



Partnering with the African Community to facilitate transformation



2025 YEAR END  
REPORT

*10 "if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. 11 And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. Isaiah 58: 10, 11*

Countless promises are spoken in the Bible, directed specifically to those who help the needy, feed the poor and give comfort and protection to the forgotten and powerless. God's promises will certainly come to pass, as He is a God who CANNOT lie. We, as the Board of Directors of Berkshire Missions, Inc/DBA Africa Connect and the Kenyan Connect team can testify of His blessings as we serve Him and those He loves, together with you. We continue to be astonished at how He is moving through this small, grass roots ministry to transform many lives. I would be remiss not to express thanks to the Kenyan team, who do the hard work on the ground every day; their passion and joyful dedication to the children and to the vision is inspiring. Please keep them in prayer!



#### Connect Premiere Preschool:

The preschool continues to improve in performance, giving the poorest children an opportunity to grow and learn in a healthy, loving environment. 65 children were fed two meals daily, and received uniforms, medical care and an excellent education. For three years a Connect teacher is involved not only with the child, but with the child's family, because the vision is to transform the home, and ultimately the community in which the child grows up.

#### Connect Premiere Academy:

We have expanded our temporary building again to include Grade 6 as we plan to build a permanent Primary School this year. Our students perform at a standard above other local schools, attracting paying parents that will help to fund the project. A highlight was the preschool and primary kids joining in the Kenya Music Competition. Our little "slum school" competed against thousands of schools, some of them very large and well-funded, and our 5<sup>th</sup> grade class came in #1 in the Regional Competition in

Nakuru! In August they traveled to the Nationals where they performed so well, they nearly won the Title. Maybe next year! We are so proud of our kids and our staff!

#### Ian Memorial Sponsorship Program:

In 2025, there were 104 sponsored students, 78 in grades 1-9, and 26 in Secondary School. We had 8 graduates in November, who were ecstatic and grateful at how far God had taken them since entering the Africa Connect preschool many years ago.

We think of Charles, who was discovered at 3 yrs old in a locked compound with his brother, malnourished and showing signs of significant abuse. His only nurture came from the Connect staff and AC team when we visited; he had rough times going through school, but his care for the weaker children and clear leadership qualities shined through. He proudly gave testimony at Connect Chapel to the kindness and faithfulness of God and God's people who never gave up on Him. So many stories...

IMS entered 2025 with a deficit, coming out of a rough previous year; your donations to the IMS General Fund helped us to balance the budget. Thank you so much!

**Continuing Education:** This year Susan graduated from the local Vocational College and is currently seeking a job as an electrician. Joseph is in his final year of studies in Public Administration, and Nevin is graduating in the Spring. Favor Juma completed his training in Audio/Visual school,



and two former IMS students, Vincent and Edward, joined an apprenticeship in mechanics and carpentry, respectively, and are now working. Through a generous donor's request, we have instituted a **Continuing Education Fund**, which will fund grants for ongoing education and skills training for our High School graduates. Those interested can apply for a grant in the area of their choice after receiving counseling. Barring rare exceptions, these grants will be partial, in expectation that the parents and/or the student will chip in.

### **Empowerment and Discipleship Programs:**

2025 saw our Empowerment programs growing, with new classes added that are more accommodating to the men, the elderly, and single parents who cannot devote a lot of time to training. Apollo is continuing to stress policy enforcement regarding the parents' commitment to join an empowerment program in order for their children to be assisted. A Parent Evaluation system was set up for regular assessment of parent/guardian compliance, and policies were established when that is not the case. It was mutually decided that after a year of probation for non-compliance, the child will not be returning the following year. Chronically ill or elderly caregivers who cannot work will be exempt. Parent participation has increased in Grades 1 and 2; we need to emphasize parent responsibility in the preschool years, so by the time Grade 1 arrives they are more prepared.

**A Grant program** was set up for students whose parents are either on probation, or need more time to learn to use newly acquired skills. It is meant to incentivize responsibility rather than long term sponsorship in cases in which the parent is able, with some effort, to pay their child's school fees. 4 children were included in 2025.

**Tailoring:** This year was a big one for the Tailoring program; thanks to a generous donor, we were able to purchase 5 more manual machines for the Instruction Unit, to meet the demand of 2 classes and increased interest in learning the trade. 8 graduated in a ceremony October 26<sup>th</sup> and machines will be gifted in January.

