

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

JULY 2023

*"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground,  
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;  
and man became a living being."*

Genesis 2:7

[JIMANDJANICE.LARSON@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JIMANDJANICE.LARSON@GMAIL.COM)  
[WWW.JIMANDJANICELARSON.COM](http://WWW.JIMANDJANICELARSON.COM)  
FACEBOOK - JANICE YOUNG LARSON



PO BOX 1870  
MOSHI, TANZANIA  
TANZANIA CELL PHONE 011 255 78 454-8658

# God is Life!

By nature, God is life. He alone has the ability to grant life to those He creates, for He is the source of life. He sent His Son to save the world by giving it eternal life, for God takes *“no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.”* (Ezekiel 33:11). God is the fullness of life. For this reason, Jesus can say with love: *“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* (John 10:10b).

***“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself.”***  
**John 5:26**

This short introduction will help you better understand feedback that we recently received from one of our graduates, Amos, a promising young man of amazing talent and ability. We’ll begin with some important context. First, most of our students have never been to a college. The academic rigor, accountability, and sheer volume of in-class and outside-of-class work that have defined the Western educational environment are new ideas to them. When a student completes one of our programs, it is a major accomplishment, which means that graduation is a big deal to them. Second, the methods and materials we teach are transformative for the vast majority of our students. They are radically changed in how they approach ministry and God’s Word, and it really touches their heart.

***“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”***  
**John 3:16**

One of the things we do at graduation is allow each of the students to privately share from their heart on what they experienced in the program. This is when Amos gave his testimony. He was from the outer reaches of Tanzania, a 2-day bus ride away from the Moshi campus. He began attending the Church Planting Program at the campus that was only a 1-day bus ride from his home. He made it through the first two sessions, but a challenge in life caused him to miss the last session. He said that he then gave up all hope of ever finishing, but another student mentioned a class that we had in Moshi, with its last session scheduled in June. *Now* there was some hope, except he had to deal with the idea that he had a 2-day bus ride at the beginning *and* end, and he did not have the bus fare. Still, he called our director and asked if he could attend that last session in Moshi and graduate.

We discussed it and told him yes. No one from his village or near there had ever traveled that far to attend a class; it is simply too far and too expensive. But to show him how impressed we were with his enthusiasm, we said we would help a little with his bus fare. As long as he got himself to the campus, we would help him get home. To be honest, we never imagined we would actually have to pay that bus fare. So, it was a great surprise to see him arrive the evening he was due. We resisted the temptation to call him crazy, though that is what we thought. A 2-day bus ride is sheer torture!

As it turned out, he was an exceptional student. He seemed well-grounded and sure of himself, even as he soaked up all of the teaching. His preaching was stellar; such a strong command of God’s Word from a very young man. Then the moment of truth—what would he



