

HEART FOR AFRICA

"TRANSFORMING BIBLICAL PREACHING ONE PASTOR AT A TIME"

AUGUST 2018

*"The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of
the learned, That I should know how to
speak A word in season to him who is
weary. He awakens Me morning by morning,
He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.
The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was
not rebellious, Nor did I turn away.
Isaiah 50:4-5*

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To Hear and Obey

God hears the prayers of His own! As we wrap up an absolutely incredible 3-month “home assignment” where we have spent blessed time with family and friends while reporting on the work the Lord has been doing through us in Africa, we are reminded that God often responds in ways we simply do not expect. As a result, we can overlook an opportunity to give thanks to the Lord. He has used this time to not only remind us of the amazing team of Tanzanian pastors he has built for us, but to also remind us to expect the unexpected from Him when we pray. We pray for what we want...He responds with what He knows we need!

“Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

Matthew 9:38



Many times we have stood before US congregations imploring them to pray on our behalf for the Lord to send workers to help us cope with the ever-expanding work He has brought our way. We expected the Lord to inspire westerners to respond to this call, but instead, He responded with Tanzanian pastors—31 to be exact. We almost missed that!

Our team of faithful ministers of the Gospel carries on in our absence in the same manner as if we were there. Receiving daily updates from them has confirmed in our hearts that we made the right decision to allow them to continue the ministry work and momentum we had gained in the time leading up to our furlough. This was not an easy decision, for the ministry has become multi-faceted and extremely complex with a mix of basic Inductive Bible Study seminars, pastoral preaching seminars, women’s

“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

1 Corinthians 4:2

seminars, and Bible College classes going on all across Tanzania each week.

Shutting down while we are in the U.S. would be the safe, worry-free approach. We could easily justify it as the wise way out of what could be a high-stress source of constant concern which would take our focus away from family and church reporting. Plus, it would conserve ministry resources by not producing materials, feeding students, or paying instructor travel. Surely the Lord would understand. In fact, we rationalized that if we had more Western missionaries working with us, there would always be someone in country to oversee things and operations would not have to be paused for anyone’s home assignment.

But we thank God that we did not listen to our own hearts. Instead, we waited until He spoke clearly through His unfailing, unchanging Word. A few years ago, each member of our Tanzanian leadership team urged us to allow them to continue the ministry work while we are away. They encouraged and implored us by stressing that they know what to do, that they could be trusted, and their work to help strengthen the church is urgent. Hard to argue when they reminded us that they are to be always abounding in the work of the Lord as Paul mentions...

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

The Lord has used that encounter to help us chart a course for the ministry work during our times of absence. We arrange for things to move forward without us so as not to disrupt or disturb well-thought out and conceived plans and schedules.



What that looked like this time was quite interesting. Seventy IBS seminars were completed. Seven women launched the women's IBS ministry program without Janice present. Four college sessions, involving 60 senior pastor students, were completed at three different campuses, including the inauguration of our new campus at Morogoro in the southern region of Tanzania. Planning was completed for four Bible college sessions in August. Finally, our Kenya Country Director, Pastor Ezekiel, kicked off IBS seminars there. Our team plans for us to hit the ground running!



Martha teaching to a crowd outside

"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."
Colossians 3:17

We are thankful the Lord heard and responded to the prayers of His saints in the U.S. on our behalf. Not the answer we expected, but certainly what we needed! The ICM-TZ team continues to amaze and bless us with their ability to not only carry on, but thrive when we are not there to direct and guide them in all they do. It is a reminder that this is a work of the Lord—not us—and will be



Ongoing Bible college sessions

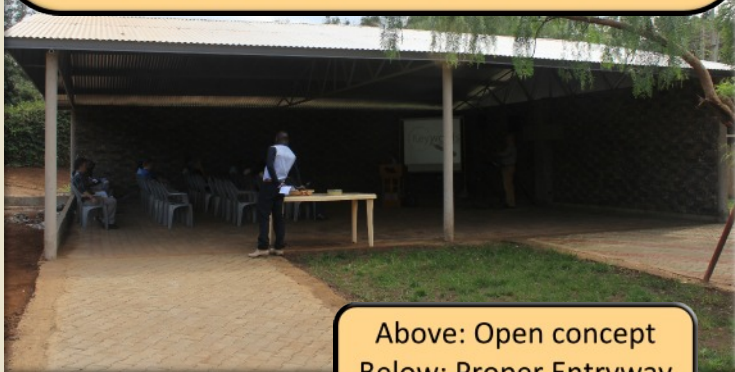


accomplished in His perfect way and time. Because He is in it, we know it will last and bear fruit for years to come.

Finally, we've been abundantly blessed and encouraged by everyone we encountered during our home assignment. We have several short-term teams already scheduled to visit and observe the ministry work between August and November of this year, which will encourage our team greatly. They love to be able to personally meet and thank their US brothers and sisters in Christ who are supporting their discipleship and outreach efforts. Please let us know if you would like to plan a trip for 2019!

BELOW:

Here is a before and after of the church Jim co-pastors in Moshi. For the last 7 years, we've met under a tent or else this semi-permanent 2-walled structure. We got used to having fresh air and a breeze, but it is now enclosed and has 4 walls and windows!



Above: Open concept
Below: Proper Entryway



Catch up on our personal journey through our website news, and find many more pictures there.

www.jimandjanicelarson.com

Picture of the Month



We enjoyed some sunshine and water sports while visiting family and churches in Western NC and Eastern Tennessee. We've been refreshed and are ready to return to Tanzania and the work we love, as well as celebrate our 36th wedding anniversary this month!

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PRAYER REQUESTS

- PTL for all the many blessings and accomplishments during our "home assignment" in the USA! Pray we get our bodies back on the right time zone quickly.
- We have a small team of women coming for a short-term visit August 14-28. Pray for safe travel and for them to both be a blessing, and be blessed, as we minister together during that time.
- Pray for the all-women Bible college class going on August 1-10 in Moshi. We will both be teaching then.
 - There will also be a Bible college class August 22-31. Pray for the instructors as well as students.