



GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION

of the Evangelical Congregational Church

Empowering National Churches • Facilitating Mission Workers • Ministering to the Marginalized



The Road Behind

As many members of the Evangelical Congregational Church community know, Jim Ehrman was its Director of Global Ministries from 2005-2008 and served numerous years before that as one of its commissioned missionaries. Upon leaving the GMC offices in 2008, Jim served as the Executive Director of the World Christianity Initiative at Yale University. In that role he aided both Yale University and the Western Church at-large in its engagement with the explosive growth of the worldwide Church.

As a result of the recession, however, Yale University was forced to cut its funding for several of its research centers, and in late 2010, Yale reluctantly ceased operating the World Christianity Initiative. It was a challenging time for Jim as he recognized the influence of the work was just beginning to take root and was making genuine inroads into the university scene. One small yet meaningful example was how Jim had been invited to be a lecturer on the topic of “World Christianity” in Yale’s popular “Faith and Globalization” course co-taught by world-renowned theologian Miroslav Volf and ex-British Prime Minister Tony Blair-- a course which draws over 400 of Yale’s brightest applicants and admits only 40 into the study. Needless to say, opportunities for real influence were abounding at a time when an apparent door of opportunity was being closed.

The Way Ahead

Within days of that Yale center being closed, however, Jim was asked to become the Executive Director of the Rivendell Institute at Yale. The Rivendell Institute is one of the most respected Christian research centers at Yale University and is known for its call to “Explore the Intersection of Christian Faith and Contemporary Scholarship.” Not only does it seek to affect the overall academic paradigm at Yale but also provides spiritual formation and mentoring for graduate and doctoral students, as well as faculty. Simply put, the Rivendell Institute “seeks to influence the world’s influencers” and one example of its effectiveness is summed up by William Imboden, former senior director of the National Security Council, when he said: “The Rivendell

Institute played a singular role in shaping my worldview as a follower of Christ. The Biblical mandate for the responsible stewardship of power must guide every Christian in the work of the government, in the service of nation, for the Glory of God.”

The Rivendell Institute at Yale is a private research center and receives no funding from the University. All of its program directors partner with individual donors and organizations to secure their personal funding so that any money which Rivendell receives corporately can be funneled 100% into the vital programs and operating costs. In light of his history alongside the E.C Church and that funding need, Jim successfully applied to have his commission reactivated by the Global Ministries Commission and is available to share about his work in our Churches.

The Preparation and Mission of Jim Ehrman

Jim grew up in the E.C. Church and has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from The Pennsylvania State University and graduated Magna Cum Laude from Yale University with a Masters of Arts in World Christianity and Mission. After years of academic training and personal experience, Jim wholeheartedly shares:

“It is my conviction that Christianity is most true to itself when involved in the risky business of mission and hence my calling into teaching, mentoring, leadership development, and strategic planning follow that idea.”

Accompanying him in that mission are his two children (Kent and Genevieve) and his wife Aiyana, who directs a relief and development non-profit, *Imagine Goods*, which operates in Cambodia offering micro-business opportunities to marginalized families.

You can read more about both Jim and Aiyana’s work at www.RivendellInstitute.org or www.imaginegoods.com . Jim can be booked for E.C. speaking engagements through the GMC offices, or for events outside the E.C. Church, contact james.ehrman@yale.edu.

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