

KNOX COLLEGE, CANADA | AUTUMN 2023

VOCATIONS

*Embracing
a posture of
humility*

**CHARLES FENSHAM'S
NEW BOOK, MISSION
AS PENANCE**

ALSO: FINDING WOORI; SACRED CONVERSATIONS;
A 'CURIOSITY ENTHUSIAST'; & THE 2022-2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

“In baptism, we have been knit together as a body. . . . Like a human body, it is vulnerable, subject to injury and self-harm. The Body of Christ bears wounds – even after resurrection. Despite this woundedness, and because of our baptism, because of the great love that God has for us, we are continually renewed and transformed by the Spirit, and healing is possible.”

—Rev. Dr. Sarah Travis, in a sermon at opening worship on Knox College Orientation Day, September 6, 2023



Pictured: Knox College Master of Divinity student Rachel Kennedy in the Knox College Chapel. Sarah Travis, Knox College Assistant Professor of Preaching, Worship, and Christian Ministry, invited students, faculty, and staff to approach the baptismal font and celebrate belonging in the Body of Christ. Find more about Orientation Day 2023 on page 19.

VOCATIONS

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3 | AUTUMN 2023

Vocations is published three times per year for graduates, former residents, and other friends of Knox College. We welcome your news and suggestions.

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Special thanks to Helen Cheung, Wan-Kit Keng, and Mi-Weon Yang for translating the Principal's Message.

Page 2 photo by Stephanie Hanna.



ON THE COVER: Professor Charles Fensham. Photo by Stephanie Hanna.

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KNOX COLLEGE



Finding Woori

FORMING A THEOLOGY OF WITNESS THAT BRIDGES GENERATIONAL DIVIDES

By Yo Sep Heo

When preparing a summer retreat for the youth, we were told that everything should be approved by the senior pastor. We thought, “Of course, we should seek approval for (or at least let the pastor know about) the major pieces like the location, the theme for the retreat, and the budget.” The senior pastor, however, intended to review and approve *everything* – not just the speaker, but also the praise team leader, the small group leaders, the list of retreat attendees, and even the meals and the snacks.

At present there’s a lot of tension between first- and second-generation Korean-Canadians, particularly in the church. The story above is just one small example. As a pastor serving at a second-generation Korean immigrant church, and as a second-generation Korean-Canadian myself, I wondered: *Why? What are the roots of these differences? Why are so many second-generation immigrants leaving the church? How can we as a church find a way to move forward in witness?*

These questions have led my doctoral research as I seek to develop a Korean-North American theology of witness. My goal is to incorporate the understanding of the communal self (*Woori* in Korean) with some of the wider Protestant ecumenical conversation on witness.

I believe that theology should exist for the church, for ministry, not only abstractly. I wanted to dive into theology with this pastoral concern and to tackle a church issue. I wanted to learn more about why there was a “silent exodus” of second-generation immigrants leaving the church, and how we can respond to this phenomenon.

This research, especially the concept of *Woori*, helped me understand some of the differences in thinking between first- and second-generation Korean-Canadians and propose a way forward as a witnessing church.

Understanding Woori

Woori is the word “we” in Korean, but the concept is much broader. It has to do with the Korean understanding of self, the communal self vs. the western individual “I.” This concept is the foundation of first-generation Korean immigrants’ everyday lives. The Korean immigrant church has a unique collectivity, a “we-ness” that is not just the sum of individual thoughts, but something deeper.

You can hear it even in the language. In Korean, we say “our church” instead of “my church.” Even when I say “my wife” in the Korean language, it’s more like “our wife.” I wanted to learn more about how this concept has influenced the Korean church – its liturgy and its people.

Generational differences

First-generation immigrants generally live according to the Korean culture, which is largely influenced by three religions: Korean shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The addition of Christianity is relatively recent, and a lot of this Christianity has been shaped to accommodate the Korean culture.

For example, the first-generation Korean churches focus very strongly on the senior pastor; this person

brings the congregants together and leads them spiritually. This connects with filial piety consciousness – an integral part of Confucian teaching, and a part of first-generation Koreans’ collective understanding.

On the other hand, second-generation Koreans like myself aren’t 100% Canadian, but we’re also not 100% Korean. We tend to be influenced more by individualism, postmodernism, multiculturalism, and diversity. We don’t really understand the Buddhist, shamanistic, or Confucian influences on Korean Christianity. Instead of being so strongly oriented toward hierarchy, second-generation Koreans are more likely to see everyone as equal. We are *all* called to be leaders, witnesses, pastors, and followers.

Collectivity vs. individuality

Historically the Korean collective consciousness, the *Woori* consciousness, helped to bring the Korean immigrants together; the Korean church was always a source of belonging, a “Little Korea” where you could share freely without language barriers. That reinforced the collective consciousness, and the shared struggles in life and differences in culture helped to push people (even non-Christians) to attend church, just to be part of a community and fellowship.

Second-generation immigrants don’t have the language barrier, and they understand the Canadian culture better. They don’t feel this collective pull toward the church in the same way. As the second generation has gotten older, these tensions have grown: these people want to be more independent, they want to “be themselves” – whereas the first generation values collectivity and submission to authority. Eventually these increasing tensions led to what’s known as the “silent exodus” of second-generation Koreans leaving the church.

In recent years, many churches are shifting so that they no longer have only Korean-speaking services and ministries. They understand that the second generation needs to have English-speaking ministries with second-generation pastors. This has helped to slow down the silent exodus.

A theology of witness

I feel that the Korean church has been led by a survival mentality; it’s been here to help the immigrants

and has provided a place of comfort – but I see a lack of genuine witness into the world. The churches have been focused on survival, on their own identity, and on the language barrier. I want the Korean church to now translate that survival mentality into a witnessing mentality, to say, “We can go out into the world. There’s value in us as a Korean immigrant church. There’s a role and a calling for us.”

