor in the School of Education, Arts and Social Sciences at Africa International University. He holds a PhD and master's in educational psychology from the University of Alabama, USA. He also holds an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Administration with a minor in Epidemiology, Master of Public Health and a Masters in Speech and Language Pathology. His research interests include human motivation, goal orientation, Socio-cultural and Public Health imperatives in communities. His ardent desire is to promote leadership among young people. He is currently the Chair of Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) at Africa International University and Director of Restore Physiotherapy Hospital. He also serves on several boards of Trustees. Joash has a passion for church planting and social justice.

Faith Nyakerario is a Development Professional specializing in the intersection of peacebuilding and Sustainable Development. With a Bachelors and Masters in Development Studies (peace Building and Conflict Transformation, she brings a robust foundation of her practical expertise in sustainable development Faith has a proven track record at Africa International University, where she has excelled as a tutor, administrator, and researcher. A published scholar with two co-authored articles, her research focuses on the vital roles of women and indigenous knowledge in conflict prevention and post-reconstruction. She is a strategic thinker skilled in stakeholder engagement and participatory development, committed to creating sustainable, community-led solutions.

VIOLENCE, TRAUMA AND HEALING

Strategic Interventions to Combat Gender-Based Violence in African Societies: An Interdisciplinary Perspective

Betty Kanyiri Njoni

The Management University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Gender-based violence (GBV) persists as a profound challenge in many African societies, undermining human dignity, social cohesion, and the Christian call to justice and peace. This study examines the efficiency of strategic interventions, i.e., legal change, faith-based advocacy, community education, and policy partnership in reducing GBV among some communities in East Africa. It employs a mixed-methods interdisciplinary approach, combining quantitative surveys of survivors and frontline practitioners with qualitative interviews of church leaders, policymakers, and activists. The thematic review of these data indicates that theologically grounded interventions carried out through church-state collaboration are making a significant contribution to reporting and survivor assistance. Considerations based on the preliminary analysis indicate a spurring of GBV reports by 30-40 percent and a corresponding resiliency of survivors when local churches are involved in the promotion of awareness programming and healing activities. In this paper, it is maintained that sustainable transformation needs a multidimensional model, which must have theological, socio-cultural, and policy at its core. Practical recommendations include further expansion of church-based legal literacy work, integrating GBV awareness into the theological education program, and institutionalizing partnership mechanisms between government institutions and religious communities. By bridging theory and praxis, this research contributes to interdisciplinary peace building and provides an actionable, contextualized roadmap for achieving the gospel of peace in Africa.

Keyword: Gender Based Violence, sustainable transformation, policy.

Author Biography

Betty Kanyiri Njoni holds a Bachelor of Education degree in English and Literature from Kenyatta University and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Human Resource Management, also from Kenyatta University. She is currently a PhD student in Strategic Management at the Management University of Africa, specializing in gender and strategy. Her research interests are deeply informed by first-hand community engagement through her professional work in gender programming. Driven by these lived experiences, Betty is passionate about addressing gender inequalities and is particularly interested in developing innovative, context-sensitive strategies for combating gender-related challenges, while taking into account the cultural realities of African societies. Her work seeks to bridge strategic management theory, policy practice, and community-based solutions.

Hidden in Full View: How “Private” Violence is a Public Concern

Ruth Barron

Africa Inland Church, Kenya

Abstract

There is violence hidden in the midst of our churches: the violence of abuse. Yet frequently our responses to the abuse in our midst perpetuate rather than disrupt the violence of abuse. Common responses to abuse in our families, churches, and communities include denying that abuse happens in churches, insisting that victims confine their stories to private counselling, and blaming victims for provoking the abuse. These responses miss the mark, compounding the harm caused by abuse. Statistical research tells us that abuse is widespread in the Church. The abuse of one part of our Body is harm to our whole Body. Abusers are accountable for their own actions, and the Church cannot help either abusers or abuse victims without holding abusers accountable and acknowledging the reality of abuse. In this paper, I will trace the pathology of abuse, specifically focusing on how it grows over time when we fail to expose it and to disrupt its growth. There are many forms of abuse, but I will focus on the sexual abuse of children, touching on my own story of child sexual abuse, while tracing connections to other forms abuse. Failure to protect victims of one type of abuse leads to the proliferation of many forms of abuse. Many feel overwhelmed when faced with abuse in their midst, feeling powerless at the immensity of the problem. Looking to the concept of “pattern interrupt psychology,” I will argue that when we each focus instead on taking smaller steps to disrupt the patterns of abuse in our midst, our efforts will effect change, and our churches will become havens of peace and safety and healing for those who have been trapped in abuse.

