

PT NEWS UPDATE – July 2019
Formal Training Begins at the PT Center



We are full of joy and great satisfaction that finally, formal training can be run under the PT Institute, right at the PT Center, after 19 years of hoping and waiting.

For the last 16 years we have been trying to put up a facility for this purpose (by God's grace), looking forward to this nature of training.

The land was acquired for this ultimate purpose in 2003, and have served towards this goal since then. Abraham waited much longer for a son, but we can join him in proclaiming, "God is faithful to his promises".

Of course we have had a fore taste and fore elation in this formal training of Gospel workers through the 15-week Perspectives Study Program and other classes, but the launching of a Master's Program by the PT Institute causes us to breath deeper at last, with a grateful sigh of God's own accomplishment.



We set out in the year 2000 and focused on training pastors in a non-formal way, holding preaching workshops, spiritual leadership seminars and Bible exposition conferences.



We assessed the impact among our trainees within seven years of this work, and noticed that unless we point the pastor-teachers back to their congregations for an incise development of a 'church-based prospectus', ministry at grass roots will not yield lasting fruit.

All along, we hoped that the local church would yield eligible trainees at pastoral level for the seminars, then from the non-formal seminars, trainees for our formal programs would be found. All this, so that the seminary and the church remain intact, as pastors train other pastors. The nature of our candidates, the denominational coverage, the infrastructure, the curriculum – all proved problematic to overcome.

But our goal remained that in some future, we would offer formal training, so that we produce more teachers of the Bible and instructors in Christian ministry to resolve the theological famine on this continent.

Without scaling back on the informal program (encouraging a church-based prospectus that turns a local church into a worthy school), and the non-formal programs (fish-pond short seminars for men, women, students and market place professional workers), we are so glad to roll out a formal program to multiply teachers for the wider vision. In a sense, we are training near-future trainers.

The initial modular session was held throughout the week of July 14th to 19th, at the PT Center. The intensive study program is arranged as a Graduate Studies Certificate (imitative of Western Seminaries innovation) which students will complete in February 2020.



We have 30 registered students from different churches, cultural and social backgrounds, with a passionate desire to learn and be transformed to greater devotion and faithfulness in their walk with Christ, and their work as believers in their various placements.

18 of the students are serving within para-church organizations and churches, while 12 are professionals serving in the market place such as banks, law firms,

education and health sectors.

Our current facilities at the PT Center can now enable the students reside on site – good beds and mattresses, good washrooms, a small library, beautiful chairs and desks for the class room as well as an forthcoming kitchen and a dining hall (still under construction)



The class sessions for two course units were covered during week: BTI 500 - Introduction to Theology and Biblical Studies and SPF 500 - Spiritual Formation. The students are currently doing assignments which include an exegetical project and a book review (for BTI 500), an integrative paper and journaling on a daily basis (for SPF 500).

They are currently 'unpacking' the intensive week with reading assignments. They shall hand in their completed work by mid-September, just before the next class-session sits to handle two more courses.



It was a great time for the students to learn, relearn, and unlearn some of their long-held views which are not compatible with the Bible or Christian doctrine. Our underlying aim in the curriculum is to allow the great academic challenge engender a spiritual confrontation in a student, so that convictions are grounded better in Christ.

So, the discussions were full of energy and passion within their respective groups, with a view to practically live out that which they now understand. Students would also take off some time to pray together and for each other according to what new things they have learned or along the fresh mind-battles as a result of a more biblical stance presented in class.



Taking turns, the students led morning devotions. They were challenged to re-think what they have believed, know how to help one another considering their strengths and weaknesses and focus on the Bible to resolve and realign all their various postures in Christ.

We also had co-curricular activities that refreshed the students, and brought about bonding among them.



They played various games at the end of the day.

This program was long-awaited by many of these students, and with its arrival, we could sense a great desire of the students to grow in deeper understanding of God – his plan, purpose and their role in it.



Their comments show that they were re-energized to learn in order to serve God better where He has placed them. They were challenged to go beyond just living their personal lives as Christians but also be concerned about reaching out to others to instruct them for God's glory.

The two students from the Pentecostal denomination are resolute and determined to be Bible teachers back in that setting, which they consider to be zealous, but on little knowledge.

