

COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

ADVANCE

FALL 2020

MAGAZINE

DISRUPTION & INNOVATION

How COVID-19 is impacting Christian higher education.



**The Explosion
of Online Learning**
p. 26

**Leading Through
Crisis**
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FROM THE PRESIDENT | [SHIRLEY V. HOOGSTRA](#)

Developing Resilience



A HERO OF MINE is Corrie ten Boom, a Dutch freedom fighter and resistance leader during World War II. She always had a deep and abiding faith in Jesus and a calling to serve others. The Nazis invaded the Netherlands in 1940; in May 1942, the ten Boom family began to hide Jews from the Nazi occupiers. By February 1944, the Nazis captured Corrie, her sister Betsie, and 30 others after the ten Booms were sold out by their neighbor. After enduring three months of solitary confinement, Corrie and her sister were sent to a number of concentration camps before arriving at the notorious Ravensbrück, a women's labor camp in Germany.

Corrie and Betsie, along with the other prisoners, endured terrible conditions: food deprivation, infestation, beatings, and the constant threat of death. In the midst of this, Betsie and Corrie led worship services with their smuggled Bible in their barracks. They were a source of encouragement and hope to fellow prisoners. Betsie died on Dec. 16, 1944; a week later, Corrie was released from Ravensbrück because of a

How can we help our students develop resilience and recognize the silver lining in the midst of disappointment, trauma, and uncertainty?

clerical error. She later learned that within a week of her release, all the women in her age group were gassed. God sustained her life. Corrie returned from this dramatic and devastating experience still dedicated to helping others; she helped in recovery efforts, wrote books, and traveled, sharing the good news of the Gospel.

To me, Corrie ten Boom is the embodiment of resilience. Why are some individuals resilient in the face of such unpredictable and uncontrollable circumstances?

Much has been written about resilience. It is developed through training and enduring challenges; it is the silver lining of living through awful things. Consider the terrible set of circumstances we face now: a pandemic, economic and social upheaval, a future full of uncertainty. How can we help our students develop resilience and recognize the silver lining in the midst of their disappointment, trauma, and uncertainty? These circumstances may be unprecedented, but we know this is not the last time they — or we — will face significant challenges.

In a *New York Times* article published in June, Eilene Zimmerman wrote that the most significant determinant of resilience is personal relationships — the ability to feel loved. In the first 20 years of life, this is particularly crucial. Traditionally, two of those years will be happening on our campuses. In what ways can we help our students feel deeply loved, secure, and able to withstand adversity?

Zimmerman's article refers to the concept (coined by Dr. Steven Southwick, professor emeritus of psychiatry, PTSD, and resilience at Yale University) of a "resilience toolbox." What's inside such a toolbox? Realistic optimism, religious beliefs, a moral compass, intellectual flexibility, emotional flexibility, social connectedness, no dwelling on the negative, eyes to see opportunities in dark times, and dedication to a worthy cause.

In other words, Christian colleges and universities are the perfect place to build a robust resilience toolbox. A belief in God and the pursuit of a worthy cause are reinforced through our educational experiences. Religious beliefs are foundational to our work, and they prove to be indestructible tools, as Corrie ten Boom's life reveals. What could be more hopeful in a time of uncertainty and peril than to know that you are held in the hand of the creator of the universe? This belief in God forms the prerequisite for a moral compass and optimism. Knowing that God has written your life before you were born (Psalm 139) provides calm and comfort.

The final tool of resilience, according to Dr. Southwick? Community. In his words, "Very few resilient people do it alone." As members of the Christian higher education community, we, too, can say that we never do this journey alone. Now, more than ever, we are stronger together. ☺

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THE COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES (CCCU) is a higher education association of more than 180 Christian institutions around the world. Since 1976, the CCCU has served as the leading national voice of Christian higher education. With campuses across the globe, including more than 150 in the U.S. and Canada and more than 30 from an additional 18 countries, CCCU institutions are accredited, comprehensive colleges and universities whose missions are Christ-centered and rooted in the historic Christian faith.

THE MISSION OF THE CCCU is to advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and to help our institutions transform the lives of students by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth.

DISTRIBUTION

Advance is published each year in the fall and spring and is mailed to members, affiliates, and friends of the CCCU. It is also available online at **www.cccu.org/magazine**. Direct questions and letters to the editor to **editor@cccu.org**.

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2020 Vision, Reimagined



YOU PROBABLY SAW it, too: the first week of January, social media posts embraced our ability to riff on the year and declare a "2020 vision" — hopes, goals, and plans for the coming year. (High on my own list was continuing a therapeutic hobby I had picked up: bread making. Little did I know how popular *that* would become.)

Then came COVID-19, and a semester, and then a summer, and likely now a fall, were completely upended. Then came horrific, unjust deaths and a wave of social protests speaking out against racism and discrimination. Suddenly, the vision-setting posts at the start of 2020 seemed hopelessly naïve — or at least so distant as to feel like another lifetime ago. 2020 reality seems to drown out our 2020 vision.

But this year is indeed giving us clearer vision. Some things we see more clearly are painful. The unexpected shift to remote learning revealed deep inequities on our campuses that may have been more hidden and more prevalent than we realized. A laptop, access to a reliable internet connection, the ability to focus on studies in a home environment — all things that we now realize we may have taken for granted among many of our students. We are also recognizing and lamenting the ways that the deeply rooted sin of racism has invaded our Christian communities. What painful but necessary corrections to our vision.

But we are also seeing a clearer vision of the ingenuity, the innovation, and the resilience of our students, our faculty, and our staff. We are being reminded of the depth of the commitment our communities have to helping students — all students — learn, grow, and flourish as they pursue academic excellence rooted in the grace, truth, and love of Christ.


This is one of the beautiful realities about the power of God. Job knew this; even in the depths of his despair at losing everything he had and knowing that he had done nothing to deserve such an awful reality, he proclaimed, "With God are wisdom and strength; ... He uncovers the deeps out of darkness, and brings deep darkness to light" (Job 12:13, 22, NRSV).

In our reimagined 2020 vision, there is much that should be mourned: hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and deaths, millions of lost jobs, entire seasons of activities canceled, graduations and other milestones not celebrated to their fullest extent. Countless lives are irrevocably changed.

But in our reimagined 2020 vision, we can also celebrate the light that God is casting on the hidden things that we would not have acknowledged otherwise; now we begin the process to cleanse and restore that which was in darkness. In our reimagined 2020 vision, we can celebrate the innovation and resilience that will propel our campuses into a new era, trusting that "all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

This issue is all about that reimagined 2020 vision; we hope that these conversations and stories can renew, refresh, and reinvigorate you as you continue on in this season of disruption and innovation within Christian higher education. 📢

MORGAN FEDDES SATRE is the CCCU's communications specialist and managing editor of Advance. She is an alumna of both Whitworth University and BestSemester's L.A. Film Studies Center and is currently pursuing her M.Div. at Fuller Seminary.

**COMMENTS**
Do you have comments about stories in this issue or ideas for stories in a future issue? Email us at editor@cccu.org.

Hi Lon Kang Haaga

NEWS FROM THE CCCU

Around *the* Council

NEW INSTITUTION JOINS CCCU



In July 2020, the CCCU Board of Directors approved the application of a new member:



Morling College
Australia

PRESIDENTIAL CHANGES

The following institutions have experienced presidential transitions since September 2019. Campuses that currently have interim presidents are not included.

Bethel University (MN) Ross Allen, July 2020	Liverpool Hope University (UK) Monica Grady, January 2020
Concordia University Irvine (CA) Michael A. Thomas, January 2020	Lubbock Christian University (TX) Scott McDowell, April 2020
Dallas Theological Seminary (TX) Mark M. Yarbrough, July 2020	Oklahoma Baptist University (OK) Heath A. Thomas, January 2020
Greenville University (IL) Suzanne Davis, May 2020	Palm Beach Atlantic University (FL) Debra A. Schwinn, May 2020
Kentucky Christian University (KY) Terry Allcorn, September 2019	San Diego Christian College (CA) Kevin Corsini, September 2019
Lee University (TN) Mark L. Walker, August 2020	Tyndale University College & Seminary (Ontario, Canada) Marjory Kerr, July 2020
Lincoln Christian University (IL) Silas L. McCormick, June 2020	Warner Pacific University (OR) Brian L. Johnson, August 2020

Photo courtesy of Morling College

INSTITUTIONAL NAME CHANGES



Northwest Christian University in Eugene, Oregon, is now **Bushnell University**.



Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, is now **Messiah University**.



Milligan College in Milligan, Tennessee, is now **Milligan University**.



Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario, is now **Redeemer University**.



Tyndale University College & Seminary in Toronto, Ontario, is now **Tyndale University**.

THE LATEST UPDATES FROM CAPITOL HILL

THE CCCU'S ADVOCACY WORK promotes and protects its institutions' unique position as Christ-centered, nonprofit institutions of higher education. We advocate on behalf of our institutions on a variety of issues affecting Christian higher education, including religious character and conviction, always seeking to advance faith and intellect for the common good. Over the last several months, the advocacy team has sent 75 letters to Congress, the White House, and various Departments and signed onto five amicus briefs to the Supreme Court and other federal courts. Our other advocacy work includes:



Title VII Supreme Court Cases | The Supreme Court's 6-3 decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County* concluded that discrimination because of sexual orientation or gender identity is necessarily discrimination on the basis of sex. The CCCU had filed an amicus brief opposing that argument, noting that redefining sex could have an adverse impact on religious colleges. The Court's ruling, though a sweeping win for the LGBT community, addressed the importance of religious freedom protections, noting the Court is "deeply concerned with preserving the promise of the free exercise of religion enshrined in our Constitution; that guarantee lies at the heart of our pluralistic society." The decision acknowledged religious freedom protections like the Title VII "express statutory exception for religious organizations," the ministerial exception, and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, but it did not discuss their application to the cases at hand. We must continue to use all levers of government to guarantee legal protections for religious mission.



Immigration | The Supreme Court's 5-4 decision in June rejected the Trump Administration's attempt to rescind the DACA program. This is a monumental victory for Dreamers, but these Dreamers deserve a permanent legislative solution to secure their certainty. On July 6, the Department of Homeland Security issued guidance to prohibit international students from entering or remaining in the U.S. if taking exclusively online course loads. After a lawsuit from MIT and Harvard, the administration agreed to rescind the guidance for returning students; as of July 28, new international students were still prohibited. The CCCU continues to advocate for flexibility for institutions and students in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.



Prison Education | Twenty CCCU institutions currently offer prison education programs. Over the summer, the CCCU conducted four webinars on faith-based prison education that discussed history, trauma-informed care, and the COVID-19 pandemic. These sessions provided networking, information sharing, and growth opportunities for leaders of these programs that empower incarcerated individuals, provide holistic reform for prison culture, and reduce recidivism rates by 43%. We continue to work to see the REAL Act passed, which would restore Pell eligibility for incarcerated individuals, who have not been able to access these funds since 1994.



Charitable Giving | The COVID-19 pandemic generated challenges for organizations that rely on charitable giving. In an effort to expand giving incentives, the CCCU signed on to two letters with the Charitable Giving Coalition and the American Council on Education to encourage Congress to enact a temporary universal charitable deduction. We were encouraged to see the CARES Act included a \$300 charitable giving deduction; the bill also provided incentives through available deductions on charitable contributions. Individual taxpayers who itemize receive a deduction of 100% of their adjusted gross income, while corporations receive 25% on their taxable income. Senators James Lankford (R-OK) and Chris Coons (D-DE) proposed an amendment that would increase the non-itemizer deduction. We continue to advocate for increased giving opportunities that could support our institutions.



LEARN MORE
For more information about the CCCU's advocacy work, visit www.cccu.org/advocacy.



Future programming decisions will be posted on www.bestsemester.com.

DUE TO THE GLOBAL IMPACT of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CCCU made the necessary decision to not run eight of our nine BestSemester programs for the duration of the 2020-21 academic year. Scholarship & Christianity in Oxford, the CCCU's U.K. subsidiary that runs the Scholars' Semester in Oxford, is offering on-line tutorial seminars for credit during the 2020-21 academic year and plans to run in-person in Spring 2021 (circumstances permitting). Additionally, the Oxford Summer Programme is planning to run as normal in Summer 2021.

More than 13,000 students have benefited from our academically rigorous, Christ-centered experiential education programs for the past 40 years, and we remain committed to advancing global experiential education opportunities for students that foster their intellectual, cultural, vocational, and spiritual growth. Future program activities are still under consideration, and the CCCU will be using this next academic year to create a new strategy and vision for our global education offerings moving forward.

CCCU STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE KILLING OF GEORGE FLOYD

IN RESPONSE TO the killing of George Floyd, CCCU President Shirley V. Hoogstra shared the following statement: "We need to do more than lament or shed tears over the overwhelming evidence of systemic racism. Those do not cost us much. We need to act with courage and perseverance in the face of this 400-year-old pattern of evil. As a leader in Christian higher education, the urgent conversations during this global pandemic have been about how higher education will adapt and innovate for the future based on the need for financial sustainability. But if we don't get this right, if we don't highlight the moral, physical, emotional, and spiritual toll of racism in all walks of life, any innovation will be like 'resounding gongs and clanging symbols,' and we will have gained nothing. Today is the day we again commit to better fighting for truth and freedom."



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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION SPOTLIGHT: SOUTH KOREA



BAEKSEOK UNIVERSITY

Baekseok University is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the proclamation that "the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Baekseok seeks to produce global leaders equipped with skills, wisdom, and character rooted in a Christian worldview. The institution has approximately 12,000 undergraduates and 3,000 graduate students. Located in Cheonan and nestled at the base of a low-rising mountain and surrounded by trees, Baekseok provides the ultimate combination of modern academic refinement in a pristine natural setting.

HANDONG GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

Handong University seeks to produce new leaders who will transform their nations and the world through Christian spirit, academic excellence, world citizenship, outstanding Christian character, and a spirit of sacrifice, honesty, and service. Students are trained so that they develop competence not only in their major, but also in their creative problem solving and global engagement. Ranked first in student satisfaction among all private universities in Korea in 2017, the university has approximately 5,000 undergraduate students and 400 graduate students, including students from 60 countries from every continent around the world (as of 2019).



KOREA CHRISTIAN (KC) UNIVERSITY

Established in 1958, KC University's motto is 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." With degree programs in eight colleges, KC University strives to provide the best educational environment that will produce talented experts, educated individuals with integrity, and devout believers who meet the demands of the age.



PRESBYTERIAN UNIVERSITY AND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary's mission is to provide higher education by nurturing leaders and ministers of the church in the foundation of biblical theology, in adherence to the confessions of faith and constitution of the Presbyterian Church. Now located in Seoul, PUTS traces its roots all the way back to 1901, when missionaries began teaching students in Pyongyang. More than a century later, PUTS continues to equip students to be workers of the kingdom of God and to love the church, the nation, and the world in faith, truth, and deed.



SEOUL THEOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1911, Seoul Theological University's goal is to foster in its students a global talent in which "intelligence, virtue, and spirituality are harmonized with the educational ideology that is truth and holiness." Students at Seoul Theological University learn core competencies in spiritual morality, sympathetic communication, creative and critical thinking, and global engagement. The university offers a number of undergraduate and graduate programs in such areas as social welfare, theology, music, education, counseling, and a number of languages (including English, Chinese, and Japanese).



All photos courtesy of institution



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ECONOMIC IMPACT

Christian colleges and universities play an **essential role in reopening our economy** in the wake of COVID-19.

\$60 BILLION
IN ANNUAL
ECONOMIC IMPACT »



\$25.9 BILLION
FROM OPERATIONS AND
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS



\$34.6 BILLION
FROM ADDITIONAL
ALUMNI EARNINGS

This economic activity also generates:



\$9.7 BILLION
IN FEDERAL
TAX REVENUE



340,000
JOBS IN THE ECONOMY



\$17.8 BILLION
IN SALARY AND
BENEFITS

» For every **\$1** in federal grant money a student receives, CCCU institutions generate more than **\$20** in federal tax revenue through their operations, capital investments, and additional alumni earning power.

Source: Econsult Solutions, "The National Impact of Christian Higher Education," 2018.

AFFORDABILITY

Christian colleges and universities provide an **affordable, high-quality education for students.**

The majority of CCCU students **do not pay the published sticker price** at their institution and are **more likely to receive institutional aid.**

INSTITUTIONAL AID



OF CCCU
STUDENTS



OF STUDENTS AT
PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

» The **average net cost for all new students at CCCU institutions is 7% less** than the average net cost for all new students at non-CCCU four-year private institutions.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS, 2017-18.

