

## Satisfying Africa's Hunger for the Written Word

A newsletter to equip and encourage Christian content creators in Africa



### "Training is essential" in Francophone Africa

John Maust

I'm excited about the coming busy year of training for Media Associates International (MAI) in Africa and especially in the Francophone nations.

Africa is home to more than 120 million French-speakers and a growing Church. A relatively small number of Christian publishers serve the entire Francophone region. And, in some places, skilled local authors and editors are scarce, and the creation of contextual Christian content struggles to keep up with demand.

To help strengthen and expand Christian publishing in the region, MAI is developing a training program to equip publishers, editors and writers in the 21 African nations where French is the sole, or second, official language.

"Training will encourage the emergence of good and lasting Christian literature," publisher Georges Laté of *Presses Bibliques Africaines publishing house* in Benin said. "Training is essential to sharing the Good News of God's Kingdom through books."

In the next 12 months, the MAI-Africa Board and Francophone publishing colleagues like Georges will spearhead trainings tentatively planned for Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Burkina Faso and Benin.

These trainings will respond to real needs, such as what Joanna Ilboudo of Burkina Faso recently

expressed. After Joanna held a Christian book promotion event in Ouagadougou last year, she began receiving manuscripts from many different people, most of them pastors.

That was a good thing, but it did present a challenge. "It is very difficult for me to handle the work alone," Joanna said. "We need help in training people how to edit manuscripts."

Please pray for God's leading in these upcoming trainings, and that they will result in locally authored content that strengthens and grows the Church of Jesus Christ in French-speaking Africa.



Georges Laté and Joanna Ilboudo at a Christian book promotion in Burkina Faso

If you would like further information about upcoming MAI trainings in Africa, or if you would like to request MAI training assistance please write to [mai@littworld.org](mailto:mai@littworld.org).

# LittWorld First-Timers

At the end of April, 165 delegates from more than 50 nations came together in Hungary for MAI's LittWorld conference, with the theme *Stronger Together: Publishing Hope Beyond Crisis*.



Africa Regional Meeting at LittWorld 2022

Quite a few of the attendees were from Africa and for many it was their first time being part of MAI's global publishing conference. Here are just a few of their impressions.

## Miantra Lalaharivony

## Madagascar

I have been delighted and wonderfully surprised by the supportive spirit of all the attendees when it came to writing. Every single interaction I had at LittWorld was insightful, even coffee breaks and meals: I would learn about someone's interests, then about someone's experiences or about someone's struggles. Not only would I learn about others, but I also found a safe space to discover myself in another light. The general atmosphere stirred me to open up and address some intriguing questions about my faith. My biggest takeaways were that, first, writing can be a way for me to deal with my questions, and second, I can write because writing starts small.

## Jonah Nyoni

## Zimbabwe

I learned a great deal through workshops, networks created, and mentors from the LittWorld Conference. As a self-published author, I was given encouragement by like-minded scholars, especially those who specialize in leadership writing and speaking. This ignited my passion to write more and I was empowered with the necessary tools on how to best mentor, train, and advise writers at their embryonic stage here in Zimbabwe. As a columnist in Zimbabwe's leading independent Newsday Newspaper, I had an opportunity to interview experts within the LittWorld community. My immediate task now is to train Pastors on how to write books and devotionals. I will be working closely with different churches in Zimbabwe to train those Pastors.





South Africans Bafana, Eric and Susan leading the song Somlandela uJesu (I will follow Jesus)

## Bafana Tshabalala

## South Africa

The conference theme of HOPE was key for me. This was because the world coming out of Covid is troubled, as many people are dealing with loss and stress-related illnesses. Also, the Russia and Ukraine situation has troubled many, including Believers.

I think the theme “Stronger Together: Publishing Hope Beyond Crisis” was a great idea.

The Voice of the Voiceless presentation by Barine Kirimi was meaningful for me as it touched our continent Africa. It is great seeing Africans writing their own stories. I took inspiration from that and will organise many township and rural pastors in South Africa and try to help them write their stories through the involvement of MAI-Africa. I hope that by the time the next conference comes we will have completed this task of helping the pastors to write, and we will have a complete book by then.

## Roland Cubahiro

## Burundi

I had a wonderful time during LittWorld. At first, I was a little bit confused because I felt like I didn't fit in, profession-wise. I dreaded the question that kept coming: “And you, why are you here?” However, everyone was welcoming and charming.

