



Contact



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INCHE Participates in the CCCU Forum

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Every four years, in lieu of stand-alone peer group conferences, the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) with President Shirley Hoogstra, hosts their international forum. It gathers campus representatives spanning all levels of leadership, from presidents, cabinet members, and trustees to leading professionals in student development, campus ministry, academic affairs, communications, advancement, enrollment, and financial aid. Together participants examine trends and issues facing Christian higher education and highlight the invaluable role of Christian colleges and universities.

The CCCU is an affiliate member of the INCHE network; and INCHE executive director Shirley Roels was eager to engage forum participants. Due to pandemic travel restrictions, most of the 1200 registrants arrived from within North America. However, there was a notable international contingent from Australia and Oceania.

Program sessions were dedicated to several themes relevant to Christian higher education, including:

- Christians in the public square
- Distinctives of Christian higher education
- Ethics and technology
- Reflections on human sexuality
- Innovation for the future
- Racial and ethnic diversity and inclusion
- Institutional health through leadership and planning for enrollment and finances
- Policy advocacy in the U.S. context



Keynote speaker Bryan Stevenson, Founder and Executive Director of Equal Justice Initiative, as a graduate of a CCCU-member university, was the first forum speaker. He created a compelling thesis about the need for Christians to be proximate to those who suffer if we seek to foster justice; and he argued that justice is an essential expression of Christian faith. In his work with prisoners, wrongly convicted or unfairly sentenced, Stevenson has argued and won multiple cases at the U.S. Supreme Court. In this process, he has realized the importance of Christian higher education in changing national narratives about those imprisoned. It is valuable for all citizens to recognize why people become addicted, how people experience racial discrimination, or when our policies toward children involved in crimes add to challenges. Stevenson closed by observing that Christians should be willing to think about matters that are uncomfortable and inconvenient because we too are broken. God has made our redemption possible; and it is just as possible for other people in a broken world. (cont. p. 22)

EDITORIAL

Are We Getting Anywhere?



Shirley Roels, Executive Director

By March 2022 it has been more than two years since the coronavirus pandemic began, worldwide. For most INCHE university and college members, these two years have been a blur of stress, unknowns, and pressing change. Since March 2020 this also has affected our network.

To refresh my memory, I revisited the March 2020 issue of *Contact*. What happened between the publication of that issue and this March? INCHE welcomed the Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences to full membership and they are now refugees. We were on the cusp of the INCHE-Europe 2020 Conference, then postponed it. INCHE welcomed the Evangelical Theological College of Addis Ababa to full membership. Since then, their college has been stressed by civil conflict surrounding their school. We announced the seventh Latin American INCHE consultation for September 2020. An in-person conference became impossible, so we gathered online in December 2020. INCHE members were poised to explore Abraham Kuyper's legacy in two 2020 conferences, one in Michigan and another in Amsterdam. Both were cancelled. The Nagel Institute's Matter and Spirit exhibit was announced as a traveling showcase of Asian art. In March 2020, the exhibit schedule was halted.

This is evidence that for the past two years, our grip on the control of history slipped several notches. Often, we felt like pawns in a game of viral chess. By February 2022, I repeatedly heard a question echoing through my brain: **are we getting anywhere?** The circular pattern of pandemic loss and the struggle to regroup was exhausting.

And then on February 24, 2022, history took another devastating turn. Vladimir Putin ordered the Russian invasion of Ukraine. More than 75 years after Europe's last large-scale conflict had been put to rest, the ugliness of war reared its head again. Were the lessons of history forgotten? Why were paths of peaceful negotiation and rule of law cast aside? Is history prone to repeat itself?

The pandemic and current European mess are only two of several global challenges in which Christians in higher education sense setbacks or a stalled agenda. Ethiopia has been wracked by civil conflict for at least the last year. Several Latin American nations sense insufficient progress to address matters of economic inequality and U.N. sustainability goals. North Americans wonder about paltry progress on racial justice or aboriginal rights. Asians worry about the octopus arms of Chinese communist influence and shrinking Pacific islands. In March 2020 I wrote, "Just like those who stood on the crucifixion hill that day, we are deformed, battered, and jaded." And in March 2022 I felt even more deformed, battered, and jaded. Than before. In the history of time, are we shaping a God-pleasing future?

Whether we expect to be influential depends on our conception of history. For many Enlightenment thinkers, ideas became the mainspring for understanding historical change with the rise and fall of civilizations. History was the gradual advance of the 'spirit of liberty' or the growth of nationalism or democracy and law. If this is our definition of progress, then hope is now littered by worry and despair. Current fights over liberty, nationhood, democracy, and law are fierce ones. Alternatively, some twentieth century historians faced with the horrors of Nazi concentration camps, Japan's WWII prisons, and Stalin's gulags asserted that history has no pattern at all - it is just a meaningless succession of terrible events, a story written by depraved humanity from which there is no exit. If we proceed on this path of nihilism, we become jaded cynics. Then our decisions do not matter. Why take them seriously?



But with either philosophy, is progress a matter of humans overcoming might with right? Or of humans, by themselves, creating meaning where otherwise purpose would never exist? If we are writing human history alone, the burden of choice may seem overwhelming. Poor decisions lead to personal or social destruction. Finite rationality can't forecast outcomes. We may give up our small limited influence.

EDITORIAL

Are We Getting Anywhere?

At this point in my inquiry, I must ask Biblical and theological questions. Who is active in creating history? How are we to respond regarding our place in it?

The Bible can teach us about the nature of history and our current experiences within history. In Matthew 24, after Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the disciples ask him about the end of the age. When will it happen and what will be the signs? In verses 6-7, Jesus proceeds to note wars, power struggles, famines, and earthquakes that will accompany end times. Yet then, he takes an unexpected turn in this description. Instead of framing such catastrophes as the end, in verse 9 he says, "All these are the beginning of birth pains." Really? Disasters are not the end. Instead, they are a push toward new beginnings?

In the verses that follow, Jesus does not ignore pain, death, confusion, betrayal, desolation, refugees, fake messiahs, false prophets, or even days when "the stars will fall from the sky." He acknowledges that these evils can and will happen. But Jesus promises that the Son of Man will come with power and glory, bringing his angels to gather his elected people "from one end of the heavens to the other." (v. 31). Jesus tells us that we are not writing the big story of history alone. With God as our provider and the Holy Spirit as our comforter, Jesus is creating the story in which pain leads to promise and to resurrected life.

Faith is believing that the chapters leading to new life are being written with God. Because we are characters in the story, we can't always see the outline and flow of the chapter. We see glimpses of the future but not the whole. Christians can still care about the future. But as C.S. Lewis preached on the brink of WWII, "A more Christian attitude...is that of leaving futurity in God's hands. We may as well, for God will certainly retain it whether we leave it to Him or not."*

So, what should we do in Christian higher education since history is going somewhere and we are not solely responsible? In Matthew 24:46, Jesus says, "It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so (namely providing household food at the proper time) when he returns."

As INCHE leaders in education, how do we provide sustenance in the months ahead? We work in faith with compassion, detecting glimmers of joy. Quoting from Lewis again, "Happy work is best done by...{those} who takes his long-term plans somewhat lightly and works from moment to moment 'as to the Lord'. It is only our daily bread that we are encouraged to ask for. The present is the only time in which any duty can be done or any grace received."

If we work now as to the Lord, the daily sustenance that Christian educators provide is in continuing to do our work through the courses we teach, the learning communities we form, the discoveries we make, and the services we render. Even in times of pandemic or disaster, our task is to provide Christian educational food for our students. On a given day, such a meal might include a video from Ukraine, a worrisome text message from Hong Kong, or a call for water in the Sahel. But woven through such crises we should teach our students a bigger frame about God as the author of history and as the One who guides this world through its pain to new beginnings in the resurrected One. Our Christian universities can nourish the world through daily research, teaching, and service to unveil pain as a source of new birth. When we prepare students well, our academic banquet reopens vision, breaks down barriers, heals strugglers, and supports joy-filled lives. INCHE members need not worry about a future in which we are agents but not its sole authors.



Lewis concluded his sermon with these words, "If we thought we were building up a heaven on earth...we are disillusioned, and not a moment too soon. But if we thought that for some souls, and at some times, the life of learning, humbly offered to God, was, in its own small way, one of the appointed approaches to the Divine reality....we can think so still."

As Christian educators, God is leading us through pain to a closer understanding of God's glory. So, as we reopen our classrooms, reinvent our conferences, and attend to the tasks before us, let us take comfort as today's actors in God's story. In the process we can teach our students that the God who is with us and for us guides the future.

INCHE NETWORK NEWS

INCHE North America: Call for 2022 Conference Papers and Presentations: Faith and Pedagogy amid Educational Change

INCHE, with the Kuyers Institute for Christian Teaching and Learning of Calvin University, is pleased to announce the call for papers and presentations for our next jointly-hosted conference. It will be held October 6-8, 2022 at the Prince Conference Center, Calvin University, Grand Rapids, Michigan. After a one-year postponement, we are prepared to proceed.