CCCU students have the **highest loan repayment** rates.*



REPAYMENT RATE

77.6%
CCCU
INSTITUTIONS

71.9%
NATIONAL
AVERAGE

CCCU students take out the **least in loans**.**

FEDERAL LOANS

\$7,453
CCCU

\$8,920
PUBLIC

\$9,810
ALL

\$11,950
PRIVATE

CCCU students have the **lowest loan default** rates.*



DEFAULT RATE

6.6%
CCCU
INSTITUTIONS

10.8%
NATIONAL
AVERAGE

**Source: 2019 Trends in Higher Education, U.S. Department of Education. **Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2015-16.*

SOCIAL IMPACT

Christian colleges and universities are vital in educating **first-generation and low-income college students.**

1 in 3 CCCU students are first generation college students.*



1 in 3 CCCU students receive Pell Grants.**



50% of CCCU students come from families that make less than **\$50,000** per year.*



**Source: Econsult Solutions, "The National Impact of Christian Higher Education," 2018. **Source: 2019 Bethel Study: Financial Aid Survey of CCCU Institutions.*

CAREERS

CCCU students are overrepresented in fields that **deliver social benefits**, like human services (which includes counseling, mental health, and family services).

HUMAN SERVICES

12.7%
CCCU
INSTITUTIONS



4.2%
ALL 4-YEAR
INSTITUTIONS

COMMUNITY IMPACT

CCCU students are **more likely to participate in community service** while in college.

COMMUNITY SERVICE



35.2%
OF CCCU
STUDENTS



25.7%
OF ALL COLLEGE
STUDENTS

Source: Econsult Solutions, "The National Impact of Christian Higher Education," 2018.

Rising to the Occasion



IT WASN'T SUPPOSED to be this way. What started off as one of our strongest study abroad semesters was soon truncated by the infamous virus that would become known worldwide as COVID-19. After learning about the pandemic, our staff made the decision on March 12 to end the residential portion of our BestSemester programs and teach out the remainder of the term remotely. Although no one was happy about this, our students lamented it the most. While our staff worked hard to console them, we were proactive in getting students out of various countries and back home as international borders began to quickly close, sometimes in as little as 24 hours.

In the literary world and movie industry, this is the inciting incident — a cataclysmic event that spurs things in motion and results in the main action of the story. These incidents always have a major impact on the main character's life and draw a clear line between life before the event and life after. For us, COVID-19 was that inciting incident. To further complicate things, the cold, senseless murder of George Floyd by an officer lit a social justice fuse in the American conscience that reverberated around the world. The Black Lives Matter movement, which was birthed and championed by the African American community, was suddenly taken up and hailed by people of all races and ethnicities as people protested and prayed.

Drained emotionally, economically, socially, and spiritually by the two pandemics of COVID-19 and racism, Christians and Christian higher education were left with the question, "What now?" Months later, we are still grappling with this question and the fallout from both events, but the gravity of these inciting incidents won't allow us to go back to business as usual.

Even as universities around the country attempt to commence with a fall semester, whether remotely or in person, and foster a semester as close to normal as possible, we all have the feeling that things will not be the same. When it comes to addressing systemic racism, that is a good thing. When it comes to enrollment and revenue for colleges, that may not be good. Campuses that rely heavily on both tuition dollars and revenue from auxiliary services to meet their budgets, such as student housing and meals, are bracing for the financial impact

Our hope is not dependent on circumstances, or momentary trouble, but on the One who can do above whatever we can think or imagine.

of not having a bustling student body on campus this fall. With the anticipated loss of revenue from these temporarily reduced or cancelled services, it may ultimately mean that even more difficult days lie ahead.

What is a Christian response to uncertainty, disruption, and crisis? Fear? Anguish? Despair? Our Bible shows us chapter after chapter that Christ is in the crisis; God is with us. If he is with us, then our hope is not dependent on circumstances, or momentary trouble, but on the One who can do above whatever we can think or imagine.

It is because of this that I believe innovation and creativity will come out of constraints and opportunities will rise up from problems. I believe that Christian higher education will rise to the occasion. This may in fact be our finest hour. Our job is simply to look. What do I mean? Look for opportunities to think outside of the box; to stretch your team's imagination; to create an inclusive and diverse table; and to innovate past your comfort zone. Remember that success is not predicated on having all of the resources but on being resourceful.

You may be saying to yourself, "That sounds good, but it is easier said than done." I understand. I am not telling you anything that I am not working on myself. Even as I write, my team and I are working diligently to be resourceful, creative, and innovative. We are thinking about what our member campuses will need in the future. With God's help, we truly believe the best is yet to come — not only for our programs, but for Christian higher education as a whole. 🙏

KIMBERLY BATTLE-WALTERS DENU is the CCCU's vice president for educational programs.

Photo courtesy of Kimberly Battle-Walters Denu

TEACHER-SCHOLARS

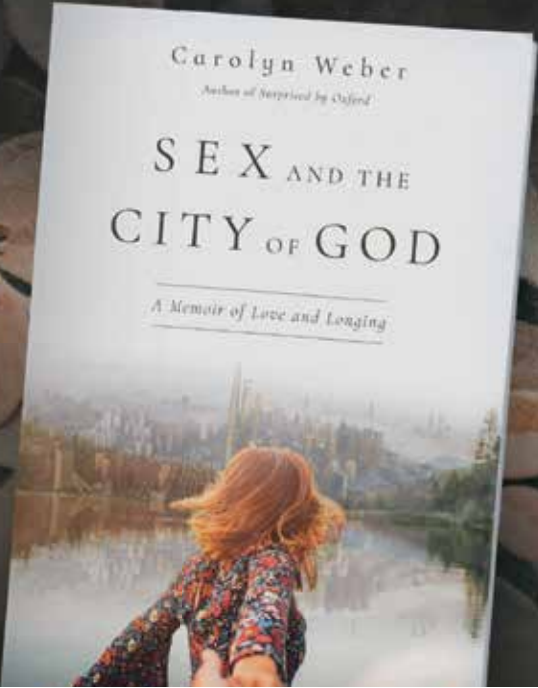
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CAROLYN WEBER is the award-winning author of *Surprised by Oxford* and is an international speaker. Dr. Weber holds her MPhil and DPhil from Oxford University, England. She has served as faculty at Oxford University, Seattle University, University of San Francisco, and Westmont College, and was the first female dean of St. Peter's College, Oxford.



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Scholarship: Vocation Steeped in the Long View



IN 1939, ABRAHAM FLEXNER, the founder of Princeton University's Institute for Advanced Study, published "The Usefulness of Useless Knowledge" in *Harper's Magazine*. It is a seminal essay that should be required reading for every institution's board, administrators, and faculty alike. It celebrates the liberal arts and the "products" that creative thinking enables; underlying Flexner's premise is the long-term vision afforded by the liberal arts.

Flexner notes that liberal arts-style creative thinking — thinking that is motivated purely by curiosity and the desire for answers to deep questions, regardless of practical applications — has, in fact, led to many practical discoveries with deep impact that are valued by the wider society. The list is far longer than these few examples (Flexner offers the first two; I've added an additional two):

- Michael Faraday's experiments enabled his discovery of the ability to induce electricity; this has led to, well, every bit of our modern lives we take for granted! No electrical generation? No modern medicine, no computers, no lights, no mass farming techniques — the list goes on.
- James Clerk Maxwell's pure research and mathematical models led to the ability to control and send radio waves. This then enabled the practical inventor Guglielmo Marconi to develop the wireless.
- Monastic scholars, from the Schoolmen to the early humanists, were committed to a seemingly abstract preoccupation with recovering ancient language and texts. Their efforts led to a renaissance of learning and a focus on texts that played a profound role in the Reformation.
- Had Hedy Lamarr — Hollywood icon, Austrian émigré, and genius mathematician — not pursued her curiosity in the development of certain equations, there would be no signal hopping, and we would not be using cellphones or Wi-Fi.

The "useless knowledge" of the liberal arts has indeed proven to be useful in the long term. But we now live in a world that prioritizes and prizes the practical arts over the liberal. Amid the challenges that present themselves to us in our present world, we are often tempted (and indeed may even be pushed

by many of our institutional constituents) to focus solely on those studies that offer an immediate and obviously beneficial payoff. As academics, we often find ourselves required to apologize for research or to justify the days spent in the library, laboratory, or wandering about lost in our intellectual imagination as we consider an idea. The practical arts are important, but they are not sufficient; they are far too constrained and narrow to serve the long-term common good.

But in defending the vision of the liberal arts, we find both a challenge and an opportunity. Academic institutions — and the research activity that happens within them — are a rarity in our world in that they provide a long-term vision that spans generations, even as they engage new ideas and technologies. In a world that favors short-term gain, immediate turn-around, and instantaneous results, academics (and the institutions they serve) have a unique responsibility: Produce work that offers a long view. Ours is an investment not simply in the next generation that happens to populate the current classroom (whether that classroom is meeting in a physical space or over Zoom) but in the generations and the societies that we cannot yet conceive because they have not yet been conceived.

Where else could we find communities of people and leaders considering and actively working to contribute to the common good of those who are not yet born? Among businesses? Well, perhaps a rare few. Wall Street? The stock market is notorious for rewarding short-termism. Governments? Occasional policies may prepare for the long term, but the examples of failure

Research is a commitment of those in academia to offer something transformative and to present a vision that extends beyond the immediate.

Jonathan Kirkpatrick

to do so are much more common. Even churches, with all the good they do, are generally focused on the needs of the immediate moment or on the heavenly life to come; there is not a lot of consideration for generations to come in 50 years or more.

But colleges and universities committed to the liberal arts focus on the discovery of new knowledge (as Cardinal John Henry Newman describes it), the transmission of knowledge to students, and the formation of those involved in the learning. Formation is not just focused on immediate needs or the activity in the classroom today; it invests itself in ways that go beyond the reckoning of a few days or years.

Research is a particular form of service, a formative exercise that invests in the long vision as a way of life. It is a commitment of those in academia to offer something transformative and to present a vision that extends beyond the immediate, the pragmatic, and the personally beneficial. The impact of particular research projects may not be realized for many years; they may not even impact our own immediate communities.

Liberal arts institutions have a unique call to serve those in whom we invest without any hope of return or benefit. We have a call to speak, serve, and act prophetically without knowing the impact we will have. We do so with a vision of serving the common good, both in the communities present today and the far-off tomorrow.

While I would not claim that Christian colleges and universities stand alone in thinking about the long-term common good, they are a rare commodity. As Christian scholars taking the long view, our commitment to research and long-term vision calls us to interpret the layers of pain in the world for our current *and future* students, and the broader communities entailed, and better enables them to respond in a way that is deeply marked by our Christian vision. Our world needs those who express a vocation steeped in the long view. 🙏

STANLEY P. ROSENBERG is the CCCU's vice president for research and scholarship and the executive director of SCIO: Scholarship & Christianity in Oxford, the CCCU's U.K. subsidiary.

CULTIVATING DISTINCTLY CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

In cultures fraught with fear and division, experienced leader Gordon Smith calls for Christian leaders who can effect change from the margins, promote unity and maturity among Christians, and provide a nonanxious presence grounded in Christ.

What does it mean to provide leadership for the church in an increasingly secular context?

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Will We Engage?

Reflections in the aftermath of George Floyd's death.

EIGHT MINUTES AND 46 SECONDS. Those horrifying moments gripped this nation as people from around the world watched video footage that captured a violent knee crushing the neck of yet another unarmed Black man, draining George Floyd of life as he repeatedly uttered the same words desperately pleaded by Eric Garner in 2014: "I can't breathe." Again. Another Black life expunged, lost to violence and hate, not born of that moment alone, but representative of centuries of oppression and abuse.

The brutality and violence depicted in those frames recorded in Minnesota connect to other tragedies that have unfolded across the nation in small towns and big cities. In days prior to Mr. Floyd's death, we recalled the names of other victims such as Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. Although painful and deeply troubling for many, especially people of color, the recent tragedies were grossly familiar, pointing to historic racist acts of violence and abuse aimed at Black minds and bodies. This abuse dates back to this nation's founding; the stain of slavery is woven into the pages of our history and into the systems that perpetuate an ideological premise of superiority. Across this nation, around the globe, and within our university communities, voices cried out, "Enough! This is not right!"

As we reflected on these events at Azusa Pacific University, it was heartbreaking to hear students of color, particularly Black men, explain how those lost lives triggered fear and trauma within them, as they have personally witnessed or been victimized by abuse of power. A few Black men recounted the informal supplemental education relayed by family, not to avoid a speeding ticket or reprimand, but to help them survive as a Black man in this world:

"If you are pulled over by an officer, be compliant, don't make any rash moves, speak calmly, get the officer's permission before going to grab your registration from the glove compartment, and always make sure your hands are visible."

"As a Black man, you may be perceived as a threat by some; do everything within your power to comply because your life depends on it."

As I listened, I recalled my father sharing the same instructions with me as a young man. I, too, have discreetly passed similar counsel on to my teenage son — not to evoke fear, but to relay wisdom that may facilitate his safety in light of the countless occurrences of unnecessary violence directed toward Black men. These lived experiences reveal both the depth of pain produced by racism and injustice and the dire need for meaningful engagement and change.

In this unprecedented time dominated by angst and social unrest, I am reminded of the parable that Jesus shares in Luke 10. He recounts the plight of the man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho who is attacked, stripped, and beaten by thieves and left to die. In the story, Jesus contrasts three approaches exhibited by two religious leaders and one Samaritan; these approaches are applicable for our consideration today. First, there is the priest who saw the battered man, but he *kept his distance* and passed by on the other side. Second, a Levite *went over and looked at the man*, but he walked by on the other side of the road. Last, a Samaritan *came to where the injured man was*, and when he saw him, he *felt compassion* for him. He bandaged his wounds, pouring olive oil and wine on them. He put him on his animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Some in this nation, like the priest, choose to look away and keep their distance when it comes to matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion. For others, like the Levite, the curiosity is there, but it does not translate into action or change. However, the Samaritan's heart and compassion for his neighbor compels him to engage and invest his time, energy, and resources to support the overall well-being of the battered man. As the higher education landscape grows more ethnically diverse, Christian colleges and universities have an incredible opportunity to amplify and operationalize the same compassion. They can model what it means to be culturally responsive and relevant by cultivating an ethnically diverse community, an inclusive cultural climate, and an equitable and just learning environment that reflects Christ-centered engagement and fosters holistic thriving for all faculty, staff, and students.

I am also struck by the partnership the Samaritan cultivates with the innkeeper to provide steady and ongoing care to the abused man. It presents the beauty of the collaboration of responsive people rallying around a common purpose. At APU, we saw some of this same collaboration in the aftermath of Floyd's death. The shocking footage evoked anger, frustration, and grief in faculty, staff, and students within the APU community. Aware of the pain felt across the institution, President Paul Ferguson sent a message acknowledging the pain

of the recent tragedies, denouncing racism and injustice, and emphasizing our unwavering commitment to love God and our neighbors who bear the image of God. This communication prompted collaborative efforts to provide immediate care to colleagues and students and to educate our community on racial and social complexities. Our University Counseling Center offered therapeutic services, while campus pastors rendered spiritual guidance and coaching for students. Our Student Center for Reconciliation and Diversity provided focused support for our network of ethnic organizations and hosted *VOICES*, a safe space for students to engage in critical conversations weekly to process current and historical issues related to race, culture, equity, and justice and to promote community action, engagement, and solidarity. The offices of the provost and diversity and inclusion co-sponsored APU's first Equity and Justice Forum, drawing more than 500 faculty and staff. The livestreamed forum featured a panel of faculty experts that provided comprehensive, multidisciplinary perspectives on current realities, disparities, and injustices evidenced across the nation and exacerbated during the pandemic season.

An intentional effort continues to further engage the community in meaningful, robust conversations to inform strategic efforts to advance racial equity and justice. The president and select members of his cabinet met with officers of the Black Faculty, Staff, and Administrators Association (BFSSA) to collaborate and consider added action items to further complement pronounced equity-based outcomes and priorities embedded in the recently constructed university strategic plan. Added conversations enabled leaders to glean more insight and perspective from ethnically diverse student groups and other constituents, providing qualitative remarks to assess areas of opportunity as we seek to enhance the Christ-centered impact of the institution.

I am convinced that Christian higher education is strategically positioned to employ a compassionate approach that translates into purposeful care for all students, faculty, and staff while also implementing systems that advance anti-racism, racial equity, reconciliation, and the holistic development of diverse learners and leaders who will leverage their knowledge, skills, and faith to effectively engage and inspire change in a complex world. 🙏

DR. KEITH E. HALL serves as vice president, chief diversity officer, and a member of the president's cabinet at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California.



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LOOKING FORWARD

How Will the Pandemic Change Christian Higher Education?