Later, through personal interactions, I found that we have so much in common; our common faith, our love for words and so on. It was surreal to be in a space where I hung out with people I normally admired from afar. Yes, I was starstruck.

The first take away from the conference was listening to stories from writers and publishers from various literary genres and various backgrounds. The experience was helpful to broaden my understanding of the “why” of literature.

Second, I learned a lot from seasoned writers, tips and ideas of how to grow the craft and how to overcome obstacles along the way. I am grateful for the opportunity and look forward to seeing how God will use all the lessons from LittWorld22 in the future.



# Exciting News from Quiet Garden Publishing in Kampala, Uganda.

This year started on a high for Ugandans as the economy was finally reopened. The curfew, which started in March 2020, was removed and the longest-running school lockdown in the world was lifted! As a Christian organisation, we were concerned that the morale of the youth who had missed years of school would be low and we prayed for ways to inspire school-goers to continue to believe in their dreams.

At the launch of this project, a respected Ugandan writer – Professor Timothy Wangusa – read some of his poems and discussed the role of literature in developing the youth.

In the next six months, QG will be concluding and judging both the Young Adult Manuscript competition and the Radio Script contest. We will then have prize-giving ceremonies and publish

As a Christian organisation, we were concerned that the morale of the youth who had missed years of school would be low and we prayed for ways to inspire school-goers to continue to believe in their dreams

To this end, Quiet Garden Publishing ("QG") launched a book competition, our second-ever Christian writing contest, calling for manuscripts aimed at Young Adults. To increase interest and writer participation, we ran a one-day workshop in April to train writers on what YA writing is and how to make their manuscripts stand out.

Following the success of this workshop, we are having another workshop in July that is aimed at radio scriptwriters. We invite them to enter our Script Writing Competition which will produce radio dramas that will be aired on both Christian and secular radio stations this year! An anthology of winning plays will also be published.

We would like to thank our partners, Tyndale House Foundation, for graciously sponsoring these projects and being so crucial in the work of Quiet Garden over the years.

Additionally, in order to increase the love of literature amongst students and nurture budding writers in Uganda, Quiet Garden partnered with the main library in Mbale, a city in the east of Uganda, to start a book club to discuss African stories that bring hope and inspiration to readers.

the winning entries in November. The book club is going full-steam ahead and we will continue to work closely with the city of Mbale as we see how to replicate the model in other cities in collaboration with the secondary schools (High schools) in different regions.



QG Publishing YA Writing Workshop

We covet your prayers as we continue to work passionately as Christian publishers to spread the good news of Jesus by training writers and releasing high-quality books for all to read, both in Uganda and the rest of the world!

[Visit the Quiet Garden Publishing Website](#)

# Joys and Frustrations After Publication

John Wessels

As authors we feel deeply the power of the metaphor that publishing a book is like giving birth to a baby. But we quickly discover that the time and commitment this baby needs are even greater *after* the birth than before!

I self-published in November 2019, five months before the world went into the shock of lockdown. This was a terrible blow for my book because it was all about supporting the teaching ministry of local congregations – who were now prohibited from gathering! It was as if my baby's heartbeat had flatlined.

My book has the audacious title of *"Missing Jesus? Finding the Shepherd we Lost."* It focusses especially on people who call themselves Christians but are not followers of Jesus and his Kingdom vision. It is a comprehensive resource for making disciples. It is designed to be used by individuals, as well as in small and large groups. It is illustrated, has mind maps at the end of each chapter as well as questions for discussion.



John Wessels and Rev Simon Prins at book launch interview

Since publishing I have had to put in many hours on my days off each week to tell people about the book and how best to use it. This sometimes feels a lot like my line-fishing – I seldom get a bite and if I do, I rarely reel in a fish!

I am a Methodist minister at Trinity Methodist Church, Linden, Johannesburg, South Africa, where we were able to use my book to support the mission objectives of our congregation. This has recently resulted in two exciting initiatives that I had not envisaged when I published my book.

