

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

FEBRUARY 2022

**"I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living."
Psalm 27:13**

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Last month—because of Jim’s snake encounter—we held off sharing about the amazing Preachers Conference we conducted in December, but now it’s time! The Lord created so many incredible experiences during this first attempt at bringing together like-minded men and women of God involved in preaching ministries in Tanzania. We could hardly contain our excitement as we watched the Lord use the Preachers Conference to take us one step closer to seeing His vision to establish a “Center of Excellence for Biblical Preaching” here in Tanzania come to fruition. Our enthusiasm to share this story has not subsided one bit over the last month. Thank You Jesus!

First, why a Center of Excellence for Biblical Preaching? We believe there is life changing, village-transforming power in God’s Holy Word; power that is unleashed when biblical truths are preached God’s way, and for His glory and honor. Power to raise a lost sinner to new life. Power to heal and strengthen broken relationships. Power to bring hope to the hopeless. Power to bring peace in the midst of conflict. And power to bridge the gap between different peoples.

“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

Isaiah 55:11

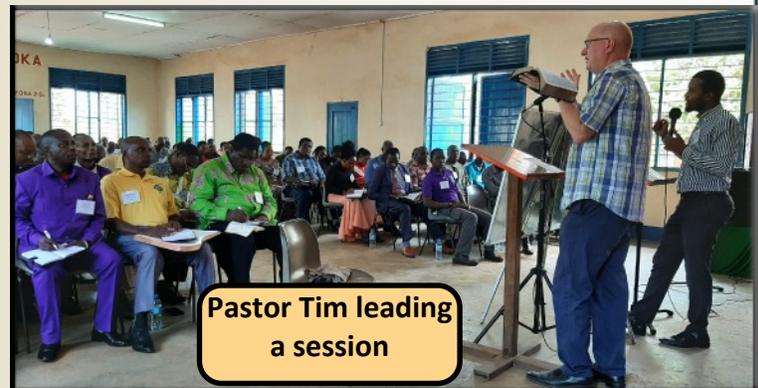
The power is there...it just needs to be brought to bear. So the Lord calls Spirit-filled men and women who are passionately committed to proclaiming God’s Word to that role, and that’s where the Preachers Conference fits in. He gave us this important tool to help us showcase the preaching quality that’s being developed here, so pastors can encourage and spur each other on in their respective journeys toward excellence in *all* they do—not just preaching.

The Lord inspired us for the Preachers Conference in the midst of a time of uncertainty—the Covid pandemic. Upon returning to Tanzania after a 6-month absence in 2020, we brought the ministry team together for a 3-day leadership conference. We prayed and worshipped, opening our hearts for the Lord to minister to us through the Word. We felt refreshed and renewed at the end, and wanted to share this experience with other pastors who have graduated from the ICM Bible College program. The 2021 Preachers Conference was born! The challenge before our team would be how to replicate this mountain-top experience for a group five times the size. Not easy for us, but quite possible for God.



The ICM-Africa staff

God put together the right members of the ICM-Africa team for planning and conducting the conference over a year later. The team chose the Moshi campus as the host location because it was close by and could accommodate the most people. We chose to limit attendance to the first 100 of the 300 diploma graduates who were invited. This was a modest number to start with since we were bearing all the costs, finding out if we could logistically feed this many people every day, house them, and if they would even come—but we moved forward by faith and in prayer.



Pastor Tim leading a session

We lined up two guest preachers from the US: Pastor Dan Finrock, ICM founder and Executive Director, and Pastor Tim Anderson, ICM board member. Pastor Tim would preach leadership lessons from the book of Nehemiah, and Pastor Dan would preach verse by verse through 2 Timothy. We would supplement their teaching by selecting 10 of our instructors to preach over the 3 days. What a way to encourage humility and preaching excellence—standing before one’s peers and preaching God’s transforming Word.

We quickly reached the limit of 100 people and ultimately decided to increase it to 120 people. A myriad of planning and administrative details fell into place. A worship team was formed from among the staff and they set about planning and practicing. Mama Ruth, an ICM

cook for more than nine years, put together a team of cooks from the three ICM Bible College campuses closest to the conference site. Before long, our two guest preachers arrived and settled in.