Keywords: abuse, pathology of abuse, responses to abuse, disrupting abuse

Author Biography

Ruth Barron is a #metoo/#churchtoo advocate who has worked in full-time ministry since 2000 and as a missionary in Kenya since 2007. With degrees in English and psychology (BA from Milligan University) and Christian doctrine (MAR from Emmanuel Christian Seminary), her focus is on the intersection of trauma, theology, literature, and church polity. She has developed curricula for Maasai and Turkana churches and writes essays, poems, stories, articles, and chapters, including “For Whom Will the Church Be Safe?,” *Priscilla Papers* 37, no. 2 (Spring 2023): 18–21, and “The Rain Reveals the Leaks: How the Vulnerability of the ‘Least of These’ Reveals the Vulnerabilities in our Own Hearts and Systems,” *African Christian Theology* 1, no. 2 (2024): 251–271. Her passion is to challenge churches to address abuse well.

Impacts of Indoor and Outdoor Heat Exposure on Maternal and Neonatal Health in Rural Kenya

Isaac J. Gazemba Ovita¹, Felix Agoi¹, Eunice Irungu¹, Lynn Mwatata¹, Isabela McDonald²,

Adelaide Lusambili¹, Cherie Part²

¹Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

²London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, United Kingdom

Abstract

Rising global temperatures and shifting climatic patterns are intensifying heat exposure in many rural settings, posing growing threats to human health and security. This study investigates the impact of indoor and outdoor heat exposure on maternal and neonatal health in rural Kilifi, Kenya, highlighting its intersection with environmental change and human conflict. Kilifi experiences increasing temperature extremes, deforestation, and inadequate housing design, all of which heighten heat retention in homes and work environments. Pregnant women, who often engage in outdoor agricultural activities and reside in poorly ventilated dwellings, face elevated risks of heat stress, dehydration, and adverse pregnancy outcomes such as preterm birth and low birth weight. The study situates these health risks within the broader context of environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and social vulnerability. As heat and drought reduce agricultural productivity and water availability, communities experience growing competition over limited resources, exacerbating livelihood insecurity and contributing to local tensions. These dynamics underscore the intricate linkages between environmental stress, health inequities, and human conflict in climate-vulnerable regions. By combining environmental monitoring, bio-meteorological assessment, and health data analysis, the study aims to generate evidence for climate-sensitive health adaptation strategies. Findings will inform policies that integrate environmental management, maternal health, and conflict

prevention, emphasizing the need for resilient health systems and sustainable community planning. Ultimately, addressing heat exposure is not only a public health imperative but also a pathway to promoting environmental justice, social stability, and sustainable peace in rural Kenya.

Key words: Indoor and outdoor, heat exposure, maternal and neonatal, climate, environment

Author's Biography

Cherie Part works at LSHTM in the department of Public Health, Environments and Society. Her PhD focussed on past and projected impacts of climate extremes on the health and welfare of intensively farmed livestock. She has continued her research interests in environmental epidemiology at LSHTM, firstly as a Research Fellow on the CHAMNHA (Climate, Heat and Maternal and Neonatal Health in Africa) project and, more recently, on the HIGH (Heat Indicators for Global Health) Horizons project. She is particularly interested in the development and application of statistical methods to assess the impacts of weather variability and climate change on maternal and neonatal health in sub-Saharan Africa. My recent research has focussed on quantifying the effects of ambient heat exposure during pregnancy on risk of adverse birth outcomes and maternal complications, and how extreme hot weather during the postpartum period affects maternal behaviours, including infant feeding practices. She also has ten years' experience in the community and voluntary sector; providing education, support, and advocacy services for disadvantaged young people, individuals living with HIV, and persons affected by mental ill health. In 2009, I co-designed and delivered the first rapid HIV testing service in Northern Ireland, which continues to operate today.