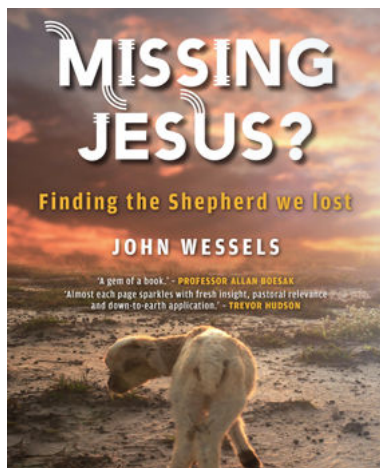
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At the Leeuwkop prison outside Johannesburg, all the ministries that had supported them pre-Covid had ceased. We were invited to run a *"Missing Jesus"* course in the maximum-security part of the prison. We are now running the course for the second time and are also using inmates as small group facilitators. At the first graduation service a participant said that this experience has been worth more to him than being offered a million rand!

Our congregation has made evangelism a priority and so I extracted the evangelistic messages within my book and turned them into a journey called *"Table Talk – Discussing Life's Big Questions"*. The members of our congregation invited their non-church-going family and friends, neighbours and colleagues to come and engage with questions like: Does God exist? Why is the world so broken and evil? What is the meaning of life? Does Jesus matter? What is hope and is there any? Why be a Christian? We have run this journey twice now and have seen people come to faith!

I encourage every author to not just think about writing your next book, but also to put a lot of thought and effort into the growth of the baby *"in years and divine and human favour"* (Luke 2.52).

Visit our website to order your copy or find out more:  
[www.missingjesus.net](http://www.missingjesus.net)



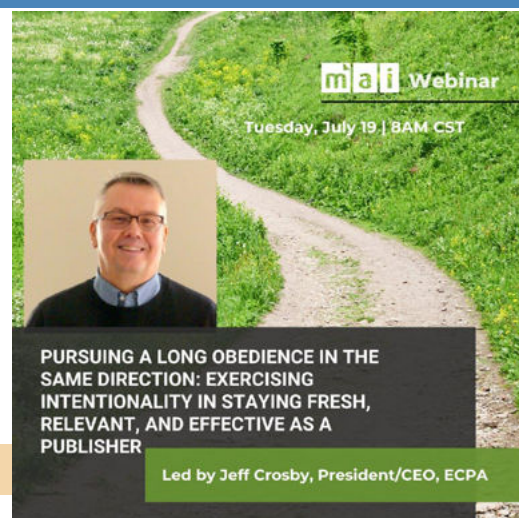
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## Upcoming Webinar

### Pursuing a Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Exercising Intentionality in Staying Fresh, Relevant, and Effective as a Publisher

MAI's next webinar is scheduled for:  
**Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at 8AM CST.**

In this webinar, Jeff Crosby will share personal stories and insights, drawn from his four decades of experience, that will help you pursue what Eugene Peterson called a "long obedience" in your work with Christian literature, regardless of the particular space you occupy. He will offer practical suggestions and take-aways for staying fresh, relevant and effective as both an individual and an organizational leader.



[Register for the webinar](#)

[Access past webinars](#)

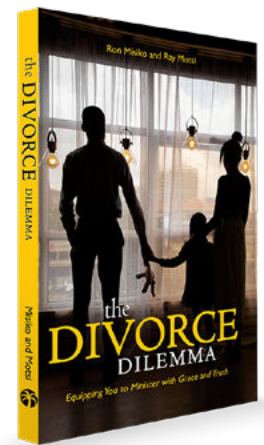
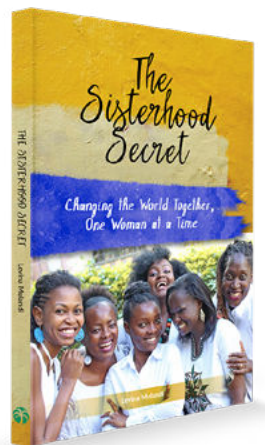
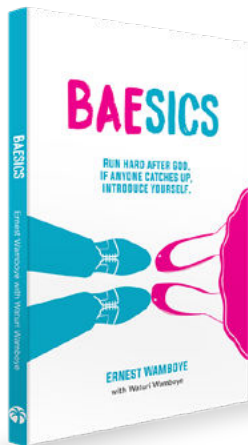




## Oasis Publishing – New Titles

*No voice can speak more powerfully to the unique issues and challenges of the church in Africa than African voices. Oasis discovers, develops, and distributes books by authors who speak clearly to African contexts.*