The conference theme of "Faith and Pedagogy amid Educational Change" results in the following call for papers and presentations:

"The already rapid pace of change in the educational environment has accelerated in recent years, fueled by factors as varied as the foregrounding of health and safety, sudden shifts to online learning, political polarization among parents and students, challenges to civil discourse, shifting demographics, ambiguous student identities, and increased needs for student and faculty support. How can Christian educators, themselves burdened by present challenges, constructively respond? How might we retain a focus on investigating intentionally Christian educational processes in an unstable environment?"

We welcome proposal submissions on any aspect of current change as they relate to questions about how Christian faith can inform teaching and learning processes. Presenters could address Christian approaches to new pedagogical media and current challenges, ways of sustaining existing Christian emphases in changing circumstances, proposals for needed emphases or strategies moving forward, or other topics that further a sustained engagement with questions about faith and pedagogy in a time of high distraction and need. Proposals of 1-2 pages, including 100-word abstracts, should be sent via e-mail to kuyers@calvin.edu no later than **May 20, 2022**. Find more information at pedagogy.net.



INCHE notes the passing of Louise Hulst

INCHE notes the passing of Louise Hulst in December 2021 at the age of 91. She is the spouse of our former executive secretary, Dr. John Hulst. After John died in 2013, Louise continued her life in Iowa for another nine years. Louise earned her BA degree in 1951 at Calvin College (now University) and her MA at the University of South Dakota. She met John while they were students



at Calvin. Early in their marriage, both John and Louise had polio. Louise recovered completely; but John had a weakened leg and later developed post-polio syndrome.

While John attended seminary in Grand Rapids, Louise held positions as an engineering assistant for a private business and as a library assistant at Calvin College before their 14 years of service in congregational ministry. In 1968, with John's move to the faculty of Dordt College (now University) in Iowa, Louise began a 24-year career in the Dordt library, which has since been named in their honor.

Louise and John traveled to six continents to support John's work with the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE, the former name of INCHE). John served as the network's executive secretary from 1996 to 2002. After John's retirement from this role, they enjoyed additional travels as well as church and community volunteering. INCHE is grateful for their lives.

INCHE December 2021 Board Meeting

On December 14, 2021, the INCHE Board of Directors gathered on Zoom for the second of its twice-yearly meetings. The board voted to enhance the definition of the associate membership category, reviewed network finances, and noted the current stability of the board's membership. The Board has begun a long-range planning process for the INCHE network that will continue throughout 2022. The expectation is that this effort will culminate with an in-person meeting of the Board in October 2022.

INCHE NETWORK NEWS

INCHE Governing Board Members on the Move

Since July 2021, two of the ten INCHE board members have made significant decisions regarding their professional roles.

In the Latin American region, since 2005, board member Dr. Alexandre Fonseca has been a professor and scholar at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Nucleus of Education Technology for Health, using his doctorate in sociology. At that time he served IAPCHE (now INCHE) as a board member supporting the network's 2006 global conference in Granada, Nicaragua. Since then, he has worked with Joel Carpenter, Director of the Nagel Institute emeritus, on an initiative that brought North American scholars into a consultation with Brazilian scholars. Thereafter, the paper that Dr. Fonseca presented at the IAPCHE-Latin American conference in July 2017 was published in an edited volume by Bullon and Panotto titled *¿Hacia Dónde Va el Protestantismo en América Latina?* Dr. Fonseca has now become the Dean of Personnel Administration for the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.



Dr. Rick Ostrander, principal consultant for Ostrander Academics, has become the Executive Director of Westmont Downtown and a special advisor to the Westmont College president on academic innovation, including Westmont's global connections.



Westmont College is a well-regarded Christian college in Santa Barbara, California. Dr. Ostrander will retain some consulting ties with Acadeum, a business that provides the IT platform through which many U.S. Christian colleges and universities share their online course offerings with each other.

Ruth Padilla DeBorst to receive Kuyper prize

On Wednesday, April 6, Ruth Padilla DeBorst will accept the 2022 Abraham Kuyper Prize for Excellence in Reformed Theology and Public Life. She will receive the award during the Kuyper Conference hosted by Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary.



Padilla DeBorst, a theologian, missiologist, educator, and storyteller, has been involved in leadership development in her native Latin America for several decades.

The Kuyper Prize was established in 1996 by Rimmer and Ruth de Vries and is named after Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper. The prize is awarded each year to a scholar or community leader whose outstanding contribution to their chosen sphere reflects the ideas and values characteristic of the Neo-Calvinist vision of religious engagement in matters of social, political, and cultural significance in one or more of the 'spheres' of society.

Padilla DeBorst currently serves with Resonate Global Mission, leading in the Comunidad de Estudios Teológicos Interdisciplinarios, a learning community with students across Latin America. She also coordinates the Networking Team of the International Fellowship for Mission as Transformation and is actively furthering missional leadership formation processes with the Christian Reformed Church of North America. Beginning in fall 2022, she will be joining the faculty of Western Theological Seminary serving as the Richard C. Oudersluys Associate Professor of World Christianity.

"I am humbled and honored to be chosen as a recipient of the Kuyper Prize, recognizing that there are hundreds of more deserving candidates, women and men who are silently living out God's mission in challenging contexts, often with no public recognition," said Padilla DeBorst.

She joins an esteemed group of past winners of the award, which include a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, Templeton Prize-winning philosopher, a prime minister, and a pair of U.S. ambassadors, to name a few.

"I am humbled and honored to be chosen as a recipient of the Kuyper Prize, recognizing that there are hundreds of more deserving candidates, women and men who are silently living out God's mission in challenging contexts, often with no public recognition," said Padilla DeBorst.

AFRICA REGION

African Universities Foster Professional Development through the deVries Institute

In early 2022, INCHE members in five African Christian universities signed up for online asynchronous professional development through Calvin University's de Vries Institute for Global Faculty Development.

This is the last initiative under the INCHE grant on **African Formation of Christian Teachers**. Since 2018 five African universities have been enhancing the effectiveness of their teacher education programs. They are: *Bowen University (Nigeria)*, *Christian Service University College (Ghana)*, *Scott Christian University (Kenya)*, *Uganda Christian University*, and the *University of Mkar (Nigeria)*.

In the prior three years each university organized a professional development circle for faculty and staff members; served as professional development coaches for faith-based schools in their regions; and selected books to expand the range and depth of their resources. This last year-four activity offers the de Vries Institute's digitally-based modules titled **Reflecting Faith**. In February 2022 17 participants selected the module on "Educating for Shalom." In March 2022 16 participants selected the module on "Hospitality to the Stranger." In each module, learners were invited to read and reflect on Biblical passages and articles that frame the efforts of Christian educators. Participants then posted thoughts online so other scholars could comment. Throughout the experience, Dr. David Smith provided coaching and commentary.

Similar de Vries Institute modules will be offered again in June-August 2022. Topics will expand in the near future. Further information about **Reflecting Faith: Resources for Christians in the Academy**, see [Learning Modules - De Vries Institute | Calvin University](#).

Christian Higher Education Advances in West Africa

During this time of global pandemic Christian higher education continues to advance in multiple locations across the African continent. These paragraphs are a small sample of the many advances that have been occurring among some INCHE members.

Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN)

To ensure that students continued to enjoy rich study for both spiritual and academic development, this college developed...a blended learning approach, either synchronously or asynchro-



nously. During the 2021-2022 session, TCNN is running full-fledged online programs in undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate studies in Biblical studies, theology, counseling, and Christian education. TCNN is reputed to be the first theological institution in northern Nigeria and has a unique ecumenical composition. The college is owned by seventeen different denominations, all of which identify themselves as evangelical in the Nigerian context. Each student who learns at TCNN develops a deep respect for the variety of Christian theological traditions. TCN: <https://tcnn.edu.ng/>

Bowen University-Nigeria

In November 2021, Bowen University in west central Nigeria honored Ebola physician, the late Stella Adadevoh, with a Doctor of Science in Public Health, as part of their 16th graduation ceremony. Vice Chancellor Joshua Ogunwole said that this heroine should be honored for saving Nigerian lives. In 2014 she diagnosed Nigeria's first-ever Ebola patient.. Despite pressures to release the patient, she refused. Her heroic efforts prevented a major outbreak of Ebola in Nigeria when all 20 Ebola cases in Nigeria were traced to a single transmission path from another nation. In this graduation ceremony, Dr. Ogunwole congratulated graduating Bowen University students, saying that the university's entrepreneurial culture can result in graduates who influence the world. In his speech Dr. Ogunwole lamented the lack of funding for private Nigerian universities. But then he added that "despite this limiting factor, we are still able to compete favorably with public universities with all the support from their federal and state governments. BU: <https://www.sunnewsonline.com/bowen-university-holds-16th-convocation/>

Christian Service University College: Ghana

Christian Service University College conducted its 45th graduate ceremony to confer awards on 479 students in postgraduate, undergraduate, and certificate programs in humanities, business, health and applied sciences. Considering the place of private universities in Ghana's tertiary

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system, CSUC President Samuel Afrane, said that private institutions "are an important component of our national education assets. However, we face several challenges relating particularly to the regulatory environment within which we operate; and these challenges affect our growth and ability to contribute effectively to the delivery of tertiary education in Ghana." Ghana's Education Minister, Dr. Adulwum, was present to acknowledge the role of private institutions; and he commended CSUC for the quality of persons trained for positions in government, academia, churches, and industry. CSUC is advancing the introduction of MPhil degrees in Mathematics Education, English Education and Communication. President Afrane indicated that the current faculty situation is the best since the institution started over 40 years ago."

