



Trainers of Trainers Teach the Old-fashioned Way

By Tom Smith, ITEM Executive Director

In North America, most of us (95 percent) have access to the Internet.

Around half the labor force in the United States and Canada can work from home as long as they have a telephone, a computer and Internet access.

This is not always the case in less developed countries. In Africa, only 39 percent of the population has Internet access.

All Nations College in Thika, Kenya (population: 280,000) does have Internet access. But because of regulations related to trying to control the COVID19 pandemic, the school is not yet allowed to gather groups of students.

In the villages surrounding Thika, the COVID19 virus cases have been significantly lower. So small group gatherings are possible. All Nations College has three branch campuses spread across villages around Thika. More than 60 student-pastors are being trained in Machakos, Makindu and Kitui.

Over the past four years, ITEM instructors invested in in-depth training in a select group of men. Director Daniel Muindi chose mature men to be equipped as trainers who could go out into the rural areas to teach in the three training centers. Daniel has a team of 13 men, whom he calls, “Trainers of Trainers” or “TOTs.”

While regular classes are not possible in Thika, the TOTs have continued training student pastors using ITEM curriculum and teaching resources. These small village classes are not high-tech. They are “old school”—just a TOT standing in front of a group of people breaking down God’s word.

Muindi would like to equip these village training centers with computers and Internet connections to enhance the education the students receive. Until then, the TOTs will continue to make do with what they have on hand. Please pray for the 13 TOTs and for the 60 student-pastors and their families.

Last month, ITEM sent \$1,000 to aid those in need during the pandemic, which helped 35 students and their families. Pray the pandemic ends soon and for the many in Kenya and other developing nations to be spared the deadly effects of the COVID19 peril.

Check us out on Social Media

Staying informed on what ITEM is doing around the world has become easier because of social media. It has become more important because of COVID19. For that reason, more than ever, we want our newsletter readers, prayer partners and contributors to follow us on social media. World-wide more than 2 billion people use Facebook and over 1 billion use Instagram to share ideas, thoughts and information. We want you to be better connected with ITEM and the people we serve in 13 locations in nine countries around the world. So we are also asking our supporting churches to mention that ITEM is on Facebook and on Instagram.

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

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/InternationalTheologicalEducationMinistries/>



From Austria to Iowa to Latvia, Bolivia and beyond

By Tom Smith, ITEM Executive Director

Usually ITEM newsletter articles are written about an instructor who taught a class in a country the previous month. This month—well, the last several months really—have been different.

By the time this ITEM newsletter is sent out, students in Cochabamba, Bolivia will have started a class on Worship and Sacraments.

Their teacher, Dr. Sacha Walicord, taught the class at Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary (BRTS) in Riga, Latvia eight months ago. BRTS recorded Walicord's lectures and made them available to other ITEM fields.

One of these fields using Dr. Walicord's lectures from BRTS is Seminario Reformado Latinoamericano (SRL) in Bolivia. Rev. Gerson Cruz, SRL's director, is dubbing Walicord's lectures into Spanish.

SRL has 85 or so students. Roughly a dozen are from outside Bolivia. Some live in Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, Chile and Argentina. Inside Bolivia (which geographically is larger than California), SRL has students in Santa Cruz (10), La Paz (25) and other cities as well as in centrally located Cochabamba.

It is amazing how a professor who was born in Austria, went to seminary in South Carolina and now lives in Iowa can teach a class in Riga, Latvia which then can be watched by students in Bolivia and other parts of Latin America. God moves in mysterious ways, indeed.

ITEM is a tiny part of the modern missions movement which God is directing. Our Sovereign Lord is using a good thing (the technology of video recordings and the Internet) and applying it in new, unforeseen ways because of a bad thing (COVID19). He is working all things together for good for those who love the Lord.

Prayer Requests

1. Praise for 10 students from Russia who participated via Zoom along with Latvian students in the Old Testament class taught by board member Mark Vander Hart.
2. Praise for the four courses that were recently taught via Zoom to students at Evangelical Reformed Seminary of Ukraine (ERSU).
3. Pray for the church members in ITEM's fields who have lost their jobs and need food.
4. Pray for the Sacraments and Worship class that will be taught by recorded lectures in Bolivia.
5. Pray that American teachers will be able to teach overseas later in 2020.

How to Contribute

In the U.S. send contributions to ITEM, PO Box 31456, St Louis, MO 63131 or at www.ITEM.org through PayPal.

Email executive director Tom Smith at tomsmith@item.org
Or call 717.640.6268

Contributions to ITEM in Canada may be sent to:

Action International Ministries
3015A 21st NE
Calgary AB T2E 7T1