

HEART FOR AFRICA  
"TRANSFORMING BIBLICAL PREACHING ONE PASTOR AT A TIME"

NOVEMBER 2023

# Labor of Love



*"Unless the LORD builds the house,  
They labor in vain who build it..." Psalm 127:1a*

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Nothing gives us greater joy than spending time learning about the Lord. It is a life-long, never-ending pursuit for the Christ-follower, whose goal is an ever-deepening relationship with the Lord. God says this pursuit brings Him delight (Jeremiah 9:24).

That said, it is a very fascinating and rewarding theological exercise to examine the various metaphors that God uses to describe His gathered people. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, we see them described as:

- the bride of Christ (Eph 5:25-27),
- God's vine (Psalm 80),
- God's flock (Jeremiah 23: 1 Peter 5),
- the kingdom of God (Matt 16),
- the family of God (John 1:12-13; Eph 2:19),
- God's temple (Eph 2:21; 1 Cor 3:16-17),
- God's building (1 Cor 3:9),
- God's field (1 Cor 3:9),
- the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12),
- dough (1 Cor 5:6-7), and
- God's house (1 Tim 3:15; Hebrews 3:6).

Though the metaphors are wide-ranging and disparate—from the agricultural to the architectural, from the zoological to the horticultural and everything in between—they seem to be united by a common idea. His people are His possession! And thank God that when He looks upon His church, He does not concern Himself so much with how nice the physical church building looks, but with what is going on inside. Is His Word magnified? Is His Son glorified? Are His people edified? And is His love testified?

***"For the LORD does not see as man sees;  
for man looks at the outward appearance,  
but the LORD looks at the heart."***

**1 Samuel 16:7b**

ICM-Africa kicked off its new Nairobi Bible College campus in September. Nestled on the grounds of a local church in the midst of a wealthy Kenyan area, the site's buildings stick out like a sore thumb! The old dilapidated buildings look more like an abandoned storage site than an institution of higher learning dedicated to the Lord. Walls and roofs are all the same material – corrugated steel sheets nailed together and painted bright blue! To keep costs low, the buildings are constructed at the

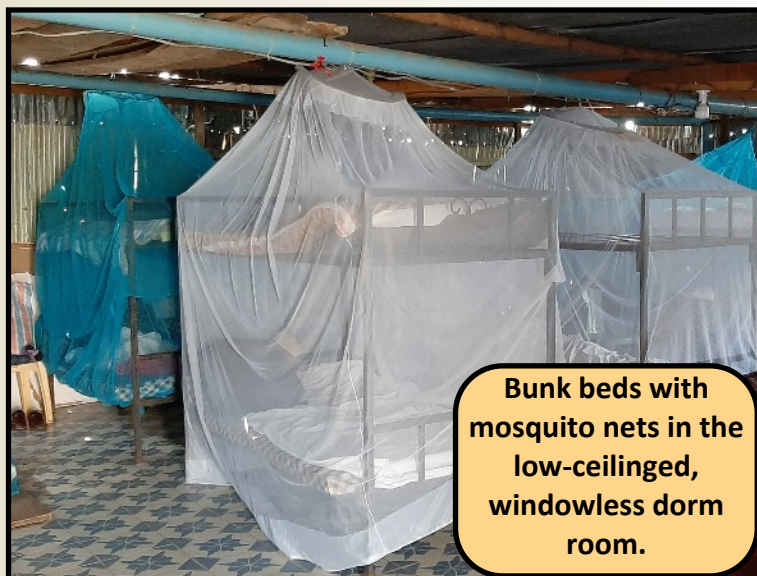
absolute lowest height possible. No windows help keep mosquitoes out at night, but create oven-like conditions inside the buildings during the day. No short naps during the breaks!