CSUC: <https://www.csuc.edu.gh/2021/12/28/csuc-holds-45th-congregation/>

UCU Professor Ponders Education for Journalism and Media Studies

Recently, Dr. Emilly Maraccho wrote an opinion piece titled: "The Future of Media: How Covid Changed Journalism Education" which was featured in a national Ugandan news site: 'The Monitor.' In her article, she noted the struggles Uganda has faced regarding higher education in the field of journalism. Then she explained how INCHE member, Ugandan Christian University (UCU), has worked to overcome and adapt to these struggles.



Dr. Emilly Comfort Maraccho

Dr. Emilly Comfort Maraccho is the director of the Africa Policy Centre (APC) at UCU. APC's vision is to be a platform of excellence for African Christian public policy, research, analysis, evaluation, and talent training on the continent and beyond. About her article, Dr. Maraccho stated that "This piece is based on my observations both as head of department of journalism and media studies and my year in the International Training Programme for media development which started in 2020."

Below are a few notable sections taken from the article. The entire piece can be found at [The Monitor](#).

"The impact of Covid-19 on the media was devastating to say the least... Like the future of media, here too there is the good and bad news. I will start with the bad news and end with the good.

The first bad news is that so many stories of poor pay, harsh working conditions, and a seemingly bleak future of the industry potentially has a negative impact on young people's choice of career. To think that the field itself has no future implies that more people are likely to make other career choices.

The second bad news is that Covid-19 will reverse some gains made towards gender sensitive reporting and fair representation in news for women. Some female journalists have indicated that it was quite hard to be a female reporter in the circumstance with lockdown measures and working at home... children at home... individual journalism income and freelance suffered. The implication is that fewer female journalism students and journalists are likely to consider journalism as a viable option.

The final bad news is that while we are still able to continue training journalists largely online, the practical aspects of training and supervision of research have greatly suffered...

The good news, which constitutes opportunities for journalism education includes digitization, partnerships, new areas of research and fresh perspectives into health reporting.

The first good news is that digitization became 'the' word. Uganda Christian University... had already been running programmes in a blended manner... quickly returned to teaching despite the closure of schools. By September 2020, we were back to teaching, this time fully online... We had to find creative ways to share materials and record lectures... We would soon discover incredible online resources to help our students learn. Now no one wants to go back to the old ways entirely. Some good aspects of the old ways will be retained, but most of the new discoveries in training as we figured things out will be our mainstay..."

The second good news is that partnerships with the industry became a critical point of call for UCU. Having seen our internship programme suffer, the university got into formal partnerships to ensure that would not happen again. The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Aaron Mushengyezi, visited both the New Vision and Next Media Services,... giving placement for UCU students... Internship placement plays a critical role in ensuring that students supplement their theoretical knowledge and the limited exposure to industry is bridged...

ASIA-OCEANIA REGION

Handong Global University Welcomes a New President



On February 8th, Dr. Do-Sung Choi was inaugurated in the presence of domestic and foreign leaders to his work as the new President of Handong Global University. He will serve a four-year term

from 2022-2026.

"Handong Global University should soar with the wind of challenge," stated president Choi, in his inauguration speech. "We need to reset Handong Global University through bold revival such as revival in spirituality and education."

President Choi added, "We will differentiate Handong into a Christian university where God becomes the master, a global university that fosters global citizens, and a university that prioritizes the success of students who will serve the world with honesty and sincerity."

President Choi also said, "This is the only university that is familiar with studying to give others, and that has students who change themselves with bone-cutting efforts to change the world," adding, "We should not benchmark the world, but be benchmarked in the world."

President Choi received a doctorate in business administration from Pennsylvania State University and was a professor at New York State University and Seoul National University, Vice President of Internationalization at Handong Global University, and Vice President of Gachon University.

In addition, he served as a member of the Bank of Korea's Monetary Policy Board, the Director of the Korea Securities Research Institute, the President of the Korea Securities Association, and the President of the Korea Financial Association. President Choi attended the 2013 INCHE conference in the U.S. With your INCHE login and password, listen to his comments about Christian higher education at: [INCHE | International Network for Christian Higher Education — Personal Reflections & Testimonials](#).

Update on Sarinah Lo, Indonesian Writer and Professor

Dr. Sarinah Lo, featured in a prior INCHE newsletter, provided the January 20 webinar for our partner, The Society of Christian Scholars. Her focus was on her research about Indonesian Christian faculty members. How do they understand the integration of faith through being, knowing, and doing in their Indonesian context?

Being involves a calling by God to moral and ethical decision-making and a strong work ethos. It gives strength in adversity.

Knowing engages Christian faith with divergent academic responses to ontological-epistemological, worldview, moral and ethical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal, attitudes toward contributions to the kingdom of God,. Do Indonesian faculty members seek such integration or presume that faith and learning are two different domains?



Doing concerns the provision of their best efforts for students; building positive relations with students; understanding a teacher's life as exemplary; practicing Christian values in the class; and explicit evangelism outside of class.

In summary, Dr. Lo concluded that Christian faculty in Indonesia have a strong emphasis on being, based in pietistic life and practices but less on knowing and doing. She then recommended professional development strategies relating a theological framework of creation, fall, redemption, and "restoration" to foster educational vision and practice.

Lumina College Advances Christian Thinking and Practice About Technology

Lumina College in Hong Kong launched a public seminar on "Technology, Knowledge, and Wisdom." The goal is to draw lifelong learners via popular culture into academic literature that questions whether technology helps us gain knowledge, when increased knowledge leads to wisdom, and how we enable wisdom to inform technology. Lumina

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College sensed that scientists, engineers, philosophers, theologians, and educators need opportunities to engage these issues together. So, in five sessions, participants are wrestling with these questions. Futuristic movies are paired with reading and commentary to prompt reflection on such topics. Films are matched with reflections arising from philosopher Mary Midgley, cultural commentator Andy Crouch, and theologian-scientist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

For example, in the first session on *Specialization*, led by President Wing Tai and Dr. Jonathan Cheung, the movie *Free Guy* (2021) was paired with a Midgley book chapter. Participants discussed the nature, purpose, and interconnections between knowledge, humanity, and technology. Specialization was acknowledged as a potential enhancement of deep understanding or as an enlargement of narrow selfishness. Participants considered the term "algorithm" to describe the broad logic of a technology and create a larger platform than does a mere machine. Some participants wondered if science can describe reality, but should not prescribe what humanity ought to do. They observed that for Christian scholars, prescription should come from God's will for earthly flourishing. Yet then they observed that the understanding of God's will remains subject to human interpretations.

The second session on *Integration* provided opportunities to examine what humans gain and give up when they are integrated with machinery. The movie *Blade Runner 2049* (2017) was paired with a book chapter exploring transhumanism and Christianity as contending salvific religions.

The seminar is continuing with topics such as separation from technologies, effects of technology on the centralization of power, and the implications of technology for an understanding of transcendence. The overall goal of such Lumina College public seminars is to educate and equip adult learners with life-long skills for integrating faith with lives that support long-run flourishing. The college continues to take bold steps into this vision for shaping Christian influence in contemporary society.

India Colleges Hold INCHE Webinar

INCHE has a growing network of members among India's Christian colleges. In early February 2022, they gathered online to share their needs and hopes. Dr. Daniel Ezhilarasu, INCHE India coordinator, organized and hosted this session. He began by focusing on their common mission of serving Jesus as Lord; and he said that these colleges are united by faith in God, love of neighbors, and the desire to form graduates who can contribute to the welfare of society as well as nation building.

Then each college's head, professionals who are designated as "principals" in India, offered their reflections. Principal Christiana Singh of **Lady Doak College** in Madurai noted the need for shared events, a connection of experts by their fields of study, the need for collaborative scholarly projects across India's Christian colleges, training in ICT for teaching and learning, joint consideration of digital library strategies, and a focus on institutional development.

Principal Jemimah Winston, principal of **Bishop Appasamy College** in Coimbatore, noted that her college had been a long-standing member of INCHE. She wants India's Christian colleges to maintain their distinct Christian missions; but she also called on the colleges to help each other in understanding how they must improve their infrastructures and create a structure for advocacy with the Indian government.



Vice Principal Annie Florence of **Voorhees College** in Vellore observed that sustaining Christian values and motivation are essential across the college faculty culture. Additionally, she recommended that colleges find ways to enhance their resources for digital classrooms and leadership training needed to support such technologies. The pandemic created the beginning of such efforts; and now colleges need to take next steps in the development of them.

Participants in this webinar are hopeful that they will gather again in two months to consider their priorities. Gradually, they will create ways in which they can work together as INCHE-India and strategies through which the worldwide network of INCHE can engage them actively.

