



International Theological Education Ministries, Inc.

JULY 2022 NEWSLETTER

Check out our new website

The new ITEM website is www.learn.item.org Folks interested can create an account and access our recorded and written modules and even test themselves by taking quizzes and exams.



Recruiting instructors is one of our major reasons for going to General Assembly. This year there were over 2,300 delegates, all of them Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders. One key requirement for elders in the PCA is they must be “able to teach.” So if you want to catch fish, you go where the fish are located.

A broader objective for attending General Assembly is to raise awareness of ITEM. The PCA has more than 1,600 congregations. Yet ITEM’s instructors and support comes from about 2 percent of these congregations. We need to make the other 98 percent aware of ITEM.

When people find out that we send instructors to teach intensive classes to pastors overseas on one week trips, the response is positive. Of course it makes sense to take the instructor to the students in their home setting to train at a small fraction of the cost of a modern western seminary.

At this year’s assembly, many good connections were made. Potential new fields came to light, such as Haiti, Vietnam, new places in India, Hungary, and Romania. New partner ministry relationships were begun with others such as Come Over And Help. Current partnerships with MTW, ELI, TMI and TCWM were strengthened.

How General Assembly Is Like a Candy Store

By Tom Smith, ITEM Executive Director

Walking around the exhibition hall during the PCA’s General Assembly makes me feel like a kid in a candy shop. At this year’s GA, held in June in Birmingham, Ala., there were more than 100 ministries, organizations, and businesses with booths. I could see what others are doing in God’s kingdom.

In the exhibition hall there were other theological educational ministries similar to ITEM. Most of these other “theo-ed” ministries are friends of ITEM as partners and collaborators in the International Discipleship Coalition, such as Mission To the World (MTW), Equipping Leaders International (ELI), and Teaching Missions International (TMI). Across the aisle from the ITEM booth was Trinity Center for World Mission (TCWM) who operates Trinity Bible Institute in Uganda, where ITEM sends instructors.

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

Check us out on Social Media

Staying informed on what ITEM is doing around the world has never been more important. We encourage you to follow us. ITEM is on **Instagram**: [@itemmission](https://www.instagram.com/itemmission), **YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/Mc24JfvgOoA>), Channel: ITEM-Videos,

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



Getting Right to Work on the Great Commission

John Van Schepen and his wife, Willie, traveled from Keizer, Oregon to preach and teach in Kenya and Uganda. John filed the following report:

“When presenting the teaching on the Kingdom of God I found that the men were especially desirous of diving directly into the Book of Revelation and wanting to know about the millennium. Although we carefully reviewed the three basic positions on the millennium I found that there was a strong inclination towards the pre-millennial view.

Regarding the Book of Acts, what struck me was that the student body expected that the Great Commission was the church’s task, one in which they were fully engaged. One pastor told me how he had planted a new church in 2014 with four of his family members. That church, in which I was privileged to preach, now has well over 100 regular attendees as well as a ministry to orphans and a school that goes up to 5th grade.

While teaching there I found that one of the biggest challenges is to have a clear sense of the level of English competence of all the students. After a day or two these differences become more evident and you seek to find ways to compensate for some without holding up the others.

The system in Uganda at Trinity Bible Institute was very helpful in that I was given two teaching assistants who could identify those who

were struggling more quickly than I and could give further explanation either during or after class.

When I was given the opportunity to preach five times and also to lead a men’s group I became much more aware of the need to simplify certain matters without “dumbing down” the truths of the gospel. There was a two-hour time slot in the afternoon where questions could be asked and the teaching of the day be reviewed to be certain we were moving forward together.

We found the people to be very friendly, gracious and helpful in all circumstances. They proudly shared their culture with us so that we could experience their blessings and also understand their concerns.

Prayer Requests

Please pray about these issues.

1. Alister Torrens, president of Evangelical Reformed Seminary of Ukraine, and his family are traveling in the U.S., connecting with family and supporters. In July, Alister will teach a class online to students back in Ukraine. The Torrens need to get visas sorted out for returning to Europe.
2. For the war in Ukraine to end, and for the protection and provision for our students and colleagues there.
3. Rob Toornstra, pastor of Sunnyslope Christian Reformed Church in Salem, Oregon, will travel to Bolivia in late July to teach Christ-centered preaching from the Old Testament.
4. In Bolivia, the wife of Gerson Cruz, director of the Seminario Reformado Latinoamericano, is 6 months pregnant. Her condition is fragile, and they are being attentive to her and the baby’s health.
5. Bob Clark, the retired senior pastor at Christ Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Indiana, injured his shoulder and cannot travel to Kenya this month. Jim Roszell, an elder at CPC, will travel and teach alone at All Nations College in late July.
6. For the pastors trained in Kenya and India going out and teaching classes of other pastoral students this month.