IN NEARLY AN INSTANT, the coronavirus turned campus life upside down in the spring. But as the weeks progressed, it became apparent that the impact of this pandemic on higher education would not be limited to one or two semesters. Additionally, a summer of social unrest in the U.S. stemming from overwhelming evidence of systemic racism has shone light on numerous inequities in all aspects of society, including higher education. We asked several leaders from a variety of areas of campus leadership to reflect on both the present and the future of Christian higher education.



Illustration by Kathryn Ferrance / Source Image: AdobeStock

CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: OUR FUTURE, OUR MESSAGE

JOSEPH JONES
President

HOW DOES AN African American president who previously served in South Asia and now leads Fresno Pacific University — a Christian Hispanic-serving institution — see the future of Christian higher education in America after COVID-19? Or should we say post-COVID-19/George Floyd incident, since one impacted the other? Both revealed inequities and disparities in this country that our educational communities have ignored for decades.

Now our hearts are exposed by guilt, anger, self-denial, and civic division that threaten our traditions. This global situation has revealed that when it comes to these vulnerabilities, there is little difference between Christian institutions and secular institutions. If we had not before, we should now ask how to reconcile a Christ-centered education that truly models the washing of feet amid chaos.

Strangely enough, both the pandemic of COVID-19 and the pandemic of racism are associated with breathing and death. Both reveal aspects of human nature that are positive and negative. And both have global influence. To ignore these implications in nurturing a Jesus worldview in our students only reinforces our complacency and privilege in defending our centuries of status that we have fought to maintain.



WILL WE GRADUATE THOSE
WHO ARE STRONG IN THE
SAMARITAN'S SPIRIT, BOLD WITH
THE DISCIPLES' RESOLVE, AND
HUMBLED BY JESUS' EXAMPLE?

Did Christian colleges and universities look like Jesus before this crisis? We have sent students into the mission field since the beginning of our existence. We are proud of the many service hours our students contribute in their communities. We have developed our own denominational cultures and avoided the issues that make us and our students uncomfortable. We have accused the world of being self-centered, while avoiding the uncomfortable by moving to the metaphorical other side of the road as Jesus decries in the parable of the Good Samaritan. And we have justified our rights as Christians, forgetting that the Christ-follower "must deny themselves," take up their cross daily, and surrender to the "royal law" to love in the same way that Jesus loves us.

You see, Christian higher education will be challenged not by the rhetoric on which we have built our institutions. It will be challenged to show Jesus as he is — not as we have conceived him in our traditions, but as he is revealed through the Word that lives through us. This is not political, nor is it a social gospel; these are only labels we use to pacify our own existence. Jesus' call is love manifested; it is a call for us to be ready to surrender our rights, our privileges, our goals, and our traditions to the person who loved us and powerfully demonstrated that love by washing others' feet.

None of us can predict the future, but we can learn in the present. If we are open to the Holy Spirit's counsel of moving beyond wisdom — what we know as the integration of faith and learning — and into the fusion of wisdom and surrender, then we will affirm Jesus' relevance. This "taking up the cross" way of living is not always what we like to teach, nor is it always what our students want to hear, but it is what the Master expects.

The compounding issues we face now and in the future mean our campuses will only become more disordered. Are we willing to examine our institutions in the same way that we examine ourselves individually as followers of Christ? Will we be graduating those who are strong in the Samaritan's spirit, bold with the disciples' resolve, and humbled by Jesus' example? We may assume we are already doing this. But are we? Do those who need to see the light of our work seek us because of our engagement with these tough issues and ongoing crises? Or will we continue in our privilege of complacency that has sustained us in the past?

Our new normal should be the old normal of Jesus Christ — humility that serves amid crisis.

JOSEPH JONES is president of Fresno Pacific University in Fresno, California.

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THE UNCHANGING GOSPEL IN A CHANGING WORLD

JONG HYUN CHANG
President

IN 1976, Baekseok University launched with a mission to produce talented people who serve humankind and are educated in the word of God. The COVID-19 pandemic has had enormous impact around the whole world; in fact, we might label this as the Age of New Normal. The pandemic's impact can be seen in every area of politics, economy, society, and culture. Drastic changes are also happening in the field of education. It is an experience none of us has ever faced before.

As the founder and president of Baekseok, I have thought a lot about the way we can overcome this crisis situation. In a semester of disrupted courses, I am very grateful to professors and students who bore so much sacrifice and trouble in the midst of it. Fortunately, Baekseok University had been concerned about online study and distance lectures for a long time; it is why our school could cope with the transition into these new systems immediately.

At Baekseok, the Center of Teaching and Learning had not only provided training and development for professors but also had operated distance classes on a trial basis. At the graduate school level, the Center of Distance Education had been employed in producing cyber classes in order to provide high-quality distance lectures. As a result of preparing for the future in these ways, our professors were able to adapt to distance lectures without significant trouble. After the outbreak of COVID-19, our administrative staff has supported the production of video lectures and constructed systems that are optimized for professors' lectures. They developed guidelines and gave demonstrations about making content for video lectures that enabled professors to self-produce those lectures. Considering the short amount of time for learning and preparation, this cooperation was

quite significant for the transition to distance lectures.

Since more teachers and students are experiencing online classes on account of the rapid change, we are seeing an increased demand for online open classes such as MOOC courses or celebrity special lectures; there is also growing demand for realistic learning using technology like virtual reality or augmented reality. Baekseok is endeavoring to prepare for and meet these needs so we can improve our educational environment and enhance the quality of education.

However, the thing to which we have to devote ourselves even more than these efforts is to examine and confirm our religious identity.

We are living in the time of a rapid transition, and we are facing an unprecedented state of affairs. We face great anxiety that we might be eliminated if we are not able to adjust to these changes properly. But even in the age of this tremendous change and uncertainty, we must remember that giving genuine education and life to human beings is to give them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Times change, but the Gospel does not.

In the time of COVID-19, Christian universities must stick firmly to their religious identity. Ironically, in the age of non-face-to-face interaction, people are more eagerly longing for intimate fellowship and relationship than they ever have

before. In this respect, the crisis that we face now is not just a crisis but is also another chance to share the fellowship and relationship of faith in Jesus Christ.

Baekseok's theological identity is Reformed Life Theology, a movement to practice Reformed Theology properly. We can practice this through the spiritual life in which Christ lives in me and I live in him. We are not to be afraid of changes. We are not to forget our evangelical identity as we work to stay culturally relevant.

After COVID-19, university education will likely change much more than we can imagine. But our Christian faith is a living faith. Though it has encountered many troubles during the past 2,000 years, the Christian church has survived and flourished. There is an insightful saying: "If the church is to remain the same, it must change." To live in Christ is indeed to face challenges. Do not be afraid of change. Instead, let us embark on our new religious voyage on uncharted waters of uncertainty, knowing that our future is in God's hand.

JONG HYUN CHANG is the founder and president of Baekseok University in Cheonan, South Korea.



LET US EMBARK ON OUR NEW
RELIGIOUS VOYAGE KNOWING
THAT OUR FUTURE IS IN
GOD'S HAND.

Photo courtesy of Jong Hyun Chang

IN THE TEMPEST, A CHANCE TO RE-CENTER OUR MISSION

SARAH THOMAS BALDWIN
Student Development

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY AT A SOCIAL DISTANCE

DENNIS N. BAZEMORE
Student Development

I RECENTLY WALKED a labyrinth, a spiritual practice that has become deeply meaningful as I listen to God and consider my formational identity and calling. When I face challenges, the circuits of the labyrinth offer space to slough off any internal soul clutter so that when I arrive at the center, I not only know the question that I have for God, but I am prepared to listen to his response.

In many ways, the global pandemic is like the winnowing circuits of the labyrinth. It is taking each of us to the center of our mission and forcing each of us to consider the questions connected to our identity in God — and, hopefully, giving us space to listen to what God has to say to us.

We face a multitude of turbulent internal and external challenges. If Christian higher education breaks loose from its moorings in Christ, the world will lose an influential catalyst of personal and community transformation. We must ask the hardest questions of our mission. Who is God calling us to be as sustainable, faith-fused institutions of higher education? I believe that the answer that is being revealed to us is collaboration — specifically, collaboration in four ways.

First, we must deepen and expand our collaboration in a way that we never have before within each of our institutions. To prepare students most effectively, we



have to blur the lines between the departments of "academics" and "student development" and instead be a seamless learning environment in the student experience. While we have talked about this for decades, we no longer can afford to operate out of segmented or siloed sides of an institution. If we are to survive and thrive, we must find ways to champion holistic education comprehensively in adaptive structures. At every level of the institution, collaborative leadership is necessary.

Second, in order to be strategic collaborators, we must trust each other. Such trust happens through personal, multisector collaboration that incorporates intentional relationship building. The polarization in the culture and in faith communities is real, and it is reflected in institutional culture. While the turbulent times seek to unmoor us, nothing will capsize our mission more quickly than an institutional community that does not trust each other.

Third, we will be better able to offer distance education without compromising mission if we can foster deeper partnerships with our local churches and communities. This year of tumult, from pandemic to the

conversations on racism after the death of George Floyd, is forcing us to reckon with the inequities of educational opportunity and to further note the response of emerging adults who are choosing to live a localized life as a reaction to a hyper-globalized society. To do formational education that prepares students for the complexities of this moment, universities and churches must collaborate creatively to forge relational, interconnected spaces for multifaceted, networked mentorships, internships, and high-impact learning practices. In the recent past, young adult discipleship has primarily been the work of the campus ministry. Now, we need to reassess how churches and universities can collaborate.

Finally, we must deepen and expand our collaboration with each other across our CCCU institutions. In the future, I predict institutions like ours will be more interconnected with others who share similar community culture, and we will increasingly share academic programs and faculty members across regions and states. The residential programs will continue to anchor us to a particular geographical area and hold our identity, but we will not be able to survive without working together at unprecedented levels of connection.

This is a grand opportunity to get to the center of the soul of the university and follow Jesus together courageously. The winds buffet us, but they can also propel us forward if we do this together. At the end of the day — at the center of it all — this is God's work. The mission of the Christian university belongs to God. May God guide and direct us and give us a vision of mutuality in our work.

SARAH THOMAS BALDWIN is vice president of student development and dean of students at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky, and chair of the CCCU's Commission for Chief Student Development Officers.

AdobeStock; Photo courtesy of Sarah Thomas Baldwin



AT CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY, the offices of student life and spiritual life are intentional in building and sustaining community and socialization. As a university of Christian higher education, Campbell's mission includes "gather[ing] a diverse community of learners, forg[ing] a community of learning ... and provid[ing] students with opportunities for servant leadership and community engagement with an emphasis on underserved communities." It is important for our students to be learners in the classroom, but we also want them to learn about being a part of community. Throughout the year, we plan programs, offer resources, and create opportunities for socialization to support this community focus.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our community in March as we closed the campus, sent students home, and provided instruction through an online platform, with the hope of completing the spring semester in a positive way. As the year has continued, it is apparent that this disruption of our community-centered work will continue, and we have been planning on how we will adapt to this reality this fall.

Campbell's administration created a Fall 2020 Task Force to provide

guidelines, recommend policies, and work with all campus partners to make plans for the opening of the fall semester. All residential students will be in a private room with limited guest hours. Spaces on campus (including classrooms, dining facilities, the library, and other common areas) are being set up for 50% occupancy. The university has also adopted policies addressing face coverings and social distancing.

All these changes have been made with a focus on the health and safety of our students, to continue to provide instruction to our students, and to keep the operation of the university as normal as possible. Yet many of these initiatives increase isolation of students instead of building community. This is especially true for our incoming freshmen and transfer students. New students will not be able to experience the typical large-scale "welcome week" activities that help them engage with classmates and build community. Instead, many of these activities have been adjusted into virtual events as a different way of student engagement with the university.

In past years, we planned numerous events to increase socialization of our students and build community. This engagement leads to growing

our campus community. The student life leadership team has met weekly working on strategies and plans to address how we can continue to build community when all these major events have been cancelled.

Campbell's student life team plans to utilize technology to build community as much as possible during this time of pandemic. Our operations and services have had to adjust to Campbell's new social distancing policy as we plan our activities and events throughout the entire academic year. Typically, we offer touch points each week with students, but these will be greatly reduced.

Instead, our staff members have become creative with virtual events, and we are figuring out plans for repeating on-campus events many times. Student clubs and organizations will be holding many online meetings using Zoom or WebEx. Virtual chat sessions for students and staff will be a way of staying engaged, and traditions are being celebrated online to connect with students.

In the midst of pandemic, we will be using different methods, but our focus remains the same: building a community of students.

DENNIS N. BAZEMORE is vice president for student life at Campbell University in Buies Creek, North Carolina.



THE NEXT NORMAL OF CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN CANADA

BARRY SMITH
Provost

OVER 30 YEARS AGO, I moved from my home in Canada to pursue graduate theological education in the United States. At that time, with rare exception, postsecondary education in Canada that addressed any faith component came from small, regional Bible colleges or Roman Catholic schools. In the U.S., I discovered a rich variety of Christian liberal arts institutions available alongside the many highly revered private, elite colleges and universities. When I returned to Canada nine years ago, I found several institutions (including Tyndale University, where I serve) had become comprehensive "university colleges" with a clear commitment to faith integration and vocational and personal formation. However, well over 90% of all post-secondary education still comes from public colleges and universities in Canada; decision-makers and the general public regard the "publics" as the norm. Therefore, financial support of education, including most private donations, goes to these educational institutions.

This is the background as we consider how the pandemic will affect Christian higher education in Canada. There are several challenges common to Christian institutions on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border — namely, challenged health care services, a



softened economy, diminished summer employment opportunities, public unsettledness, and uncertainties heading into the fall semester.

Tyndale University is located in Toronto. Two-thirds of our undergraduates and all of our graduate and seminary students commute from beyond our campus and nearby apartments. We are fully preparing to enter the fall academic term with the possibility of significantly fewer residential students, providing all classes online, having the majority of campus programs and services functioning remotely, and offering the "community experience" uniquely and deliberately. Our distinctive of campus and community engagement is "under construction," though it will remain a hallmark of the Tyndale educational experience.

How students and their families will respond to these changes and uncertainties as we enter the new school year is a real concern. Many have found high school attempts at online delivery unattractive and inadequate. How will they receive ours? Most of the publics, at least in our part of Canada, have also announced the fall academic term courses are primarily online. If students are staying home, what difference does the "school product" and Tyndale distinctive community make? As the economy

begins to rebound, students may opt for a gap year to earn more money, or they may lower the number of courses they take as they blend both employment and education. All schools are concerned with the impact of closed borders and how international travel limits will influence the international student fall enrollment, both new and returning.

Clearly, courses sold, residency revenue, and auxiliary services have significant fiscal implications. Social separation and isolation bring into the equation emotional challenges that necessitate counseling support. With a demographic group that spends a high amount of time on their devices already, how classes, counseling support, community-building, and general communication achieve their full purpose is a primary concern.

I conclude with optimism and confidence in higher education's role and significance in shaping society, particularly in unsettled times. We have a unique opportunity to support and shape the "next normal" through our resources, product, and mission. May it be so, both here and where you are.

BARRY M. SMITH is the senior vice president academic and dean of undergraduate studies at Tyndale University (Toronto, Ontario, Canada).

AdobeStock; Photo courtesy of Barry M. Smith

THE FINANCIAL STRUGGLES OF TODAY MAY BRING NEW OPPORTUNITIES TOMORROW

KIMBERLY M. HADLEY
Finance & Administration

DURING THE LAST several months, Christian colleges and universities have had to develop a laser focus on critical paths to navigate the unclear future in the midst of COVID-19. Always considered important, innovation, cash flow, mission, and contingency planning are now at the forefront for administrators as revenue streams evaporated during the onset of the crisis. But as we consider what was done in these areas out of necessity, we can see the potential for great change and growth for the future.

Innovation: In what seemed like an overnight feat, faculty developed innovative techniques and learned new technology that allowed them to teach in a modality many had never experienced before. They embraced the herculean effort of rethinking all of their courses and considering how to accomplish learning outcomes without the convenience of proximity. Electronic meetings became an everyday occurrence, and chapel and other student development efforts were also reimaged for a digital format. This process expanded the ability of many institutions to respond to future demand for online, hybrid, and remote education. Although students and parents say they generally still prefer on-ground education, there now exists a greater level of comfort among students and faculty for remote and online educational experiences. While many long to be back on campus for on-ground instruction, the increased acceptance for online, remote, or hybrid education may continue forward, and a greater percentage of students will likely gain a portion of their education through online, remote, or hybrid modalities.