For the Production Unit, we purchased 2 more electric machines, an embroidery machine and presser, and a knitting machine, enabling them to produce full school uniforms for our own students as well as for other schools. This investment results in AC no longer paying Seamstress salaries; the Production unit is self-funding as of January 1, 2026! This is a major milestone, we trust the first of other Empowerment programs to follow.

**Business Boost:** In 2025 our Business Groups struggled, but many parents have signed up for classes, wanting to join groups in 2026. We are considering starting Business Groups for graduates of our other programs, such as Tailoring, Hairdressing and Cooking, to make it easier to access the tools and financial assistance needed.

**Hairdressing:** 9 students graduated and 2 received tools to help them start their business. Cynthia, the instructor, took out a loan for supplies to help support the class through sales, and paid back the loan.

**Computer:** Computer classes are taking place 4 times per year, during the holidays. When the Primary school is built, it will include a computer lab for our primary/Jr Secondary students. **Needed: 15 more tablets, \$2500**

**Cobbling:** In 2025 a Workshop was built and Cobbling equipment purchased; Matthew, the instructor, is now setting up his class. He will begin with making small items, and later move into producing school shoes.

**Loaves & Fishes:** Lillian Armstrong has initiated a new Cooking/Baking class, and will be on the field to train a Kenyan Instructor. Equipment was purchased, and the old dining hall has been refurbished to accommodate an oven and an area suitable for cooking lessons approved by the Ministry of Health. We envision this as an easily accessible program for our parents, with an easily marketable product, as Kenyan love their baked goods!

**Farming and Husbandry:** Our farm is doing well, with a great maize harvest in October; however, beans continue to be a problem these days, with heavy rains and flooding destroying the November bean crop in the area .

- Using farming techniques learned from Crown Ministry's Foundations for Farming, Emmanuel continues to instruct parents on ways to get significant yields from a small plot of land. The Connect compound hosts beautiful gardens that are feeding our children, and helping our chronic care caregivers to survive.
- We purchased 200 chickens and quite a few roosters, providing eggs and meat as vital sources of protein.
- We now own an incubator, and will begin hatching eggs and teaching parents how to run a poultry business.
- With the birth of two heifers, we now have 4 cows and plenty of milk for our students and elderly caregivers.



- 5 goats, as well as rabbits, will also provide milk and meat for the school as well as for the church events.
- An animal caretaker was hired, and a shed built for him to stay in. Parents can also learn animal husbandry.
- In 2025, we invested in machinery and supplies to begin producing quality animal feed at a level at which we can also sell to local farmers. This is something that parents can participate in as an empowerment.
- Beekeeping: Apollo attended a beekeeping class, equipment was purchased and classes will begin soon!

**Outreach & Relief:** Connect Chapel is deeply committed to reaching their community - and beyond - with the gospel, and to teaching the Word of God in context and clarity. Church leaders are being actively mentored through discipleship sessions on zoom, and have dedicated themselves to make visiting our school parents a priority. It is impossible to expect major change in life habits and mindsets without spiritual transformation.

**Impact Leadership Bible School** was launched April 24, “with the aim to encourage and challenge the participants to allow their lives to impact the people they come into contact with... we consider the school as not a forum to add head knowledge but to practically present the participants to get out to the community and present the gospel of hope.” This is the fulfillment of a long-term dream! Two other pastors join Apollo as instructors, and the class is growing quickly; sessions are conducted during the holiday months and weekends.

**Relief:** Food Distributions took place in April and at Christmas, with Connect Chapel members contributing clothing and household items to the food staples. The team’s focus is now leaning toward an Emergency Food Bank, which allows assistance to the chronic care and elderly throughout the year, and emphasizing help to only the most desperate families, rather than creating a regular expectation of a handout to all of our families.