Professor Adelaide Lusambili is a Research Professor and a Pan-African climate and health scientist focused on one central question: how does a warming world harm the most vulnerable, and what can we do about it? She leads the Environmental Health and Governance Centre at

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

Africa International University and founded NextGen for Earth, a platform developing the next generation of climate and health leaders across Africa. Her work has been shaped through collaborations and roles across leading institutions in Africa and the UK, including National Health Services (UK), Bradford Institute for Health Research (BIHR/UK), Sheffield Hallam University (UK), Aga Khan University Medical College, Strathmore University Business School, KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme and the University of Leeds, where she served as a Visiting Research Fellow. My research spans the life course, from maternal and newborn health to ageing. Through the CHAMNHA Consortium and HEARTH Project, I study heat risks for mothers and newborns, integrating lived experiences with measurable health outcomes. Through the SENIORS Consortium, in collaboration with the Medical College of Wisconsin, she generated evidence on the impacts of global warming on ageing populations in sub-Saharan Africa. Through ESA ARCH, she supports institutional climate research capacity across East and Southern Africa. Through NextGen for Earth, she has built capacity among early-career researchers and youth to advance climate action, strengthen intergenerational climate stewardship, and promote knowledge transfer across communities. She has served as Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on over 22 major studies across sub-Saharan Africa and the UK, with research spanning ageing, dementia, mental health, infectious diseases, health systems strengthening and child protection. She has authored more than 84 peer-reviewed publications, and she believes research only matters if it reaches the people who need it. She works with governments, health systems, and communities to translate evidence into policy, contributing to global climate discussions from COP26 through COP29. She has spoken at AAAS, WMO, and EU climate platforms, and her work has been featured in The New York Times, National Geographic, Washington Science Magazine, and the BBC. She serves as Associate Editor for BMC Global and Public Health, has served as editor for journals including

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

PLOS ONE and Frontiers in Public Health, and review grants for the Wellcome Trust (WT), SSRC, and NIHR.

**Faith Communities as Healing Communities for Children in Ghana: Reflections
through a Relational View of the Trinity**

Ebenezer Tetteh Kpalam

Pentecost University, Sowutuom, Ghana

Abstract

Violence against children in Ghana continues to be a pressing public health concern, persisting even after more than three decades since the adoption of the African Children's Charter. Despite numerous interventions by governmental and non-governmental organizations, the prevalence of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children remains alarming. This reality calls for broader and deeper engagement from Christian faith communities, given their significant presence and influence in Ghanaian society. With over seventy percent of the population identifying as Christian, churches are not only spiritual centers but also vital actors in the social and developmental agenda of communities. This study undertakes a critical theological reflection on the role of churches in addressing violence against children, drawing particularly on a relational view of the Trinity. The relational understanding of the Triune God -Father, Son, and Spirit—emphasizes communion, mutuality, and care, offering a theological foundation for churches to embody healing and restorative practices. By situating the church as a relational community modelled after the Trinity, the paper argues that faith communities can create safe, nurturing spaces where children are protected, valued, and empowered. Such an approach moves beyond charity or advocacy alone, envisioning churches as transformative agents of healing that respond to the brokenness caused by violence. The study concludes by proposing a practical framework that integrates theological reflection with pastoral praxis, guiding churches in Ghana to reform their faith practices and structures. This framework highlights relational discipleship, communal responsibility, and holistic child protection as

essential dimensions of becoming healing communities. Ultimately, the paper calls for churches to embrace their theological and social mandate to safeguard children, thereby contributing meaningfully to the national and continental vision of protecting the rights and dignity of every child.

Author Biography

Rev. Ebenezer Tetteh Kpalam (PhD) is a senior lecturer of Practical Theology at the School of Theology and Mission, Pentecost University. He is the director of postgraduate studies and research at Pentecost University. Dr. Kpalam is a minister of the Church of Pentecost. He holds a PhD in Theology with pastoral studies from the North-West University in South Africa. His research interest includes child theology, child protection in faith communities, pastoral psychology and African Christianity.