EUROPE REGION

Károli Gáspár University: New Rector Begins



On January 31, 2022 Prof. Dr. László Trócsányi received his official appointment as the new rector of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. In accordance with the proposal of the Reformed Church in Hungary, the University Senate supported this decision to appoint him as University Rector for five years. János Áder,

President of Hungary, conferred the appointment at Sándor Palace on January 31st.

Prof. Trócsányi is a research professor in the Department of Constitutional Law, Faculty of Law, at Károli Gáspár University. Formerly he held positions as Judge of the Constitutional Court, Minister of Justice, and Ambassador of Hungary to France, Belgium and Luxembourg. He serves as a Member of the European Parliament, President of the National Board Against Counterfeiting, President of the Hungarian Lawyers Association and Honorary President of the Ferenc Mádl Institute of Comparative Law.

In February, Rector Trócsányi confirmed the election of Dr. Peter Balla to serve for five years as vice-rector in the area of spiritual matters. Dr. habil. Róbert Szuchy, a lawyer, has been elected as vice-rector for academic matters, and Prof. Dr. Péter Furkó, Professor of English language and literature became vice-rector for research. All three vice-rectors have been asked to oversee international relations. *(story taken from KGU's website news)*

VIAA: Making the Best of Online Years

The pandemic forced VIAA-Zwolle to rethink strategies for relationship management, and also review programs for international students. VIAA developed routine and frequent online meetings with colleagues worldwide through MS Teams. This allowed direct feedback on exchange programs so VIAA could adapt to partner plans. Now VIAA is proud to present exchange semesters to incoming students. VIAA offers such semesters in line with majors in Social Work, Education and Business, creating a range of opportunities for Europeans and non-Europeans to study with other internationals and with Dutch students.

Event Hosted by VET

Visoko Evandeosko Teologico, the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Croatia held an ecumenical event at their seminary campus this January. They wrote: "A



meeting was held at our School with representatives of other religious communities, and the main organizer on our part was the Church of God. The slogan for this year's prayer...is "Let's see where his star comes out so let's come to worship him." (Mt. 2,1-12.)"

Liverpool Hope University Hosts Calvin University Study Abroad Program



Liverpool Hope University in Liverpool, England has begun its first year of hosting Calvin University students who study abroad in Britain. A great number of study abroad programs by schools across the globe have been on hold during the past two years; and Calvin and Liverpool were not exceptions to this pause.

Despite global pandemic conditions and uncertainty around planning, the partnering schools continued to work closely to make this semester become a reality. Beginning this January, the program focuses heavily on studying British literature and culture, with the unique opportunity to physically be in the place and context of these subjects.

"Physical presence is really a premise of this program," stated Chad Engbers, the Calvin literature professor who is leading the Semester in Britain program. After an unprecedented hiatus due to a global pandemic, the ability to learn through physical presence in other nations is once again possible.

EUROPE REGION

Theologische Universiteit Kampen Will Move Its Campus to A New City

The Theological University will move from Kampen to Utrecht in 2022. From September 2022, the first lectures will be offered in a building on the Plompstorengracht.



For the next few years, the university will settle in the city centre, where it will rent a building in the University Quarter that is near the university library and the Janskerkhof. The building on the Plompstorengracht is owned by the Netherlands Institute for Catholic Church Music Foundation and is located next to the Kathedrale Koorschool, a primary school with a focus on music education.

The Board of Directors of the TU is pleased that this location has been found. 'With the board of the Catholic Church Music Foundation and the Kathedrale Koorschool, we have found good partners to work with. The intention is to stay here in the coming years until it is clear where the TU will be able to settle permanently in Utrecht', says Pim Boven, member of the Board of Directors.

TU is moving in phases. The period of construction in Utrecht and dismantling in Kampen lasts three years. In the coming years, buildings will be divested in Kampen, while the activities in Utrecht begin to expand. In September 2022, the first year Bachelor's programme in Theology will start in Utrecht as will the pre-master's programme.

TU will not change much about its name. 'We value continuity with who we are and remain the same institution, only now in a different context', says rector Roel Kuiper. 'That is why we now only add the place name Utrecht to the name of the university'. In the transitional phase, TU will be called Theological University Kampen | Utrecht.

(story taken from TUK's website news)

LCC International University in Lithuania Responds to Current Conflict

As a community that welcomes students and colleagues from around the world, LCC International University — based on the international diversity of its campus population — is concerned about hot spots and crises around the world.

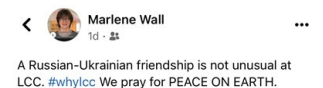
LCC is very aware of the current Russia/Ukraine tensions and the build-up of military personnel and machinery as well as the burden of concern that this places on their students and alumni.

The student body of almost 800 students is gathered from 57+ countries and represents many regions living with conflict or war. This year 25% of LCC students are from Ukraine, and 5% of students are from Russia. So, community members deeply feel the tensions of this crisis and are ready to support one another.

Faculty, staff, and students also value the wisdom and contextual perspectives of their board members living within this region:

Recently, a Ukrainian LCC board member wrote: "Today I'm sure many people pray for peace. And I pray for peace as well. But for me peace is not an absence of war. Peace for me is an absence of sin. And only peace with God can be a solid foundation for peace in this world. So please pray for people in both Ukraine and Russia, that they seek God and His truth; pray for the leadership in our countries. God is almighty."

A Russian board member wrote: "As Christians, we pray for peace and believe that in His time God will reveal all truth. Nobody's propaganda, no matter how convincing it sounds now, will stand the test of His holiness."



Like Comment Share

LCC President Wall's Facebook Post

LATIN-AMERICA REGION

Latin America's Pending Publication

The annals of the Seventh Conference of INCHE in Latin America will be published in the next quarter. This gathering, held virtually in December 2020, was supported by the Community of Interdisciplinary Theological Studies (CETI) and the Latin American Theological Fellowship (FTL), in the context of celebrating the 50th anniversary of FTL. The resulting book will be published under the seal of Ediciones Kairos, from Argentina. There will be both a physical print version and a digital one. The primary title of the work will be: "*Renewed Christian University Semper Reformanda Est*". The descriptive subtitle, the one that was carried from the conference is: 'Higher Education, Christian Identity and Public Impact in Latin America'. When the book is published in Spanish, a selection of papers and other aspects of this publication also will be published in English by the Journal of Latin American Theology (JLAT), the English-language organ of the FTL. INCHE will provide further information in the next issue of *Contact*.

UNEV, Dominican Republic: In Support Against Covid-19

The Faculty of Health Sciences of the Universidad Nacional Evangélica (UNEV) carried out the fourth working day of vaccination against coronavirus (COVID-19) for students, collaborators, teachers and their families.



The vaccination day was held at the Santo Domingo de Miraflores campus, in order to vaccinate with the first, second, third, and fourth doses, as needed. Some 240 doses of SINOVAC and 40 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech were used.

The inoculation process was directed by the staff of the Faculty of Health Sciences and the health team belonging to the institution's medical dispensary. They were assisted by a team from the Ministry of Public Health.

Universidad Cristiana De Panama: Commitment to Re-accreditation



The Universidad Cristiana de Panama (UCRI), represented by its rector Dr. Prudencia de Delgado, participated in the Signing of the Commitment Act for the Institutional Re-

Accreditation Processes. A total of 22 universities in the country begin the re-accreditation process while six universities begin the initial accreditation process. The President of the Republic, Mr. Nito Cortizo, was present at the event.

The signing of the Commitment Act was made in compliance with the 2015 Law that creates the National Evaluation and Accreditation System for Panamanian improvements in the quality of university education.

President Cortizo stated: "*Universities are the sounding board of society, their contributions and achievements have a direct effect on the country's development, hence the importance of improving the quality of their training processes.*" With this act, educational leaders affirm their commitment to educate more and better leaders at the highest academic level.

Universidad Mariano Galvez (UMG), Guatemala Launches Legal Magazine

On October 21, the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences officially presented the *Dr. Mariano Gálvez Law Review*, broadcast via the Internet and available [here](#). The journal results from dreams and hopes of UMG professionals and academic authorities who offer the university community as a medium to encourages scientific research, and quality space for those who wish to publish doctrinal, academic or scientific articles, whether they are national or foreign authors. This first issue can be downloaded for free [here](#).



LATIN - AMERICA REGION

Unireformada, Colombia: Campaign For Tax Justice



Some thirty people at an in-person conference, and others who joined virtually, kicked off the 'Zacchaeus Project' on December 1, 2021, to campaign for tax justice.

The attendees focused on the analysis of the biblical account of Luke 19, while main elements of this campaign promoted by the World Communion of Reformed Churches and other ecumenical organizations were introduced. The activity had a large participation from among young people, which reveals a new generation gaining strength and predicts greater involvement of churches and ecumenical organizations in issues involving social, economic, tax and reparation processes.

In the presentations and subsequent dialogues, it was possible to learn about and share knowledge of the various tax forms and how they work in Latin America, their relationship with politics, debts, and inequality. Specific cases of several countries in the region were analyzed and, in all cases, even with their differences, a constant was perceived, namely the injustice of the existing tax systems and how they favor inequity, the increase in inequality, and the widening gap between the richest decile and the most impoverished sectors.