Our cook staff being recognized for their hard work at the conference

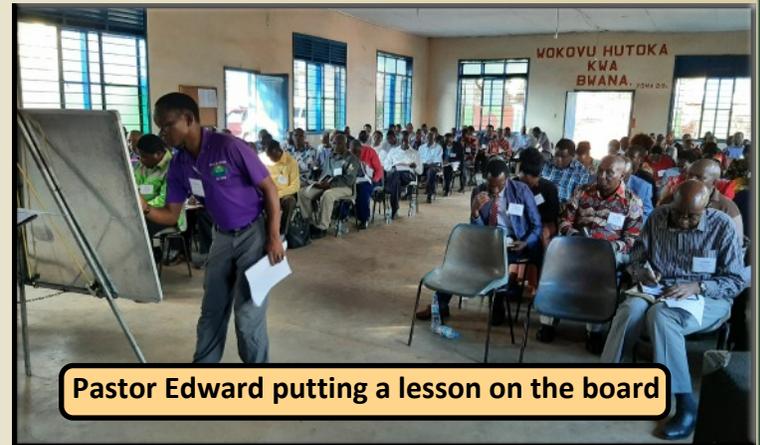
Opening day was upon us...the moment of truth. Would everyone honor their commitment to attend? Praise the Lord, almost every pastor showed up. We were even able to accommodate a few walk-ins to give us a final attendance of 117. Check-in went smoothly, and each attendee received a nametag, notebook, and ICM pen. That may not sound impressive to us, but it was a big deal to them. That first evening of praise and worship allowed us to express heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Lord—How great Thou art, Lord...How great Thou art!



Blessed by our times of worship

As Pastors Dan and Tim taught through their lessons and modelled preaching excellence, we could see hearts being touched and passions being stirred toward this concept. Even more so as the ten Tanzanian instructors preached their sermons. These alumni were being reminded of the power of preaching verse by verse through the Bible to feed their people the nourishing, life-changing truths from God's Word. They recognized that their training provided them the ability to do their

best for His glory. Excellence begets more excellence. God is good!



Pastor Edward putting a lesson on the board

The ICM-Africa 2022 Preachers Conference is set for October 3-6 with a goal to have 150 senior pastor attendees. Our first conference only cost about \$2600 to cover everything; we're budgeting \$3000 for this year. Please keep this event in your prayers as we work out all the details.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."
2 Corinthians 4:7



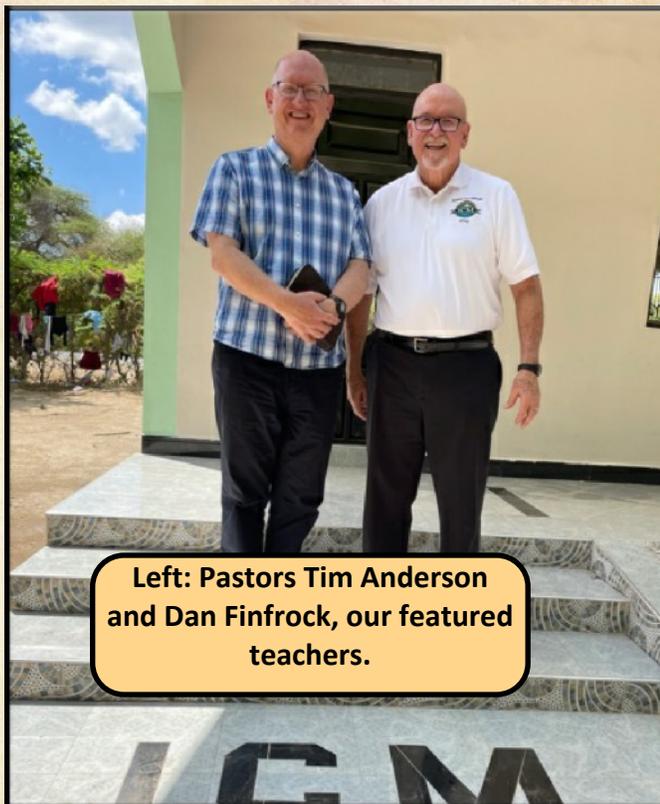
Top and bottom: One of our male and female instructors demonstrating verse by verse teaching.



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

www.jimandjanicelarson.com

Pictures of the Month



Left: Pastors Tim Anderson and Dan Finrock, our featured teachers.



At special events, the cultural norm is for married couples to dress alike, so we obliged during the conference!

CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE & MAILED TO:

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Note "LARSON" in Memo of check

On-line giving available through our website



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PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for safe travel to NC 6-16 February to visit Jim's family.
- Praise that Jim seems completely recovered from his snake bite!
- Praise that our home church in St Petersburg raised \$12,000 in just a few weeks to cover the cost of conducting 2 Church Planting and 2 Women's Bible Teaching certificate classes for 2022!!! What a difference this will make toward multiplying the number of disciples who can teach others!
- Pray for ICM-Africa staff and students as classes continue in our absence.
- Pray for our return to Tanzania 24-25 February: Covid test results; smooth flights, and an easy adjustment back to hot weather and the time zone change.
- We are still praying for our ICM-Africa registration documents to be finalized. May the Lord open some doors and hearts for this to occur.