**Here are three of their latest titles:**

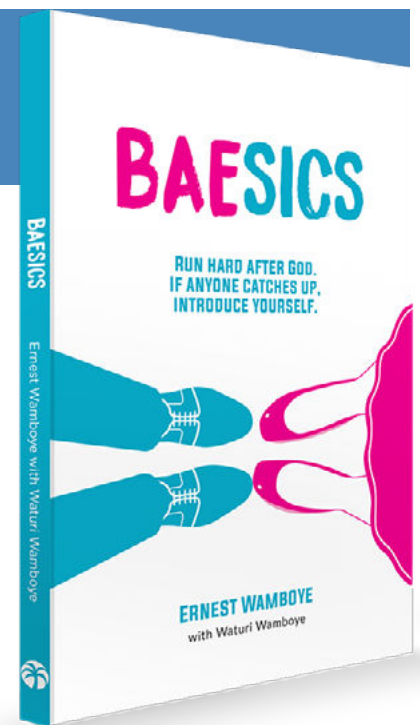


### Baesics

**Run Hard After God. If Anyone Catches Up, Introduce Yourself.**  
By Ernest Wamboye with Waturi Wamboye

To say finding a life partner is an important decision is an understatement. No other person has the propensity to affect your life – for the better or for the worse – more than the person you marry. For this reason, it is important that the person you call your lifetime “bae” or spouse is fit for the journey up ahead. Even better, it is important that you are equally equipped for the journey that ensues till death do you part. But where do you start on the journey to finding yourself and to finding love? Only the Author of marriage can provide you with the design plan.

Through personal stories, no-nonsense advice, and biblical exposition, **Baesics** urges you to commit yourself wholeheartedly to Christ, find your identity and purpose before you find a partner, and set appropriate sexual and emotional boundaries. It addresses the world's myths about what makes one a man or a woman, how to handle temptations such as lust, and how to deal with emotional wounds. Learn the basics for choosing your bae so you can lay a biblical foundation for your love life and the marriage you desire.



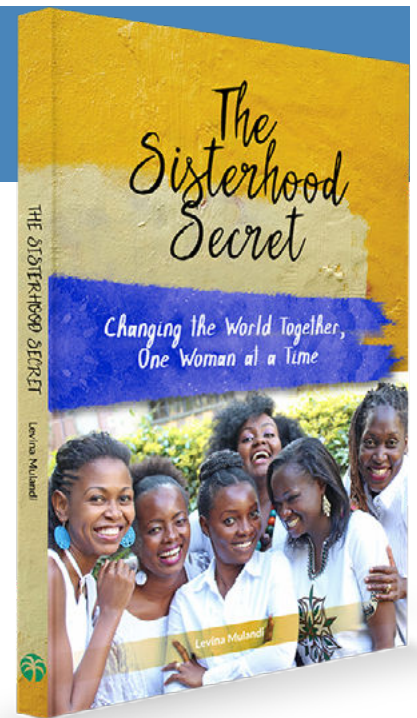
## The Sisterhood Secret

Changing the World Together, One Woman at a Time.  
By Levina Mulandi

Over the past two decades, Dr Levina Mulandi, has disciplined women who are concerned about the state of their community, city, and nation, but do not know how to make a difference. They often do not realize that Christ has called them as his disciples to disciple others, and that they can find fulfilment through investing in younger women.

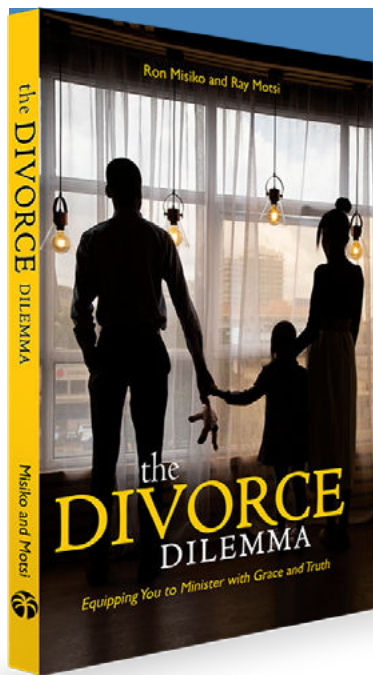
In her newly released book ***The Sisterhood Secret***, Dr Mulandi casts a vision by telling stories of some of the 50 women in Nairobi, Kenya she has disciplined. More than Bible study or a church program, Dr Mulandi shares how she empowers any woman to mentor younger women, guiding them to understand their identity, discern the purpose of their lives, and be transformed to be more like Christ.