Cash Flow: As students returned home and many schools refunded a prorated portion of room and board while simultaneously investing in technology to serve our students well in the emergency

AS WE CONSIDER WHAT WAS DONE OUT OF NECESSITY, WE SEE POTENTIAL FOR GREAT CHANGE FOR THE FUTURE.



remote education format, cash flow and cost containment became paramount concerns. Never before had institutions seen the cost structure with all but the bare essential expenses stripped away. Of course, this level of cost containment is not sustainable for the long run. However, institutions will probably reconsider expenses that were previously assumed to be necessary. As faculty, staff, and administrators evaluate potential expenses and investments to determine what is essential in carrying out the mission of the institution, there is an opportunity to develop a more efficient overall cost structure in higher education. Over time, this should improve cash flow, contingency reserves, and affordability.

Contingency Planning: In the wake of sending students home from campus, administrators developed a wide range of contingency plans for the spring, summer, and fall terms. Given the cyclical nature of the traditional higher

education financial model with two primary terms, institutions will likely develop more contingency plans within the annual budgeting process, and boards will likely demand that those contingency plans be in place before approving the budget. When risk and uncertainty are high, the desire for contingency will be as well.

Mission: As institutions can no longer afford to sustain programs that routinely run deficits or divert resources from efforts more central to the university's primary mission, they may develop specialties and readily collaborate with one another through remote and online education modalities to more cost effectively meet the broader educational needs of the students in specialized programs with lower enrollments. This level of collaboration, coupled with program reprioritization, may allow institutions to more effectively and efficiently carry out mission-central efforts.

As we head into an academic year that looks to be as tumultuous and uncertain as this past spring was, we can also take heart and inspiration from what has been accomplished in the midst of this adversity and the potential it creates for a brighter future for Christian higher education. 🙏

KIMBERLY M. HADLEY is vice president for finance and administration at John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

Photo courtesy of Kimberly M. Hadley



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THE EXPLOSION OF ONLINE LEARNING

Lessons learned from a
disrupted semester.

**A conversation between Anthony Bradley,
Charles Reese, Candace Wicks,
Theodore Williams, and Linda Samek**

GIVEN THE SUDDEN shift to distance learning in the spring of 2020 and the continued anticipated disrupted classroom experience into the 2020-2021 academic year, the CCCU hosted a conversation with a team of faculty from a variety of disciplines at campuses across the country to share the lessons they learned from the spring and their insights on questions of education quality, accessibility, and innovation in the future.

The discussion was moderated by Dr. Linda Samek, professor of education in residence at George Fox University and former chair of the CCCU's Commission for Chief Academic Officers. Panelists included Dr. Anthony Bradley, professor of religious studies and director of the Center for the Study of Human Flourishing at The King's College in New York City; Charles Reese, professor of theater and co-chair of the theater department at Bluefield College in Bluefield, Virginia; Dr. Candace Wicks, associate professor of biology at Hardin-Simmons University; and Dr. Theodore Williams, associate professor of communication at Bethel University in Mishawaka, Indiana.



This conversation has been condensed for length; to view the full discussion, visit www.youtube.com/CCCUvideo.

LINDA SAMEK: This past spring, college and university faculty faced an unprecedented challenge in an abrupt shift from a typical in-person format to finishing out the academic year through remote delivery. As the disruption from COVID-19 continues and increasingly looks to impact the upcoming academic year as well, we also recognize that what has been and will be happening throughout this year is going to impact our classrooms, our students, and our colleagues possibly for years to come.

We would like to start today by asking each of you some questions that are focused on your classroom experiences from the spring. Dr. Bradley, you teach theology at The King's College, which is located in New York City, one of the earliest epicenters of the pandemic in the U.S. Could you briefly share what the spring looked like for you as a faculty member and for your students? What lessons are you reflecting on as you prepare for fall?

ANTHONY BRADLEY: I would say the one word to summarize our experience is "crazy." It was an absolute circus to very quickly change our modality from on-campus to online. We had about a week to go completely online, and it happened around our spring break, so that gave us a bit of a buffer. ...

I think for me, the biggest thing that I actually lament is that you could really see the disparity between the wealthy students and lower income students. That's where my heart really broke. Students who had great Wi-Fi access, who had great options in terms of hardware,

who had home lives that were very stable and well-suited, they got the highest grades. Some of my more intelligent, high-performing, really sharp students performed poorly because they had so many distractions. Some of them didn't have good Wi-Fi connections. We learned that some of our students didn't even have a laptop. Some of them had laptops with no cameras on them — things like that.

So the disparity between the high-income families and the low-income families was really laid bare. For the fall, we're thinking about ways to close the gap by making the delivery such that, regardless of [students'] capacity to have the best Wi-Fi and the best hardware, we can still have the best delivery opportunities for our students.

LINDA SAMEK: Dr. Wicks, I'm going to turn to you next. As a biology professor, you teach in a field that has unique classroom needs. How did you and your colleges manage the transition in the spring? What are you thinking about for the new year?

CANDACE WICKS: One of the things that was helpful for us is many of our [education] resources quickly made a lot of their digital resources, including lab simulations, available online at either a discounted or for no cost for the remainder of the spring semester. So a lot of those accommodations allowed us to push forward and do that within the biology department. There were other avenues that a lot of my other faculty [colleagues] were able to utilize. They contacted a lot of our distributors that we work with for our in-person labs, and [the distributors] were able to provide kits that we then put together and sent off to the students. So labs, dissections, chemistry experiments — students were able to complete those things at home with those resources.

However, we did run into the same issue [of disparities]. We have a large disparity between our students who are from metropolitan areas versus the rural areas who don't have access to a stable internet connection. There are students who, if they're at home, they're responsible for working and helping bring in an income in that household, so they weren't able to focus and do well in those classes. [Like King's,] we also had the same situation on hardware. So those labs simulations that we were able to use — if students didn't have a compatible machine to access those simulations, that put them at a disadvantage. I had one particular student who was sharing a computer with their parent; they weren't able to log into any synchronous Zoom classes if they were at the same time that their parent needed to access the computer. Some students were trying to complete the semester on their cell phone — which is very difficult to do when you're trying to do chemistry, biology, and mathematics. ...

Those were some of the things that we had to look at on the back end in order to offer those options to the students so academically they wouldn't suffer because of those disparities. Now, moving forward, I will say that chaos and craziness do feed



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THEODORE WILLIAMS
Associate Professor
of Communication,
Bethel University (IN)

into innovation. So some of the things and some of the resources that we were able to access in the spring, moving forward we think these are good things to integrate into our classes anyway. ...

LINDA SAMEK: Professor Reese, you also teach in a very experiential field in theater. What happened for your classes in the spring? What are you considering as you prepare for the fall term?

CHARLES REESE: One of the biggest challenges for us is that you have theater as an academic discipline, but then you also have theater as a performance discipline. So a big part of what we do had to go away. One of our biggest productions to the season was canceled because we couldn't bring audiences together. Our acting classes faced unique challenges; there was no way to do the partner work they needed to do to do scenes, so they had to shift to monologues, and it's just not the same experience.

I think the biggest thing we're facing in the fall is that same scenario and finding new solutions to these problems. So for instance, our fall production, we are looking at doing a radio show, a reenactment of Orson Welles' *War of the Worlds* broadcast from 1938. For Christmas, we're looking at doing a live-streamed reader's theater of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Another major challenge for us is that we are teaching a profession that right now is on hiatus. I've got friends and colleagues throughout the professional

world who are writing and saying, "We can't do what we do." So it's a particular challenge in the performing arts — for musicians, theater artists, and dancers — that I think will be with us for at least the next couple of years.

LINDA SAMEK: Dr. Williams, I would imagine that there are people who would say that a field like communication might be well suited to online transition, given that we've learned how to communicate electronically even before the pandemic. But I think that everyone would agree that the past few months have shown not just the strength and flexibility that online education can provide, but also some of the ways that communicating remotely can fall short. What was your spring like, and what are you reflecting on as you prepare for the fall?

THEODORE WILLIAMS: I teach traditionally face-to-face, but I have taught online on the adult education side. ... One thing I learned early on in online teaching was the key of really connecting with the students. I love the face-to-face — I love the energy. I tell jokes; I'm excited; I'm personable. But the first online class I taught about five or six years ago, one of my evaluations said that [the student] felt like some kid who had been dropped off at a picnic by their parents and then their parents came back a week later. I was like, "Yeah, that's probably about what it was." From that semester on, I really began to develop opportunities where students could always hear from

me, see me posting videos, and checking in.

I think that's the key to online. I had a lot of students this past semester that, if you didn't stay connected with them, they would just float away. Unfortunately, I did have several students that, even during the face-to-face, they were just there, but at least there was an accountability because you could see them. Once we went online, I had at least a handful of students that I did not hear from at all. They just fell off the face of the earth for various reasons. I think that was just tougher for those individuals where face-to-face was the only thing that was keeping them tied to the class.

[One strength for faculty] was the creativity, as Dr. Wicks talked about, toward innovation. We had a lot of people who were sharing best practices. Our administration was intentional — the key words were flexibility and grace. They were going to extend flexibility and grace to us as professors; we would extend those to our students, and we would hope our students would extend those to us. We did away with the faculty evaluation for this one semester, and we did away with some other things that took the pressure off; [our administration would] say, "Just be a great steward. You know your students; you know your gifting; you know what needs to be done. Just do the best that you can do." ... [For fall,] once again, [we'll focus on] grace, flexibility, and just keeping to the main thing, which is how we can offer

the best services to our students to honor them and honor God.

LINDA SAMEK: I want to take a few minutes to think about implications for this disruption on the future of teaching and Christian higher education in particular. Probably all of you have heard from parents and students who have concerns about the quality of the education that they might be receiving when we're using primarily remote delivery. I would like to hear what you say to students and parents who are very concerned about online and other forms of remote learning. What are some of the positive outcomes that you have seen?

CANDACE WICKS: One of the things that we do hear quite a bit is, "Well, if I'm online, why do I need to come to Hardin-Simmons? I can go to a college that doesn't cost me as much and take the exact same class." What I tell the student or the parent is, "Yes, we're delivering the information online, but you're paying for the access to the elite faculty that we have here at Hardin-Simmons. That is who is delivering that course material." The [faculty-student] relationship can still be maintained and developed. We make sure that our students can access us. ... A different institution may be hiring an adjunct faculty to teach a course to keep their costs down. We're still the full-time faculty at Hardin-Simmons that is invested in how well our students learn and in their futures. You still get that quality education, and that's why it's still worth doing those online classes at Hardin-Simmons or at their [CCCU] institution of choice.

One of the things that is essential with any teaching experience is you have to be open to the feedback that you get from students. So the simulations that I pulled out and I started to use in the spring, I'm using them online this summer and planning to use them in the fall. I'm currently getting feedback from those students. [They might tell me], "So I really didn't like that simulation, or I didn't get anything out of it." So what that tells me is



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that I need to create a pre-lab lecture that helps them focus in on the points that they need to [learn].

It's all about communication. As Dr. Williams says, in having grace and flexibility — you have to have that with yourself. It's great that the university is giving that to us, and we hope that we're getting it from the students. But we have to give that to ourselves as well, because without that, we can't grow and we can't get a better product for our students to make sure that they're getting the quality education that they need. So with innovation, you also have to take the critique in order to continue to improve upon those new ideas that you're using.

ANTHONY BRADLEY: What's important for every CCCU school is that this is an opportunity for us to actually sell our distinctives. Every Christian college cares for its students. But we come from different traditions; we come from different perspectives; we have different histories. Those [differences] are the things that people are actually paying for.

At King's, we have a unique core curriculum — it's politics, philosophy, and economics. There are only a handful of universities in America that still do that. You can't go anywhere and get that. So you're getting something distinctive by doing that at King's with our faculty. You're also doing this with a cohort of different students [from institution to institution]. So it's not just the faculty — you're actually learning in a community with different people who are feeding into and co-contributing to your learning together, which is also important.

I think the online delivery also allows us opportunities to be flexible with different learning styles. There are some students that I experienced where they needed a lot of one-on-one time, and others who were like, "Leave me alone. Let me go do my work, and I can come back and later learn." Because of the flexibility, we were able to really frame and deliver the education in a way that actually fit learn-

ing styles — which, by the way, is something very large universities cannot do. The smaller schools have the flexibility to really meet students where they're at in ways that other schools don't. I would actually say this: In this environment [at CCCU institutions], you actually get more bang for your buck, because of the ways in which we, as full-time faculty, are engaged with students that you won't get at larger state schools.

THEODORE WILLIAMS: I think the beauty of being in the CCCU is this foundational value that we are really trying to honor God in our teaching. So in terms of how this disruption impacts the quality [of classes], I'm working under the premise that the disruption should make it better. I'm a firm believer that God uses all things for the good of his people. As a professor and a pastor, I've been preaching and speaking that maybe the disruption was [actually] because of the [prior] complacency that set in.

When you think about long-standing institutions — whether it's in academia or in the church — we have a tendency to get comfortable with how we do things. Every now and then, God has to shake things up because we can go on autopilot. As professors, we have certain evaluations [of our work], but I think there needs to be a self-check that we do also to make sure we don't grow stagnant in our teaching. So for a lot of us, [the disruption] shocked us out of the slumber we were in, in terms of, "Wow, I had gotten so used to teaching the same courses. I know how I'm going to do it. I know on this day I'm going to tell this joke. They're going to laugh. I'm going to follow with this." So I think the disruption, if anything, it's going to spur the quality to another level, in terms of individuals having to go back to the drawing board to really think about, "What is the best way to get this information to our students?"

Another benefit — a lot of our students live online; they live on social media. For



them, it probably wasn't as big of a transition as it was for us. They're like, "Finally, welcome to my world. Now you're on my home turf." We'd be on Zoom or on a different platform, and they'd be like, "Hey, by the way, Professor Williams, do this. Here's how you should be doing it." So it was an awesome opportunity for us teachers to become students, and that interaction became genuine because all of a sudden, students felt more empowered because, in some ways, they were the experts. It was a give and take.

So I think there's lots of pros to this particular transition, in terms of the quality of making sure that we connect with our students. There are some downfalls and disadvantages, but I think the quality will not suffer if all those involved are committed. I think that's most important, regardless of the modality. If people aren't committed, it could be the best, and it still will suffer. But if people are committed, no matter what you're working with, it will be all right.

CHARLES REESE: I would echo what Dr. Williams said about this idea of being shocked out of our complacency. I would say, though, there's also a degree of complacency that happens with students sometimes. I think students often view college education as a passive thing: "I come in. I go to the place that you tell

me to go for four years. You give me a degree." What this has challenged all of us to do is to take a greater ownership of the educational process. I've got to make sure I'm communicating with each one of my students, but they've got to be as involved, making sure that they are taking ownership of their own responsibility in their education.

I had my theater majors in courses and they pretty much stayed involved. But then, among the students who I had [general education] courses with, I had students who dropped off the face of the earth because it wasn't something they took ownership of. They were relying on that passivity. It doesn't happen that way anymore once we get into this modality.

LINDA SAMEK: All of you in one way or another talked about accessibility. We've heard and experienced the reality that our students, many of them don't have access to internet streaming, at least at the quality required for some of the things that we asked them to do last spring. What would you say to cabinet leaders and other campus decision-makers about accessibility for students? What do campuses need to do to make sure that a Christian higher education is accessible to anyone who wants to take advantage of that?

CHARLES REESE: I think one of the biggest issues is infrastructure. I do a lot of traveling around the world, and it shocks me that countries that we would think of as not as advanced, perhaps, as we might see ourselves have a much greater infrastructure for the internet, for computer accessibility. We have got to enter the 21st century. We have to invest — both as schools and as a nation — in making sure that we can communicate on the same level as the rest of our neighbors in the world.

ANTHONY BRADLEY: We've already been talking about flexibility — that's going to be key, flexibility and grace, as it was mentioned earlier. For those of us who are professors, who see classrooms as these classic spaces where we deliver the most amazing content ever, we're going to have to be flexible because the ways in which that content is delivered will be received by people in different stages and different places. So we actually have to, I would say, chill out, and be more open to the fact that for some students, we have to be more flexible and extend more grace in terms of allowing the students to get assignments in, maybe even allowing them to take tests at different times than normal.

The other dimension that I would really encourage administrators to think about is the mental health disparity.

That's as important as the other ones. One student told me he was so "Zoomed out," he was actually experiencing depression from having to engage in this platform. That's an additional variable, and administrators and those who work in student success are going to have to work with the faculty and the students who are managing the mental health component of being isolated and engaging in this [remote learning] platform. God did not design us to engage with other human persons [in this manner].

