



**TEACHING**

**MINISTERING**

**SERVING**

## The EVANGEL Voice

April, 2009

### Ray of Hope School of Practical Ministry



I'm so excited to announce that this summer Evangelical will be participating in an exciting new cooperative training program for pastors and leaders in Kenya.

### The Partnership

The idea of running an intensive short-term training for pastors and emerging leaders was initiated through conversations between John Kisamwa and myself in the spring of 2007. God is strategically bringing together three ministries to assist Ray of Hope in training others to plant churches throughout the coast of Kenya. This partnership includes:

#### **Ray of Hope (ROH)**

Mombassa, Kenya

Directors: John & Habona Kisamwa

[www.kenyarayofhope.com](http://www.kenyarayofhope.com)

Ray of Hope will provide all on-site coordination, advertising, registration, and hosting of the students.

#### **Grace Covenant Church (GCC)**

Harrisonburg, VA

Mission Trip Leader: Steve Hedrick

[www.gcch.org](http://www.gcch.org)

GCC will provide stateside coordination, support team training, and partial funding.

(540) 433-7760  
(888) 711-0066

EVANGEL Theological Seminary  
P.O. Box 1887  
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[www.ets.edu](http://www.ets.edu)  
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## **EVANGEL Theological Seminary (ETS)**

Harrisonburg, VA

www.ets.edu

ETS will provide all of the course curriculum, on-site instruction, and long term program development.

### **The Program**

Steve Hedrick (GCC mission team leader & EVANGEL student) and I will be leading a team to Kenya. Our team is going to leave the U.S. on July 16 and the program will start on Monday, July 20. The first two weeks we will be having class Monday through Thursday with 3 teaching sessions a day. In addition, there will be 3 small group sessions a day where students will work on 4 group projects and spend intensive time in ministry to each other. On Friday, those students who are able will return to their homes for the weekend. On the 3rd week there will be teaching sessions Monday through Wednesday and on Thursday we will be having a graduation with each student receiving the Practical Ministry Certificate. We leave Kenya on Friday, August 7 and arrive back in the U.S. on August 8.

Instead of writing learning papers, as the students in the U.S. do, the Kenyan students will be working on four small group projects. These projects are designed to be practical in nature and provide students the opportunity to further develop their ministry skills and gifting. Each one will leave with a better understanding of the person God has created them to be, 5 preliminary outlines for Bible studies on 5 different books, sermon outlines for 5 sermons, and a plan for a cooperative ministry event that can be implemented after the program ends.

The goal for this year is to graduate 25 students. John Kisamwa has indicated that at least 5 of the students will come from Tanzania and the remaining ones from the Kenyan coast. As part of this year's program we will be working closely with John to identify some individuals who can help with running the program next year. Our goal is that by 2011 this program will be entirely taught and administered by Kenyans.

### **Your Role**

There are two ways that you can participate in this exciting program. First, you can invest your time. We need you to spend time between now and the time we return from Kenya praying. Here are some things you can be praying about.

- Steve and I as we lead the team.
- The members of the team as they prepare to go and lead the small group sessions.
- The 25 students. Pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare their hearts for this time. Pray for their families while they are studying. Pray for their churches. Pray for protection for them.
- Pray for the financial resources that will be needed to start this program.

Second you can participate in this program by investing your financial resources. The cost per student is \$900 which includes all meals and lodging, tuition, SOPM textbooks and materials, a new Bible for each student, and translation and interpretation for SOPM course materials and instruction. Each student will be paying a small amount to help offset some of the expenses in Kenya, however because of their limited incomes (\$800 - \$1,200 annually) they aren't able to fully pay the cost of this program. We really need your help! Won't you prayerfully consider sponsoring a student. There a number of ways you can do that.

- You can give \$900 which would cover the entire cost of the program for one student.
- You can give \$300 which would cover the cost of one week for a student.
- You can give \$60 which would cover the cost of one day for a student.
- You can give whatever amount the Holy Spirit places on your heart.

Your gifts are an investment in the lives of these students and the Church in Kenya and all of Africa. Only God knows the impact of this program and the fruit that will come from it.

Please make your check out to Evangel Theological Seminary and write Kenya in the memo. Please use the enclosed envelope to send your gift and remember that each gift is tax deductible. Thank you for your help.

### **Upcoming Course**

There is still one more course to be offered during the 2009 Spring Semester, **O-431 The Psalms**. This course will look at the nature of Hebrew poetry, the different categories of Psalms and their significance, and what the Psalms have to say to us today. This has been an exciting course and offers students an opportunity to practically implement the Psalms into their daily lives.

This course will be offered on 2 weekends, **May 1& 2 and June 5 & 6**. For further information or to register for the course, contact the EVANGEL office. Hope to see you in class!

### **Golf Classic**

The 2009 Clubs for Christ Golf Classic, which benefits EVANGEL, will be held on Monday, May 18 at Jackson's Chase Golf Course in Front Royal, VA. The event will begin at 1:00 p.m. with a shotgun start and uses a Captain's Choice format. The entry fee is \$60/player which includes greens fee, cart, range balls, meal, and prizes. The deadline for registering your team is Friday, May 15.

Not a golfer? You can still help. We also need individuals, businesses, or churches to help us by agreeing to become a sponsor. Sponsorships of \$100 are needed for tees, greens, closest to pin and longest drive contests, food, and prizes. Won't you consider helping us out?

