

Dear Friends and Prayer Partners,

Greetings and blessings to you.

It has been a while since my last communication with you and this one is long overdue. I travelled to the U.S. in May for four weeks on some necessary business discussions with folks at UWM and others. I knew at that time that my return to Kenya would be the beginning of a major new phase of the work that I have here.

It is our intention to follow up the three completed Church Planting Vision Conferences in the Mount Kenya Region with a large number of Church Planting Workshops. These workshops will be for pastors and will help them to understand the specifics of how to organize and plan for church planting in their own local churches.

Unlike the Vision Conferences, which gave the "what" and the "why" of church planting, the workshops are more practical, giving the "how to." Actually, though, the "how to" is not "how to plant another church;" it is more of "how to prepare your own church for planting another church. In other words, it focuses on the *mother* church, rather than on the *daughter* church.

The issue here is that nobody has ever written material that is directed toward this type of training. Such curriculum is badly needed and we believe that the lack of it has been one of the major obstacles to church planting for generations here in Africa. I have been specifically involved for three months now with originating this material. There is a feeling here that, once such material is published, it could unleash whole new movements of church planting in the region.

It is not the case that church planting has not been taught here in Africa or that this would somehow be the first effort to get church planting movements off the ground. There has been tremendous work in church planting being done for decades by African and foreign workers alike. However, in the past, the focus has been on individuals planting churches, rather than on *churches* planting churches. The job has fallen on (a limited number of) specially trained "hired hands," rather than on the gifted church members (as in the 1st century church). We believe this comes from today's training sidestepping the concept of churches planting churches. The pastors are not to blame because they have never heard it any other way.

Since June, and night and day for the past month, I have been working to develop the curriculum for the October workshops. It is intended that this curriculum will also be converted into a manual for distribution to pastors in general, although that publication effort will follow the workshops. The workshops are "denomination specific," meaning that the attendance at any one workshop will all be from a single denomination. At this point, nine workshops (avg. attendance = 25-50) are on the schedule, but many more are still to be planned.

Please pray:

- \* That the efforts in designing the workshop curriculum will be according to God's will and purposes.
- \* That the church planting workshops will be Spirit-led and will correctly impact traditional thinking on church planting.
- \* That, through the workshops, denominational leaders will "catch the spirit" of encouraging and assisting their pastors and churches in church planting efforts.
- \* That my energy level will remain adequate for the work ahead.
- \* That the plans for design, publication and distribution of church-focused church planting manuals will be accomplished through God's grace and leading.

Yours in Christ, Jeff Osborne