David Bosch and Lesslie Newbigin are prominent missiologists who also look at ecclesiology (the study of church doctrine). They have a lot to offer our witnessing theology. It’s fascinating to think of Newbigin, a British missionary in India, as an immigrant to India, acting as a witness there. His understanding of the church resonates with me. He helped me understand how we as an immigrant church can witness in the Canadian context. And Bosch’s work shows us how the church has been shifting its paradigm, and how we as an immigrant church can also shift to become a witnessing agent.

The Lausanne Covenant and the World Council of Churches’ missions and evangelism statements also offer helpful foundations. Both of these documents talk about witness as evangelism, as preaching the gospel, the word of Christ. Both also present witness as being part of social action, the physical living out of the gospel.

The Korean church primarily has been evangelical and conservative, pointing to primacy of preaching the gospel – sometimes even to point of being coercive. I see a need to shift toward living out the gospel as well.

I’ve always felt called to serve people, especially the second-generation Korean community. This Korean-ness has helped me become who I am, and the church has also helped to shape my identity and lead me to this role as a minister.

I hope that, beginning with my church, we can look towards the future with this understanding of our purpose in the world – and eventually also influence other churches to witness genuinely in the Canadian and broader North American contexts. ■

Yo Sep Heo is a Knox PhD student.

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Sacred conversations

THE PRIVILEGE OF LEARNING FROM NEIGHBOURS



By Sharon Benjamins

It was a cool October morning. A little after 9:30, people began to arrive and wait in chairs, chatting quietly. I was working at Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, a food bank that serves people from all walks of life in Hamilton, Ontario.

My role was to provide “emotional first aid” as one of the many services available at Neighbour to Neighbour Centre (n2ncentre.com). When people asked for someone to talk to, they would be scheduled for a 45-minute appointment with me. Our sessions were kind of like therapy, but I found myself doing a lot more listening than I did anything else. People just wanted someone to listen, and I was happy to do that.

On this particular Wednesday, however, I was tired. I hadn’t slept well and was feeling the weight of life heavy on my shoulders. But I settled into my office and began to welcome people for their appointments with me – and as usual, I was amazed by the resilience and generosity of the people I met.

That same day, an unassuming man made his way into my office and said a quiet greeting. I asked him how he was doing, and he paused for a moment before responding, “I’m alright, you know. Just trying to get by.” I could see the shine of unshed tears in his eyes. As we interacted, I made sure to not rush him, being both gentle and careful.

As he was leaving, he turned back to me, hesitating before asking me about the dental program that Neighbour to Neighbour runs weekly. He told me that he and his wife are in need of a checkup. “I feel safe with you,” he admitted to me with a small smile on his lips, “I thought I could ask you for help.” Hearing him tell me he felt safe with me brought tears to my eyes; I was grateful he felt both comfortable and safe with me.

He had difficulty walking, so I offered him my arm, and we made our way slowly out to the bus that holds the dental program. He told me about his and his wife’s journey from Iran to Canada over ten years ago, explaining to me how different his life is now, and how much he’s enjoyed his time here. Once we reached the bus, one of the hygienists booked him an appointment and made sure he knew where he and his wife needed to be, and when. Then as I walked him back to the food bank, those same tears shone in his eyes and he gave me another smile, gripping my arm gently. He told me that sometimes it is difficult to meet someone with genuine kindness, and that he felt that there was something genuine with me. He told me that he was so glad to have come for his appointment that afternoon.

In my placement at Neighbour to Neighbour, I was privileged to share countless moments like these with individuals I met. People shared many smiles, tears, and stories with me in what felt like sacred conversations.

Prior to beginning my placement, I’m not sure what ideas I had about people who would come to a

food bank. Perhaps I had a naive notion that people going to a food bank would be sad and upset with their lives. But that’s not the case at all. Yes, they all are facing hardships – but many people were soft-hearted, vulnerable, and kind. Many would open up to me about their lives while also making jokes and making sure that I felt comfortable.

Not everyone is the same, of course, in their experiences or their walks of life. Some of the people I met had a very hardened exterior, and I wouldn’t push them; I’d just be as kind to them as I could.

My courses at Knox taught me a lot in preparation for my placement – including how to be a good listener, and what tools to use to keep myself protected from not absorbing all these very hard and very heavy stories I was hearing. The courses also taught me how to be open-hearted, and to understand what mental illness and other struggles can look like in people, and how those vary from person to person.

I can see how someone might find this context difficult, working with people in need – but I mostly see it as hopeful and something to approach with curiosity. I like learning about people, hearing about their lives, and being a small part of their lives, even for an hour or two.

Many were incredibly kind and open-hearted towards me and everyone else at the food bank. They showed me the sort of kindness that I desperately wanted to spread in the world, and they showed me how easy it was to do that.

With their hilarity and generosity, they taught me how to take life one day at a time when it all feels like too much, and how to be patient with myself. I provided a listening ear, and in return I came to understand different worldviews, cultures, and many other ways of seeing how our lives are intertwined in this complicated, beautiful world. ■

Sharon Benjamins is a 2023 Knox College Master of Pastoral Studies graduate.

Photos of Sharon Benjamins. Photos provided by the author.

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A posture of humility

MISSION AS PENANCE, A NEW FACULTY BOOK

THE REV. DR. CHARLES FENSHAM, Knox College Professor of Systematic Theology, has published a new book, *Mission as Penance: Essays on the Theology of Mission from a Canadian Context*. *Vocations* interviewed Dr. Fensham to learn more.

Why this title, *Mission as Penance*?

Let's begin with what I mean by "mission." Throughout my time as a minister and missionary, and later as a professor, my focus has always been on what it means that God sends us into the world to be witnesses.

Many people, when they think of mission, immediately think of Matthew 28, Jesus' commissioning of the disciples. But the text that has always really touched me is John 20, when Jesus says, "As the Father sent me, so I send you." That is a beautiful summary of what it means to talk about the concept of mission – and what it means for the church and for us today. Are we going as Jesus came to us, in the same spirit, in the

same attitude, in the same posture? This is what my book is all about.