Universidad Evangelica Del Paraguay (UEP): Testimony Of Two Graduates

The UEP is honored provide its students with the necessary tools and skills to be admitted to distinguished universities abroad. Here is the testimony of two of its graduates currently in European universities. Guillermo S. Zaracho, graduated from the Faculty of Living Languages (FALEVI) of the UEP, at its Gutemberg campus, and was admitted to the prestigious University of Oxford, England. He will study English Literature.

Zaracho says: "It is difficult to explain with words, one only sees this in movies or in other people's experiences. Being part of this university, one of the best in the world, creates a mixture of feelings and emotions that are difficult to assimilate. It generates tremendous happiness but also a great commitment". And regarding his alma mater, the UEP: "Beyond the excellent academic training, the values shared by the UEP also permeated me. I learned that I must be an agent of change for my community and provide others with the necessary help so that they can access opportunities that seem distant. The comprehensive training that UEP gave me contributed significantly to the academic success that I am experiencing today."



Also, Theresa Enns, first completed a Bachelor of Education (IFD) at the Philadelphia branch of the UEP, and then a Bachelor of Social Work (FAHCE), at its Gutenberg campus. In addition, she did internships and exchanges at national and international levels that helped her professional development. Thanks to the UEP agreement with the University of Freiburg in Germany, she also had the opportunity to carry out an exchange that left an important mark on her life. Today, Theresa is studying at the Technische Universität in Berlin, Germany, for a Master of Science in Education with a focus on Organization and Counseling.

Theresa says: *I am convinced that the training one receives at the UEP is one of the best in the country. Not only training quality professionals in the academic field, but also instilling fundamental values that over time distinguish us from the rest in the labor market. I am more than sure that our country needs many more professionals with national and international training to continue promoting real change in Paraguay with a different perspective. The UEP is the ideal place to start building and be part of that future that we so desire for our country.*

NORTH-AMERICA REGION

Wheaton College to Partner with CCCU to Launch Evangelism Commission

Wheaton College and the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) are excited to announce a new commission focused on evangelism. Wheaton College was asked by CCCU President Shirley Hoogstra to chair this new initiative dedicated



to helping Christian Colleges build thriving evangelistic campuses. Over the next several years, the commission will convene leading influencers, commission research, host events, and share best practices for preparing students for sharing their faiths throughout their lives.

"Wheaton College is honored to serve as the inaugural chair for this new commission. We look forward to facilitating this important conversation about our shared work equipping students, faculty, and staff to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ," said Phil Ryken, Wheaton College President.

The Wheaton College Billy Graham Center will launch the initiative with the gift of a generous donor who is providing \$330,000 in vital seed money. Center Executive Director Ed Stetzer said, "There has never been a more vital time for our colleges to show and share the love of Christ to our world. Christian colleges prepare women and men for a lifetime of gospel witness both here and across the country."

Founded by Wheaton College alumnus Billy Graham, Wheaton College Billy Graham Center is a world hub for evangelism training and equipping. Through its eight institutes dedicated to advancing individual and corporate witness, it serves more than 100,000 leaders annually.

(parts of story taken from Wheaton's website news)

The King's University Receives \$20-Million Donation for New Science Centre

Construction of a new 40,000 square foot Centre for Excellence in the Sciences at The King's University will move forward thanks to a gift of \$20-million from an anonymous donor. The landmark donation, the largest gift in King's 42-year history, allows the institution to build on its strong academic reputation in the natural, health and social sciences.

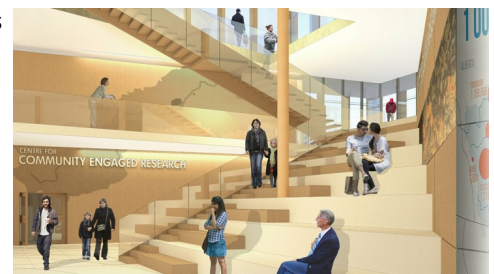
The Centre will include beautiful common spaces, purpose-built teaching facilities, leading technology, and laboratories that enable the university to further place student research at the heart of its academic programming.

Student-faculty research teams at The King's University are currently involved in projects such as antibiotic resistance, animal-assisted therapy in mental health, endangered trees in Canada's mountains and foothills, and diseases that devastate honeybee populations. King's Community Engaged Research program collaborates with local non-profits to help provide data-driven solutions for their organizations.

The Centre for Excellence in the Sciences will be a hub for sustainability research. With a newly granted Transitions to Sustainability Canada Research Chair, the Centre will enhance support and coordination for sustainability work happening across disciplines and at King's Centre for Visualization in Science (KCVS).

KCVS alone has partnered with more than 40 organizations worldwide, such as UNESCO, and has contributed important resources

to three United Nations International Years: Chemistry (2011), Periodic Table (2019), and the upcoming International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (2022–23). Another KCVS resource contributed to the education and outreach work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.



(parts of story taken from The King's website news)

NORTH-AMERICA REGION

Redeemer University Appoints Its Fifth President



Redeemer University has appointed Dr. David Zietsma as its fifth president. Zietsma brings a wealth of experience, passion and vision to the position. He has served as Redeemer's interim president since the departure of Dr. Robert Graham in April 2021. Prior to this he served as provost and vice president, academic and in a variety of other leadership roles since 2010.

Having served on the university's President's Council for nearly 12 years, Zietsma was deeply involved in developing the 2020 and 2025 strategic plans. From 2015 to 2017, he served as vice president, marketing enrolment, and from 2017-2020 he served as vice president, external relations and enrolment. During this time, he worked closely with stakeholders to increase Redeemer's reach and impact. He led new efforts in student recruitment, fundraising and marketing, including tuition restructuring and the [Re Campaign](#), the largest fundraising campaign in Redeemer's history. From 2010 to 2015, Zietsma served as dean of humanities while also holding the appointment of associate provost, curriculum from 2013 to 2015. He led the development of the new core curriculum that launched in 2016, strengthening the Christian liberal arts and science mission that shapes students by getting them to think beyond the boundaries of their major area of study, integrating faith, life and learning. From 2007 to 2010 he served as assistant professor of history in the history department.

Zietsma holds a PhD in history from the University of Akron, a master of arts in history from the University of Waterloo, and a bachelor of arts from McMaster University. He also has a diploma in business marketing from Mohawk College.

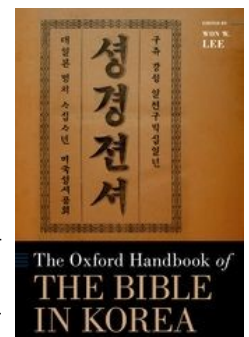
"It is a real privilege to serve the university as president, and I will do my best to continue to increase the university's positive reach and impact," says Zietsma.

ICS Engages Online Philosophy Conference

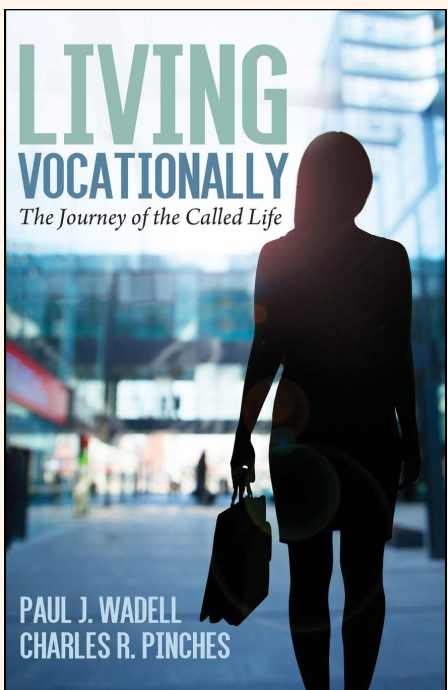
In December 2021, senior members of the Institute of Christian Studies (ICS) participated in the annual reformational philosophy conference organized by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VUA). The online conference theme was **"Philosophy in the Reformed Tradition 2021: Celebrating the Heritage, Facing the Challenges, and Embracing the Future."** ICS President Ronald A. Kuipers chaired a panel on the topic: "Bridging the Theology-Reformational Philosophy Gap" along with panelists from ICS, Dordt University, and Calvin University. ICS faculty leader Bob Sweetman and others participated in a panel about teaching reformational philosophy to the next generation. ICS colleague Edith van der Boom co-chaired breakout sessions on the topic of education. The conference also featured book presentations by many authors, including Jonathan Chaplin's latest monograph about democracy.

Handbook of The Bible in Korea is Published

Dr. Won Lee; Calvin University Professor of Religion, has published: "The Oxford Handbook of The Bible in Korea.. The publisher's summary says, "Korean Christianity is known around the world for rapid growth, conservative theological orientation, participation in political struggles(...), and missionary spirit, as well as schism, materialism, and secularization. This reputation is intimately and inextricably tied to how faith communities in Korea and Korean diaspora use the Bible in their ... contexts. In this Handbook, noted theologians offer representative thinking on creative inculturations of the Bible in Korea. Some conservatively align with received Western orthodoxy. Others have a sense of complementarity that informs distinctive accents of Korean Christianity, the long-standing religious traditions of Korea, the diversity of Korea's global diaspora, and the learning of non-Koreans attentive to the impact of the Bible in Korea. Together, this volume presents an exquisite tapestry of Korean biblical interpretation in the making."