**Unbloody Violence and The Bloodied Streets: Genz, The Streets, The Web
the Pulpit and the Contestation for a Just Society**

Carol Ng'ang'a,
Msingi Trust, Kenya

Abstract

The term violence immediately conjures up images of blood, broken limbs and loud wails. This physical reaction against pain is seen as valid and more often than not, seeking retribution is accepted and even expected. Not all violence screams. Some signs a budget, some closes a clinic, some let's poison seep into water. The unseen body count is the tally of people who die, not from accidents, but from choices made in rooms they'll never enter. This paper seeks to explore the GenZ's contestation with the violence of living in an unjust Kenya. It looks at the following violences: collapsed public institutions, being silenced, elimination, deferred dreams, state captured churches, prophets and pulpits. The paper interrogates the concept of peacebuilding and peace-making in the context of systemic and structural violence and explores how gospel informed, just, intersectional, imaginative and holistic conflict transformation in light of the GenZ contestation on the streets and online. The paper makes a case for activism as gospel witness and protest as prayer walks and argues that holistic gospel living in a contested, unequal political context like Kenya must include protestations against visible and invisible violences that plague society

Keyword: Blood, unseen body, peacebuilding

Author Biography

Carol Ng'ang'a is a Nairobi-based activist, public theologian and social justice advocate whose work explores the intersection of faith, theology, gender justice, and civic engagement. As

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

founder of Msingi Trust, she curates spaces for theological reflection and community organizing aimed at systemic transformation. Her scholarship and praxis are grounded in postcolonial African contexts, engaging theology as a tool for critical analysis, liberation, and social renewal.

Prayer or engagement: The skill called compromise

Oliver Kisaka Simiyu,

CORAT Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Christians' influence or lack of it has been of interest to scholars for a long time. Which is the biblical and effective way of Christians' engaging society? Scholars have however not focused much on the intra-Christians' conflict of opinions between those that favour a prayer-without-engagement of socio-economic and political issues approach and those that favour active engagement. The former group focuses on avoiding defilement (that is that politics and business are 'dirty' engagements) while the latter focuses on Christians being the salt and the light of the world, seeking to make things right. This paper employs two critical guidelines. First, it employs a 'dynamics assessment' approach to Bible interpretation (Kisaka input). Second, it employs the historical method based on a theoretical framework from the works of Max Weber's (1930), Reinhold Niebuhr's (1960) and Ernst Troeltsch's (1990), to survey past records and contemporary opinions for Christians' divergent perspectives on engagement of societal issues. It argues that part of the reason the two sides retain their differences is the reality that they have not considered 'compromise' as a strategic skill of engagement with each other and with society. Over the years, the two perspectives have meant that Christians are either dis-engaged from society for fear of being contaminated or actively engaged in it at 'great risk' to contribute to what society becomes. On the greater part, the latter are heavily criticized by their anti-engagement brethren. It draws lessons from continuity and discontinuity, to argue that Christians need to discover compromise as a skill of negotiation to agreement, both internally and externally, to find a common Biblical and theologically based approach to discipleship and engagement in society as responsible Christian citizens.

Keywords: Prayer, negotiation, Christians

Author Biography

Oliver Kisaka Simiyu currently serves as Managing Director of CORAT Africa. Prior to this role, Oliver served as Chaplain and Theology lecturer at Africa International University (AIU), Deputy General Secretary of National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), with Fellowship of Christian Unions (FOCUS) Kenya and as a Secondary School Maths/Physics teacher. He holds a PhD in Church and State studies from Middlesex University and the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in UK, a Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies from AIU and a Bachelor of Education degree in Mathematics and Physics from Kenyatta University. Oliver is a frequent speaker, teacher and trainer in various conferences, workshops and universities in and out of Kenya. He currently serves as Trustee of the Friends United Meeting at global level, member of the Quakers Nobel Peace Prize Nominating Taskforce and Chair of the Friends Church in Kenya Reparative Justice Group. He previously served the boards of the Africa Institute of Contemporary Mission and Research, Ufungamano House, the Kenya Integrity Forum, the National Ethics Taskforce, the Uraia National Civic Education Programme, Co-ordinated the activities of the Inter- Religious Forum in Kenya, participated in international inter-religious initiatives to address security concerns, served as Africa's Representative of the Friends World Committee for Consultation on the board of Quaker United Nations Organization.