***"As water reflects the face,  
so one's life reflects the heart."***  
**Proverbs 27:19**

**Corrugated tin buildings serving as dormitories,  
painted blue to look cooler inside than they are!**



If we stopped there, we would miss out sharing some of the most amazing stories about how the site came to be. We met the host, Bishop Joshua and his wife Emily, back in November 2018. One of our Tanzanian instructors had met the couple that year through a ministry in Israel they are both associated with. One thing led to another and soon ICM's Pastor Charles was teaching a 4-day Inductive Bible Study (IBS) seminar at their church. Shortly thereafter we found ourselves teaching ICM-Africa's 4-day sermon development seminar to the pastors who had attended the IBS seminar. We bonded well with Bishop Joshua and Emily, and we really appreciated their ministry approach.



**Bunk beds with  
mosquito nets in the  
low-ceilinged,  
windowless dorm  
room.**





Participating in both the IBS and preaching seminars was enough for Bishop Joshua to catch the vision for a college on his site, so he offered to host the program. He said he could have the site prepared for a start in late 2019, a year later. That date actually worked for us, and like that, the vision for ICM-Africa starting a Bible College program in Kenya was born!

We would like to say that everything went smoothly from there, but Covid and the busyness of starting other campuses caused a 4-year delay in starting our program there. As it turned out, the delays gave Bishop Joshua time to make improvements to several of his facilities to better align them with our needs. That included construction of a classroom where we had planned to use a tent. It freed up the tent to be used as the dining hall. That proved to be the final piece of the puzzle, and now we were ready to finally start.

Eighteen students attended the first day, but it soon became clear that several had misunderstood the amount of work required. Still, 13 students completed that first 11-day session. Very importantly, we were able to use this first session to fine-tune our local processes as well as the facility needs. We were even able to schedule a second class to begin there next year, in addition to the current ongoing one. The first class will graduate in 2025 and the second in 2026. It is truly amazing to think that we have reached this point without any capital expenditures for improving the facilities, but that may still happen in the future. Though the site does not look like the perfect educational environment, what matters is what is happening inside. God's Word is being magnified. His Son is being glorified. God's people are being edified. And the Lord's love is being testified.

*"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father."*

1 Thessalonians 1:3

Please continue to pray for our Nairobi site and for Bishop Joshua and his team. Being the leader of his denomination as well as the leader of a 26-nation consortium dedicated to improving cross-cultural exchanges between African nations and Israel, Bishop Joshua is well-connected within Kenya and within other surrounding countries. This visionary man of God promises to be a great help to ICM-Africa in the future.



**Top left:**  
The original  
class of 18  
students.

**Above:** The  
classroom is a  
very good  
environment for  
everyone.

**Right:**  
Students  
working hard to  
learn a new  
way.



### **IMPORTANT NEED**

Our American missionary co-pastor who has taken the lead at our English-speaking church for the last two years announced he is retiring at the end of this year. Pastoring the church is NOT our primary ministry and we cannot take it over again. Please pray that the Lord would move in the hearts of others who have a desire to work in an international community, preaching and teaching God's word verse by verse, to come alongside us very soon and help us keep it going, or for the Lord to make it clear that it is time to let it go.

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

[www.jimandjanicelarson.com](http://www.jimandjanicelarson.com)



# Pictures of the Month



**The 2023 ICM-Africa Staff Team  
and Their Core Leadership**

## CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE & MAILED TO:

Intensive Care Ministries  
P.O. Box 109  
Mentone, CA 92359-0109

Note "LARSON" in Memo of check

On-line giving available through our website



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## PRAYER REQUESTS

- We open a new campus in the capital city of Dodoma, 7-11 November, with a small trial class. Praying for the Lord to help us see how to move forward at this location.
- Pray for us as we travel back to South Sudan this month to conduct the 4<sup>th</sup> diploma session Nov 22 - Dec 5. We will hopefully participate in dedicating the new Bible college buildings then. Jim will be doing all the teaching and Janice will be assisting with administration.
- Please pray for more workers to help us in the field. A strong administrator and/or more Bible teachers would be a major blessing to help carry the load during this time of expansion into new countries. This would begin as an internship and prayerfully grow into a long-term commitment.
- Starting in Liberia had to be put on hold for another year due to organizational issues on their end.