



PAST ... PRESENT ... FUTURE

As I'm writing these lines I'm attending the International Program for Academic Leadership (IPAL) in Nairobi, Kenya. It is such a privilege to be among, to meet, and to share with Principals and Academic Directors and to see that many challenges are not unique to individual institutions but are similar all across Africa.

selection and yet became the foundations of the worldwide phenomenon we today call Christianity.

We accept that premise when it applies to students and even with regards to teachers but insist that the newly appointed leadership must already be a finished product.

The Challenge of the Human Factor

One of the most common challenges is the fact that while finances and resources are always scarce and institutions need to become creative in making ends meet ... the overall challenge remains the human factor. The Conference has been focusing on the tasks of Principals and Academic Deans as they *are* and compared it to what they *should* be. Most institutions wholeheartedly agreed with the concept but are struggling with the question of "Where do we find such people?" Many crises in many institutions relate to the fact that the humans in these positions are not what they need to be. And this does often not refer to Academic Qualifications or years of experience but basic spiritual maturity and servant leadership.

Interestingly this does not end with the academic leaders of an institution but extends to teachers, staff and any other personnel involved in the institution. How do we identify and recruit the right people? But then again this challenge is not unique to theological education institutions but most probably extends to all churches, NGO's, ministries and whatever else we can think of.

One consensus among the IPAL attendees was that we most likely will have to invest (not necessarily resources) into developing and raising these people we need. In a sense Jesus didn't do anything different with the selection of his disciples. They were neither qualified nor mature at the point of their

As the IPAL members have indicated "*the good ones are all taken and the ones not yet taken are ...*" here the wording ends in a variety of terms but the general meaning is clear. While I personally do believe that there are good ones without a current ministry (or "taken") those seem to be few and far in between.

Once again this leaves institutions with the need to raise and grow their own future staff members. Of course there is a need to equip them with Qualifications and skills but most of all to mentor them in personal development, spiritual maturity and an attitude of servant leadership. This remains a long-term objective while most institutions are experiencing immediate needs because often the long-standing Academic Dean has suddenly retired after 40 years of sterling service (sarcasm intended). Succession planning is a sore topic in most institutions and yet "tomorrow" is never as far off as we think it is.

Jesus raised disciples. Paul mentored disciples. Maybe it's time that we consider discipleship not as another course but as a task and maybe even our primary task: be it with students, staff or anyone else we see as potential partners in ministry.

On behalf of the Seminary,
Johannes Klapprodt,
Academic Dean

Steps of Faith

At the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa

April 2017

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After the site visit, the response and our submitted improvement plan we now have been given a preliminary date for further proceedings. More details on [p.3](#)

[Get to know the staff: Hennie](#)

In the last edition we re-introduced Lee-Ander Grantham. This edition will feature Hennie Storm – who joined us only in 2013 but has made a tremendous impact.

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[Upcoming Workshops](#)

We have been trying to revitalize the "odd workshops" but haven't gotten very far with it yet. Some topics are quite controversial and might have unwelcome side-effects such as media attention, etc.

The proposed dates and topics can be found on [p.3](#)





A tree has fallen

Before I headed for Nairobi in February I just popped by at ESSA on my way to the airport. I was told to take a look in the back of the Admin building where I saw the above image.

While I don't think anyone actually was praying in this direction it was, in a sense, a best solution.

The tree needed to be removed eventually. Either for the accommodation project or because neighbours were already scared of an event like this. The tree had been growing for the past decades and the adjacent wall had already been toppled over twice.

Now that decision was taken from us – and it's not the worst thing. The tree could have fallen into the admin building, or to the neighbours' side, or on to the old stables and the adjacent property and – whichever way it fell – would have caused immense damage. Except the way it did fall. Even a slightly different angle would have caused damage to the library building or the aircon unit. This was the least damaging and hence perfect way for it to fall. Coincidence? Definitely not. Even with thorough planning and preparation we would not have managed this precision.

We thank God for directing the tree as he does direct our daily lives: in the best possible way.



CHE Update

As you probably know we are still battling with DHET for registration as Private Higher Education Institution (PHEI) and with CHE for accreditation of the proposed BTh programme.

On 19th October 2016 we received a letter from CHE informing us of the result of the meetings that took place on 9th September 2016. In that meeting CHE apparently concluded that *"the site at 189 Pine Street is not fully equipped and resourced for the delivery of higher education programmes."*

The Report mentioned 5 areas we were expected to address in an improvement plan – which would then be evaluated and processed accordingly.