Now, what do I mean by "penance"? Dutch theologian Johan Bavinck wrote in 1954 (after the First and Second World Wars, and after the colonial era), that as the church goes into the world now, it can only do so in a spirit of penance for all of the harm it has done and is implicated in. The church needs to take on very different posture – not going triumphantly with, "We have the best message, and you have to listen to us." Instead, we must first acknowledge our penance before God and before the world as we go. The spirit of humility is key.

We seek to follow God rightly, to constantly go as Jesus came to us, to look at his example and teaching; that's our ideal. But because we do fail, we also always need to come at the world in a penitent way – not haughtily forcing ourselves on others, but in humility and kindness.

Penance, as I am using it, is a corporate and systemic concept that recognizes harms done in the past and harm still being done. Penance, conceived in this way, is not so much a goal of mission as an individual and corporate posture. It requires a posture of humble listening to the other in respectful relational encounter.

What, then, does mission look like?

One thing I see as the heart of this idea of mission today is that we must first begin with self-examination. The idea that we are to judge the world gets mission completely wrong. Jesus was scathingly critical at some moments of his ministry; when he was, it was because the religious authorities have overstepped their power and were hypocritical, judging others and not examining themselves. As David Bosch writes, judgment must always begin with the house of God (*Witness to the World*).

We must resist arrogance, find our rightful place in the wonder that is God's creation, and trust in the love and grace of the Creator. We are relationally accountable to our neighbors, all creatures, and the world. As we come to terms with the plight of the planet in the grip of human greed, we must also, each day, personally resist indifference and cynical hopelessness.

What themes do you include in the book, and why?

This book brings together my work over the decades. First I introduce mission and what it means today. I outline some of the many reasons we have for penance, including the way we've treated Indigenous people and LGBTQ people. How we treat other people is a huge piece of our mission and witness.

In my second section, I explore what mission means as to us as theologians, including Douglas Hall's theology of the cross – which prompted a spirited email conversation with Dr. Hall himself. This section also highlights themes from my book, *Emerging from the Dark Age Ahead*, and I outline a process for doing missional theology today that looks at Scripture and mission history in conversation with the social sciences.

Then the third section discusses the public side of missiology: How does church positively witness in the public? At present the image of the church in public is very negative and actually harmful, so I engage with church history to see where we've gone wrong.

Finally we come to eco-missiology. My pieces on public missiology and public witness go together with this focus on eco-missiology. Our witness as Christians includes working for the good of God's earth and living in ways that sustain the earth. Too often we vote for people with short-term plans that don't consider the long-term impact on our world. I know this can be a challenging subject – especially when livelihoods depend on fossil fuels. But we need to actually be penitent.

We have known since the 1950s that this ecological crisis was coming. As Christians, as people responsible to care for God's earth, we must see this as a key issue. I therefore explore how social movements come about, and how they bring change to the way we act and live in the world. The ecological disaster happened in part because we have not stood up and acted. We have power and need to exercise it. We must stand up and act for justice on behalf of humankind and the whole creation.

What is the most important thing for readers of this book to take away?

First, we need to continually seek a posture of penitent humility in the world. This is where it all begins. Then, we must act upon our calling – to witness to God's love of creation, to the incarnate God.


Penitence does not mean holding onto feelings of guilt; Christianity has focused on guilt and has failed. The point is repentance, turning around and doing something different. You remove guilt by acting with integrity, in large and small ways. It may mean caring for a plant in your condo, or buying a fuel-efficient vehicle. As Christians, these kinds of decisions should happen not just because they make economic sense (now that gas is getting more expensive), but because we are trying to live with integrity. We need to ask our politicians about their plans to address climate change. And in our personal lives, we may have small rituals and commitments like taking transit and cultivating hope. At the heart of it all is integrity, the daily seeking of integrity.

Although there is an individual element to every penitential journey, mission as penance is ultimately an act of communal responsibility before God and the watching world around us. My aim is to imagine the church and all Christian communities in Canada on a corporate journey of penance in concerted action for change. I see this as a never-ceasing commitment to ongoing daily repentance, a daily turning to the way of healing and love, a daily turning to our neighbor, and a commitment to care for God's earth. ■

One thing I see as the heart of this idea of mission today is that we must first begin with self-examination.

Below: Professor Charles Fensham. Photo by Stephanie Hanna. Facing page: Book cover. Photo provided by Charles Fensham.



 **Mission as Penance: Essays on the Theology of Mission from a Canadian Context is available from publisher Wipf and Stock. Learn more at knox.utoronto.ca/mission-as-penance.**



A ‘curiosity enthusiast’

INTRODUCING THE NEW DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING

In this post-pandemic context, congregational leaders face new challenges as well as new opportunities. In response, Knox College is piloting a virtual program for lifelong learning for clergy and congregational leaders. The online Centre for Lifelong Learning at Knox College will include short educational programs and events for clergy or congregational leaders, a knowledge base for leaders, and networking groups. Knox College plans to develop content that profiles leaders and best practices from thriving churches. Knox will also provide a library of resources, tools, and blogs on church vitality and growth.

The Rev. John Borthwick, Knox’s new Director of Lifelong Learning, is leading this project. He began on staff August 1, 2023, and he shares the following introduction to himself, his love of lifelong learning, and the new Centre for Lifelong Learning at Knox College.

By John Borthwick

Not alone

“You are not alone.” That’s the message I most hope to share through this new work at Knox College. Leading a church today is complex and challenging. Either by nature or due to the weight of others’ expectations, ministry can feel profoundly lonely. Having served as a congregational minister for 25 years since graduating from Knox College, I have known this feeling intimately.

In my experience, the presence of family, colleagues, trusted friends, and wise mentors buoyed me up during difficult seasons in ministry. Finding the courage to share how I was feeling in other spaces made a difference, too. I also found it transformative to know that what I was feeling was not unique to me – or even to church leaders. So, as we share resources and networking opportunities through Knox’s Centre for Lifelong Learning, we hope to convey that you are not alone.