CANDACE WICKS: This is a question with a lot of different arms going out. I first want to address the social aspect of things. The social problems that have been present on campus — and we may not have experienced or known about them — are amplified when we move to an online platform because those disparities become very apparent. So we have to make sure that our students are comfortable enough to open their mouth and let us know that they don't have access to certain things. If they weren't comfortable [telling us that] on campus, they're definitely not comfortable telling us that they're lacking something through a screen. So moving to an online platform isolated even more those students who already felt isolated.

So basically, we just took this problem [of disparities] that we wanted to keep in a little bubble and we basically just blew it up. Now, we're having to not only address those disparities, but we're also having to get to the root of the problem, and say, "Okay. We need to address this. But we also need to make sure that if you experience problems going forward, that you're comfortable enough coming to us and telling us so we can help you alleviate these issues and these problems. Or at least be able to meet you where you are and give you those accommodations to make sure that you have the ability to be just as successful as the student who doesn't have these disparities."

We take a lot of things for granted; that became very apparent when we switched to online. We assumed that all of our students had the equipment that they needed. We assumed that our students had access to internet. We assumed that these students are coming from places where their home life is stable. So when we sent these students home and said, "Hey, you don't need to be on campus, but we're going to still make sure that you have the same level of education," we set some of our students up to fail because we took a lot of these things for granted.

So I think one of the things that the admins and the higher-ups need to know is that, we need to make sure that when our students enroll, that they have different opportunities to satisfy some of those [technological] requirements that we're asking of them and at different price points. Give them different ways of paying that off so they don't have to go further into student debt in order to meet those requirements to succeed. We need to give our students options, and we need to make sure that our students have a safe space where they can actually express the things that they need to express, so we can meet them where they are.

LINDA SAMEK: It's been a hard year. It's been a very busy year, and it looks like things

are not going to be slowing down in any of this fall. What is giving you hope and energy at this moment in time?


CHARLES REESE: The thing that I'm looking forward to the most is being back with my students. In the theater, we are a very, very hands-on-communal kind of people. I had that family yanked away from me with no warning — seniors I didn't get to see graduate, freshman who I haven't been able to spend time with. I'm looking forward to the chance to be back in the classroom; even if it's with a mask between us and a glass partition, at least we're in the same room. That's where my energy is right now.

THEODORE WILLIAMS: For me, I have taken advantage of the last few months to allow God to work on me. I was not one of those individuals where I couldn't wait to get back to normal. One thing God was telling me is, "We're not going back there. The plan was never to go back to that." So there's a new thing that God is trying to do. He's trying to keep us all dependent upon him and keep us from growing complacent.


So I took advantage of being away. I'm excited because I was able to, in the midst of this stay-at-home time, to actually stay at a home. My mind was where it needed to be in terms of focusing on my marriage, and focusing on family, and eating right, and preparing. So I'm excited about that. I'm also excited about the synergy that takes place when you're able to be around like-minded people, whether it's colleagues or students. I'm excited just to be able to see what God has been doing in all of our lives. That's what excites me.

ANTHONY BRADLEY: So this has been an exciting time, as Professor Williams said earlier, for innovation. It reminds me of [Exodus], as God's people came out of captivity, came out of the Red Sea, they had a new world, and they had to pivot on the spot and reorganize everything.

This is an opportunity for us to actually be creative and to do new things that take some risks and to try out some new things.



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I think it's wonderful because it's forcing us to do that. In Christian higher education, if we don't innovate, we're done. We don't have the margins of big state universities; we don't have the endowments of the Ivy League. So this is an opportunity for us to figure out ways to be sustainable.

The other thing that really gives me hope is Generation Z. Given the world they were born into after 9/11; given the fact that they withstood the financial crisis of 2008; given the election of 2016, and now this — I mean, this generation could be the most resilient generation we've had in decades. So I'm excited because they want to make this work. So as students dig down deeper in their own courage, in their own readiness, and in their own flexibility, our innovation and their flexibility could create something quite extraordinary in the future.

CANDACE WICKS: I think Dr. Bradley was peeking at my notes over here. At the very top of my page, I have the big word, resilience. I think that is going to be the big banner after all of this. The thing that gives me hope and gives me energy is that, because we've had to change, it's giving us the opportunity to evolve. We don't have to just reach the students who can come to us. We can reach out and we can go as far as the interwebs will take us. ... It's allowing us to be better as a faculty, as individual instructors, and as people, because it keeps pushing us to move forward.

We're also stretching our students. They are in such an uncomfortable place, and I absolutely love it, because I know that on the other side of that, they're going to say, "Hey, I went through this. I went through this. I'm resilient. I'm able to conquer whatever you throw at me next." It's going to build confidence in them. It's going to give them the opportunity to innovate in the future. It's going to give them the hope and the energy that's now coursing through our veins, and that we're excited about, and we're praising God about. I think that energy is going to get passed along to our students. 🙌



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Leading Through Crisis

Weathering the Storm Facing Higher Education

A conversation between
Roslyn Clark Artis, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez,
Barbara K. Mistick, Ted Mitchell, and Shirley Mullen



Illustration by Katryn Ferrance
Source Image: AdobeStock

THE CCCU HAS ALWAYS VALUED learning from other leaders; our effectiveness is due in part to our ability to engage in conversations in the larger higher education network. We brought together leaders from across the higher education sector to discuss navigating the simultaneous crises we all face and preparing for the road ahead. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Shirley Mullen, president of Houghton College (Houghton, NY) and chair of the CCCU's Board of Directors, and included Dr. Roslyn Clark Artis, president of Benedict College (Columbia, SC); Dr. Barbara K. Mistick, president of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU); Dr. Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education (ACE); and Dr. Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, chancellor of the City University of New York (CUNY). This conversation has been condensed for length.



To view the full discussion, visit
www.youtube.com/CCCUvideo.

SHIRLEY MULLEN: We're focused today on the three crises of the spring, but those of us in higher education were already dealing with such issues as the approaching demographic cliff, the broken economic model for higher education, and certainly lots of public skepticism. So the crises of the spring have really exacerbated what was already a fairly turbulent time within higher education: the crisis in global health caused by COVID-19; the accompanying economic crisis; and the social and civic crisis rooted in a long history of systemic racism and injustice and exacerbated today by the polarization of our public politics.

As institutions of higher education, we are at the crossroads of these issues, and leaders in higher education cannot avoid dealing with these. We've come to realize that the impact of this [past] semester is also not only a one-semester impact; higher education will be changed for the long haul.

So we're here today to invite several leaders from different sectors of higher education to wrestle with some of the impact of these crises, to think about what we can do to prepare for the long road ahead, and in particular to think about how we can better utilize our collective resources to support leaders in higher education. ...

Dr. Matos Rodríguez, [you are] the chancellor of the City University of New York, a system of 25 campuses with an enrollment of over 275,000 degree-seeking students and over 225,000 adult and continuing education students. Within just a week this past spring, [you] oversaw the transition of nearly all of CUNY's 50,000 core sections to remote education — an unbelievable accomplishment. ...

As chancellor of the CUNY system, you lead the United States' largest urban university, which is also in one of the areas that was hardest hit in the early days of the pandemic here in the United States. As your institution thinks about the coming academic year, what are some of the lessons you've learned from this spring semester that are shaping your plans going forward? And what are some of your top priorities for the coming year?



SHIRLEY MULLEN
PRESIDENT, HOUGHTON COLLEGE



ROSLYN CLARK ARTIS
PRESIDENT, BENEDICT COLLEGE



BARBARA K. MISTICK
PRESIDENT, NAICU



TED MITCHELL
PRESIDENT, ACE



FÉLIX V. MATOS RODRÍGUEZ
CHANCELLOR, CUNY

All photos courtesy of conversation participant

FÉLIX MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: We had to — in pretty much two weeks — move 50,000 courses to distance learning. We continue to learn about that experience from our students, our faculty, and the student support services — which is an important [group] that often gets neglected when you talk about that transition. And I am so proud of our faculty; before [the spring], about 10% of our courses system-wide were offered in online or hybrid modality. So we had faculty that had, in some cases, very little experience with the distance learning, and they just went all out for the students. The stories that I have from faculty [include] really trying to reimagine [their courses]; they formed learning communities with other faculty members on their own campus or throughout the system. [They wanted] to do the right thing for the students, who were adjusting to a new modality but also dealing with all kinds of situations at home — maybe having the virus themselves, or taking care of a loved one who was sick. Many [students] have children in the K-12 system in New York that went to homeschooling and they had to adapt their entire home routines, which was also happening to the faculty.

So [our faculty were] an incredible asset. We've now invested heavily in the professional development of the faculty getting ready for the fall and the spring; we've had about 2,000 of our faculty already go through some very intensive professional development in online instruction. We saw their passion and commitment to the students, and that was encouraging and inspirational, particularly then, when we were at the center of the pandemic.

On the other side, [the spring] was not the kind of classroom experience that we're proud of or that we want to provide students moving forward. So we took a lot of notes on how we could improve the work that we were doing and also about investing in providing student support services — our academic advising, our mental health advising, our scheduling, our bursars, all those things that are key to give to students — and how we could find the best practices to be able to support students.

So as we go into the fall, I think that we're better prepared because we have really invested and doubled down on the professional development of our faculty, the professional development of our staff in the student support systems, and then also on mental health [services], which is something that everyone needs — not just students, but [also] the faculty and staff, because we're dealing with trying and difficult times.

SHIRLEY MULLEN: It is an encouragement in itself to see how the faculty have really stepped up to the plate and put the students first. I think that's something we've



all seen. Dr. Artis, I'm going to move to you now. You lead a historically black college located in South Carolina — in many ways, a long way from New York City, far removed from the experiences of the campuses that Dr. Rodríguez just talked about. How have the events of the past few months impacted the Benedict community, and what are the lessons that you are translating into the fall semester?

ROSLYN ARTIS: As you might imagine, the challenges that Benedict has faced have been, certainly in my opinion, somewhat more extreme than perhaps some of my other colleagues have seen. North of 80% of Benedict students are Pell-dependent students, so they are incredibly low-wealth. They are overwhelmingly first-generation: 74% of my students are first-generation college students. So they are among the most vulnerable student populations in the country. And so when we experience traumatic incidents like sudden displacement from the campus, we see a lot of emotional trauma associated with that.

We also have had academic challenges that have been born, by and large, out of the digital equity divide. COVID-19 has revealed what we have always known but now have fully confirmed: Digital inequity is a huge crisis in rural states like South Carolina. Fully 12% of Benedict College students do not have access to broadband in their home communities. We've spoken with numerous students who have had to walk upwards of two miles to get to a local library — which, of course, is closed in the wake of COVID-19 — and sit on the steps in 90-plus degree heat for a couple of hours to complete assignments on their cell phones. Many students did not have laptops and other devices to be able to complete work online. So while I am incredibly proud of our faculty for their immediate pivot and transitioning all of our courses online, the socioeconomic status of the students that we serve really exacerbated an already critical situation for our students, in particular, and made educating them all the more difficult during this period of time.

We also began to track the extent to which our students experienced homelessness and food insecurity. We found that a significant number of our students, quite frankly, did not have a stable home

environment within which to study. Many of them were actually in more danger from COVID-19 at home than perhaps they might have been on the campus because the primary earner in the family is a frontline service worker and, as a result of that, was exposed on regular basis to COVID-19. We have been tracking very carefully the cases of COVID-19 among our student populations at home.

And so as we began to move toward fall to make decisions for the reopening of the campus, we did so against the backdrop of the socioeconomic factors I've outlined, as well as public health and safety factors that again are unique for populations largely of color, where we're seeing a tremendously disparate impact of COVID-19. For example, in South Carolina, the population of people of color is 27.1%, [but] incidences of COVID-19 exceed the 50% mark at this juncture [in mid-July] for people of color. And so there are lots of social issues that surround the education of our students; while the curriculum and the deployment of that curriculum was our primary objective, we had to do that within the context of those socioeconomic limitations and the racial disparities that occur.

And then add to that the racial unrest that really evolved in a very big way over the last several weeks. For many of our communities, that brought an entirely different challenge to bear: the inability to wrap our arms around our students to help them unpack their feelings about recent events associated with George Floyd's murder and so many others; the inability to help them really work through those feelings and be effective, articulate, safe advocates for the issues of the day. We felt very limited in our ability to engage them in those meaningful and often difficult conversations; Zoom just isn't the same when we were having those kinds of engagements.

So lots of lessons: one is to take nothing for granted. We were among the institutions that, when we evacuated, we provided travel subsidies for our students to purchase plane tickets and bus tickets — only to learn later that some students were terrified because they had never been on a plane. But we didn't stop to ask them. We thought we were doing the right thing, only to find out later that the anxiety they experienced was quite significant. Moreover, many of our students said, "Nobody asked me if I was going home to a safe environment." We were so busy evacuating the campus, we didn't stop to process some of those unique and personal issues that our students were suffering through.

So over the summer, we've had a comprehensive communication strategy deployed, and we're listening — really listening — to what our students have to say, not only about their academic experience but their home experiences, their social experiences, and their emotional state. They are not okay. And it's important to us at Benedict College to ensure that they are [okay], because when they come back, they're going to bring that pain and that anxiety and those feelings with them. And we have a responsibility to help them to unpack and work through those things. So it has been, as they say, more than a notion, but it is work that is critically important for us to undertake and to be persistent about.



SHIRLEY MULLEN: Dr. Mitchell, I'm going to turn to you now and ask, as you've listened, what have you heard that resonates with what you're hearing in higher education as a whole? Do you see ways that higher education as a whole is going to be changed by what's happened this spring?

TED MITCHELL: So I have the great pleasure of serving ACE, and both [President Artis] and [Chancellor Rodríguez] are our board members at ACE, and we've been meeting once a week since all of this started. So we've been having very robust conversations among our leadership group of 40 to 50 university presidents as we've worked through this.

I think that the biggest lesson that we are all taking away at the moment is that these combined crises have revealed a lot about higher education. On the upside, one of the things that this crisis has revealed is the inherent strength of our institutions. And it's not just the traditional strength of bringing people in, teaching them things, introducing them to different cultural experiences, and then saying goodbye. No, it's really about a set of institutions that are morally committed to the growth and development of individuals and to the communities that they are in and that they serve. So I've been heartened every day by the stories of individual faculty members, of individual student service officers, of students reaching out to other students; the kind of support that has been just in time and incredibly creative.

So these crises have revealed an inherent strength in higher education in the way we think about our work and the way we deal with each other. I hope we don't forget that. I hope that as we move out of these crises or to the next set of crises, we can continue to draw on that experience of the assets that we might not have recognized before.

On the flip side, I think that the crises, as [President Artis] said a moment ago, have drawn back the curtain on issues that have been a problem in higher education for generations: racial injustice; the inequalities inherent in our system as a result of racial prejudice; socioeconomic dislocation. [CUNY's and Benedict College's] student bodies share many characteristics in terms of poverty, [students with] complicated family situations, and [the number of] first-generation students. As we look at the dynamics of American higher education, that represents

These crises have revealed an inherent strength in higher education. ... [They also] have drawn back the curtain on issues that have been a problem in higher education for generations.

more and more of our future. So it's high time that that curtain gets pulled back and we look for ways to address [those issues]. And I hope as the crisis clears — or again, as we move to the next set of crises — we remember and we commit ourselves to working on remedying some of those systemic issues that have compromised the lives of our students as well as our institutions. ...

We do our best when we recognize the systemic nature of our students' experience. That includes everything from race, to gender, to family status, to socioeconomic status. ... So I hope that we really remember the systemic nature of our work and not fall back into this default that, well, we have these tight little compact communities, and if everything is okay day-to-day as students move from residence halls to cafeterias, to

classrooms, then all is well with them. No; they — and we — are all a part of very complex social dynamics and social systems that we need to attend to.

SHIRLEY MULLEN: Dr. Mistick, I'm going to turn to you now. You're also a leader of a national organization. The question I particularly want to address to you is how do you see these new circumstances having an effect on the role of university leaders, particularly university presidents?

BARBARA MISTICK: Chancellor Rodríguez and President Artis, your comments really make me think about the changing nature for presidents as they lead through a crisis today. You have several crises we're addressing. You have a lot of emotion; it's a very personal crisis, both COVID-19 as well as issues of race on our campuses. You've got limited facts and a lot of speculation. All of that together makes for a very unstable informational environment.

So I think one of the big challenges for presidents is to be prepared for a phase I'm thinking of as "über-engagement." You've got to be prepared for an era where students, parents, families, your community, your faculty, and your staff want to be more engaged with what's happening on campus. This need for communication today is just intense — not just to be communicating but to be timely with information.

A second element that's really important is transparency today, particularly in this lingering and extended level of uncertainty that we have right now with the crisis. So if we can tell people what we know and tell them what we don't know, if you can explain the process, [even if] everything else is uncertain, you can at least have some certainty in how decisions are going to be made, who's making those decisions, and which members of your campus community are involved.

