



## NOVEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER



### A First-Time Class, A Long-Time Church by Eugene Oldham

(pictured at left: Dr. Jasmin Milic, Eugene Oldham, daughter Meredith, and Tom Smith)

I recently had the opportunity of teaching Pneumatology at the Mihael Starin Theological Seminary in Osijek, Croatia. What a privilege it was to gather with ministry leaders, theological students, and lay people to pour over the pages of Scripture and learn about the role and nature of the Holy Spirit. The prevalence of Pentecostalism in evangelical churches in Croatia made our study of this often misunderstood doctrine particularly relevant.

On Sunday, I had the privilege of preaching at the Reformed Christian Church in Tordinici, the oldest (c. 1551) Protestant parish in Croatia. This church has faced its share of difficulty and opposition. The building was decimated during the Serbian conflict of the 90's, and some of its members were even killed. But the Lord preserved this Protestant witness of this precious congregation. The historic building has been rebuilt and the congregation enjoys vibrant, gospel-centered worship each Sunday. It was a delight to hear their voices singing foreign words set to familiar tunes. For the evening service, we worshiped with the congregation in Osijek and enjoyed a time of fellowship over dinner after the service.

A unique privilege for me on this trip was the fact that I was able to bring my daughter, Meredith, along. This was Meredith's first time out of the States. She was able to see firsthand that God's church spreads far beyond the geographic and cultural borders of our small presbytery in North Carolina. Our host, Tom Smith (ITEM missionary), graciously carried us all around the Croatian countryside and villages, telling us about the history and culture of this part of the world and of God's work in Europe.

What an encouragement for us both to return to our little corner of the world with a fresh realization that the Spirit of God is at work all over the globe, bringing His

people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. May His kingdom spread in Croatia and America and to the very ends of the earth.



Thank you for a great class!

By Edwin Singh,  
ITEM Director of  
Bangalore/Chennai

"I want to thank ITEM for giving us the opportunity to learn from God's Word. It was a great blessing for all of us who participated in Bangalore and Chennai. It was a time of learning and introspection. It was more of a devotional teaching on having the mind of Christ to live like Him. Most of our pastors and leaders personally thanked me for putting together this session.

John and Josh, a friend who helped teach, were simple and humble men and poured out their heart to focus on having the mind of Christ. They taught with simplicity and connected with the students. John is a naturally gifted teacher, and he was very focused on the material. I was wondering how could they cover so much material in three days, but they taught with a specific theme. The material was wonderful, and we will be able to use this for our own personal study and preaching. Personally, I think we were given a commentary on Philippians, but one that was easy to understand and simple in its language.

I look forward to having such a good time of learning and introspection in future classes as well. Thanks to ITEM and Will for giving us this opportunity. May God continue to use ITEM for many leaders around the globe."

In the U.S. send to ITEM, PO Box 31456, St Louis, MO 63131 or through PayPal at [www.ITEM.org](http://www.ITEM.org). Email: [lwhesterberg@gmail.com](mailto:lwhesterberg@gmail.com). Contributions to ITEM in Canada may be sent to ITEM, c/o Action International Ministries, 3015 A, 21<sup>st</sup> Street NE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2E 7T1. **New Phone # 618-939-5069.**

## **We All Learned So Much Together** **by John Van Schepen (Portland, OR)**

Since I would be teaching in South Africa in September, Will Hesterberg challenged me to also teach the course “God and Man” for ITEM in Thika, Kenya, in October. I left Friday afternoon, Sept. 29, from Johannesburg for Kenya. Due to delays I arrived in Nairobi early Saturday morning, Sept. 30. Still, my hosts, Daniel and Florence Muindi, along with Pastors Obed and Moses, met me with a big smile and graciously drove me to the Luke Hotel in Thika, 1 1/2 hours outside Nairobi.

At 9:30 that morning Daniel and Florence returned to the Luke hotel to take me on a splendid day to get acquainted with the Thika area. We first went to the lovely Chania Falls and the zoo there. Then we drove on nearly impassable roads to Florence’s ancestral home, a village far into the countryside. Near there we visited the Salt and Light All Nations Church started by Florence’s grandfather. Today many are leaving witch craft and ancestral worship and coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The current pastor had planned to come to our training the next week but circumstances prevented him, so he sent his wife and one other member instead!

While traveling on Saturday, Daniel asked what I had been doing in South Africa. Upon hearing about Timothy Leadership Training, Daniel asked me if I would give a brief overview of the Preaching Manual to key leaders. Having clarified that my primary responsibility was to ITEM, I agreed to teach 8 leaders (who also attended the daytime classes) Tuesday and Wednesday evening from 7-8:30 pm with a quick flyover of the manual. They received a taste of inductive teaching as well as a glimpse of the three keys of Biblical Preaching.

On Sunday, Pastor Moses invited me to preach at the Full Gospel Church of Thika. I was blessed and humbled to speak to this precious group of brothers and sisters. Pastor Moses also hosted us for the week of training at his church since the usual place for training was currently under construction.

Beginning Monday, after devotions, my teaching each day usually began at 8:30. How does one cover the subject of God in four days, especially when such weighty subjects as predestination came

up only on the very last day! Nevertheless, clearly the students (approximately 30) were attentive, eager to learn, and quick to raise important questions. We finished about 3:30 Thursday afternoon. After goodbyes, we headed to the airport to beat the traffic rush. I also had arranged to meet at the airport my wife’s second cousin serving with Wycliffe in Africa since 1978, first in the Congo now in Nairobi. This turned out to be a very special meeting for me and for Daniel, Florence and Moses. That week we learned so much from each other.

After supper together I checked in and waited for my plane to Amsterdam and then home. I arrived in Portland, OR, Friday morning at 11:35, tired but thankful to God for His care, keeping, and the work just completed. It had been a real privilege to work with ITEM and to use the material to teach and train brothers and sisters in Kenya. Thanks be to God.



### **Opportunities to Pray for ITEM**

- 1. Praise God for Dick Moes leading the Preaching Conference in Ukraine assisted by Tom Smith and in Romania assisted by Maurice Sikes.**
- 2. Praise God for the great attendance in the Marriage and Family class taught by Bob Smart in Indonesia.**
- 3. Pray for the Pastoral Counseling class to be taught by Mitchell Persaud at Bangalore and Chennai, India from Oct. 28 – Nov. 11, for the Christ and Salvation class taught by Charles Williams at All Nations College in Kenya November 2-9, and the OT Introduction class to be taught by Cal Hoogendoorn at KRBC in Ukraine November 13-17.**
- 4. Pray for the Vision Trip by Will Hesterberg and Norris Lesley to Bolivia Nov. 9-18.**
- 5. Continue to pray for more supporters for ITEM and for more financial support as the year is drawing to a close.**