Ministry experience

Serving as a congregational minister for 25 years has shaped me into the person and leader I am today. After graduating from Knox in 1998, I was ordained and inducted as the minister of Rexdale Presbyterian

Church in Toronto. At Rexdale I began to learn the practice of ministry more deeply. I also began to truly discern the kind of minister I desired to be, which for me meant being engaged in the wider community’s mission and needs.

Five years later I was called to St. Andrew’s, Guelph (Ontario). My passion for community engagement grew exponentially over the two decades I served there. I experienced that synergy of vocation articulated so well by the theologian Frederick Buechner: “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” I will miss many aspects of the life and rhythm of being congregational minister.

Throughout my career I have sought to enhance my personal ministry toolkit by broadening my experience and learning. I believe that taking these opportunities made me both a better minister and a more integrated person. Over time, I have been called upon to share my knowledge and experience in mental health, conflict management, leadership development, and resilience.

Upon becoming the first volunteer chaplain for Guelph Police Service a decade ago, I began a personal journey and rapid learning trajectory exploring traumatology and organizational health. My time coming

alongside the first responder community was a profoundly transformative experience – a spiritual one, even. From the passenger seat of emergency vehicles, I was privileged to witness and participate in some of the deepest theological conversations in my life – all initiated by others.

Wired for lifelong learning

I describe myself as a curiosity enthusiast. I’ll admit that in my public school years, school for learning’s sake wasn’t my favourite. I was that student who always tried to get the teacher to talk about other things, instead of sticking to the required curriculum. However, when I was not in school, I was always seeking ways of learning about something. I loved non-fiction books about nature and history – and even those encyclopedias that were sold door-to-door. Unfortunately, I could only learn things in the volumes A and B, since my parents just kept the free samples and never ordered the complete set!

As I look back, I can tell I was wired for lifelong learning. In Grade 12 I attended a summer course at McMaster University on the writing of Aristophanes and Plato (I know, right?!). During my bachelor’s degree in history at McMaster, I spent my Saturdays at Sheridan College taking their Ontario Management Development Supervisory Studies Certificate. While doing my MDiv at Knox, I could be found at Toronto School of Theology’s continuing education offerings, much to the surprise and delight of Program Coordinator Bill Lord (a good friend to this day). Today, you will find me voraciously consuming audio books and podcasts at 1.5 speed.

The Abbey

One way I combined my passion for lifelong learning with ministry was the creation of a virtual community called The Abbey. Like many leaders, during the pandemic I found myself needing to learn new ways of communicating and sharing the gospel. The Abbey was something that I had envisioned almost fifteen years ago – but back then, I had intended it as an in-person experience and was held up by the logistics. When the world changed in 2020, and The Abbey concept popped back into my consciousness. Its goal was to be a safe space to nurture spiritual things, and to care for those who tend to spiritual things.

I launched The Abbey with the generous support of our congregational leadership and our Presbytery,

which was offering grants to do things differently with technology as the pandemic continued. Using the various tools in my toolbox, I offered some of my own webinars around empathic strain (formerly “compassion fatigue”) and conflict management, as well as a regular information session on Intermissions. (This is a passion of mine – if you do not know what an Intermission is in the PCC, we need to talk!) I also reached out to special guests like Dr. Andrew Root, Ryan Panzer (who had just written a book about hybrid ministry), and our own Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand, who co-authored the recent publication, *When Church Stops Working*.

The response was so encouraging. Being a project at the side of my desk, however, I was never able to give it as much attention as I would have liked. Now I am delighted for the aligned vision of Knox’s Centre for Lifelong Learning with a platform like The Abbey. Together with the amazing staff team at the College, I hope that we will make a significant difference in leaders’ lives as they navigate ministry in today’s tumultuous context.

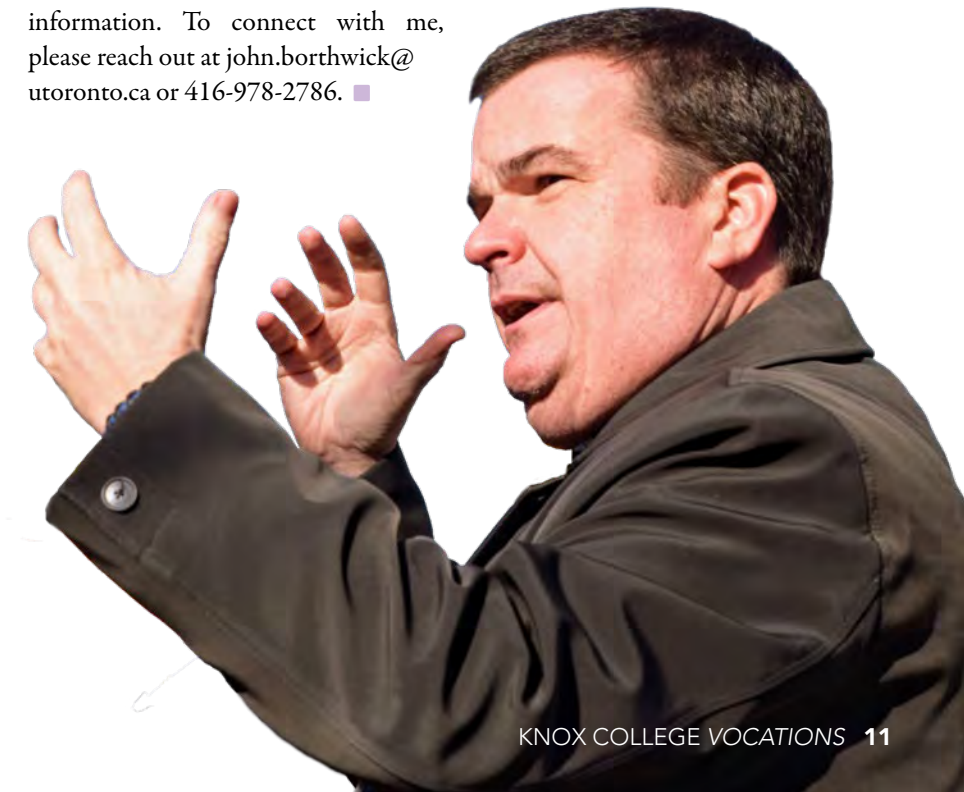
The goal

As you strive to bring Jesus’ good news to the various places where you’re planted, I sincerely hope to remind you that you are not alone. We, at the Centre for Lifelong Learning at Knox College are here for you.

