

# *Director's Word*

**JUNE 2017**

It's easy to identify the outstanding highlight of the past six months. Graduation is a colourful ceremony, especially when PhDs are being awarded, and in May we celebrated the award of 20 PhDs and one MPhil. It marked an incredible achievement for the individuals concerned and for OCMS as a community. On days like this you feel like the old church of St Philip and St James comes alive.

A visiting professor from Oxford University remarked, 'OCMS could teach our university something about how to do a graduation.'

There was joyful celebration, thanksgiving, and worship, as well as a re-dedication of scholars and community to the ministry to which God has called each one. Of course, OCMS does not exist to simply turn out PhD graduates, worthwhile as that might be, but to equip women and men so that the global church is better able to participate in God's mission. That's why we celebrate graduation.

A big thanks to those of you who participated in our organisational review. We began last November with a day consultation for staff and Council, wrapping it up with a day of prayer retreat and consultation. Around 80 people connected to OCMS (staff, Council, alumni, current students, and supporters) completed surveys that produced a wealth of information and ideas for action. We will be taking up many of those in the coming months.

One major area is the development of an active alumni network. We believe OCMS can continue to support the research and ministry of our alumni and that with the right opportunities they can play an active part in the development of OCMS.

The central goal of the review process was to renew our Vision and Mission. The Council are now working to bring this work together so watch out for new statements in the coming weeks. One thing that is clear, the vision of those who founded OCMS will be clearly seen in the renewed statements. While church, global context, and mission have changed hugely over the past 35 years, we found through the review process that the sense of calling on OCMS remains unchanged.

We want to foster research activities that are agile and responsive to rapidly changing contexts. We want to see men and women equipped as thought-leaders across the incredibly diverse contexts of the world Church.

Pray with us as we explore what it means to place scholarship in accessible ways at the service of the church-in-mission.

Thank you for being part of the OCMS community.

**Paul Bendor-Samuel**

### PROFILE: Emmanuel Ndikimana

Troubled by the civil war and ethnic violence in Burundi, one of our scholars, Emmanuel, asked :

***“What does it mean to be a follower of Christ in an ethnically divided society?”***

This question eventually led him to study at All Nations Christian College, where he wrote his MA dissertation *‘Mission as Social Transformation: Engaging with Social and Political Issues in Burundi.’*

In 2009 he put his thinking into practice by setting up:

- **The Great Lakes School of Theology and Leadership** (a non-denominational Bible College accepting students from all walks of life)
- **Bujumbura International Community Church** (A place for students to share community and practice their new understanding)
- **A development agency.**

Under the umbrella of **Partners Trust International (PTI)**, Emmanuel sought to empower Burundi church leaders to engage with society by:

- teaching **theological reflection**
- modelling **servant leadership**
- bringing **unity** among church leaders

Attracted by this thriving fellowship, many church leaders have sought to imitate their methods so as to inspire similar success. Thankfully, churches do not see the fellowship as competition, given that students and members remain in their respective churches to help and support their own congregations.

Despite differences in ethnic background, political stance and church denomination, students at Great Lakes have found unity in studying and working together, their dissimilarities thrown into perspective in the face of Burundi’s greater social and political issues.



Bible college students in discussion

When the government instituted the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**, PTI helped leaders of different Protestant churches and denominations participate in the process. Consequently, members of the Commission are predominantly religious leaders.

While we thank God for his protection and blessings, we want to continue to keep praying for:

- All involved in PTI to have **faith and wisdom** in the volatile situation in Burundi.
- **Funds** to keep the ministry going, as the economy of the country has collapsed.
- **Emmanuel** who is trying to be a good father, husband and leader in a very unstable situation (Emmanuel and his wife help look after **ten children** and **two widows** after his three uncles died suddenly last year).

### INTERVIEW: Terry Garde

**Q: Terry, when did you become our student rep and why?**

A: I took on the role as the student rep more formally about three years ago because I live in Oxford, I'm always around, and because the other students seem to like my leadership style.

**Q: What do you do as the student rep?**

A: As the student rep, I try to be a good conduit. We organise two formal meetings with the students every year during the Research Induction School period so that new scholars can join us.

**Q: Have the students sensed any change in the operation of OCMS?**

A: The students see OCMS shifting its emphasis by increasingly working to equip the students to become better researchers. Substantial efforts are being made to improve the quality of the student learning process with a new focus on improving the generic skills required for research. Yet the Centre is also enhancing its resources e.g. through the strategic use of online resources or treating students as resources for peer to peer guidance,

**Q: What is your heart's desire for OCMS?**

A: I pray that OCMS will continue to grow as a missional academic community, serving the scholars well so that they too can serve the global church effectively.

### INTRODUCING: Dr Hae-Won Kim

I am a 1.5 generation Korean-American; born and raised in South Korea, but went to the United States in the mid-1980s to pursue further education.



In the 1990s God led me to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS) in Chicago, where I worked and studied until relocating to Oxford earlier this year. Like many of our students at OCMS, I pursued doctoral studies while I was working full time as the Academic Programs Coordinator for the three PhD programmes at TEDS.

I was thrilled when God opened a door to join the OCMS faculty.

***My research interests are concerned with the globalization of theological education and implications for an international learning community such as OCMS.***

Although I am slowly feeling more settled, the transcontinental moving process has been very complicated and challenging. In particular, I would deeply appreciate prayer for the quick sale of my house in America so that I can fully engage with this new chapter of my life here at OCMS!

### GRADUATE PROFILE: Ole Kirchheiner, Denmark

**Research Topic: Culture and Christianity Negotiated in Hindu Society: Church Case Study in Nepal**

When I was half-way through my Masters in Electronic Engineering studies, a number of Christian friends revealed to me the great secrets that the living God was our heavenly Father and that Jesus Christ was our Saviour.

I finished my MSc and worked for five years, during which time God directed me to the mission field with my wife. We lived and served nine years in Nepal and came back in 1999.

The work with the Nepalis never really stopped, but in fact re-focused on an increasing influx of Nepalis to Denmark. My wife and I went to All Nations Christians College, Herts, and we finished an MA in Mission Studies which, for me, was shortly followed up at OCMS by anthropological research among Christians in Nepal.

Since coming back from serving in Nepal, I have been working in pastoral positions and am now a



mission pastor focusing on field work, teaching, and networking among Nepalis and non-Nepalis in Denmark and beyond.

My eight years of research taught me to differentiate between prejudiced approaches and actual research.

The publication of my thesis by Regnum Books has given me opportunities to network with new, interesting people all over the world. I am especially excited that my book will be published in Nepal.

#### **Appreciation**

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the staff at OCMS. It was always encouraging to come to during residency and, despite the distance, OCMS has always offered such great help.

### THANKS FOR READING

We hope you've enjoyed our updates. Even though we can only feature a few people each time, we love sharing glimpses into the work here at OCMS. Do send us your own news, we love hearing from you.

OCMS is a charity and depends on the generosity of God's people. Let us know if you would like to support the work of OCMS, sponsor a student or become part of the team support for a faculty member.

God bless you abundantly.