**From ‘Next’ to Now: Empowering Gen Now for Justice, Reconciliation, and Human
Flourishing**

Esayas Ersabo

Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

From ‘Next’ to Now: Empowering Gen Now for Justice, Reconciliation, and Human Flourishing. The widespread use of the term “Next Generation” within African church and societal discourse has unintentionally nurtured a culture of postponement, deferring the agency and leadership of young people to an undefined future. This paper argues for a paradigm shift toward Gen Now, which affirms African youth's immediate capacity and responsibility to embody Christ’s reconciling presence and contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding in contexts scarred by systemic violence, exclusion, and fragile trust. Building on Eliza Filby’s sociological analysis of generational identity (2019), McDowell and Wallace’s theological call to shape resilient worldviews in young believers (2019), and Kennealy’s pastoral insights into the realities of emerging adults (2020), the paper situates youth leadership at the intersection of theology, sociology, and peace studies. It engages Emmanuel Katongole’s reflections on interrupting Africa’s cycles of violence through reconciliation (2011), John Mbiti’s communitarian vision of African theology (1969), and Francis Fukuyama’s argument that trust forms the foundation of social capital (1995), alongside Johan Galtung’s framework of positive peace (1969), which moves beyond the absence of conflict toward the flourishing of human dignity. Biblical examples such as Jeremiah’s prophetic call in youth, Timothy’s entrusted leadership, David’s early courage, Mary’s radical obedience, and Jesus’ model of entrusting responsibility early illustrate that deferring youth leadership undermines both ecclesial witness and social transformation. The paper contends that the African Church and allied institutions

Towards a New Humanity in Africa in Christ: Glory, Violence and the Gospel of Peace

must advance beyond symbolic inclusion to substantive empowerment by reshaping mentoring systems, ecclesial structures, and leadership pipelines. In doing so, Gen Now provides a missional discipleship framework that dismantles generational deferral and contributes to the conference theme of One New Humanity in Christ by integrating discipleship, reconciliation, and cultural relevance for justice, peace, and human flourishing in Africa.

Keywords: Gen Now, missional discipleship, African church leadership, youth empowerment, gospel of peace.

Author Biography

Dr. Esayas Ersabo is a strategist, mentor of leaders, theologian, and visionary whose doctoral research explored the integration of mission outreach with intentional discipleship in the African context. With over two decades of experience initiating and leading missional discipleship, he pioneered several strategies in Ethiopia that gave birth to the African Strategic Discipleship Movement (ASDM), now a continent-wide initiative shaping leaders and churches across Africa. He continues to lead ASDM as Africa Director. Esayas serves as the mission director of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA) and also teaches missional discipleship at Africa International University. His research bridges biblical theology with practical discipleship strategy, seeking to restore the intentional, relational, and transformational way of Jesus in today's Church.

**Youth, Violence, and the Gospel of Glory: A Secondary Analysis of Gospel-Centered
Identity Formation and Resistance to Radicalization in Africa**

Jacqueline Gathungu

Association of Evangelicals in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