We had a number of discussions regarding our options and whether an appeal might be a better option as compared to an improvement plan ... or whether the whole project of accreditation should be scrapped altogether.

Given the attention that is currently being directed toward "fly-by-night" institutions and the most recent *"Draft National Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications"* (January 2017) we felt that we should pursue accreditation until there is a definitive outcome. We also felt that an appeal might win the fight but not produce the desired outcome in that it would create enemies within CHE.

Hence we submitted an Improvement Plan on 6 February 2017 in which most of the concerns were addressed and our position was clarified.

We were hoping to be placed on the agenda for the CHE accreditation meeting of 23-24 February but have now been informed that we did not make it on to that agenda. Currently ESSA is placed on the agenda for the meeting on 10-11 May 2017. The agenda has not been approved yet so there may be changes beyond our control.

However the accreditation meeting will then (hopefully) *"serve the review on the status of the BTh Programme at the Accreditation Committee (AC) of 10-11 May 2017 (including the original evaluation of your programme (in which ESSA was granted accreditation), the site visit report, conditions you submitted in addressing the original conditions, and the improvement plan)."*

The findings of the accreditation committee will then be reported as recommendation to

the HEQC meeting which is scheduled for June 8, 2017.

Usually it takes another 2 (or more) weeks until we receive a notification of the outcome. If the outcome is positive we will submit the accreditation letter as final document to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to finalize our registration as PHEI.

All things considered we are looking at a possible positive outcome by end of June which would allow us to get everything ready and in place to offer the proposed BTh programme as of January 2018.

Please join us in prayer toward this aim!

Upcoming workshops

ESSA has been offering non-formal workshops to ministers, pastors and other interested parties over the past years. The frequency has not been very regular which led us to rename them from "odd" to "occasional". These workshops were not meant to be a hobby on the side but rather an opportunity to serve churches and congregations with what they need or with topics of general interest. Unfortunately some workshops have seen more interest than others and we are still trying to figure out what the actual needs really are.

We are proposing the following dates and topics for the remainder of 2017:

Spiritual Powers and the Bible
8, 15, 22, 29 of May

Islam, IS, and a Christian Response
7, 14, 21, 28 of August

Culture, Identity and Christian Ministry
9, 16, 23, 30 of October

Most of these topics are highly controversial and the actual interest in each topic remains to be seen. We will keep you updated on the Facebook page and occasional emails.

Should you have suggestions for topics or interest in hosting a workshop in your own congregation: don't hesitate to contact us via Johannesessa@gmail.com or 072 730 2549

Get to know the staff: Hennie

I was born and raised in the Northern Cape and Free State and started working in the Finance Directorate of the then Free State Provincial Administration in 1989. In 2007 I made my way to Cape Town to study theology (Bth) at the Cape Town Baptist Seminary where I graduated in 2010. Cape Town is very near to my heart since (apart from the fact that it is just beautiful) it is the place where I met my wife Kim, whom I married in 2008, and where our sons Hendre (7) and Stefan (5) were born. I enjoy cycling (when I get the time) and go to gym on a regular basis. As a family we love the outdoors and go camping whenever we can.



After Cape Town we pastored a Baptist Church in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands and I subsequently joined ESSA as Financial Manager in 2012. ESSA had sadly lost its accreditation with the Department of Higher Education and Training in 2011 mainly due to non-compliance with financial requirements as set by the Department of Higher Education and Training. The task to straighten out the financial problems by setting financial policies, systems and control measures in place fell on me and by the grace of God and the support of an amazing team we managed to achieve clean audits from 2014 to present.

Setting the finances and financial reporting straight is only one small step in the journey to achieving re-accreditation which is presently still being evaluated by the Council for Higher Education which mainly does an academic assessment and makes a recommendation to the Department of Higher Education and Training. Even though the process of re-accreditation has been long and tedious and the outcome anything but certain, the "down-time" was also constructive since it allowed for reflection and earnestly seeking the guidance and will of God.

In my time in ministry I have learned many things but above all that, as the wise king Solomon pointed out, "unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain." (Psalm 127:1)

My prayer is that ESSA may once again, in whatever manner, be used by the Lord for the extension of His Kingdom and to reach many lost souls. Please pray with us for the guidance of the Lord and to see His power at work in and through ESSA for His glory.

Hennie Storm

As staff we are extremely grateful to have Hennie and his family join us and keep a tight rein on the Seminary's finances. Given the previous years challenges the financial development is a critical one with a view to accreditation and registration. After all this item was, at least technically, the one that led to ESSA losing the accreditation in the first place.

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