It is also important to be consistent with what you're telling people. There are so many different audiences; whether it's internal, whether it's media, whether it's your political leaders, you need to be able to communicate the same message to all of the various constituencies. When in doubt, come back to your mission. The missions of our institutions are so important, and they're so embedded in our community — colleges and universities have trusted brands. So as you have that trust that you already have established with your communities, you can really let that mission help drive your approach to dealing with the various crises that are out there. And that trust does give every one of our presidents that platform to speak as a leader and help people through this unprecedented time.

SHIRLEY MULLEN: It really does require a level of upfront humility and just engagement in the moment even more than in normal times; if someone has not already somewhat acquired humility in this job, this moment will bring that about. And we all want our characters changed for the better in our work.

I'm going to ask a question now that invites you to speak a bit more out of your own leadership style. You have all experienced in

many arenas a lifetime of leadership, learning, and lessons. And so I'm going to invite each of you to share one or two lessons from your own journey that you have drawn on in this moment to give you courage and sustenance as you've gone forward.

FÉLIX MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: One thing that was very clear to me early on [in the pandemic] was how exhausted both my team at the central office was, emotionally and physically, and how my presidents and their teams on the 24 campuses were. I needed to find energy in my own daily life to be able to be sensitive to where they were and — either [by engaging] collectively or one-on-one — be someone who was supportive of them and urged them to take time for themselves, to take care of their families.

It's recharging your existential batteries, and it's also being humble about things I have to learn. We lost one of our vice chancellors — Allen Lew, who was an alumnus and the first Asian American chancellor in the history of the university — we lost him to the virus, and that is a big blow to the team. So these things hit you personally, but you need to keep battling on. You need to keep dealing with the uncertainty of the budget for the next year and how to deal with the racial unrest.

So one thing has been to keep an eye on how my team is doing and making sure that I'm providing collective space for all of us to nurture each other and help each other. But [it's also important to] do the one-on-one work — which I think all presidents or chancellors do in a different way — [to help your team manage] the levels of exhaustion and insecurity, which are at a much bigger place than they've ever been historically.

We all need something that gives peace and energy. For me, I've been able to get out and bike. That has been my space to stay physically fit and to give me 45 minutes or an hour of mental peace and figuring things out so I can come back and be a good husband at home, a good dad to my two teenage boys, and [a good leader] to my team. I've also told all my members — and I suffer because every day we're behind on what we need to do — but I tell them to take time off in the summer. We're in a war mode, but I need people to sneak out and go recharge because that's the way that we are going to be ready for whatever the fall might bring.

SHIRLEY MULLEN: Yes, this is clearly turning out to be a marathon and not a sprint. President Artis, what would you like to add?

ROSLYN ARTIS: The short answer is "ditto." Everything that Chancellor Rodríguez said is entirely accurate. What I would add is that it is okay even for the president or the chancellor to not be okay. I think there is a level of empathy and humanity that attaches to us all, and I think there are moments when it's appropriate to share that.

For example, Benedict College postponed its commencement ceremony; it was rescheduled for Aug. 8. It became abundantly clear that that is unsafe and is not going to happen; a crushing disappointment for the first-generation students who want the opportunity to walk across the stage. I was unpacking how I was feeling

about that, and I was really dreading having to talk to them over Zoom to explain why we made that decision. And it occurred to me — I'm sad too. It is my favorite day of the year. The other 364 days of the year are all for this moment for me as a president to see those kids complete their academic goals. And while I will not suggest the disappointment that I feel is equivalent to the disappointment that the graduates feel, it's important that they see me as human and they see me as grieving right along with them. I have lost something, too.

The reality is, I've also lost something else that's really important — the ability to make decisions. I did not decide to cancel commencement; COVID-19 decided to do it. Even though I am the president, and I'm accustomed to controlling environments, making decisions, engaging my team, and trying to reach the best possible solution, I understand very much that the buck stops with me, but

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the reality is it doesn't. Roslyn Artis did not cancel homecoming; she did not cancel commencement; she did not cancel summer schools; she did not push us online. COVID-19 did. I am serving at COVID-19's will and pleasure right now.

And so I'm grieving the loss of my decision-making authority as the president of this institution and really grappling with the extent to which the decisions I make are not my own — they're necessary decisions brought about by the circumstances we find ourselves in. But I think it was okay for me to be vulnerable in that moment with the students and express to them, "Like you, I feel the pain of the displacement. A college campus is not a college campus without college students. I miss you. It's terrible



here without you. And I'm so sad about commencement, too, and I'm going to hate missing homecoming, and I love football. I didn't unilaterally call off football. But those decisions had been made not necessarily by me, but by the circumstances, and I grieve with you. I am not simply handing down a decision; I am sharing that pain with you."

I think it's important for us to reveal our vulnerability as human beings who experience loss in many of the same ways. It humanizes us. It allows us to empathize more fully with our students. And as Chancellor Rodríguez said, our staff and faculty are exhausted. They are fundamentally exhausted, and we're seeing it manifest itself in small ways, and we can ill afford them to break. And when I say that, I mean the psychological impact on your health. When your emotional state is in flux, it is not a good thing. I care enough about the people that work with, for, and around me that I forced them to take a break and give their family some much needed and much deserved time.

So I think the humanness of acknowledging that we are not okay either, but we will get through this together is a critically important leadership lesson. We don't always have to be in charge; COVID-19 is in charge. But we do always have to be kind and empathetic and clear and transparent.

SHIRLEY MULLEN: Certainly, as presidents, we know that we're never really in charge, but COVID-19 has reminded us of that to a very deep level.

TED MITCHELL: As I think about the words that we've been using — about humility, vulnerability, serving humanity — I'm reminded that that really is the core of the work that we do. And I think that all of these crises have helped us double down on those ideas.

Students really more than anything else want to be listened to. They want to be heard. They want their experiences to be a part of the experiences of other people

whose privileges and backgrounds are different. And I think that we need to remind ourselves of that every day — that what we bring to every interaction is a set of our own experiences, and they're different from those that other people bring. We've learned through Zoom that people have kids, people have dogs, people have pets, they make noise. And just as a microcosm, that suggests that we're all part of these very complex environments, each of which has a different story and different dimensions.

In working with our staff at ACE, we have the conversation regularly: When are people going to come back [to the office]? And as we work with our staff, one of the things that we hear over and over again is that people are worried about coming back. They're worried about the disease; they're worried about the unpredictability; they're worried about public transportation and what vulnerabilities they increase by taking the Metro in D.C. to work; they're worried about childcare.

We are all really coming to understand the interdependency of the family system with the work system and the childcare systems. And those are out of alignment. So we need to listen hard, we need to work hard, and we need to bring those together in ways that impact both public policy and institutional practice.

BARBARA MISTICK: I think obviously Ted and I have been spending too much time together, because I think that he's absolutely right about the COVID-19 crisis. It is a very personal crisis. And I see that from all of our colleges and universities, all of our member schools, but I also see it from our own staff. This is impacting everybody differently. So the leadership lesson for me is one of acceptance and one of not placing judgment on decisions that people make. We are dealing with people who are torn between their kids being home and a homeschooling environment; they're dealing with perhaps being in an age group that is more vulnerable; they're dealing with concerns about just the basic transportation pieces. I think that's true for all of our member colleges too. I hesitate to say this, but there is also an inherent sadness by parents at a very deep level because they want the experience on the college or university campus to either be what they had themselves or to be what they aspire to [if their children are] first-generation college students. I think that we just have to accept that that's where everybody is today and not have judgment about it.

I think the best way to deal with all of that from my leadership experience is to find a way to celebrate every single accomplishment. So you got everybody home safely from the spring semester; let's talk about that. Talk about anything that you've been able to accomplish that's had a successful outcome, even if it's really small. We got all this Plexiglas installed, or we had a win with the CARES Act. All of these things are tremendous accomplishments that we've done because we've been working together. I think that we are stronger together and if we can celebrate all of those accomplishments along the way, I have no doubt that we'll figure out a way through this crisis. 🎉



SPIRITUAL LESSONS LEARNED IN QUARANTINE

FIVE CAMPUS LEADERS SHARE
INSIGHTS ON HOW TO GROW
CLOSER TO GOD IN THE MIDST
OF CRISIS AND ISOLATION.

Campus ministers have always provided mentorship and counseling for students and campus leaders in the midst of crisis. But the current crisis requires physical distancing that can make this ministry challenging. Five leaders share how they have responded and what spiritual practices they have found encouraging for their campus communities.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS — AND FOR US

A PATTERN EMERGED as I talked with students during Spring 2020 stay-at-home orders. They were reeling with anxiety because they had been unexpectedly disconnected from people and places. Scrambling to make meaning out of this life shift, they longed for hope and direction. One student's text mournfully described her off-campus isolation: "How long will this last?"

In those strange times, my first impulse was to help students find connection. Although quarantine meant that people and places would be limited, spiritual practices could offer peace in the midst of unrest. And a key was to connect students to spiritual practices in a readily understandable way. The biblical ideas of peace and self-care seemed to be a common language that most — whether they were Christ-followers or not — could lean into.

As I walked students through spiritual practices, I noticed that they'd quickly identify one as a good fit. It was key for me to listen and understand their personal experience, reflect back what they were feeling, and then suggest practices that could provide them with peace.

In her formative book *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun explains that spiritual practices begin with a desire to grow closer to God or see him make change in our lives. This desire leads to trying spiritual practices which, when practiced regularly, become disciplines. Through these disciplines, the Holy Spirit transforms us, lovingly leading us through life change.

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LINDA J. LEON

Director of Spiritual Formation
at Malone University in Canton,
Ohio.



As we continue in uncertain times, it is vital for campus ministry staff to listen closely to students' fears and longings. We can help students put words to their desire for change. We can suggest the right spiritual practices that will meet students' heart longings. And we can introduce them to the God whose peace passes our understanding.

Spiritual practices for peace and self-care include:

Breath Prayer: Find a quiet space and relax your body. Focus on your breathing. As you breathe in, think the phrase, "Holy Spirit" (or another name for God), and as you breathe out, think the phrase, "Send me your peace" (or another comforting petition). Repeat as often as you breathe in and out for at least five minutes; change the phrases to suit your emotional and spiritual needs.

Unplugging: Unplug from your devices for a while. Start by turning them off for 30 minutes and then try for longer. The constant notifications and ongoing news cycle are impacting your stress level and ability to slow down! Give your mind and body a chance to relax.

Lament: Many of the 150 Psalms give voice to fear, sorrow, doubt, and anger. Psalm 13 expresses dismay in suffering but ends with words of trust in God. Try rewriting Psalm 13 with your own words of lament and trust in the Lord.

Gratitude: Being grateful can be hard in times of stress and uncertainty. Research shows that your sense of well-being

improves by writing three things you're grateful for before sleeping and again upon awaking. Try keeping a gratitude list by looking for goodness or gifts that the Lord brings into your life.

Photo courtesy of Linda J. Leon

LEARNING FROM OUR 'COMPULSORY SABBATH'

WE ARE LIVING in unprecedented days. Social and physical distancing have become the norm, but spiritual distancing is not required; if anything, our proximity to our Savior must increase. In some ways, the pandemic might help us with this. As my good friend and evangelist Dr. Sam Chan said, "We are living under a compulsory sabbath." The commandment to keep the Sabbath used to be the only one I did not think twice about breaking. Yet now, more than ever, it is critical to our spiritual lives that we practice Sabbath.

When I asked God for more margin in 2020, I received much more than I was expecting. This much slowing down can bring about more anxiety because you have more time to think and worry. But Sabbath reminds God's people that they are not in control. This can be a fearful reality, but it is also a calling into a new and deeper level of trust in God.

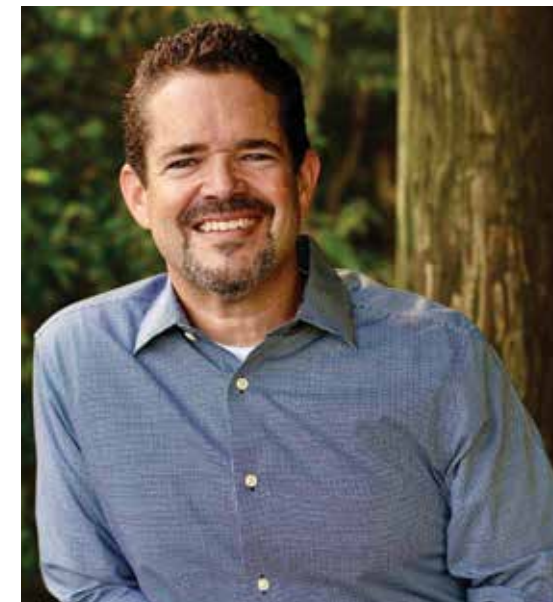
For most of us, the Sabbath is theologically irrelevant, dreadfully impractical, and awkwardly counterintuitive. Yet the Gospels show us that Jesus regularly pulled away to rest. We, too, must pull away in order to not be pulled apart.

Imagine if, like the children of Israel who were gatherers in the wilderness, your life depended on your work. If the Sabbath is odd for us, it was worse for them. No refrigeration! No work meant maybe no eating. But Sabbath is God's way of telling us, "You need to trust me. Rest is a necessity; you need a weekly reminder to depend on me." Don't get me wrong: Working hard is important. Christians, especially those in the academy burdened with forming souls and minds, must have a robust work ethic. But trusting God is even more important.



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There's a story of two foresters — a young man and an old one — competing to see who could cut more trees by the end of the day. The young man noticed that every 30 minutes, the older man would take a 10-minute break. At the end, the old man had cut down several more trees than his younger competitor.

The young man said, "How is this possible? I didn't stop and you stopped several times." The older man replied, "You worked, grunting and groaning. I sat for two reasons. I sat to recover, and I sat to sharpen my axe. You were tired and working with dull equipment." You can be busy but dull and unproductive at the same time.

Bottom line: A rest-less person is restless person. In Matthew 11:28-29, Jesus challenges us to experience a soul rest that only he can give: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (NLT)

I rediscovered the Sabbath just over two years ago, and it has been a glorious find. From Friday evening to Saturday evening, I turn off my devices and minimize the ways work can take my attention. I spend more time with God in prayer, reading, being outside, and simply slowing down. Everything becomes more special. Meals taste better; conversations take on more meaning; and even the occasional *siesta* feels great.

We are designed to rest. Take a day to declare your dependence on him. Lay it all before the Lord; whatever the pressure, whatever sins, whatever demands are outside of your control, take them and unload them. In this time of social distancing, you will find him closer than you expect. Go ahead, call a time out, and learn to rest in him.

Photo courtesy of Bernie Cueto

ENSURING ACCESS TO GOD’S WORD — EVEN WHEN HOME

AT WISCONSIN LUTHERAN College, we believe that access to God’s word is the means through which the Holy Spirit creates and sustains faith (Romans 10:17). Was there ever a time in our recent history that we have had more access to God’s word than during the pandemic? Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have been flooded with online church services, daily devotions, and posts of encouragement from the Bible.

What a blessing it was during the change in the spring semester to see how readily available God’s word was for our students as they finished up their studies at home. But it left us as campus spiritual leaders with a question: What is our spiritual responsibility to our students when they are not on campus and when they are more readily connected with their own pastors at home?

At WLC, we offer seven various public worship opportunities per week — daily chapel, Wednesday Vespers, and Sunday morning worship. We also offer a regular array of Bible studies and individual spiritual counseling. This is all part of our goal to support our students when they are on campus; when students are home, it has not been our goal to replace students’ pastors and spiritual leaders. Thus, we have been in a position of assessing our role to our students while they are home in a way that we have not done recently.

For the spring, we chose to continue offering online chapel. We recorded daily devotions that were about five minutes each and emailed them out to our students, faculty, and staff every day. We offered a weekly Zoom Bible study and continued to provide individual spiritual counseling through Zoom. On top of that, our campus ministry office

OUR BLESSED RESPONSIBILITY IS TO MAKE SURE THAT OUR STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO GOD’S WORD AND THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES THAT THEY NEED.



GREGORY LYON

Campus Pastor for Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



spearheaded a makeshift food pantry for the few students who needed to stay on campus, as well as regular mass texts to check in with everyone.

Moving ahead, we are still in the process of figuring out what our role will specifically be for the coming year. Will we be able to offer public worship options? Will we need to simply livestream or record a chapel devotion? In short: Will we be meeting in person or online? As of this writing in mid-summer, we don’t know.