Sub-Saharan Africa is home to the fastest-growing Christian population in the world, yet it remains one of the regions most affected by violence and intergroup conflict. In pursuit of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa's (AEA) vision for holistic transformation, this paper focuses on youth often portrayed as vulnerable to radicalization but also recognized as vital agents of peace. Many young people face unemployment, marginalization, and fractured identities, making them susceptible to recruitment by violent groups that promise honor, belonging, and false "glory." Aligned with the One New Humanity research initiative under the Institute for the Study of African Realities (ISAR), this study draws on secondary research including peer-reviewed literature, policy reports, and theological reflections to examine how Gospel-centered identity formation, understood here as shaping personal and communal identity through the redemptive narrative of Christ's glory, can serve as a transformative alternative to violent pathways. The paper employs thematic analysis of existing studies across East, West, Central, North, and Southern Africa to explore how the Gospel of Glory the biblical message that true honor and purpose are found in Christ's victorious reign and reconciling work reframes narratives of violence and radicalization. Findings highlight the potential of the African Church to cultivate resilient youth identities, advance peace-oriented agency, and offer theological resources for nonviolence. The study concludes with implications for discipleship models, church-based peace initiatives, and

policy engagement toward reconciliation, justice, and Gospel witness in conflict-affected contexts.

Keywords: Youth, radicalization, Gospel of Glory, peacebuilding, identity formation, Sub-Saharan Africa, secondary research, One New Humanity

Author Biography

Jacqueline Gathungu is a researcher with expertise in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and a strong academic background in International Relations, holding a master's degree in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies. She has over three years of professional experience in research, data collection, and analysis across Africa, with a particular focus on African peacebuilding approaches. Her work at AEA combines mixed-methods research with theological and policy analysis, bridging the gap between academic inquiry and practical applications for the Church and society. She is passionate about empowering African youth to become agents of peace, justice, and transformation.

**Restoring Identity and Peace: Gospel Witness and Youth Formation in Kenya Through
the Lens of the One New Man in Christ**

Thomas Ndetto Ndungo

The Management University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

With youth comprising over 75% of Kenya's population, a profound identity crisis has emerged as traditional cultural foundations are disrupted by rapid modernization, urbanization, and global digital influences. This crisis manifests among youth aged 15–25 through escalating substance abuse, mental health challenges, ethnic polarization, and moral relativism. While existing psychological and sociological frameworks provide valuable insights into identity development, a critical gap remains in understanding how Gospel witness functions as a transformative resource for restoring identity, dignity, and peace among Kenyan youth. This study explores the intersection of Gospel witness and youth identity formation in Kenya through the theological framework of the One New Man in Christ—a vision of reconciled humanity redeemed from fragmentation into shared glory and peace. Employing comprehensive literature review methodology, the research synthesizes identity development theories, African cultural identity frameworks, and Christian formation practices to examine how Gospel principles address the unique challenges confronting contemporary Kenyan youth. The investigation analyzes three critical dimensions: the tension between traditional African values and contemporary global influences in youth identity construction; the role of Christian communities and institutions in anchoring identity and fostering belonging; and the practical mechanisms through which Gospel witness cultivates moral clarity, cultural rootedness, and spiritual transformation. By situating youth identity

formation within the redemptive narrative of the Gospel of Peace, this research illuminates the potential of faith-based approaches to heal identity wounds, reconcile cultural tensions, and restore communal dignity. The study contributes to peacebuilding and reconciliation discourse by offering a vision for youth ministry, education, and community engagement that honors African heritage while embodying renewed identity in Christ. It provides practical insights for addressing generational fragmentation and cultural violence through Gospel-centered approaches, demonstrating the transformative power of Christian witness in contexts of social upheaval.

Keywords: Youth identity, Gospel witness, Kenya, peacebuilding, cultural transformation, One New Man in Christ

Author Biography

Thomas Ndetto Ndungo currently serves as a Bishop with Redeemed Gospel Church Inc., overseeing the Machakos Region. Alongside his ecclesiastical duties he is pursuing a PhD at the Management University of Africa (MUA).

In This Issue

Christianity, Violence And Social Justice

Nexus Between Theology, Colonial Legacy And Law

Church And Reconciliation

Religion, Justice And Peace

Gender Justice, Violence And Peace

Politics, Violence And Peacebuilding

Post Conflict Recovery

Social Justice, Violence And Peacemaking

Violence, Trauma And Healing

Youth, Social Justice And Peace

A Publication of the Institute for the Study of African Realities

Africa international University

P.O Box 24686 – 00502,

Nairobi-Kenya

Email: isar.office@aiu.ac.ke

Website: ww.aiu.ac.ke