



## AUGUST 2019 NEWSLETTER



### Pastor Teaching Abroad for 1st Time Offers Observations

*Rev. Jonathan Cruse, pastor of Community Presbyterian Church in Kalamazoo, taught in Cochabamba, Bolivia in late June and early July. It was his first international teaching trip.*

**Different words, same God.** It was interesting to hear them sing their songs in their language and go through their liturgy in their language, and at the same time recognize we're worshipping the same God.

**My opening bombed.** I tried an icebreaker to loosen up the crowd. I played off of my last name—Cruse, which sounds Latin American. When I lived in California, people would see “Cruse” and assume I'm Mexican. Then they'd see me — I'm the whitest person on the planet. My translator was named Cruz, too. So I said, “We're not brothers, but we're brothers in the faith.” It was supposed to be funny.

Maybe they don't laugh in church; maybe it was lost in translation. But the reaction was ... crickets.

**Their attention is on Christ.** When I preached, nobody looked at me. It was unsettling. At first I thought maybe it was a fluke, but it kept happening. Did I offend them? Then I realized they were looking at the translator. They knew they couldn't get the gospel from me, because they couldn't understand me. So they focused on the person they could understand.

I equated it to the work of the Holy Spirit. His job is to put the attention on Christ. That was what was happening here.

**The food was ... interesting.** The dried, salted llama was good. It was unique, unlike anything I've had. It looked like pulled pork, but it was dry, so it felt like beef jerky in your mouth.

**My Spanish is limited to gracias and hola, but I managed OK.** My translator was named Kathy. Sometimes she asked me to say something a different way to help her. She took pictures of my notes in English then went home and read them to prepare. She had a notecard with a cheat sheet of words that she had to look up—big theological words like superlapsarianism. Translating what someone else is saying is hard enough. Translating deep theological talks—I taught on the doctrine of God and the doctrine of Man—would be really, really tough.

**I was impressed by their fervor and devotion to learning.** Even though they weren't looking at me, the people in the audience were totally engaged in the subject matter. I saw lots of nodding heads, and they were voluminous note-takers.

I taught during the day, but there were a lot of lay people there. I asked them, do you not have a job? One woman told me she was a doctor and took a week off of work to attend my class.



## Big city problems follow urbanization in Africa

**WHO:** Larry and Linda McAuley. We have lived and worked in Kenya for 18 years and Africa for a total of 35 years.

**WHAT:** We co-facilitated a short course on Pastoral counseling for pastors and church leaders.

**WHERE/WHEN:** We worked with All Nations College in Thika, Kenya teaching from June 2 to June 6.

**WHAT WE TAUGHT:** Pastoral counseling that is firmly rooted in God's Word is increasingly important in Africa as more people move to the cities away from their traditional support systems in villages. Africa is becoming more urbanized and westernized, and with that comes worldly influences. Pastors and church-based counselors need solid biblical foundations for their counseling of singles, couples and whole groups of people to help people overcome their problems and challenges and live God-glorifying lives in their homes, communities, schools and workplaces.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Many church leaders in Africa have not had the opportunity for much formal education. They are passionate about the Gospel and do great work in reaching out into the community with the Good News of salvation through trusting Jesus. But with educational levels

of communities and congregations increasing, church leaders also need to stay ahead of things so they can relate well with and be respected by their church members. All Nations College is helping to equip church leaders who will impact the lives of hundreds of church members and their families.

**WHAT WE LEARNED:** We are always challenged (in a good way) by the faith and joy of our African brothers and sisters in the midst of sometimes very difficult situations.

## Check us out on Instagram

Item is on **Instagram:** @itemmission. Follow our journeys and tag us when you go on yours.

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/teachingnationalChristianleaders/>

### Prayer Requests

1. Please pray for Tom Smith's recovery from pacemaker surgery.
2. Pray for Jim Roszell teaching Pneumatology and Bob Clark teaching the book of Revelation in Kenya in early August.
3. Pray for fruitful results from Bill Boekestein teaching Eschatology in early August in Belize and Fritz Harms teaching Church History in Bolivia in early August.
4. Pray for ITEM to be able to recruit more instructors to go to India.
5. Pray for a full schedule of travel for Will Hesterberg and Tom Smith in September, October and November.
6. Praise for Larry and Linda McAuley's teaching on counseling in Kenya.
7. Praise for Jonathan Cruse's teaching on the doctrine of God and Man in Bolivia.

### How to Contribute

In the U.S. send contributions to ITEM, PO Box 31456, St Louis, MO 63131 or at [www.ITEM.org](http://www.ITEM.org) through PayPal.

Email: [lwhesterberg@gmail.com](mailto:lwhesterberg@gmail.com).

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