



Winter 2016

The College of Bible and Ministry of Harding University seeks to lead all students to know, live and share God's Word and to understand, love and serve God's world through and beyond their chosen vocation.

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Online Bible Courses Serving the Church Globally

Record breaking enrollment was reported by the College of Bible and Ministry's Center for Distance Education. Dr. Tim Westbrook, who directs the center, noted 475 seats were filled in 2014-15, which is the highest seat count since Harding's first online Bible classes were created in 2005.

Beyond counting numbers, though, the Center for Distance Education in Bible and Ministry actively pursues opportunities to share God's Word beyond Searcy. In fact, the purpose of the Center is to create bridges between the College of Bible and Ministry and adult learners from the global community in such a way that the word of God will inform, transform, and bless the students and others in their contexts. In short, this means that

the Center offers classes for students in multiple degree programs for adult learners as well as students who are in ministry contexts around the world.



Jacob Dassah, a minister and school administrator in Ghana, visits Harding after completing his Certificate in Christian Ministry.

One way the Center is

helping the global church is through the Certificate in Christian Ministry, a program leading to a certificate of completion specifically created with the local, international preacher in mind. With support from an anonymous donor, the Christian Ministry certificate program provides a full tuition scholarship for up to 18 students who are non-US citizens and serving in a church context.

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So far students from Ghana, Kenya, Romania, Hungary, New Zealand, and India have been able to enjoy the blessing of an international online learning community. The courses have had immediate application to their church contexts, and the students have been able to learn, free of charge, while remaining fully engaged in their church work.

Another way the Center has been able to help the global church is through a partnership with the Klesis Bible Program out of Melbourne, Australia. Though not a degree or certificate program of the university, Klesis and the Center for Distance Education have cooperated in offering Bible and ministry courses for students in Melbourne. So far three undergraduate courses have been taught, and about 15 students have been participating. The long term goal of this partnership is to increase the Bible and ministry training within the Australian churches with an eye on equipping future church leaders and Bible class teachers within the continent.

The Center for Distance Education takes its place in Harding's "community in mission" by extending an inclusive invitation around the world to provide affordable access to Christian education. If you would like to know more about what the Center offers contact Tim Westbrook at twestbrook@harding.edu or visit www.harding.edu/distancebible or follow @HUDistanceBible on Twitter.

Tim Westbrook, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Distance Delivery of the Bible



Coming up in 2016.....

- Feb. 19-20** WINGS (Women in God's Service) Annual Conference - "The Sacred Journey".
For more info, visit www.harding.edu/WINGS
- March 24-26** Spring Sing (www.harding.edu/events/springsing)
- August 23** Arkansas Ministers and Wives Day (www.harding.edu/arministers)
- Sept. 25-28** Lectureship - "Holy, Holy, Holy : Living in the Presence of God"
(www.harding.edu/lectureship)

KEEPING UP WITH: Alan Howell

Can you tell Salt, Light, and Leaven how you ended up at Harding University and what you are doing here this year?

My wife, Rachel, and I graduated from HU in 2000. We moved to Memphis where I began my studies at HST. In 2003, we moved with our mission team to Africa and have been serving in the country of Mozambique ever since. Our team has enjoyed hosting many Harding summer interns over the years and that has kept a strong connection with the University. So, when this opportunity to serve as a Visiting Missionary was presented to us, we were excited to get the chance to promote missions and disciple-making on campus.

What do you like most about serving as a Visiting Missionary?

Coming from our context in Africa where many of our friends are illiterate and have very little awareness of the content of the Bible, it has been fun to teach classes full of bright students who all know how to read! And while the teaching has been very enjoyable, I think the most rewarding part has been making connections outside the classroom and getting to see the ways that God is developing the call to mission in the lives of students.

Can you tell us what first planted the dream of mission work in your own heart?

Well, I always imagined myself working in ministry, but serving cross-culturally had not been on my radar. As a student at HU, though, I learned from experienced missionaries and that helped me begin to consider mission work as a real possibility. So, when a new team was forming to go to Africa and they asked us to consider joining, we took that invitation seriously and through a process of prayer decided to follow that path.

Could you briefly share with us how God led you to Mozambique and what you have done there?

Our team felt drawn to Mozambique, a former Portuguese colony, because of the large number of unreached people there. After learning the Portuguese language in the city of Lisbon, we moved to northern Mozambique in 2003 and eventually settled in the town of Montepuez. Our team serves the Makua-Metto, a predominantly Muslim people group. Learning to speak their language (a Bantu language similar to Swahili) was instrumental in connecting, forming relationships and beginning to make a difference.



Discipling believers like Cruz Fransisco has brought the Howells much joy.

In the beginning we concentrated on church planting, and now our work focuses on making disciples and developing leaders. Currently, our team works with about 50 churches made up of about 1000 total members spread out over an area about half the size of Arkansas. This past year we went through a process of helping the churches appoint deacons and we're looking forward to the day when they have elders of their own. During our time in Mozambique, I've had also the opportunity to help lead a few development initiatives including the construction of a pedestrian bridge and a sustainable agriculture program that has formed community groups throughout the region.