SPECIAL FEATURE



Living Vocationally: The Journey of the Called Life

By: Paul J. Wadell & Charles R. Pinches

Publisher: Cascade Books, January, 2021

In the thick of modern life, we are tempted to forget what we are doing and why we are doing it. We are busy socializing, building careers, and looking for fun—but what’s it all for? The ancient concept of “vocation” has recently gained popularity as we return to questions about the meaning of life. Almost all religions include the idea that divine purposes should guide our lives; Christianity has particularly accented it. The God who called Israel and sent Jesus has something in mind for us. God’s call challenges us, but also opens us to the best sort of life imaginable. In *Living Vocationally*, the challenge and the joy of the called life is thoroughly explored. Part one considers the benefits of living vocationally, biblical traditions of call, and subsequent Christian understandings. Part two examines why vocation pertains not only to careers, but indeed touches every dimension of our lives and encompasses our full journey through life. Because every person’s life includes many callings, some very difficult, part three considers the virtues we need to live the called life well. *Living Vocationally* demonstrates why to have found a calling is to have found a good way to live.

About the Authors



Paul J. Wadell is Professor Emeritus of Theology and Religious Studies at St. Norbert College in De Pere, WI. A native of Louisville, Kentucky, he received his B.A. from Bellarmine University in Louisville, his M.Div. and M.A. degrees from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and his Ph.D. in Christian Ethics from the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of several books,

including *Friendship and the Moral Life*; *Becoming Friends: Worship, Justice and the Practice of Christian Friendship*; *Happiness and the Christian Moral Life: An Introduction to Christian Ethics*; and, most recently, *Living Vocationally—The Journey of the Called Life*, co-authored with Charles Pinches. He has published articles on Christian theology, ethics, and spirituality in both scholarly and popular journals and has given workshops and lectures both in the United States and abroad. He has also been actively involved with NetVUE (Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education) since it began in 2009. Paul and his wife Carmella live in Green Bay, Wisconsin.



Charles R. Pinches is professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania. Dr. Pinches is the author of over 50 scholarly articles in professional journals and book collections in the fields of theology, theological ethics, medical ethics, philosophy, and political theory. He is the author of a number of books including *Christians Among the Virtues* (1997), co-authored with Stanley Hauerwas,

Theology and Action (2002), *A Gathering of Memories* (2006) and, most recently, *Living Vocationally: The Journey of the Called Life* coauthored with Paul Wadell. The book was adopted as the 2021 “big read” by the NetVUE, a nationwide network of colleges and universities formed to enrich the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation among undergraduate students. It was also received the 2022 Christianity Today book award in the category of spiritual formation. Dr. Pinches lives with his wife Robin in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania. They have 4 adult children and 7 grandchildren. They travel often to Uganda in East Africa where they have established a program for University of Scranton students with assistance from affiliated Ugandan universities and leaders in both the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Shirley Roels: In the introduction to your book, you describe vocation as “a fundamental way of thinking about ourselves and our place in the world... continually.” You describe this frame as bigger than a blueprint for life in professions and careers. Instead, you envision vocation as a journey. What central Biblical and theological themes shape this sense of vocation as pilgrimage or journey?

Paul Wadell & Charles Pinches: In the Bible, calling and journey go hand-in-hand. For example, the heart of God’s call to Abraham contains the com-



mand: “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you” (Gen 12: 1). For Abraham to answer God’s call, he cannot stay where he is; indeed, he can grasp the meaning of God’s call only as he lives it. Similarly, Jesus’ call to Simon, Andrew, James, and John summons them to abandon what they were doing in order to follow Jesus on the journey of discipleship. Jesus offers no “blueprint” of what the journey will entail. He simply says, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” (Mk 1:17).

Perhaps the most important theological warrant for envisioning our vocations as journeys is that we are creatures who are given life by God for God’s purposes, and so are answerable to God. We are to use our lives—and all the gifts God entrusts to us—to contribute to the creative and redemptive activity of God in the world, wherever we find ourselves on life’s journey. As we journey, our lives are taken up into the story of God.

SR: You write compellingly about the need for vocational discernment. What makes such discernment challenging, particularly for emerging adults at this time in history? What types of questions should our worldwide students be taught to ask themselves and others to engage in thoughtful vocational discernment?

PW & CP: Good question! To begin, we live in a very unsettling time in which the world is confronted by so many problems that it can be hard for emerging adults to have the confidence in the future that vocational commitment requires. Yet that is precisely what makes vocational discernment and commitment so necessary. Rather than surrendering hopelessly to the challenges, through our callings we work to help shape the world according to God’s dream of justice and peace. Second, vocational discernment requires cultivating habits of prayer, reflection, silence and attentiveness—very difficult to do in cultures that encourage us to be continuously distracted, stimulated, and entertained. Moreover, in such cultures we have been ceaselessly told that our life is our own and that we are free to do whatever we want with it. In contrast, a Christian theology of vocation asserts that our lives belong to God, and that God expects something of us. Third, for persons in developing countries who feel pressures to find any available occupation to support oneself and one’s family, vocational discernment seems a superfluous luxury. In this context it is important to remember that the most important vocational question is not “What should I do?” but “Who should I be? What kind of person should I strive to become?”

In considering discernment in this way, students might reflect on what their past can tell them about how they might be called. Do certain events, persons, and experiences stand out that might give them a sense of their callings? Are there any recurrent themes or possibilities they find particularly alluring, that could point to potential callings? It’s also important to ask, “What am I hearing?” What are the deepest and most persistent desires



of my heart? Personal prayer is crucial in vocational discernment because we must listen to how God might be calling and leading us. But we need also to listen to the counsel and guidance of family and friends because vocational

discernment is too important to be left entirely to ourselves. Another key question is, “What do I do well?” We will be frustrated if we tried to pursue a calling for which we were clearly unsuited—although of course, we can discover new gifts as we respond to a calling. Finally, vocational discernment is incomplete unless we ask, “Where am I needed?” Without this question, vocational reflection becomes dangerously self-centered.

SPECIAL FEATURE

SR: Across many centuries of the Christian church, you suggest that vocational understanding has had the shape of an hourglass. In what ways did early Christians have a broad understanding of calling? Why and how did it narrow? When did it broaden again? Are Christians still living with a broad sense of vocation in the 21st century?

PW & CP: The first Christians recognized an indissoluble connection between being a Christian and being called. Christians were called by God out of their individual lives into a community, the church, and into a life of discipleship where they strove to grow together in Christ for the purpose of continuing Christ's mission in the world. Thus, the call to discipleship and mission, which came through baptism, was the foundational vocation of every Christian. Moreover, by linking calling to baptism, the early Christian communities recognized that calling applies to everyone in the church, not just a distinctive few. To be a Christian is to be called.

Understandings of calling began to narrow with the beginning of monasticism, and especially when, in the fourth century, Christianity was legalized by the Emperor Constantine, and later became the official religion of the Roman empire. As a result, many more people became Christian. Yet as the church grew it was easy to modify the more radical teachings of Jesus to accommodate the needs of the empire. Two distinct classes of Christians began to emerge: higher, more perfect Christians who entered the religious life or priesthood, and lower, regular Christians, by far the vast majority, who did their questionable best to avoid sin. Vocation became exclusively connected with the first class.



This narrower theology of vocation was rejected during the Protestant Reformation by Martin Luther who insisted that through baptism every Christian became part of the priesthood of Christ. He argued that the fundamental vocation of all Christians is to grow in holiness by loving God and their neighbors, and insisted that they could live out this "general calling" in the unique circumstances of their ordinary lives, which he called their

"particular calling." John Calvin went further than Luther by identifying one's calling more exclusively with one's work—although, ironically, this narrowed vocation in a different way since calling became virtually synonymous with one's career or profession. Consequently, the call to discipleship given in baptism was increasingly overlooked.

One reason we wrote *Living Vocationally* was to challenge the idea that calling pertains only to one's career or profession. Instead, calling pertains to the whole of our lives. But we also wrote the book to reintroduce Christians to the idea of vocation. Calling is an integral element to being a Christian, but we can forget this. The result is a distorted and diminished understanding of what it means to be a Christian. A fundamental premise of our book is that reclaiming vocation as quintessential to Christianity leads to a more challenging, but also richer and more meaningful life. As we live out our baptisms we continue Christ's work in the world.

SR: There are some prevalent ideas in our times that mislead us about calling. These are social/cultural dangers and warnings related to our vocational journeys. What are some of the ways in which we, or the students we teach, might be misled? Are such dangers magnified as the range of our choices expands?

PW & CP: It is good to have choices, but as we have more and more of them it is easy to define who we are entirely in terms of them. Too many choices can tempt us to forget how dependent we are on the gifts of others. We did not choose our parents, but we are called, even commanded, in the Bible to honor them. As we ask, "who am I called to be?" we cannot forget who we already are because of what we have been given without asking, and therefore how we are called to respond with faithfulness and gratitude.

