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Greetings from CALA: Christian Librarians in Africa

Ephraim Mudave
Africa International University

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Greetings from CALA:

Christian Librarians in Africa

The Christian Association of Librarians in Africa – Kenya (CALA-K) started in the 1990s as a subsidiary meeting of librarians when the academic deans of theological colleges in Nairobi would meet. Since then, it has grown to attract continent-wide interest and membership, available at both institutional and personal levels. Current membership includes more than forty librarians from about twenty Christian universities and colleges, mostly within Kenya. At previous conferences, participants have attended from Zimbabwe, South Africa, DR Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Malawi, Cote d’Ivoire, Central Africa, Cameroon, Togo, and Zambia, among others.

My colleagues and I are just coming from an annual conference that was held at the Kenyan coastal town of Mombasa the last week of July, at which librarians represented three countries, namely, Kenya, Uganda, and Cote d’Ivoire in West Africa. The theme for this year’s conference was “Libraries in Transition,” chosen in recognition that most of our institutions are transitioning or have already transitioned from seminaries to full universities. Some of the challenges being faced include staffing, technological advancements, and information resources’ security, among others. Our timetable for future activities starts with a workshop on November 22, 2013 in Nairobi, an annual General Meeting on March 21 in Nakuru, the 2014 annual conference July 21-25 in Nairobi, and a workshop on November 21, 2014 in Kericho – all in Kenya.

The annual conference is the primary area in which we would like to collaborate with ACL. Our organizations could cooperate by having librarians from ACL attend and present papers. They could thereafter stay over in a given library that has a project that is shared beforehand – one that fits their expertise or experience – not only to give, but also to learn how librarianship is practiced in Africa.

Ephraim Mudave
University Librarian
Africa International University
Nairobi, Kenya

Photos provided by Ephraim Mudave

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Ephraim Mudave
University Librarian
Africa International University
Nairobi, Kenya

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Learning together in Africa

CALA participants

CALA 2011 with ACL librarian Ferne Weimer

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