I am so very excited to unveil what we are working on at in the coming months. Watch the College’s website and social media channels for more information. To connect with me, please reach out at john.borthwick@utoronto.ca or 416-978-2786. ■

My time coming alongside the first responder community was a profoundly transformative experience.

Below: John Borthwick speaks at an outdoor event at St. Andrew’s, Guelph (Ont.). Facing page: John Borthwick. Photos provided by the author.



2022-2023 IN REVIEW

THIS AUTUMN, DR. ERNEST VAN ECK completed his first year as Knox College Principal. *Vocations* asked him the following questions.



What were some challenges?

The biggest challenge was my initial lack of institutional knowledge. I very quickly had to learn “how things are done here.” Luckily, I had wonderful people surrounding me at Knox who have tremendous patience, lent me wonderful support, and were always and are always willing to give me advice when called upon. I also had to learn how to “fit in” to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. There are no theological differences between my previous denomination and the PCC, but there are liturgical differences between the two churches – some of which are very important in the Presbyterian tradition. This I had to learn by experience. Also, in the South African and Canadian higher education systems, different words are commonly used for the same thing. So, I always had to check that I understood what was meant when we had conversations about, for example, curricula, courses, assessments, and continuing education.

What were some highlights?

The whole year actually was a highlight, including: receiving my work permit, my first retreat with Faculty, leading worship in Chapel for the first time, my installation and induction, Knox’s 2023 Convocation, the promotion and tenure of Prof. Angela Schmidt, appointing an Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and Intercultural Counselling, the joint Faculty appointment with Emmanuel College (the first in the history of the Toronto School of Theology), the finalization of the sale of Knox properties, and more. The biggest highlight of all, however, was getting to know the Faculty and staff of Knox. Knox has tremendous human capital – people devoted to the mission and vision of Knox and who are specialists in their areas. I have the privilege to work with very special people.

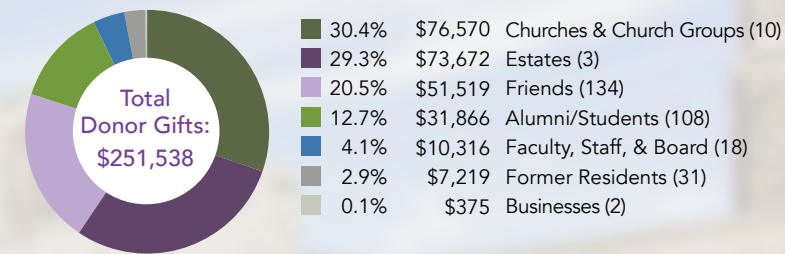
What surprised you along the way?

Nothing, really! Maybe it is because that I have learned in life not to have too many expectations. It is only when we have expectations, sometimes very specific ones, that we are surprised or disappointed when things turn out in unexpected ways. Life happens, and we have to live life to the fullest as it happens. Some things we can control, and some things not. One has to accept this. If we can, at the end of the day, honestly say to ourselves, “Today I have given my best,” then life is good in so many ways, and the only surprise is the unending grace and love we receive from the One who is grace, love, and life. □

DONOR GIFTS

Thank you to our supporters for your commitment to Knox College’s mission. Your belief in our institution’s values has made a lasting impact. Through your generosity, you have touched the lives of students, faculty, and staff. Your support enables us to nurture a community where academic excellence and spiritual growth coexist harmoniously. As we look ahead, we are confident in our ability to shape leaders who are grounded in their faith and dedicated to serving their communities. **Thank you.**

—Jennilee Psarologos, Manager of Advancement and Alumni Relations



2022-2023 Financial statements

REVENUE & EXPENSE

As we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, the College continued to be in a stable financial position. Our residence was at one hundred percent capacity in 2022-23, resulting in stronger than budgeted revenue. Revenue from chapel rentals and photography permits doubled over the prior year when pandemic restrictions were in place.

With the completion of the sale of the Knox properties in March 2023, building revenues and expenses have now transferred to the University of Toronto. Our shortfall in residence-related revenue will be covered by interest income from investments, as our Investment Fund has grown due to the sale of the building. Our Investment Fund performed strongly in 2022-23.

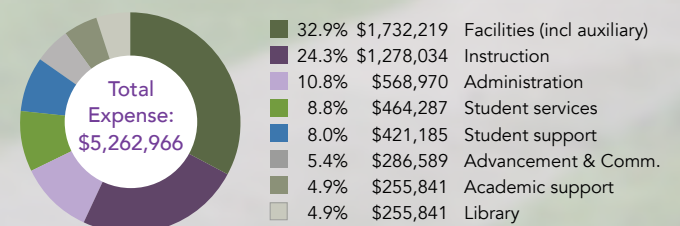
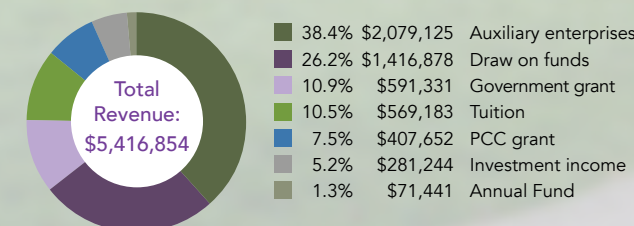
As more students opted for part-time or remote learning, we saw a decline in student registration and tuition revenue.

Operating expenses increased in line with increased use of the facilities, including staff and faculty returning to work onsite post-pandemic.

Annual fund giving is down compared to previous years, but we are grateful to the many donors who have continued to support the College, especially in the midst of rising costs. Thank you.