If you would like further information, want to register your team, or become a sponsor please call the EVANGEL office at 433-7760 or toll-free (888) 711-0066. Hope to see you there!

### **Congratulations**

We want to express our congratulations to Juergen Brinner, one of our alumni. Juergen, a 2002 Master of Theological Studies graduate and current Doctor of Ministry student, was recently appointed as the Assistant Pastor of Blisworth Baptist Church in England. We are so excited about this new ministry opportunity for Juergen and pray that God will abundantly bless he and his family and that he would experience a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit as he begins this new assignment.

### **What's The Problem**

As a nation, we seem to be stuck in a cycle of trying to figure out who is responsible for the economic mess in which we find ourselves. On a daily basis, the news media informs us of the latest transgressions of Wall Street, whether it is the extravagant performance bonuses paid to AIG executives or Bernie Madoff and his 65 billion dollar ponzi scheme. Political leaders responding to these items pontificate on the evils of unchecked greed. They look into the camera with a straight face and tell us they are working hard to protect us while, at the same time, their pockets are lined with tens of thousands of campaign dollars from these same "evil" companies and individuals.

The religious community isn't exempt from this kind of hypocrisy. National ministry leaders tell us that God will take care of us and will erase our debt if we make a large "seed" offering to their particular ministry. They even have the nerve to tell us that if we don't have that specific amount of money to charge it with our credit card. Their manipulative message is that in order to experience God's abundant blessing we must give sacrificially while they live like rock stars in palatial estates and fly all over the world in private jets. Like our political leaders, they too, look into the camera with a straight face and tell us they have heard from God regarding this situation and are here to help us.

The result of all this is that we don't know where to turn or what to do. We're angry, frustrated, hurt, and feel abandoned. Sometimes it seems like even God has walked away. The problem isn't what's happening on Wall Street or in Washington. Rather the problem is that we have allowed this situation to take our eyes off of the God we serve. To help us we need to reflect on the events and words of the Easter season.

*Jesus said, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."* (Luke 23:34). If we're honest we all have gone through times of anger. We're angry about the decreasing value of our 401K plan or our mutual funds. We're angry that Wall Street executives pocketed millions of dollars while bankrupting their company. We're angry that our government didn't protect us. We're even angry at God. Jesus, in the midst of His personal anguish and pain, asked the Father to forgive those who were

abusing Him. If Jesus was able to forgive His executioners, can we do any less? If we want to move beyond this situation we need to forgive those who have gotten us here. We need to forgive our elected officials, the Wall Street bankers and executives, Bernie Madoff, and anyone else that has played a role. We might even need to ask God to forgive us for reckless personal spending. True forgiveness releases us from the chains of anger and bitterness and allows us to walk in the Spirit.

*Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."* (Luke 23:43). Despite His pain and anguish, Jesus responded to the thief hanging next to him. This man was a condemned criminal being executed for his crimes. Yet, he recognized who Jesus was and asked for Jesus to remember him. Jesus responded with these magnificent words. All around us there are people who are hurting because of this mess. Some have lost their jobs and are in danger of losing their home. Others are experiencing family troubles or marriage breakdowns. If Jesus, who was on the verge of dying, could minister life to the thief, can we do any less? We need to get involved in the lives of our coworkers and our neighbors. We need to tell them the Good News of Jesus. We need to pray with them. We need to be sources of life and light in our spheres of influence.

*"Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."* (Luke 22:42). With this declaration Jesus subjected His will to that of the Father's. He was saying that He was willing to suffer death so that the Father's plans would be accomplished. This act was so powerful that when Jesus got up to face his accusers, they fell to the ground (John 18:4-6). Can we say the same thing? If we truly want to get beyond this situation we, like Jesus, must lay down our plans and agendas, our hopes and dreams, and yes, even our lives for the sake of the will of our Heavenly Father. It is in the act of laying these things down that we find true freedom and are able to walk in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were sinners, Christ died for us.* (Romans 5:8). *When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.* (John 19:30). *"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him."* (Mark 16:6). Finally, we need to recommit to the message and calling that we have received. We have each been challenged to be witnesses. That means we just share what we have seen and heard. All we need to do is tell people what Jesus has done for us. We need to tell them that because God loved them so much, that He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Jesus, the Creator died for fallen creation. We need to tell them that because of the atoning death of Jesus we can experience forgiveness of sins, healing for our bodies, freedom and release from the chains that bind us, and have been adopted as sons and daughters of the Most High God. We need to tell them that Jesus didn't stay dead. He was resurrected and now sits on the right side of God interceding for us. All things are under His authority. Jesus conquered death and now we don't have to fear it. We will live with Him forever.

This Easter season, instead of focusing on the economic turmoil and all that surrounds it let's commit to a different way. Let's walk in forgiveness. Let's take advantage of the ministry opportunities around us. Let's lay down our plans and agendas for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Finally, let's move out from the safety of our homes and churches and engage our streets and neighborhoods, towns and cities, states and nation. Let's boldly proclaim the message of Jesus. Let's battle for each life. Let's rescue those who are perishing. Let's become the people of God we were intended to be.

On behalf of the Evangel staff and student body I want to wish you a joyous Easter season as we remember and celebrate the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Grace & peace,

Bob Reichard, III  
President