The women that Dr Mulandi has walked with have mentored dozens more through this life-on-life discipleship model which is a family relationship between sisters in Christ.



## The Divorce Dilemma

Equipping You to Minister with Grace and Truth  
By Ron Misiko and Ray Motsi



Divorce is rising throughout Africa. We are seeing broken marriages leave families in pain. The church faces a dilemma. We are not sure how to connect what the Bible says with the person in front of us. We may be afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing, so we avoid talking about divorce at all.

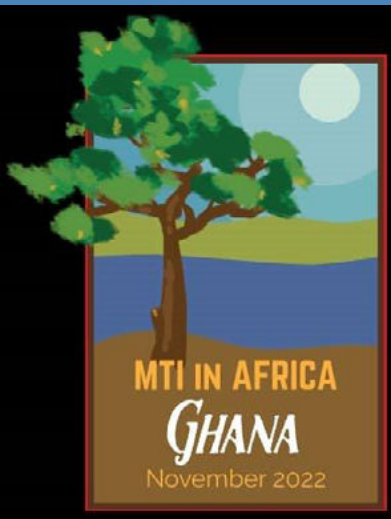
But divorce isn't going away. Instead, struggling people are going away, fearful or frustrated about turning to Christians for help. How can we respond as the body of Christ? Two wise church leaders share all they have learned in a practical handbook, ***The Divorce Dilemma***.

In ***The Divorce Dilemma***, Rev Dr Ron Misiko and Rev Dr Ray Motsi share their experiences as pastors and as married people, as well as their areas of expertise in the legal system and Bible scholarship. From their different African contexts, the authors explain how to navigate the challenges we face today. With the help of this practical handbook, you can become a champion for God's grace and truth about divorce in your community.

Their book will equip you to understand what the Bible says, what divorced people go through, and what Christians can do to navigate these challenges with God's grace and truth.



# Introduction to Magazine Publishing Course



Christian Publishers, writers, editors and designers from Africa and other continents will gather, God willing, in Ghana in November 2022, for a five-day Introduction to Magazine Publishing Course and a one-day Hands-on Magazine Startup Workshop. This is part of the MTI in Africa program, launched by Magazine Training International. The previous conference took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in September 2019, with more than 70 Christian magazine publishing professional participating.

The five-day Introduction to Magazine Publishing Course will cover the three main areas of magazine publishing: magazine editing, management, and design. An international team of six trainers will teach the course. The course will be offered in English with simultaneous interpretation into French.

It's a great opportunity to learn from highly respected publishing professionals, meet other Christians in publishing and learn from one another. To learn more about the trainers, the program and the registration fees,

[Visit the website](#)

## ECSS LIFE PUBLISHERS: Preparing for Take-off

**Dr. Kiriimi Barine**

The wisdom in Proverbs 24:27 teaches us to... *"Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and after that build your house."*



Publishing process training in Juba, South Sudan

MAI's writers' training efforts in South Sudan that have been ongoing since 2014, are finally coming to fruition with the impending opening of doors for the ECSS Life Publishers. A group of 15 participants gathered in Juba on 2-3 June 2022, for the Publishing Process Training and Orientation Program, in anticipation of the set-up of the publishing house.

The two-day training focused on ECSS Life Publishers' identity—vision, mission, core values, purpose, completed projects and new and forthcoming projects. It also introduced the participants, made up of staff and governance team as well as friends of the Publishing House, to the understanding of publishing and the publishing process, including acquisitions, contracts,

manuscript development, art direction, pre-press production, print and digital distribution, as well as book marketing.

Pray for the completion of the Publishing House office and the eventual opening in the next three months.

# Giving Voice to the Voiceless

Dr. Kirimi Barine

We use our voices daily—to talk to people, communicate our needs and wants and express our feelings, fears and concerns. Having a voice gives individuals agency, power, and a way to express their beliefs. While one can express self and not be heard, you can imagine how challenging it is not to have a voice.

*"Giving voice to the voiceless"* is a powerful tool for extending reach. Collaborative publishing projects have provided a voice for people whose voices may have been subdued or not heard. Writing is a voice, and so is each book. Writing expresses a voice through a news article, company blog post or creative storytelling. People hear you when

Collaborative publishing projects have provided a voice for people whose voices may have been subdued or not heard.