These 2022-2023 Revenue & Expense statements have been audited by independent auditors and have been approved by the Knox College Board of Governors.

—Toyin Fambege, Director of Finance & Administration



“Everyone involved at Knox – faculty, librarians, preachers, students, etc. – is dedicated to working towards a better future for ministry, the Church, and service.”

“I love having a space where we can speak freely about what is challenging to understand.”


“Knox College has provided me with invaluable professional experiences, impactful mentorship, and a nurturing environment for vulnerability and growth. The skills I’ve acquired are versatile and relevant to diverse ministry contexts. I hold deep gratitude for Knox’s presence and pray for its lasting Presbyterian influence on future students, all for the glory of God.”

“Knox is like a family that helps one another in every aspect of life, and not just academically.”

“Knox has provided helpful tools when it comes to deconstructing my faith, to see where I might have held biases and misconceptions, so that I can live out a life of faith that is more true to the gospel.”

“In this enriching environment, I’ve discovered the profound strength of authentic Christian community, the joy of a well-rounded education, and the unwavering courage of my beliefs and convictions. Knox is where I found my voice, my purpose, and a family within the Body of Christ who continually inspire me to strive for excellence.”

36% of students’ **first language is not English**; other languages include Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, and Tamil. This year, 15% of Knox’s student population were international students.



2022-2023 student snapshot

Doctor of Philosophy in Theology (PhD)

all studying full time

Avg age: **42.1**

22 students; 21 in conjoint University of Toronto degree program

Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

studying full time

Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MA)

studying full time

Doctor of Theology (ThD)

studying full time

Program discontinued; now amalgamated with the PhD

Master of Divinity (MDiv)

44% studying full time

Avg age: **40.6**

16 students, including 12 PCC with the Diploma of the College; 2 Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad; and 1 Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary exchange

Master of Theological Studies (MTS)

studying part time

Avg age: **42.3**

Master of Pastoral Studies (MPS)

12% studying full time

Avg age: **42.0**

57 students: 1 in Congregational Leadership stream; 1 in Social Services stream; and 55 in Spiritual Care stream (24 pursuing Spiritual Care & Psychotherapy Certificate)

Certificate in Theological Studies (CTS)

studying full time

1 student in Theological Foundations stream; 1 student in Presbyterian Leadership stream

identifies as female identifies as male identifies as other

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE: KOREAN TRANSLATION

크루즈선과 범선이 되어

낙스 동문들과 대화를 나누다 보면 그들이 낙스에서 받았던 교육 프로그램의 질과 높은 학문적 기준에 대하여 깊이 감사하고 있음을 자주 봅니다. 3년에 걸친 MDiv 커리큘럼 안에 미래의 목회자들에게 필요한 모든 지식과 기술을 제공하는 것은 물론 가능하지 않습니다. 더욱이 어떤 능력들은 실제의 사역을 통하여 서만 같고 닦아지는 것이 사실입니다. 목회자의 직무는, 아무리 훌륭한 훈련을 받았을지라도, 때론 잘 알지 못하고 아직 연마되지 않은 모호한 영역에서도 발휘되어야 합니다.

이러한 현실은 빨리 변화하는 세상속에 살아가고 있는 사람들을 상담하는 MPS 졸업생들에게도 동일하게 적용됩니다. 마찬가지로, 공식적인 신학 교육을 받지 않고 교회를 섬기는 수많은 평신도들에게도 새로운 지식과 기술을 습득하는 것은 필수적이라고 말할 수 있습니다.

지난해 낙스는 어떻게 하면 미래의 목회자들에게 가장 효과적인 훈련을 제공할 수 있을지에 대하여 많은 고민을 해왔습니다. 그 과정속에 MDiv 커리큘럼을 다시 평가하고 여러 변화들을 도입하였습니다. 이러한 변화는 더 많은 신학 현장 교육을 위한 길을 열 어줄 뿐만 아니라 학생들의 전반적인 교육 경험을 향상시킬 것입니다.

우리는 또한 졸업생들과 교회를 섬기기 위해 최선을 다하고 있는 수많은 평신도 사역자들을 고려했습니다. 팬데믹 이후의 세상은 매일 새로운 사회적 문화적 문제들이 일어나고 있습니다. 사람들과 커뮤니티는 이러한 급변하는 세상을 마주합니다. 이러한 세상속에 신학적 성찰은 계속 이루어져 왔습니다. 이제 우리는 서로 공유하고 있는 이 땅 지구에서, 어떻게 다른 사람들과 같이 진실되게 살아가야 될지에 대한 새로운 질문에 어떻게 답하여야 할까요? 우리는 새로운 평생 학습 프로그램에서 이러한 질문에 대한 답을 찾았습니다. . . .

Find the complete translation online at knox.utoronto.ca/korean. Translation by Mi-Weon Yang.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE: MANDARIN TRANSLATION

作為油輪也作一艘帆船

跟畢業同學聊天，我經常得到的訊息，是他們深深感恩，在母校求學時期所得到優質的課程和指導。當然，短短三年的道學碩士課程，是沒有可能為每位未來牧者，提供所有技能和知識；況且，很多技巧，是需要在職場經過實幹，才能磨煉領略滙通出來。或許在更多情況下，牧者在牧會時，就算從前已接受了優質的訓練，往往也要在未知和未曾處理過的事件中，像摸著石頭過河般，尋求對策，謹慎處理。

這情況同樣出現在我們教牧學研究碩士課程的畢業生上。在千變萬化的社會環境中，他們要處理的個案同樣複雜多變。同樣的情況，也發生在無數平信徒上；縱然他們沒有接受過正規的神學訓練，但在他們侍奉過程中，他們也滿有熱忱要掌握多些知識和技巧，以致可以有效作主工。

去年，本神學院上下同寅，搜腸刮肚地探索，如何為未來的教學事工，提供更適切的栽培。為此，我們再評估道學碩士課程，並作出數項調整；這些舉動不僅提供根基，也為未來神學科教育鋪路，容讓同學們整體的學習經歷，得以加強。

此外，我們也考慮到已畢業的同學和平信徒領袖們，他們如何在侍奉上可以盡善盡美。特別回顧到目前這後疫情時代，社會及文化氛圍，差不多日新月異，千變萬化；這帶到我們的神學反省上，如何在持守信仰的整全上，回應這個動盪社會衍生出來的新面貌。在我們推出的終生學習課程中，這提供到答案。 . . .