**Medical:** In 2025 a partnership was established with Cherangany Hospital, a quality private hospital in Kitale. Our team has been long time friends with the now deceased founder, Dr Jacob Kisang, and with his family who now run the hospital. Our students now use their outpatient services in town, and serious cases can be admitted to the hospital as appropriate. Two of our parents receive free dialysis treatment there, and our Community Clinic in February was staffed and supplied by doctors and pharmacists from Cherangany. During the upcoming trip we hope to follow up on that partnership, to strengthen and expand the services we receive from them. We have also established a Medical Fund as a consistent funding source in case of emergency needs. Thankfully, three of our precious mamas’ lives, Emma, Lorna, and Alice, were saved through medical intervention this year.

**Radio:** Pastor Apollo Juma continues to minister to an estimated 3 million people via two weekly radio shows. Testimonies flow in on the impact of this Bible teaching ministry. Besides serving as pastor of Connect Chapel and giving spiritual oversight to Connect programs, Apollo still works full time as a primary school administrator.

### Special Events:

The Connect family loves hosting their student’s families and local community with events such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Connect Chapel and Preschool launch in March, and the Connect Family Celebration in early December. Hundreds of people overflow into tents on the lawn, and the church raises funds to feed them all, lovingly ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ. Somehow, no matter how many, there is always enough!

Graduation in late October is also a huge event, reflecting to our students just how special they are, and encouraging the parents to join in this vibrant community and to experience a new life and attitude.

### Building and Development:

2025 was a very busy year, with a lot of construction taking place on the compound. Through our donors’ generosity, we were able to add a Grade 6 Classroom and furniture, 2 toilets, a men’s workshop, a food storage building, an animal caretaker’s shed, and to renovate the dining hall into a kitchen. Wow!!! Solar capacity was strengthened, allowing us to put up more solar floodlights to enhance security; and we have a playground!







We also were enabled to purchase **4 more plots of land** adjacent to our current compound, and to fence it all in. This land will accommodate our own **Primary/Jr Secondary school!** Earlier plans for a 2-story building were scrapped due to the cost and difficult logistics involved; we have now received architectural plans and an estimate to build a one-story Primary/Jr Secondary school, housing grades 1-9. By doing this, we will save ~\$78,000!

We plan to build the Primary section this year: this would include 6 classrooms, offices, toilets, a computer lab, home science lab, and science lab. **2026 Cost: \$74,500.** In 2027, Lord willing, an addition will be constructed with 3 more classrooms and a Music Room for Grades 7-9, costing **\$62,500.** **Overall cost: ~\$137,000. Please pray!**

### 2025 Missions Trip:

This year, Bob and LuAnn Herring and Lillian Armstrong, will leave for Kenya on January 26. Sue Choquette will be joining us Feb 22 for 3 weeks- an amazing answer to prayer concerning a health issue - with Kathy Rexrode, a longtime AC partner. Ben and Courtney Farrington will not be joining us on this trip, as they just had a baby - on January 10, Boaz was born! Lil, Sue and Kathy plan to leave Kenya March 17, and the Herrings will return April 1. We are excited for this adventure, and really need your prayers for safe travel, health and protection, wisdom and unity, and great communication and fruitful ministry with our Kenyan partners. We will be busy with training and administration, visiting the homes of our students in the slums, participating with the church in their activities, and speaking in other Kenyan schools. Above all please pray for more souls to come to Jesus.

### Domestic Administration:

In 2025, Africa Connect has been blessed to expand again, both through financial increase and an addition to our team, as Michele Kenney joins us on the Berkshire Missions, Inc. Board to serve as Clerk. We are incredibly grateful for the churches, both local and in other parts of the country, that regularly support this ministry, as well as the individual partners who faithfully engage. This year we added a donor platform to facilitate cash, credit and debit card, stock and crypto giving, called Infinite Giving. *You can access this link at <https://donate.infinitegiving.com/berkshire-missions>.* While this platform adds options and convenience, we still appreciate those who send regular support by checks, which avoids the cost of fees. As the project and the programs we offer expand, so do our monthly costs, and those regular donations are our lifeline. *As you consider giving, please note that in 2025, the % of AC spending that was contributions to the field was 90.2%!*

***Together, we are changing lives for eternity! What a privilege to partner with the Infinite God in His mission!***

May He reward you richly for your loving heart, and bless and expand your territory in all areas of life,

LuAnn Herring, for the AC team US and Kenya

***PLEASE CONTACT US at [info.africaconnect@gmail.com](mailto:info.africaconnect@gmail.com) if you have questions or desire to join our mailing list.***

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