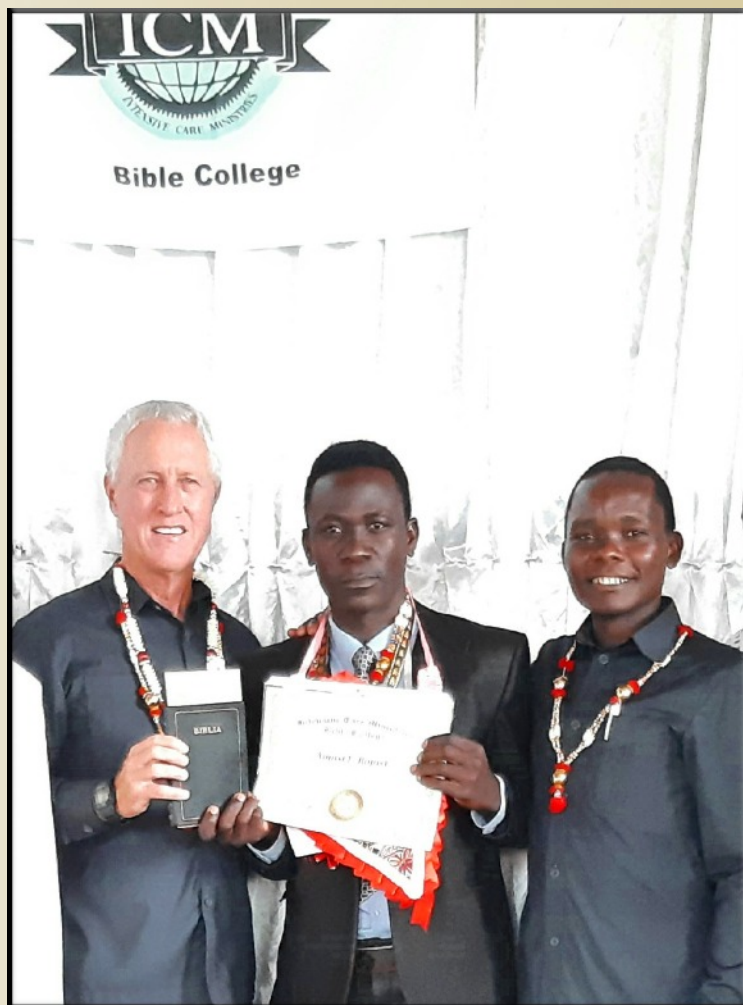


have to say during the final feedback session on graduation day?

He focused on how he felt the Lord had arranged so many things to get him here. He was devastated to miss out on graduating with his class, but somehow another student had reached out to him and told him not to give up. Wait on the Lord, and He will provide—and He did! God provided the class, but what about bus fare? That was a tall order. Again, the Lord provided the bus fare to get him to the class and almost enough to get home. Though we had no idea of the amount he lacked, the funds ICM contributed was just enough to get him home. God is good!

The rest of his testimony centered on a specific aspect of the teaching. The ICM instructor had been to Israel with our team in 2020. He shared how the instructor had made him feel like he was in Israel. Every lesson seemed to have an Israel component that the instructor was able to bring alive based on his visit there. Saving the most impactful point, and certainly his most profound idea for last, Amos mentioned that the instructor had spoken about how water from the Jordan River flowed into the Dead Sea, but nothing flowed out. It was devoid of life there—dead! Connecting that thought to his own life, Amos testified that he did not want his life to be like the Dead Sea. He wanted the life of Christ to flow through him and out to others so they could experience that same life. He was so encouraged by the ICM Bible College teaching

that he wanted to go and make a difference in the world by taking the lessons he had learned and applying them as a pastor of his own church some day. We were so blessed to hear this special testimony and we are thankful the Lord brought Amos to that class.



## PHOTOS

**Far Left:** Amos in foreground, taking notes in class.

**Left Page, right column:** Jim with entire graduating class.

**Upper Left:** Our instructor, Pastor Saimon, sharing words of encouragement at graduation.

**Above:** Amos receiving a new Bible and his certificate from Jim and Pastor Edward, the directors of ICM-Africa.

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

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

# Picture of the Month



Our surrounding region received an over-abundance of rain from March through June. This is the road leading to the village of one of our staff. A canoe is now the preferred mode of travel there! Still, the region expects a bountiful harvest to come.

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## TANZANIA CONTACT INFO:

Jim and Janice Larson  
P.O. Box 1870  
Moshi, Tanzania

EMAIL: [ICM.Tanzania@gmail.com](mailto:ICM.Tanzania@gmail.com)  
Instagram: [ICMBC.Africa](https://www.instagram.com/ICMBC.Africa)  
Facebook: [Intensive Care Ministries-Africa](https://www.facebook.com/Intensive-Care-Ministries-Africa)  
Website: [www.JimAndJaniceLarson.com](http://www.JimAndJaniceLarson.com)

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise the Lord that we should both be together again in Tanzania by the time you receive this newsletter. It's been a strange season being apart so much, so now we're ready to work side by side again!
- Pray for Jim and Pastor Edmond as they return to South Sudan July 19-August 2. This will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> session for these students, and we have high hopes to really see a major difference in how they now handle the Word of God. Pray that all the students are able to return, and for safe travel for everyone.
- Praise that Jim received his visa to enter Liberia later this year (November) and that things are on track to start in Kenya in September.
- We continue to thank God for everyone's support of the work He is doing through the African pastors and staff. It is far beyond anything that we could have ever done on our own.