But here is what we do know: God’s word is not chained and it will not be chained on this campus. We recognize that students’ time on campus is not just about academics, sports, or social life. Our blessed responsibility is to make sure that our students have access to God’s word and the spiritual growth opportunities that they need. We will ensure that the spiritual growth of our students remains a primary piece of what makes us different from so many other institutions of higher education.

I’ll close with this thought and encouragement for others: Has there ever been a time when the peace that Christ offers us ought to be more accessible to our students? The work that we do as spiritual leaders is vital. Keep thinking, keep conversing, and keep dreaming of different options to make sure that our students know that no matter what the chaos of this world brings, Jesus Christ wins — and he wins for us. Let’s not let that truth get lost in the shuffle of figuring out what our schools will look like in the future.

"For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2, NIV). May that be our rallying cry for the benefit of our students.

Photo courtesy of Gregory Lyon

HEEDING THE SACRED CALL TO REST

IN THE WINTER OF 2018, after a busy fall, I began to experience severe pain in my lower back. As I had always been healthy and had never wrestled with any major injuries or hospitalizations, I was unfamiliar with the throbbing pain that coursed through my hips, down through my gluteus, and into my legs and feet. "I must have twisted something," I said, pushing past the worsening pain. My decision to ignore these warning signs was a mistake that cost me precious time and health and would later accompany a throbbing sense of regret. Six weeks of lying flat on my back, a round of numbing medications, and a year of chiropractic work was the price I paid for disregarding this excruciating pain, caused by sciatica.

While I do not wish that kind of pain on anyone, I am grateful for the lessons I learned because of it. During my time of forced rest, God reminded me that our bodies, souls, and spirits need down time in order to heal, grow, and flourish. To ignore rest by driving oneself relentlessly is to rob ourselves of intimacy, reflection, rejuvenation, and peace with God and others. We were created to be in fellowship with our Creator and to walk in unity and peace with one another (John 17). Jesus calls us to come to him with our heavy burdens so that we can receive rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28-29). Without time to be restored in God’s presence, we risk stunting our personal and spiritual growth and instead become impaled on the barbs of our culture’s endless demands.

In his book, *Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in A Distracted Age*, Alan Noble suggests that no matter where we work or serve, we as believers can adapt to a better way of being by observing the sacred rhythms of rest and reflection: "A practical, achievable step we can take toward



LAUREL BUNKER

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WHEN WE CHOOSE TO ENTER INTO THE QUIET, WE COME OUT OF OUR TIME WITH GOD WITH INCREASED CLARITY, VISION, AND WISDOM.

reclaiming our attention and creating some space for reflection is to cut down on filler distractions. Make dinner without listening to a podcast. Use the bathroom without bringing your phone. ... Open yourself up to the possibility of undirected thought."

In a distracted, harried and hurried culture, the spiritual practice of rest reminds us that what is most important is not the approval of humankind, but rather intimacy with God, who created us to be in relationship with him. Rest can strengthen our witness. By resting when we ought, we show our trust in God, in his design, and in his timing, and we resist the fear of missing out because God, the author of time and the giver of all that is good and perfect, provides us what we need when we need it.

The challenges and heartbreaking losses that have come as a result of this season have coaxed many of us into a new normal. This new normal requires more intimacy and less hustle; more rest and less unrelenting drive; more joy and less distraction and frivolity. It is hard to welcome disruption, but one potential benefit of this pandemic is the reminder that, if we want to be good stewards, we must inhabit new ways of being, even after the pandemic has passed.

The recalibration of our priorities to align with God’s priorities is worth the effort, energy, and discipline that it requires. When we choose to enter into the quiet, we come out of our time with God with increased clarity, vision, and wisdom. We can enter into our professional lives from a place of refreshment, not depletion or exhaustion.

As we enter into a new normal, may a part of that new normal include a renewed effort to incorporate rest so that we may be people of impact for Christ and his kingdom. Amen.

Photo courtesy of Laurel Bunker

LAMENT AND BLESSING IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

DURING ONE OF our first virtual chapels of this pandemic season, two of my colleagues, Haley and Luke, introduced three simple but powerful questions to our campus community at Friends University: 1) What has the pandemic taken from us? 2) What has it not taken from us? 3) What has God given to us during this season?

With these questions, we are able to lament what has been lost, acknowledge our new reality, and recognize blessings and new opportunities. These questions, when given space to permeate our minds, hearts, and souls, may be used by God to provide us with a healthy and helpful framework for persisting through this.

What has the pandemic taken from us? What an incredible season of disruption, disorientation, and loss. Globally, we have lost lives, jobs, and a collective sense of normalcy. At the campus and individual level, we lost a spring (and possibly more) on campus, which meant the loss of things like face-to-face time with friends and faculty; spring sport seasons and fine arts performances; and a great many "lasts" for our graduating seniors, including their spring graduation ceremony.

As these losses began to pile up, they also followed us home; even in the best of scenarios, there was still change and loss to mourn. Though my kids initially celebrated being able to sleep in, they quickly felt the forfeiture of close connections with friends. They also missed out on the spring sport season.

It's necessary to lament in the midst of our pain and confusion. The Bible is riddled with examples of lament; they serve as reminders, even permission, to express our grievances and pain to God.

What has it not taken from us?

Every family has experienced this pandemic

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GUY CHMIELESKI

Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Campus Ministries at Friends University in Wichita, Kansas.



in different ways, but there are still pieces of a pre-COVID-19 way of life that remain. Can we see through the pain of loss enough to notice these important items? Identifying what we have not lost, I believe, is just as important for us as recognizing what has been lost.

For me, it was important to understand and acknowledge that much of my loss came in the form of inconveniences. I still have my family. I still have my job. I still have my home. I still have my health. I recognize my losses were minor, not major.

I know this is not everyone's story. But it's my story (at least as of this writing in mid-summer), and that is something tangible I can hold on to.

What has God given to us during this season?

While much less obvious in the midst of our current disorientation, I believe God is providing each of us with blessings of some shape or form. God is aware of our situation — and hurts with us. Yet in the midst of the pain, I believe there are hidden blessings, if only we have eyes to see them.

For example, this time of disruption has given me an abnormally large amount of time with my family. Time with all seven of us in the same place had become a rarity outside of family vacations. Additionally, the open time in my calendar provided space that has sparked some creativity and innovation within that likely would not have found place amidst the rhythms and routines that had previously been shaping my life.

As we consider these three questions, we see that there are layers and layers to uncover. But I believe that as we provide the time and the space for the Holy Spirit to work in us through reflecting on these questions, we will have new eyes to see, even as we continue serving. 🙏

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FAITH

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How my faith
informs my work
as a U.S. senator.

By Oklahoma Senator
James Lankford

Illustration by Katryn Ferrance / Source Images: AdobeStock

EDITOR'S NOTE

The CCCU is a nonpartisan association committed to advancing Christian higher education in the executive branch, courts, and legislature. To accomplish this, we work with leaders across the political spectrum, like Senator James Lankford, a Republican from Oklahoma who embodies faith and intellect for the common good as he exercises his responsibilities as a senator.

WHEN I BEGAN the journey of serving in Congress, I was constantly asked how I was going to set aside my faith to do my new job. After serving for more than 20 years in ministry, I was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2010, then to the U.S. Senate in 2014. This new calling is what my bride, Cindy, refers to as our life's "greatest interruption." I can only assume that some thought faith would no longer be important after I was in Congress; that public officials should not talk about their private faith because of the diversity of views in our nation; or that the Establishment Clause in the Constitution requires public silence on personal faith from any elected official. All of those thoughts are wrong.

We live in a unique country with an unusual Constitution that allows any person to have a faith, live their faith, change their faith, or have no faith at all and still be a "good American." The First Amendment (which history enthusiasts know was actually originally the Third Amendment) ensured that our nation would not have an established religion and that our laws would not inhibit the free exercise of anyone's religion, even public officials.

In fact, even before our Constitution had a First Amendment, it included special religious protections for elected officials in Article VI: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." That means, in America, public servants do not have to set aside their faith to serve their neighbors who do not share their faith. No one is required to change their faith to align with some cultural norm. It is a baseline of our freedom. We are not a theocracy; we are a blending of all views.

Americans would be appalled if a public official refused to serve Muslims, Buddhists, or atheists because of their faith choices or lack of faith. But for some reason, our culture has made it entirely normal to encourage that same public official to change his or her personal faith to serve others. If those

Your faith is your most precious possession. It defines you, motivates you, and centers you.

served do not have to alter their faith, why should those who serve have to alter theirs?

From the founding of the U.S., we believed as a nation that faith is not something you can require someone to take on and off like a uniform. Your faith is your most precious possession. It defines you, motivates you, and centers you. Simply stated: If your faith is something that you only do on weekends, it is not a faith; it is a hobby. Hobbies are weekend activities; your faith penetrates every aspect of your life. Any person who serves publicly is given the same rights to have a faith and live according to it as any other citizen. As Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "Proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow citizens he has a natural right."

HOW MY FAITH IMPACTS MY WORK

Everyone has a worldview. My Christian faith remains the lens through which I see the world. Like other followers of Jesus, my faith impacts my daily decisions and actions as I work to follow the still, small voice of God in my daily life. My faith affects how I treat other people around me — even those with whom I strongly disagree. They are also created in the image of God. They are someone for whom Christ died

to forgive. They deserve my respect because they are loved by God. Even though it is the responsibility of any legislator to passionately and aggressively pursue the right solutions for the many challenges our nation faces, there is no political exception clause to the Greatest Commandment.

I co-chair the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Prayer Caucus. I attend the Senate prayer breakfast that meets once a week to pray, sing hymns (often poorly), and talk openly about our families and faith. I also take the opportunity to prayer walk my office building to pray for other senators and their staffs. Over the past few years, I have forged lasting friendships through prayer and faith that have yielded a number of important bipartisan policy proposals and solutions.

We do not even have to share the same faith traditions to work on faith-based issues. We can unite under common values and moral principles. Senator Jacky Rosen, a Jewish Democrat from Nevada, and I started the Senate Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Anti-Semitism last year to join forces against those who challenge the Jewish faith through hate. Protecting religious liberty both in the U.S. and internationally — one



of my key priorities in the Senate — is also vital to who we are as a nation. The vitriol of hate is easier to access than ever. All of us should stand up for faith communities, here and around the world, who seek to worship freely in peace.

AN EXAMPLE TO THE NEXT GENERATION

As we defend the right to live our faith in our nation, we should not fail to neglect the basic responsibility of passing on our faith. The Shema of Deuteronomy 6 to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind ends with the admonition to teach these truths to our children. The Old Testament ends with the challenge from Malachi to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the hearts of the children back to their fathers. As social media pervades our lives, the often-toxic conversation disconnects families and our culture. Social media is not the problem; it is just the latest isolating distraction. But it is a reminder that mentorship from older generations is vital to our faith and to our nation.

As I meet young staff and interns on Capitol Hill, I challenge them to live their faith in a place that desperately needs to see authentic faith, just as Christian higher education leaders like you encourage the young adults that walk your halls or stop in your office. If the next generation believes that faith divides us, then they will work to diminish public and private faith as a pathway to greater social harmony. But if they understand faith is life-giving, societally challenging, and personally refreshing (as well as soul-saving), they will rightly fan the flames of faith across our nation. We have the freedom to live our faith as a nation. Let's actually do it. 🙏

JAMES LANKFORD is a U.S. Senator from Oklahoma.

We should not fail to neglect passing on our faith. Mentorship from older generations is vital to our faith and to our nation.

Photo courtesy of Senator James Lankford

The Church's #MeToo Reckoning

How Christian college leaders can engage a tough topic.

AN INTERVIEW WITH RUTH EVERHART

IN THE WAKE of such events as the revelation of widespread sexual abuse in the Catholic Church and the rise of the #MeToo movement, there has been a rising awareness that sexual abuse occurs in every sphere of society, including the church. But these events also reveal how difficult it is for the truth in these situations to come to light and for victims to be able to have their stories heard. Ruth Everhart, a pastor and herself a survivor of sexual assault in a church setting, explores how the church has been complicit in sexual abuse and misconduct — and how church leaders can change that — in her new book *The #MeToo Reckoning: Facing the Church's Complicity in Sexual Abuse and Misconduct*.

Morgan Feddes Satre, managing editor of *Advance*, talked with Everhart about the book and how it might prove to be a resource for Christian college and university leaders engaging with these realities. The conversation has been edited for length.



Ruth Everhart is a pastor, author, and speaker.

Could you sum up your key argument in *The #MeToo Reckoning*?

My book is a prophetic call to churches to be more aware, to take action, and to face the fact that they have created an environment where sexual abuse can happen — they have created cultures of secrecy and shame, and they have, by and large, protected abusers. So it is time for a reckoning. When the #MeToo movement began in the fall of 2017, I was hopeful that the church would exercise leadership in that movement, because I see this as a justice issue for women and male victims of abuse. But I was disheartened to see that instead of coming on board or claiming any leadership of the movement, they largely treated it like a pariah.

So I want to lift up the voices of victims who've been silenced too often. ... I tell stories of victims. Some are my own stories, and some are stories from other people. They're all true, contemporary stories that took place within a specific faith community. I intertwined each story with a biblical story, which is what, I think, is really unique about the book. What I'm trying to do is let the braiding of the two [biblical and contemporary] stories inform how the church can move forward.

You mentioned this is primarily written for church leaders. Since Christian colleges have different reporting structures and other regulations like Title IX to consider in this conversation, what insights can your book provide for the unique context of a Christian campus?

What's similar [between churches and Christian colleges] is that there's a tendency to spiritualize some of these behaviors and to look at them as sins rather than as crimes. Sexual abuse is both a sin and a crime. If we look at it as only a sin, it's very easy then to go into a confessional model of treatment. That becomes very privatized — that person can confess, it can be kept quiet, it can be dealt with in-house. We end up centering the response around the predator rather than the victim. That's a problem in churches and is probably similar in [Christian] campus environments.

Sexual abuse in any form has to be seen as a crime — which it is [a crime], which means that it has to be dealt with publicly. It's essential that it's not treated in-house; that it's treated with the use of law enforcement and outside justice system to prosecute offenders.

Campuses must comply with regulations such as Title IX, among others. But Christian college campuses want to go



beyond just the law and treat both parties biblically. What advice do you have for campuses who want to navigate this need?

One of the scriptures that I work with in this book is 1 Corinthians 12, which is the chapter in which the Apostle Paul talks about the body of Christ. And I connect that to a story of a church where I was the victim [of abuse], but when I dug deeper into it, I found that — previous to my experience and following right into the present day — there was a much more egregious story of abuse because it involved children. [So I point out] that when you're dealing with a church [in allegations of abuse], you're dealing with a whole system. There is a need to look at that system as a body, [as Paul says], and when one part of the body hurts, the whole body is hurting.

I would apply the same thinking to a campus. It's important that you have separate advocates for someone who's accused and for the accuser, and you protect both of them, not just one or the other. But beyond that structural

way of looking at it [in the book], I [encourage leaders to consider], how, as Christians, do you look at this whole body of Christ ... if there's a rotten part of the body? It's poisoning the whole body.

I've gotten a lot of feedback on that specific chapter, that it's been really helpful to church leaders, to elders, and to people in governance. I think it would be similarly helpful to campus leaders to have a specific conversation about that metaphor. How does it impact how they treat their jobs? I think it could be a really interesting and helpful exercise.

Obviously, gender dynamics and authority are huge factors in this conversation, and we know that, at Christian colleges, the higher up you are in the authority structure on campus, the more heavily male it becomes. I know from personal experience that many of these male leaders are very committed to this work of really wanting to make sure students are cared for



The #MeToo Reckoning: Facing the Church's Complicity in Sexual Abuse and Misconduct

By Ruth Everhart
(InterVarsity Press)

Photo courtesy of Ruth Everhart

AdobeStock

SEXUAL ABUSE IS ALWAYS THE ABUSE OF POWER. IT'S ONE OF THOSE THINGS THAT PEOPLE FORGET, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE TREAT ABUSE AS A SIN THAT CAN BE CONFESSED PRIVATELY. SEXUAL ABUSE IS NOT PRIMARILY ABOUT SEX; IT'S ABOUT POWER.

when they're in these situations of being victims. What insight would you offer to these leaders as they consider this work?

I'm glad you brought this up. I would want them [male leaders] to take a step back and say, "Well, let's look at our organization. We've got primarily female people on the bottom in positions of learning and primarily male people on top in positions of power. Why is that? How did that come to be?" If they were to really look at that, what would they discover about the assumptions of their organizations and about the way power flows?

It's so important to look at, because sexual abuse is always the abuse of power. It's such a simple statement, but it's one of those things that people forget, especially when we treat sexual abuse as a sexual sin that can be confessed privately. Sexual abuse is not primarily about sex; it's about power. ...

