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Theology

- 89 Editorial** *Improving Christian Education in Churches and Colleges*
- 91 Mary Mwangi** *Augustine's Educational Theories and Practices and Church Education Today*
- 109 Joseph Bangura** *Tracking the Maze of Theological Education in Sierra Leone: An Evangelical Perspective*
- 127 Benjamin Musyoka** *Financial Sustainability in Christian Higher Education in Africa*
- 137 Janice Rasmussen** *Transformed by the Renewing of Your Mind: Exploring Change in International Students at Africa International University*
- 159 Benjamin Musyoka** *The Integration of Faith and Learning: Aligning Values and Intentionality with the Mind of God*
- 173 Book Review**

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Improving Christian Education in Churches and Colleges

The five articles in this issue of AJET deal with improving Christian education in the Church or improving theological education in Christian Bible Colleges, seminaries, and universities.

In our first article Mary Mwangi dips into Christianity's past to discern how Augustine's educational theories and practices could be used to increase the quality of Christian education in the Church in Africa. Augustine's respect and concern for his students could be especially relevant in African universities wherever administration and students have fallen into an adversarial relationship. Student strikes and protests in public universities could spill over into Christian institutions if students and administration/faculty fail to trust and respect one another.

Joseph Bangura also looks to the past, but more recently and locally. He traces the development of Evangelical theological education in his native Sierra Leone, analyses its current models (university, denominational, and charismatic), discusses the factors that affect its delivery (the emergence of Charismatic Christianity, the need for community development and social transformation, and the need for contextual theology and cultural relevance), and raises questions that Evangelical theological education needs to address in order to be effective and faithful: is its content Biblical enough; is it sufficiently relevant; is it broad enough to deal with social issues; is it cooperative enough?

Benjamin Musyoka has two articles in this issue. The first one deals with how institutions that provide Christian higher education in Africa can achieve greater financial sustainability. Independently, this article picks up one of Bangura's issues – is Evangelical theological education cooperative enough? Among the several other strategies for financial sustainability, Musyoka suggests Christian schools should establish strategic alliances with one another to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to facilitate the sharing of scarce and valuable resources.

Janice Rasmussen's qualitative study of how non-Kenyan students at Africa International University change offers a glimpse into the transforming lives of specific students from Tanzania, Malawi, Nigeria, South Sudan, the USA, the DRC, Canada, and Ethiopia. These students reported many changes including broadened worldviews, added knowledge, developed skills, and changed attitudes. She uses the theories of several educationalists to evaluate the changes she examines.

Benjamin Musyoka's second article is also about the process of change, in this case, the sticky question of the integration of the Christian faith with learning in Christian higher education. He examines the practicalities of the issue from a philosophical and theological point of view.