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As you made that adjustment back to American culture, were there any unanticipated surprises? What has been the most difficult part of that process for you and Rachel?

The biggest concern (or worry!) that we've had about spending the 2015-16 school year in the USA has been how our three daughters would handle the transition. Our girls have been attending the little school for the kids on our team run by Martha Smith (and often staffed by teachers who are recent Harding graduates), but the experience of Abby (12), Ellie (10) and Katie (5) attending Harding Academy has been great. It has been encouraging for us to see them making friends and fitting in. Missing our Mozambican friends has been tough, but being able to step into a role here at Harding and pitch in and help has been very rewarding. Rachel has also enjoyed our family's stay in this academic setting – she's taking classes at HST as she works toward an M.A. in Historical Theology.



Alan Howell preaching at the church in the village of Chipembe.

You recently participated in the Global Missions Experience here at Harding. What was that experience like for you?

The Global Missions Experience was incredible! I had not anticipated how that event would help jumpstart so many conversations with students about participating in God's mission. Rachel and I have both enjoyed following up with students we interacted with at the Global Missions Experience in meals together and conversations over coffee. It was also encouraging to have my perspective broadened and be reminded how God is working all over the world – it's easy to become myopic and consider only what's happening in our corner of the globe.

What advice would you give to a young person who is considering answering the call to share Christ cross-culturally as a missionary?

I think having experience in ministry in the United States is really important. It would be incredibly difficult to know how to serve effectively over there in the host culture without real experience right here in one's home culture. While I was a student at HST, I learned a lot as an intern with the campus ministry at the University of Memphis. A clear memory of mine was the day that we talked about the triune nature of God in my Systematic Christian Doctrine class in the morning and then during my Bible study that afternoon with a Taiwanese student with limited English she asked me how God is both three and one. That experience of translation, meaningfully connecting what I was learning with real life and real people, helped shape me for service.

What do you think the average Christian would find most surprising about the work of a missionary?

Certain tasks that are simple and easy over here often take much longer in Mozambique. Going to the bank and the post office, handling government documents, keeping the vehicle running, Rachel cooking from scratch; those are all things that are more complicated and time consuming in our part of Africa. But, the thing Americans may find most surprising, though, would probably be the amount of fun we have. For example, our team turns Thanksgiving into a really big event - we invite lots of other foreigners in our region for a delicious meal and have a water slide and piñata for the kids – it's a blast.

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What are some of your plans and dreams for the future?

Our mission team is committed to staying in Montepuez until at least 2018 and we are trying to recruit another wave of missionaries to come and serve the Makua-Metto into the future, as well as help new teams serve other people groups in Mozambique. Beyond 2018, our family may stay and continue to serve in Africa or we might return to the United States and serve in teaching, preaching, or church planting in the North American context.

We're curious to see where God leads us next. Moving to Mozambique was a surprise, so where God leads us next may very well be, too.

Women's Conference at Harding University

"Seek the ancient paths..." JEREMIAH 6:16



"I am the way, the truth and the life." JOHN 14:6

The Sacred Journey

WINGS 2016
WOMEN IN GOD'S SERVICE






February 19-20, 2016

Registration and hors d'oeuvres
begin at 5 p.m. Friday
Program begins at 6 p.m.

www.harding.edu/wings

FACULTY NOTES

Our Bible faculty are serving the kingdom all over the world. Here are some examples:

-  Dr. David Bland, Professor of Homiletics at Harding School of Theology, recently published a book entitled *Proverbs and the Formation of Character*. It was published through Cascade Books.
-  Dr. Dale Manor presented a paper entitled "From a Palace to a Temple at Tel Beth-Shemesh--Findings from the 2010-2015 Seasons" at the Near Eastern Archaeology Society in Atlanta on November 17. On November 20 in Atlanta, Manor also read a paper entitled "Asherah...Again: Dichotomy or Metonymy?" at the American Schools of Oriental Research. In addition, the week of November 2 a book was released that Dr. Manor wrote. It is entitled *Digging Deeper into the Word: The Relevance of Archaeology to Christian Apologetics* (Vienna WV: Warren Christian Apologetics Center, 2015). Three of the four chapters were topics delivered at the Fifth Annual Spring Apologetics Lectures in Vienna, WV (May 14, 2015). In addition, it includes another chapter and an introduction. Some 35 color photographs appear throughout the volume.
-  Dr. Dan Oden presented a paper entitled "Northern Exposures: Huldah's Oracle and the Final Prophecy of Kings " for the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies at the annual national conference in Atlanta, GA in November.
-  Dr. Dan Williams spoke at the Pan-American Lectureship during the week of November 8-14, 2015, and conducted a Deacon's Workshop for the Northside Church in Harrison, Arkansas on January 8-9, 2016.
-  Dr. Kevin Youngblood presented a paper entitled "Addition, Subtraction, & Equivalency: The Significance of Expansions and Omissions in the Septuagint version of Lamentations" for the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies at the annual national conference in Atlanta, GA in November.

Winter 2016



Harding University's
93rd Annual Bible Lectureship

HOLY HOLY HOLY

Living in the Presence of God

September 25-28, 2016