The journey of the called life requires that we be open to being changed in our very selves. When we choose, we do so usually because we think we know what we want or need. But, like the first disciples, following Jesus introduces us to a new and different way of life whose outcome we can't predict—left to our own devices, we likely would not have chosen it. This is also why living out our callings is not like following a map or blueprint.

SPECIAL FEATURE

As Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat for Humanity, has said, “a planned life can only be endured.” God’s call frees us from the tyranny of our choices and plans, to enter into a work that points beyond our enclosed human lives to participate in God’s life in the world.

SR: Your book wrestles with the question of whether people outside the Christian religious tradition of faith also might have callings. You conclude that “Christians do not have a corner on God’s call.” Theologically, what has led you to this conclusion? Since many INCHE Christian universities worldwide openly admit non-Christian students, how might we incorporate such students well into learning about a called life?

PW & CP: Vocation or calling is present in other religious traditions. For example, Jews are called to holiness of life by faithfully observing God’s commandments and



called to contribute to the establishment of Shalom by working for justice, peace, and the flourishing of all creatures. In Islam, Muslims are called to submit to God through obedience to God, through prayer, and through good works, particularly sharing with the poor.

But people who are not part of any religious tradition are also called. As we stress in the book, God calls everyone—believers as well as nonbelievers—to participate in God’s creative and redemptive work by striving to transform the world in love, justice, and peace. God’s grace and Spirit are not confined to Christians but are at work in all peoples around the world. In this way, God can work through anyone to love, heal, reconcile, and bless others in ways we may hardly fathom.

Non-Christian students may be aware of sensing a call in ordinary ways that they normally do not connect with God. For example, friendship is a calling because in friendship we are summoned to be present to and accountable for another person in ways that we are not for everyone. Simply being a student is also a sort of calling as we devote ourselves to study, are open to learning, and are diligent in doing the work required of good students. As we try to show in *Living Vocationally*, calling

gets at the heart of what it means to be human. Rather than just drifting aimlessly through life, when we respond to the various callings we are better for it—and so is the world.

SR: The last section of your book focuses on the importance of virtues that undergird vocation. You write that “living and growing in our callings is impossible without the virtues,” and that “virtues help us live according to what is real.” Then you proceed to discuss three different types of virtues that are essential for a faithful response to calling. What are a couple examples of specific virtues we should discuss with our students in their vocational journeys?

PW & CP: For all of us, but perhaps especially for students, it’s important to cultivate the virtue of attentiveness, which can be described as opening our eyes, our ears, and our hearts to what God, our communities, or other people might be asking of us each day. With the virtue of attentiveness we become alert to how God is working in our lives and how God might be calling us not only in the future, but right now. With the virtue of attentiveness, instead of sleepwalking through life, we awaken to the world around us as God’s world.

A second important virtue is fidelity. Most of our callings involve a promise to other people, whether friends, spouses and families, or communities; thus, the heart of living vocationally is being faithful to a promise. This isn’t easy because we don’t know where our callings might take us or what they might ask of us. And it isn’t easy because virtually every calling will bring moments of hardship, difficulty, and suffering. As we are faithful, we learn to stand by our promises and so discover the real beauty and goodness of the called life.



No discussion of vocation should overlook the importance of hope. In our book we describe how answering a calling sets us on a journey toward something good; it orients us to a promising future. But there is a gap between where we are now on our journeys and

SPECIAL FEATURE & RESOURCES

the end to which they direct our lives, which for Christians is communion with God. The virtue of hope connects the future with the present, allowing us to experience what we hope for now, however imperfectly and incompletely. Thomas Aquinas said that “hope’s object is a good that lies in the future and that is difficult but possible to attain.” We move closer to that difficult but possible good through God’s grace, through the other virtues and our spiritual practices. Aquinas also insists on the importance of having “friends to rely upon.” We do not travel alone; and when Christians hope, we hope together.



SR: Your book encourages us to live magnanimously, in ways that can create greatness through quiet and often unnoticed goodness that comes from being responsible to our callings. During this pandemic many of us sense that quiet diligent efforts are not noticed. We feel isolated and unrecognized. What should motivate us to practice with our students what it means to live vocationally in quiet but magnanimous ways?

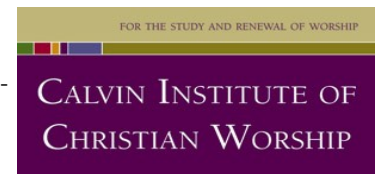
PW & CP: The question brings to mind the closing lines of George Eliot’s novel *Middlemarch* when the narrator, reflecting on the impact of Dorothea’s life, notes that “the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.” Most of our lives are comprised of unseen, and perhaps unappreciated, acts of love, kindness, patience, loyalty, and understanding. Such acts are all expressions of magnanimity. They not only remind us of the lasting power of ordinary goodness, but also that it is only by ordinary people doing their best each day that the world is suffused with the love and goodness of God. Perhaps the strongest motive for living vocationally is to realize that the world is held together by people who aspire to what is best every day, knowing that the goodness of their lives is carried on in all the people who were blessed by them.



Library Trends: In a December 14, 2021, blog by *Christian Scholar’s Review*, a Christian academic librarian considers “Library Trends and the Future of Christian Scholarship.” With the convergence of the library and information industries, how do Christians work to ensure publication and access to Christian scholarship? The blog contains thoughtful analysis and suggestions at: [Library Trends and the Future of Christian Scholarship - Christian Scholar’s Review](#).

Worldwide Ecumenical Resources from February ‘22 Worship Symposium

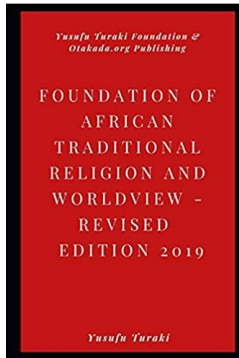
In early February the Calvin Institute of Worship hosted its annual symposium. While some sessions were in-person, many were online. Several sessions were recorded; and they remain available without cost for INCHE use. Online resources now available include:



- Worship services led by Jerry Pillay (South Africa), Ruth Padilla DeBorst (Costa Rica), Setri Nyomi (Ghana), and Elizabeth Conde-Frazier (of Puerto Rican heritage).
- Sessions on Christ-Centered Pathways for Reconciliation featuring commentators from Lebanon, Wales, Rwanda, and Ukraine.
- A conversation about Christians and Cultural Difference engaging Pennlyn Dykstra-Pruim, David Smith, and Maria Cornou.
- Discussions about the roles of artists and activists in public worship, with Noel Snyder and Hikki Toyama-Szeto providing commentary.
- An investigation of public worship and cultural intelligence by Kai Ton Chau and Satrina Reid
- Engagement with Maria Monteiro about the history of Christian worship in Brazil.

INCHE members can access these teaching and research resources at: [2022 Calvin Symposium on Worship](#).

RESOURCES & BOOKS



Foundations of African Traditional Religion and Worldview: Revised Edition 2019

By Yusufu Turaki

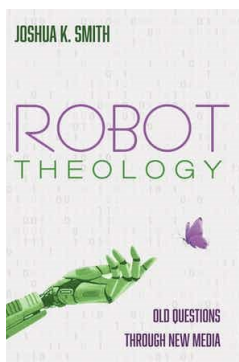
Independently published, April 29, 2019

This book is an introduction to the foundations of African traditional religions and worldview. The theological basis of the traditional belief

in gods, divinities, and spirits are examined.

These beliefs are defined and interpreted in the light of (1) the traditional religious worldview and (2) with some clarifications from the Biblical and Christian theology. The theological implications of these traditional beliefs and worldview are essential for developing and formulating a relevant Biblical and Christian theology in Africa. The traditional theological, philosophical and moral and ethical foundations and the nature and meaning of man are analyzed and examined.

Professor Yusufu Turaki helps us to understand how sin affects our relationships with ourselves, with God and with others. More than that, he gives us guidelines for dealing with sin in our lives and in our communities. This book is recommended for personal reading and for academic study.



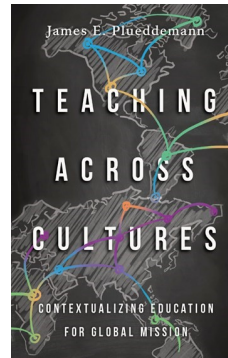
Robot Theology: Old Questions through New Media

By Joshua K. Smith

WIPF & Stock Publishers, January, 2022

What is the relationship between artificial intelligence, robots, and theology? The connections are much closer than one might think. There is a deep spiritual longing in

the world of AI and robotics. Technology is a prayer; it reveals the depth of our eschatology. Through the study of AI and robotic literature one can see a clear desire to both transcend human limitations and overcome the fallenness of human nature. The questions of ethics, power, and responsibility are not new to Christian anthropology. This book will introduce and examine some of the major ethical issues surrounding current AI and robotic technology from a theological and philosophical lens. In the study of AI and robot ethics, the Christian community has a chance to join the global efforts to build technology for good.



