



## MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

**“Come over to Macedonia and Help Us”**  
**Acts 16:9**  
**by**  
**Dr. Bob Smart**



Women leaders discussing how they can disciple

Will Hesterberg, Director of Development with ITEM and I traveled to India February 8-20. We went to New Delhi together before parting ways, Will to Andhra Pradesh and I to Manipur. Then we met up again in the right Delhi airport (thanks to his wisdom and experience).

ITEM invited me to teach Identity in Christ and Discipleship in NE India in Churachandpur, Manipur. Khen Tombing, and his wife Rith, were wonderful hosts (the food and housing were ideal). I stayed in the third floor guesthouse, above the second floor Agape Home orphanage and across the main street from the Reformed Bible Institute, and near Rayburn Grade School, High School, and College. I was able to teach thirty plus leaders (both men and women) by explaining and preparing them to do discipleship. I preached in two churches, one in the city center and one in the hills. Pau Gualmang, Reformed Bible Institute leader served as my translator and dear companion for the eight days there. The thirty leaders were very teachable and grateful, which made the fellowship together very sweet.

Here is a great opportunity to invest in the lives of pastors in India, who are Reformed and Presbyterian. If you are able and willing to teach, or if you can help financially to send an instructor, then please contact ITEM. You will be so glad you participated in global missions by equipping national leaders for the sake of the Gospel.

**January in Romania**  
**by**  
**Maurice Sikes**



We saw many prayers answered during our January class on “God and Man” at Maranatha Bible College in Campina, Romania. Between 25-30 leaders attended during the week, coming from Baptist, Pentecostal, Brethren, Evangelical Free, and Presbyterian churches from 10 different communities! With such a varied background, naturally I wondered how reformed teaching on topics such as predestination, limited atonement, and the covenant of grace might be received. To my delight, they responded openly and well. During the Q/A time they had great questions.

Mainly I desired that the students would leave class with a greater love for God, a greater sense of awe in Him, a greater faith, and a holier life. I believe those goals were met among those who attended, which I saw during our regular times of worship together in class. While I traveled the short distance home to Brasov by rail each evening, I still had plenty of time to experience the graciousness of class host Ion Vasile and his son, Andrei, who translated for me. I left with many new friends and will be seeing some of them again when I preach in Campina at the end of February.

**Announcing a New Matching Gift**  
**A friend of ITEM will again match in 2016 up to \$25,000 for every new investment in ITEM or every investment over what you gave in 2015. If you did not give in 2015, or want to give more, here’s an opportunity to double your investment this year.**

## Opportunities to Pray in March

1. Praise for Will Hesterberg's teaching at 2 new locations in Andhra Pradesh, India and Bob Smart's teaching at RBI/PCI,R in Manipur.
2. Pray for the March teaching of David Smith in Biblical Theology at BRTS in Latvia, Norris Lessley also in Biblical Theology at KRBC in Ukraine, and Jim Roszell teaching "Living in Grace" in Romania.
3. Pray for Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary, which is providing reformed teaching to students in Latvia and Lithuania, for head of BRTS Artis Celmins, and for our translators.
4. March 23 is designated as a Day of Prayer and Fasting for ITEM. Please pray for ITEM that day and, if you are able, fast for all or part of the day. Let your hunger remind you of the hunger for training Christians leaders have in Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Croatia, India and Romania. Lift those fields to God.

the Presbyterian Church of South India (PCSI) in Andhra Pradesh. After more contact, we received a request to come, look, and teach in the PCSI.

Beginning from a "chance" encounter with a Presbyterian Church of America ruling elder in 2005 who introduced him to the reformed faith through the Westminster Confession of Faith, the visionary leader of the PCSI pursued more training, recruited other men to the reformed faith, and began planting the PCSI. The PCSI has grown to 45 plus churches with attendance of over 2,200. I spent three days in each of two cities, Vijayawada and Vizakhapatnam, getting to know and teach the leaders of this small reformed Presbyterian denomination and to research whether ITEM might be able to help with training.

I remembered back to the days of Acts over and over as I taught about 25 teaching and ruling elders in each location. They were building church structure from the ground up, seeking to develop a strong leadership team of elders in each church. I thought of Acts 14:23 "Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church..." They were asking questions, searching Scripture, and tackling issues very similar to the early church in Acts. Issues such as: how to expand into new areas and still build solid churches, how to guard members from false teaching, how to correct when members do not walk with Christ? I heard stories of miraculous healings leading to whole households coming to faith in Jesus. I heard of great sacrifice as people believed in Jesus and were rejected and persecuted by their communities and family members. I heard of many small house churches springing up, like Acts. I thought of Acts 2:46 "...They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God..." As in Acts, so now in India, "God is adding to their numbers daily those who are being saved."



**"It Looks  
Like Acts  
Again"  
by  
Will  
Hesterberg**

As my recent trip to India began with an evening prayer meeting of 8 women and children in a small apartment, that made me think of the riverside prayer meeting of Lydia in Acts 16. "This looks like Acts again." That impression grew as I came to know and love those I was teaching "Biblical Leadership" in Andhra Pradesh. "Where's Andhra Pradesh?" you ask? "And what is Will doing there?" you wonder.

The state of Andhra Pradesh lies on India's east coast on the Bay of Bengal, just north of Karnataka where we have taught in Bangalore and Chennai. It is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest state in size and 10<sup>th</sup> largest in population in India. We had received a suggestion from another mission agency to look into helping

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