My advice would be to address those dynamics openly and to have a courageous conversation. I lay out in the book some of the rules about courageous conversations; they're similar to what you see around race conversations about owning your own point of view, listening to the other, and providing safety.

We know that there's an increasing number of students who are coming to campus having been victimized — whether they've already sought justice or are just living with that reality in secret — and so campus leaders are also needing to care for these students who are dealing with the unfolding trauma. As both a victim and as an advocate for victims, what advice would you offer to campus leaders?

This question is really near and dear to my heart, because my primary experience of sexual assault was very

traumatic; when I was a senior at Calvin College, I was raped at gunpoint by two intruders who broke into the home I was sharing with some other students. That was 40 years ago now, but my frame of reference is from the ways in which the campus failed to respond in helpful ways and in many ways intensified the pain that we were experiencing by silencing us and ostracizing us. This was not done intentionally, but when sexual violence is treated as something that's unspeakable, then you have a hard time speaking about it. This is a common dynamic in Christian community — we [are deterred] from talking about anything to do with sexuality. ... We can't talk about the way sexuality and spirituality are entwined and the way in which these are bodily experiences. What is vulnerability? What does Jesus say about vulnerability? We don't ever dive deep into those things.

So I would encourage [campus leaders] to simply be prepared. Forty years ago, trauma-informed counseling didn't exist, but now it does, and I would have benefited greatly by it. Trauma-informed care... realizes that trauma has biological and neurological effects that have long lasting consequences, and that these can be treated. It's not just a matter of how you are feeling in the moment and what your emotions are today. ...

So we need to have trauma-informed care, but it also has to exist in a larger context where we're starting to be able to talk about sexuality in a way that's more honest, more real, and where we can have conversations about how sexuality relates to power and how it relates to spirituality. 🌱

RUTH EVERHART is a pastor, author, and speaker; learn how to get a free copy of her book and time to connect with her at www.rutheverhart.com.

Why Talk About Racism and Religion?

Addressing the truth of the past is painful but necessary for full healing.

BY JEMAR TISBY

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. said, "There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love." This study is not about discrediting the church or Christians. I love the church. My concern for the church and for the well-being of its people motivates my exploration of Christian complicity in racism. The goal is to build up the body of Christ by "speaking the truth in love," even if that truth comes at the price of pain.

The church has not always and uniformly been complicit with racism. The same Bible that racists misused to support slavery and segregation is the one abolitionists and civil rights activists rightly used to animate their resistance. Whenever there has been racial injustice, there have been Christians who fought against it in the name of Jesus Christ. Christianity has an inspiring history of working for racial equity and the dignity of all people, a history that should never be overlooked.

The Black church, in particular, has always been a bulwark against bigotry. Forged in the fires of racial prejudice, the Black church emerged as the ark of safety for people of African descent. Preachers and leaders in the church saw the truth of the gospel message even as slaveholders and white supremacists distorted the message to make more obedient slaves. Black churches looked to the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt as a

model for their own exodus from American slavery. Black Christians saw in Scripture a God who "sits high and looks low" — one who saw their oppression and was outraged by it. Through the centuries, Black people have become the most religious demographic in the United States. For instance, 83 percent of Black people say they "believe in God with absolute certainty" compared to 59 percent of Hispanics and 61 percent of whites. Through their religious heritage, Black people have passed on a tradition of struggle, liberation, and

ALTHOUGH THE TRUTH CUTS LIKE A SCALPEL AND MAY LEAVE A SCAR, IT OFFERS HEALING.

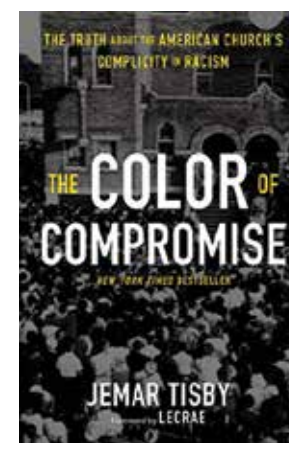
rejoicing to every generation. Black Christians have played a vital role in shaping the history of America, and they have much to share with the church universal.

But the examples in this book do not present a positive picture. The focus is mainly on racist acts and actors. This emphasis is purposeful. American Christians have never had trouble celebrating their victories, but honestly recognizing their failures and inconsistencies, especially when it comes to racism, remains an issue. All too often, Christians name a few individuals who stood against the racism of their day and claim them as heroes. They fail to recognize how rarely believers made public and persistent commitments to racial equality against the culture of their churches and denominations. Jumping ahead to the victories means skipping the hard but necessary work of examining what went wrong with race and the church. That can lead to simplistic understandings of the past and superficial solutions to racial issues in the present. *The Color of Compromise* undoes the tendency to skip the hard parts of history and directs the reader's attention to the racist realities that challenge a triumphalist view of American Christianity. ...

Reading *The Color of Compromise* is like having a sobering conversation with your doctor and hearing that the only way to cure a dangerous disease is by undergoing an uncomfortable surgery and ongoing rehabilitation. Although the truth cuts like a scalpel and may leave a scar, it offers healing and health. The pain is worth the progress. 🌱

Taken from *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby. Copyright © 2019 by Jemar Tisby. Used by permission of Zondervan. www.zondervan.com.

JEMAR TISBY is president of The Witness, a Black Christian collective, and co-host of the *Pass the Mic* podcast.



The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism

By Jemar Tisby
(Zondervan)

Opening the Red Door

A Russian Christian university's story can inspire us today.

BY CAROLYN DIRKSEN

COVID-19 HAS FORCED colleges and universities to change the way they do business and to re-envision their priorities and operating procedures. In the face of such drastic need for institutional agility, the story of Russian-American Christian University (RACU), detailed in John Bernbaum's *Opening the Red Door*, is an inspirational guide. Although the challenges are different, the persistence, flexibility, and determination of RACU's leaders is a model for the current crisis.

When the Soviet Union imploded in 1989, Russia was in turmoil, and many Russian leaders turned to the U.S. to provide instruction on developing a capitalist economy and restoring ethics and integrity. The CCCU (then known as the Christian College Coalition) empowered Bernbaum, then the organization's executive vice president, to establish exchange programs between member institutions and Russian universities. In the course of those meetings in 1990, Bernbaum received an unexpected invitation from the Russian minister of science and education to establish a Christian college in Moscow.

Opening the Red Door meticulously reviews the process of responding to that invitation. Over the next six years, Bernbaum and his colleagues survived an attempted coup, weathered the vicissitudes of a financial collapse, worked through endless issues of cross-cultural communication, and moved slowly but persistently toward launching the Russian-American Christian

University. Bernbaum explains how ongoing changes in the Russian government challenged the RACU team. Russian rules and regulations were already daunting, but the novelty of RACU and the seemingly endless shifts in governmental policies on higher education made them almost insurmountable.

RACU founders wanted to develop the institution with Russians as equal partners, creating a truly bicultural entity. As the founding board came together, conflicting ideas about educational processes, student-faculty relationships, and academic goals immediately emerged. An additional problem arose in the attempt to recruit qualified Russian faculty members since Christians had been denied access to graduate education during the Communist era. Bernbaum skillfully overviews the changing situation in Russia, providing enough detail for clear understanding without unnecessarily bogging down the compelling narrative.

In spite of the setbacks, RACU opened in September 1996 as a licensed, degree-granting undergraduate institution with 43 students. Over the next 15 years, RACU offered programs in social work, business, and English language and literature, and created a fresh new model for education in the former Soviet Union. A second economic crash, the war with Chechnya, and increasing threats of terrorism led to a hardening of the Russian government's openness to American enterprises. This change led to the creation of so many overlapping and conflicting regulations that RACU, as it was originally envisioned, ceased to exist after its ninth graduation in 2011.

The RACU experience provides some strong guidelines as colleges face the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic:

Flexibility is essential. The RACU team was primed to make quick changes as laws, regulations, and power players



Opening the Red Door: The Inside Story of Russia's First Christian Liberal Arts University


By John Bernbaum
(InterVarsity Academic Press)

were in flux around them. For example, they occupied six different campus facilities over a period of 16 years, including renting rooms in Russian institutions, sharing space with other evangelical groups, and renting rooms in a former silk factory.

Great flexibility requires meticulous planning. With each national political sea change, RACU leadership pursued the next step by working tirelessly through a daunting web of processes and procedures with rules changing at every step. Rather than being buffeted helplessly through the storms, they worked within the system to move slowly but consistently ahead.

Setbacks are stepping stones to the next level. As Bernbaum outlines the RACU story, he doesn't shy away from discussing all the things that went wrong. But in each of those setbacks, he finds a new place to make progress. Even at the very end, when it is obvious that governmental regulations will make it impossible to continue, the RACU team finds ways to carry out the vision of RACU in an entirely different form.

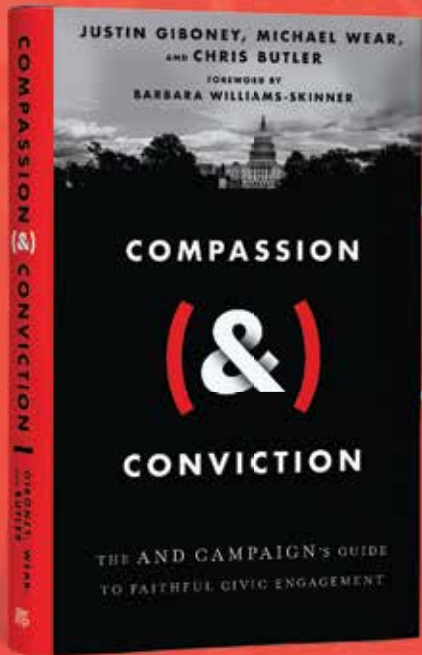
Mission and vision guide the institution through the most difficult challenges. When RACU was faced with changing fortunes, leadership kept their eyes on their essential purpose of educating young Russians to make a difference in their society.

Opening the Red Door provides insight into the mechanics of the RACU years but also into the vision that drove the founders forward. For 15 years, RACU was a shining star in the Christian community in Russia, significantly affecting the lives of more than 600 young people whose energy and optimism continue to influence Russian society. As Bernbaum tells the story, his hope and determination shine through. Like Christian educators everywhere, he draws his motivation from the students he serves, and his endless optimism, courage, and tireless work on their behalf provide inspiration for administrators in this time of change and turmoil. 

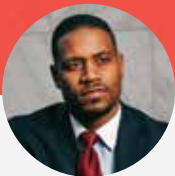
CAROLYN DIRKSEN previously served as a vice president for academic affairs at Lee University (Cleveland, TN) and as an interim vice president for the CCCU.

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"Compassion (&) Conviction is an outstanding tool in sharing the consistent, courageous, and faith-filled message of the AND Campaign. At a time when too many Christians let their politics shape their faith, this book is an example of faith shaping politics."

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Reminders for World Changers

What it takes for Christian college graduates and their campus communities to be leaders who make a difference.

BY DEBORAH BIRX

This excerpt is from a commencement speech that Dr. Deborah Birx, a graduate of Houghton College (Houghton, New York), gave at Houghton's 2020 virtual commencement ceremony.

I WANT TO CONGRATULATE

all of the seniors who are graduating today from all over the United States from your homes. Thank you for the work that you did for all your years in college, and thank you for achieving this moment. ... That work is going to be important throughout your life. As I've worked in my career, it's really been very important to understand that it's people that make programs, not just resources and dollars. If you surround yourself with good people, and you're part of a good people team, you'll be able to achieve all of your goals and make the country a better place. So thank you for your futures and what you'll bring in service to America.

Picking up on that [reminder that] people make programs, remember: Nothing is beneath you. There's no phone call, no piece that needs to be [copied], no letter that needs to be mailed that you can't do yourself. I think sometimes we wait for others to complete those tasks, but even today, if something needs to be done and I don't have what I need, I do that task. No task will ever be beneath you as you move through life. Bringing that can-do attitude will be critical every step of the way.

Be open to opportunities. At Houghton College, I was a chemistry and math major. ... And then I decided to apply to medical school. Even though I hadn't



really been in that [pre-med] track, the faculty of Houghton College supported me in making that career change and going to medical school. Following medical school, I was open to internal medicine or pediatrics. I ended up doing internal medicine and then clinical immunology and infectious diseases. ... Throughout that time, I was open to where people thought I was needed and where I could provide input and support to whatever projects there were. In my 40 years in government, I've only applied for a job once. That's what it really takes sometimes — being open to opportunities. Even if it seems like a deviation from your primary path, be open to what could happen — and will happen — when you allow others to influence your life. Listen to friends, to family, and to yourself about where you should be going.

Finally, always stay true to your moral self. This has been incredibly impor-

tant throughout my career. Sometimes that shortcut seems like a good idea, particularly at 11 o'clock at night. But you need to stay true to what it really takes to be consistent, to be data driven, to have that strong foundation of what you believe is right, and to stay on that pathway throughout your career. ...

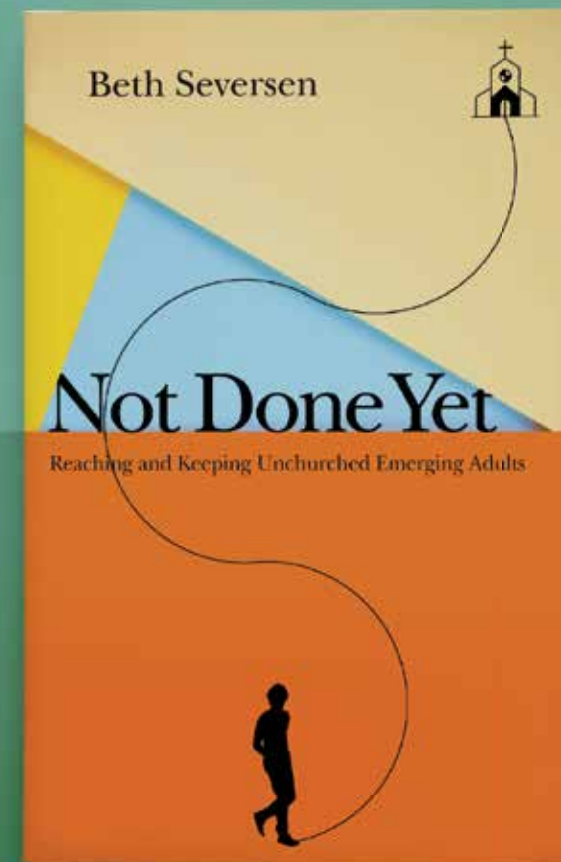
I believe in each and every one of you. Thank you for the careers and the talent you're going to bring to the United States. ... We're going through a difficult time in our nation right now. We've had to confront a new and novel pandemic. But the true strength of Americans is their ingenuity, talent, and abilities. Having you come at this moment to help America move through this very difficult time is extraordinary. 🙌

DEBORAH BIRX is ambassador-at-large, U.S. Global Aids coordinator, and the White House coronavirus response coordinator.

(Photo by Michael Brochstein/Sipa USA) Credit: Sipa USA/Alamy Live News

REACHING & INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

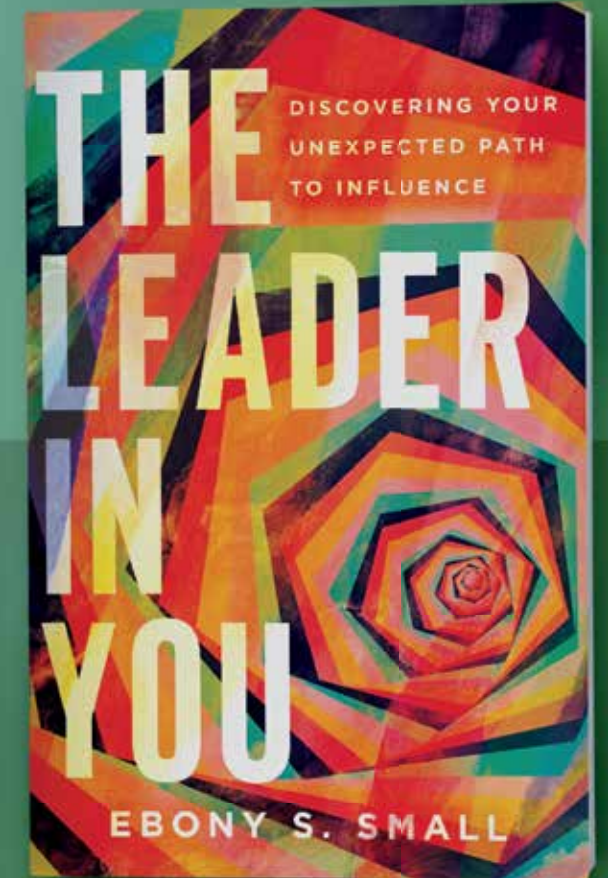
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