The students appreciated the effort of all who have supported this work, making it possible at last, to reside in this place more comfortably.



Students are now looking forward to the next class session which will be September 16th to 21st 2019. Thus far has the Lord brought us - Ebenezer!

Ms. Joy Nyombi (right), our PT Institute Liaison Officer, did a wonderful job in coordinating students, staff, residence, registration, assignments and others things. We are proud of Joy for serving as "Dean" and at the same time being a student among others.



The implications of formal training on us as the core team are real. We will cut down on rural work and training trips, with a view to concentrate on preparing teachers who can now be permanent in regions. We have been training all, but now we will selectively train the trainers who can reach far and wider than we ever could.

Prevailing Challenges

We have prevailing challenges still. I (Julius) was the only instructor through all the 19 sessions from Monday through Friday. While I love to teach, this is seemed beyond what I can bear with the frame of mind and body. We could bring on other local instructors, but we are restrained by funds.

We still hope that there may be donations which may be available to top up the current tuition fraction, so that this work is shared with remunerate-able personnel. We would need \$192 to top up the \$100 each student is bringing in, to satisfy tuition for each credit hour. With this, we can accomplish more, including more instructors.

We know that there would be friends from Western Seminary to help out on teaching, but they too, would need funds, and a better planning way ahead for good preparation perhaps next year.

What the students paid as tuition amounts to about one third of our entire training budget, so it remains insufficient to care for them and remunerate worthy instructors yet. Please pray for us in this regard, that I may not be teaching alone come September.



We have a small library which avails required literature for the courses being offered. We are in need of more shelves to put out everything we have, before we know what else we lack.

In regard to infrastructure, we are working to make the Kitchen functional. The cooking gas equipment is now fixed and we are laying work-tops and shall bring in the cooking hotline soon.

There is an urgent need to build fence for enhanced security as the place becomes busy. We still would need on site residence for ground staff and more furniture.



On the Horizon

We have the Reformation Commemoration ministry activities coming up (Sept – Nov 2019)

For Reformation, we are looking at “Preaching and obeying the unchanging message of the Bible in today’s fast-changing world”. We will be making a grounded inquiry: Can today’s Christian be faithful to the Bible, and remain relevant in this postmodern culture?

We are lining up ministry activities that will help over 9,000 people that we will interact with in about 40 different activities in three cities, to look back in history and learn to live in present, encouraged by the faith of those who were before us. The discussion, teaching, preaching and presentations will include the following:

- University Students’ Conferences: *“How Thinking Trends Affect Faith and Obedience”*
- Women’s Seminars: *“Biblical Femininity in Postmodern Times”*
- Men’s Seminars: *“Biblical Masculinity in Postmodern Times”*
- Public Lectures in Universities: *“Current trends for coming generations: What are the stakes?”*
- Reformation Week in Universities: *“Trends and Threats to Life in Christ”*
- Christian Writers’ Workshops – *Gospel witness beyond borders and across generations*
- Symposia – *“Believing & Obeying God against Postmodern Odds”*
- Theological Think Tank: *“Developing a Theology of Preaching”*
- Professionals Breakfast: *“Turning Uganda’s Christian Presence into Influence”*
- Reformation Commemoration Breakfast: *“Their Sweat Then, and Our Toil Today”*
- Perspectives Study Program (PSP) in Uganda – Graduation: *“Sending missionaries into the field”*
- The Uganda Missions Journal – *Its Launch and Significance in Enhancing Mission*
- Reformation Commemoration in various Church Worship Services: *Reflection on Then & Now*

In the coming decade, Reformation Commemoration activities will be planned in 2021, 2024, 2027 (Reformation at 510 years) and 2030

Every generation has had to fight the good fight of faith, against opposing trends and threats in order to continually uphold the meaning and cost of living in full obedience to God. Our own times bear an urgent call on us as today’s Reformers, to understand the times and know what the people of God ought to do.

The task for today’s Reformer depends so much on understanding our times, in order to assess and forecast what it is, that will determine and shape God’s mission in future. As Edmund Burke said, “Tell me what are the prevailing sentiments that occupy the minds of your young men, and I will tell you what is to be the character of the next generation.”

So, the church must capture an understanding of how today’s culture thinks and its main aspirations.