*"Giving voice to the voiceless"* presents an opportunity for the underrepresented or disadvantaged to gain opportunities to increase visibility and express themselves by leveraging the strengths of collaboration and communication technologies. *It's about opening our eyes to the opportunities to make an impact in a person's life with relatively few resources – and making change each day.*

you speak if they are in your proximity or you are connected to them in a channel or medium they have access to.

You can have your voice heard or provide a platform for a voice that may not be heard and profile them. Will you be a catalyst for discovering the next voiceless voice, which may even be your own?

[Watch LittWorld Plenary Session: Giving Voice to the Voiceless through Publishing](#)

## The Unwanted Gift

Stories of Pain, Hope and Inspiration

Have you ever stopped to wonder why you experience pain? Have you ever assessed your pain to find out the purpose it accomplished in your life?

No one wants to experience pain, let alone the thought of counting it as a blessing. *The Unwanted Gift: Stories of Pain, Hope and Inspiration* presents a collection of personal accounts of painful experiences, circumstances and choices, from contributors worldwide. It also offers the lessons learnt from the painful experiences.



If you wish to have your story considered for inclusion in the collection of stories from all continents sharing lessons learnt through pain, please share your story of approximately 2,000 words, 3.5 pages A4 single-spaced with Dr Kirimi Barine through [barine@me.com](mailto:barine@me.com)

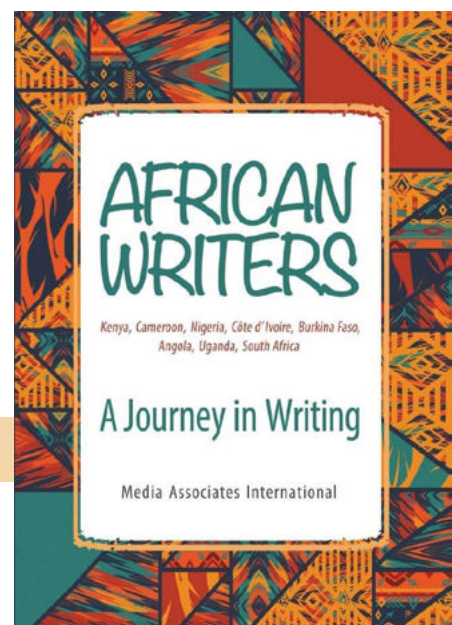
The book will be published in English, however French contributions will be considered and translated if accepted for inclusion in the anthology.

## African Writers is now available as an Audiobook

MAI is excited to announce that our first AI-narrated audiobook is now live and available for sale at Google Play.

Follow 11 African writers in their journey to becoming published authors. These gifted men and women from across the African continent tell how they pursued God's calling as writers and persevered through the hardships to create published works that will speak to readers for years to come. This anthology will help inspire a new generation of writers and encourage current wordsmiths.

[Buy it at Google Play](#)



## Announcing LittAfrica 2023!

In 2019, we had an awesome learning and connecting time at the first LittAfrica held in Accra, Ghana. We had over 120 participants from 20 countries. Our joy was to have many who could not attend the Littworld meeting in Singapore come and obtain knowledge, support, encouragement and networks from fellow Africans. And of course, we had several non-African friends who have an African heart, in attendance.

As we promised, and by God's grace, we plan to hold the second LittAfrica conference in November 2023. This comes on the heels of the just concluded Littworld Conference that was held in Hungary in April 2022.

Please be on the lookout for details as they start rolling in. We are currently working on the host country and the theme. Keep it locked and pray that it is a country near you!! Please start praying and planning to attend.



**See you there.**



## You're invited - Monthly MAI-Africa Prayer Meeting

- Where?** In your home!
- When?** First Monday of every month at 6 pm (East Africa Time)
- Who?** Anyone with a heart to pray for Africa
- Why?** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God (Philippians 4:6).*
- How?** [Register to join](#) and you will be sent the Zoom link.

## Self-Publishing Survey

Dr. Kirimi Barine is conducting a survey on self-publishing to gain insights into the experience and process of self-publishing.

If you have self-published one or more books, you are invited to complete the survey by clicking on the following link:

[Take the Survey](#)

**Your participation will be valued.**

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