Find the complete translation online at knox.utoronto.ca/mandarin. Translation by Wan-Kit Keng and Helen Cheung.

'A creative instrument of God'

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF THE CENTRE FOR ASIAN-CANADIAN THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

By Dong-Ha Kim

In April 2023, the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology & Ministry at Knox College was notified of an impending donation from the Rowena Van Seters estate. Each contribution towards the Centre is, of course, a vote of confidence for its role – but this gift touched our hearts in a special way.

Rowena Van Seters passed away on February 23, 2023. She was the surviving spouse of the late Dr. Art Van Seters, who had passed away in 2011. He was Knox College Principal from 1992-1999 – and so was a part of the inauguration of the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry in 1995.

For Dr. Van Seters and others, the inauguration of the Centre was the beginning of something wrought with awe and uncertainty. At the ceremony he said, I do not know, nor does anyone, what the full implications are of what we are starting here today." The support of the Van Seters and others over the years, and now this legacy gift, are testimonies to our prayers for the Asian Centre's continuing work.

The idea for the Centre originated with a group of Korean-Canadian Presbyterian ministers. Dr. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton Theological Seminary), a guest speaker on the occasion of the Centre's inaugural ceremony, shared his hope for the Centre as "a creative instrument of God to help many live in confidence and hope."

In the decades since its start, the Centre has strived to achieve this goal through its unique composition of membership and its role within the Knox College. Membership of the Asian Council – those tasked to responsibly and prophetically steer the direction of the Centre – grew exponentially in numbers and diversity to include members from the many Asian-Canadian immigrant

communities. The Centre came to symbolize a "meeting point" in both time and space between the hopes and aspirations of the diverse Asian-Canadian immigrant communities and those of the broader Knox College community.

In recent years, the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry has also had to grapple with the momentous impact of cultural, demographic, and COVID-19-related changes and challenges. The Centre is re-envisioning its role with the assistance of the College, the commitment of the long-standing Council members, and continuing support of generous donors, like the Van Seters were.

It is said that, when written in Chinese, the word "crisis" is comprised of two characters – one representing danger, and the other representing opportunity. The myriad of challenges that the Centre has faced in recent years could be described as a form of crisis. In the midst of this, the Asian Council members and the constituent communities of the Knox College see our current state as an opportunity – which we may prayerfully and boldly explore.

We are deeply grateful and honored by the recent gift from Rowena Van Seters. The Van Seters were good friends to our organization since its inauguration, and this gift will encourage the Centre to continue its work to "become a creative instrument of God to help many." ■

The Rev. Dr. Dong-Ha Kim is Director of the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology & Ministry at Knox College.



At left: Art and Rowena Van Seters. Above: A Korean Cultural Centre drumming group opened the inaugural ceremonies for the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology & Ministry at Knox College, October 7, 1995. Photo provided by the author.

CLASS NOTES

2020s



Jonathan Yoonjae Lee (K'22) was ordained and inducted at Vaughan (Ont.) Community on May 14, 2023.

Matthew Vizzari ('23) was ordained and inducted at Chedoke, Hamilton (Ont.) on July 30, 2023.



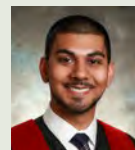
2010s

Rob Kennedy (K'11) retired May 1, 2023.



Jacob Lee (K'12) was inducted at First, North Pelham (Ont.), and Rockway, Fenwick (Ont.) on July 1, 2023.

Maren McLean Persaud (K'15) was inducted at Westminster, Calgary (Alta.) on May 28, 2023.



Christian Persaud (K'15) was inducted at Westminster, Calgary (Alta.) on May 28, 2023.

Sang-Min Lydia Bae (K'17) was inducted at Langley (B.C.) on May 28, 2023.



Eric (Fook) Lee (K'18) was ordained and inducted at Graceview, Toronto (Ont.) on July 30, 2023.

2000s

Catherine Champion (K'02) retired January 1, 2023.

Alex MacLeod (K'03) was inducted at Knox, Toronto (Ont.) on June 11, 2023.



Bernie Skelding (K'04) was inducted at St. Andrews, Niagara-on-the-Lake (Ont.) on August 1, 2023.

Donghwi Son (K'06) was inducted at Korean Christian, London (Ont.) on October 2, 2022.



Edward Charlton (K'07) was inducted at St. Andrew's, Chesterville (Ont.); Morewood (Ont.); and St. Paul's, Winchester (Ont.) on July 30, 2023.

1990s



Grace Ji-Sun Kim (E'92, K'95, K'01) has published her 22nd book, *Christianity in North America* (University of Edinburgh Press), co-edited with Todd Johnson and Kenneth Ross.

John Borthwick (K'98) began as Director of Lifelong Learning at Knox College on August 1, 2023.



Gwen Ament (K'99) retired August 1, 2023.



Susan Kerr (K'99) was inducted at Burlington (Ont.) East on September 3, 2023.

1980s

Kent Burdett (K'82) retired on June 30, 2023.

Steven Webb (K'87) retired July 1, 2023.

1960s



Sheila Cotton (E'62) passed away April 29, 2023.

Roy Donald Currie (K'66) passed away July 27, 2023.



1950s



James Farris (K'50) passed away July 24, 2023. He served as Knox's Professor of History & Philosophy of Religion and Christian Ethics from 1967 to 1992 and as Acting Principal twice (1982-83 and 1990-1992). He became **Professor Emeritus** in 1992. See knox.utoronto.ca/james-farris.

John D. Yoos (K'56) passed away July 12, 2023.