Teaching Across Cultures: Contextualizing Education for Global Mission

By James E. Plueddemann

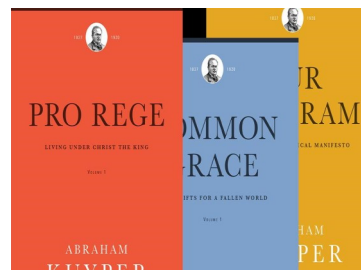
IVP Press, November 27, 2018

In our globalized world, ideas are constantly being exchanged between people of different cultural backgrounds. But educators often struggle to adapt to the contexts of diverse learners. Some focus so much on content delivery that they

overlook crosscultural barriers to effective teaching.

Educator and missiologist James Plueddemann offers field-tested insights for teaching across cultural differences. He unpacks how different cultural dynamics may inhibit learning and offers a framework for integrating conceptual ideas into practical experience. He provides a model of teaching as pilgrimage, where the aim is not merely the mastery of information but the use of knowledge to foster the development of the pilgrim learner.

Plueddemann's crosscultural experience shows how teachers can make connections between content and context, bridging truth and life. Those who teach in educational institutions, mission organizations, churches, and other ministries will find insights here for transformational crosscultural learning.



Abraham Kuyper Collected Works in Public Theology (12 vols.)

By Abraham Kuyper

Lexham Press; Acton Institute, 2015-2022

During recent months, the twelfth and final book was published in the series, *Abraham Kuyper: Collected Works in Public Theology*. This last volume titled "On Charity and Justice," edited by Dr. Matthew Tuininga of Calvin Theological Seminary, is an anthology of articles and reflections in which Kuyper articulates a Christian vision for engaging society. For Kuyper, God's law preserved civil justice, making humane life possible. However, the law itself could not save society—only the gospel can transform the heart. But the gospel is for all of life. Kuyper elaborated a social Christian approach to politics, resulting in a distinct perspective on property, human dignity, democracy, and justice. The book is available from Lexham Press in print or Kindle form. Further information available at: Abraham Kuyper Collected Works in Public Theology (12 vols.).

COVER STORY (continued from p.1)

N.T. Wright provided the next plenary session in which he articulated a Biblical theology for the meaning of justice. In the Bible, justice is described as both rescue and restoration in the process of putting things right with God, among people, and for nature.



Whether we pursue justice in this world depends in part on our Christian eschatology. If we frame Christianity as a route of escape from earth to heaven, then Christians are less inclined to address injustice in their contexts. But Biblical eschatology describes the future as God coming to dwell with his people in this world. The promised new creation is our world refined and set right. So, Christians have work to do before the Lord's return. Wright notes that in Romans 15: 7-13 the church is described as a small working model of the new creation on earth. The church is a pilot project for the world set right; and it is the task of Christians now to lead this pilot project in its contributions to justice.

Subsequent speakers continued to expand on ways in which Christian justice and reconciliation could expand. They discussed racial and religious conflict.



Sociologist Robert Putnam observed that the United States had a prior period of divisiveness, social isolation, inequality, and self-centeredness in the late 1800s after which the nation had taken a better cultural turn. In the analysis of this change, he and his co-researcher Shaylyn Garrett noted that as the 20th century dawned, a moral and cultural reawakening was led by young people at the grassroots level. They were ordinary Americans who turned their nation in a better direction, first by tinkering in small local settings with new initiatives. By the 1950s through 1970s, with reimagined social initiatives, United States indices showed greater amounts of social cohesion and equality. While the newer social units were still limited in their racial and religious inclusion, there had been a significant shift in national vision during the first half of the 20th century. These scholars remained hopeful that a similar shift might be possible once again.

The following day was filled with worship and with concurrent sessions.

One notable concurrent session was offered by Universitas Pelita Harapan (UPH) based in Indonesia. In a nation that includes 6000 inhabited islands and is the fourth largest national population in the world, what strategies should a Christian university develop? Shortly before the pandemic descended, this university concluded that their future would be as a hybrid system of online and in-person education. The pandemic accelerated their plans and intensified both IT and faculty development. Intensive efforts of their Center for Teaching and Learning were closely coordinated with the development of online education. Now they are developing a more flexible approach to teaching and learning entitled M-Flex in which they use Moodle as a learning management system, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. The university greatly expanded its IT troubleshooting capacity while building more detailed course outlines to serve students and satisfy accreditors. Now UPH is continuing to evaluate the IT platforms with which they work and build robust means to assess student learning.



Subsequent sessions asked challenging questions about the role of artificial intelligence in shaping Christian faith, research on human sexuality policies across U.S. Christian higher education, and the academic faith integration of non-Christian students.



The entire conference was surrounded with prayer and worship. In his closing sermon, Bishop Claude Alexander, a member of the CCCU Board of Directors, observed that in the middle of challenges, we tend to worry about our faithfulness to the cause of Christian education. Then he reminded participants that the more important Biblical message is that God is faithful to us. We continue in our work because we are responding to a faithful God.

The next CCCU International Forum is scheduled for January 29-February 1, 2026.

TESTIMONIAL & PRAYER

How Masagazi's Missing Name Was Restored on Graduation List

Sh500,000 (about \$140). That was the amount of money standing between Alvin Masagazi and his degree at Uganda Christian University (UCU). And Masagazi was not even aware that the debt existed. Unaware of a problem, he was preparing for graduation.

"I was bewildered about how this had happened because I thought all my tuition was covered fully,"



Nurse Alvin Masagazi on graduation day

Masagazi, who joined UCU's nursing program in 2017, says. "I couldn't believe my name was not on the graduation list."

He was even more shocked with the debt because he was on a government scholarship scheme that was meant to cover his tuition for all four years that he was to spend at the university. Somehow, he had the debt. And he had to pay it.

"I desperately needed the money, but my parents were not financially stable at the time the graduation lists were released," Masagazi says, adding that he did not have anyone else to help secure the money.

Masagazi's hope was fading; his heart was breaking. His parents were not in a position to rescue him. Then, a friend told him about the United States-based UCU Partners, a non-profit charitable organization committed to raising support for UCU programs, services, staff and students. The UCU Financial Aid Office had advertised about how the NGO could help, calling for applications from students who were due for graduation, but were financially distressed and had outstanding tuition balances.

When he applied for the tuition top-up, Masagazi was successful. On October 22, 2021, he joined 24 other people to receive the Bachelor of Nursing Science degree at UCU's 22nd graduation ceremony.

He says the kind of generosity displayed by UCU Part-

ners is something he wants to play out in his own life.

"When God grants me the resources, I also aspire to do the same for students who find themselves caught up in similar circumstances," he said.

With the degree, Masagazi is confident he will be able to fulfill his passion of "saving lives" at the health facilities where he will serve while supporting himself and a family. First, he does a mandatory one-year internship program in a hospital.

"I am really excited and optimistic for what the future holds for me," he said.

During his four-year academic journey at UCU, Masagazi practiced photography and was a student leader in charge of health in the university (2019).

"My love for nursing and helping people got me into that position in the cabinet and I worked hard to help and improve the health services during my term of office," he says.

Masagazi was born and raised in central Uganda. He was on a scholarship because of his talent in music and sports.

(Story written by Michael Kisekka and can be found on UCU's website)

A Prayer for Peace in Ukraine

"Heavenly Father, we come to you with heavy hearts as we see war in Ukraine. We pray that you would be merciful on the people of Ukraine and Russia and end this war..."



Lord, we pray for those who have lost loved ones, homes, and livelihoods. Comfort and provide for the needs of those who have been displaced and seek refuge. Lord, we ask for mercy and we seek justice. We pray that you would be at work in both.

We pray for the day when all wars will cease and when your peaceful reign will come fully. But in the meantime, we pray that you would use us to facilitate the coming of your kingdom here and now. Help us to take action to bring peace, to care for the victims of war, and to work for justice...

In all these things, we trust you, because you are our loving Father... Reconcile the nations with you and with each other by the power of the cross of our reigning Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen."

(Full Prayer by George DuVuyst at: [Prayer for Ukraine | de Vuyst's in Ukraine](#))

Contact

Contact is the official newsletter of the International Network of Christian Higher Education (INCHE). It is published quarterly as a way of informing its members about news from across the many world regions in which INCHE operates. If you have any news items you would like to share with INCHE's members worldwide, please contact INCHE at:

Email: office@inche.one

Website: www.inche.one

Tel: +1-616-526-7906

3201 Burton Street SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49546, USA



ABOUT INCHE

INCHE is a network of institutions and individuals worldwide committed to advancing Christian education through training, capacity building, scholarship, and networking in ways that reflect both the universal (shared view of Christ's centrality in our identity and work) and the local (attending to the specific realities and practices of where and who we serve).

INCHE's Mission is to develop a network that facilitates contact and mutual assistance, acts as a catalyst for research and training, and encourages biblical and contextual responses to the critical issues in contemporary society, so as to help people serve the Lord Jesus Christ in an integral way.



**Have news you would like to share
with other INCHE members?**

Members may email articles to office@inche.one. We suggest articles contain 400 words or less.