Donald Smith (K'59) passed away July 19, 2023. In 1976 he became Knox's Director of Field Education (until 1979) and Professor of Church and Ministry until his retirement in 1996. He became **Professor Emeritus** in 1996. See knox.utoronto.ca/donald-smith.

K: Knox; E: Ewart; R: Resident

SEND US YOUR NEWS

Have you published a book? Gotten married? Been called to a congregation? Send your news to *Vocations* at knox.communications@utoronto.ca.



Orientation Day 2023 kicks off new academic year

"You belong here," the Rev. Dr. Sarah Travis told students, staff, and faculty at Knox College Orientation Day. Dr. Travis, Assistant Professor of Preaching, Worship, and Christian Ministry, and the Rev. John Borthwick, Director of Lifelong Learning, led an opening worship service in the Chapel at Orientation on September 6, 2023.

The day included worship together, program overviews, degree group sessions, and time for all those attending to get to know each other.

Incoming students included 17 Master of Pastoral Studies, 4 Certificate in Theological Studies, 3 Master of Divinity, one

Doctor of Ministry, and one Doctor of Philosophy.

Classes began September 11. This fall, classes are held in person at Knox College on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with Community Worship each Tuesday and Community Lunch each Wednesday. On Mondays and Fridays, remote synchronous courses occur.

Orientation Day photos, above: *Left:* At the opening worship service, Dr. Sarah Travis invited students, faculty, and staff to approach the baptismal font and celebrate belonging in the Body of Christ. Also see page 2. *Centre:* Professor Mi-Weon Yang talks with a new student. *Right:* An Sung Kim (right) talks with Principal Ernest van Eck. An Sung Kim is a 2022 Knox College Doctor of Philosophy graduate and a new Master of Pastoral Studies student. Photos by Stephanie Hanna.

Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and Intercultural Counselling appointed

Knox College is pleased to announce the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Mi-Weon Yang as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and Intercultural Counselling, beginning July 1, 2023.

Dr. Yang has taught at Canada Christian College (2018-2020), as a sessional instructor at Knox College (2020-2021), and most recently as Knox College Assistant Professor of Spiritual Care (2021-2023), offering courses on spiritual care and practical theology in the Master of Pastoral Studies program. She completed her PhD in theology at the University of St. Michael's College in 2017. Dr. Yang is a Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO), Provisional Supervisor-Educator (CASC), and a Clinical Fellow and Approved Su-

pervisor (AAMFT). She is also an ordained minister in the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad and is active in her church, East Faith Presbyterian Church in Oakville, Ont.

Dr. Yang brings robust experience as a psychotherapist to her teaching in spiritual care and psychospiritual therapy. Her particular expertise is in employing intercultural awareness in the integration of theology and psychology in theory and practice. Her teaching has focused on using experiential pedagogies for intercultural engagement in spiritual care and psychospiritual therapy.



Mi-Weon Yang

Her research interest is in spiritual care and practice in an intercultural context. In her PhD dissertation, she theologically explored Salim as an approach to pastoral care and counselling for Korean immigrant women in North America. The dissertation's focus group was Korean immigrant women, but the methodological framework used can be applied across any intercultural context.

Principal Ernest van Eck said, "Given her expertise in employing intercultural awareness in the integration of theology and psychology in theory and practice, Dr. Yang is very well positioned to strengthen the MPS program at Knox. We are excited to have her as part of our Faculty."



Ernest van Eck
Principal of
Knox College

Being a cruise ship and a sailboat

When conversing with Knox alumni, I often encounter their deep appreciation for the quality and the high academic standards of the programs they pursued at Knox College. Of course, within a three-year MDiv curriculum, it is also impossible to provide prospective ministers with all of the knowledge and every skill necessary. Further, certain abilities can only be attained or refined while actively practicing one's calling. At times, a vocation as minister requires immersion in the ambiguous realm of the unknown and the unmastered – even when having received excellent training.

This reality equally applies to our MPS graduates, who counsel individuals within an ever-evolving landscape. Similarly, the imperative to acquire fresh knowledge and skills can be pronounced for the numerous laypeople serving churches without formal theological training.

In the past year, Knox has wrestled with how it can offer the most effective training for future ministers. In response we have re-evaluated our MDiv curriculum and are introducing several changes. These modifications will not only pave the way for more theological field education but also enhance our students' overall educational experience.

We have also considered our graduates and the numerous lay ministers who are dedicated to serving their churches to the fullest. How can we best serve in this post-pandemic world – where new social and cultural issues emerge nearly daily; where people and communities face an ever-changing landscape; and where theological reflection has evolved and must address new questions on living with integrity among others on this shared earth?

We have found the answer to these questions in our new lifelong learning program.

Why a lifelong learning program? In a recent In Trust Center Podcast, Helen Blier, president of the Association of Leaders in Lifelong Learning for Ministry, likened theological schools' MDiv curricula to a cruise ship, and lifelong learning to a sailboat. A cruise ship is meticulously designed well in advance to ensure it meets passengers' needs and expectations. In contrast, a sailboat often requires the participation of "all hands on deck" when seas suddenly change. While a cruise ship can navigate with relative ease through various weather conditions along its predetermined route, a sailboat must continuously assess shifting weather patterns and adjust as needed. It embodies the essence of reflection, improvisation, and recalibration. Also, sailboats can go where cruise ships cannot.

Knox College, when likened to a cruise ship, is smoothly charting its course. With our Faculty, we have access to an incredible wealth of theological expertise, and the future looks promising. Now with the introduction of our new lifelong learning program, we also want to be a sailboat. The program will: increase our effectiveness; make us nimble in addressing the needs of practicing ministers and counselors; help to navigate change; grow the Knox community; and foster opportunities for ecumenical collaboration. It also rekindles the legacy of our discontinued Ewart Centre for Lay Education, as it provides opportunities for lay persons to develop themselves and enhance leadership skills. We eagerly anticipate this fruitful way forward.

Korean and Mandarin translations of the Principal's Message begin on page 16.

➤ To receive *Vocations* electronically instead of in print, contact us at knox.college@utoronto.ca.

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