

KNOX COLLEGE, CANADA | SUMMER 2021

VOCATIONS



CELEBRATING THE
Class of 2021

ALSO: DOES GOD ALWAYS GET WHAT GOD WANTS?
HOLDING ONTO HOPE; & 'DO YOUR WORK, NOT FOR MERE PAY'

**“In divisive times such as this,
religious leaders must nurture
visions of global community
and the practices that support it.
Despite death, destruction, racism,
and autocracy, we believe in the
promise of shalom – the state of
peace, justice, and love to which
Jesus devoted his life.”**

*—Dr. Dana Robert, Professor of World Christianity
and History of Mission at Boston University, and
presenter of the Knox College 2021 Laidlaw Lecture*

Dr. Dana Robert presented “Constructing World Fellowship: Christian Practices and Insights from a Century Ago,” the Robert Laidlaw Memorial Lecture at Knox College, on March 3, 2021. She is Truman Collins Professor of World Christianity and History of Mission at Boston University. Lecture recording available at knox.utoronto.ca/2021laidlaw.

VOCATIONS

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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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Editor: Stephanie Hanna

Special thanks to Helen Cheung, Wan-Kit Keng, and Nam Soon Song for translating the Principal's Message.

Page 2 photo by Mica Asato from Pexels.



ON THE COVER: Principal John Vissers prepares to record the 2021 Conferral of Academic Degrees in his home office. See the celebration of Convocation 2021 on pages 14-17. Photo by Lynn Vissers.



KNOX COLLEGE

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'Do your work, not for mere pay'

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Does God always get what God wants?

How do we make sense of God *and* suffering? When Tim Reddish's spouse was diagnosed with cancer, he wrestled with this deeply personal and theological question.



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SPIRITUAL CARE IN A STRUGGLING WORLD:

Holding onto hope

By Zachary Hair

Amanda* was 13 or 14 years old, living in the group home where I worked. She had just learned that her birth mother had permanently lost her right to be Amanda's guardian. The province was now Amanda's only guardian. Amanda was beside herself – deeply distraught, frantic, and making threats on herself.

My co-workers and I were trained to physically intervene in this kind of situation, when someone is a danger to herself and others. We were getting ready to do so when I heard Jesus tell me: *Stop. Just go and sit with her, be present with her.* My first response was, *No way!* She had a history of violent charges against her.

But I turned to my team and said, "We're going to do something different. I don't want you to come with me, but I'm going to go sit with her." My colleagues were incredulous – and I could certainly understand why. "Watch the security cameras," I told them, "in case I come running and need your help."

*pseudonym

I slowly walked up to her room. She was there in a corner, so very sad, and so very angry. I sat down in the door frame quietly and prayed, not saying a word. After a few moments, I could see her energy and emotions come down. I still just sat there for a while. After half an hour, she was calm. She said thank you – and went to bed.

That incident was one reason I started wanting to pursue master's-level training. My experience in social work included lots of good techniques and therapeutic relationship building – but I knew that there was also something deeper involved. How could I make sense of my faith in these settings?

I was also working in ministry at that time, pastoring in a church. I wanted to connect these realms – to go deeper in the relationship between the two. In that moment with Amanda, I saw that connection.

Care and character

Every since I was young, I had felt a calling to care and walk deeply with people through the ups and downs along their life journeys, particularly in their darkest valleys. I've worked as a child and youth care counselor in residential treatment centres, an adult care worker with the homeless population in the shelter system, and as a pastor within the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Canada.

In 2012 I realized how vital spiritual care was in my vocation of caring for people. I decided to attend Ambrose University in Calgary, Alberta, where I completed my undergraduate degree in theology. In the academic setting, I began seriously thinking about how I define offering spiritual care: To be a vessel used in helping guide those who are struggling emotionally, physically, and spiritually, and to usher them into the presence of the divine while operating out of grace. I emphasize personal character in spiritual care. The work needs to come from an understanding that it is not as much about what you do; instead, it is about who you are becoming.

Who we are becoming

The significance of who we're becoming is something I've really gleaned from this year, my first year in the MPS program at Knox. If you're not consciously evaluating yourself as you deal with these difficult situations, it's very easy to become jaded and to burn out. We're not going to be good for others if we don't take care of ourselves. I'm learning.

While working as a first responder and being enrolled as an MPS student at Knox College, I've resonated with a particular quote from the book *Beyond Surviving* by David Maginley: "You have to know brokenness to be a conduit of grace." I have been reminded through my studies, and in this line of work, that I will constantly be around brokenness, hurt, and pain. By living in a posture of first receiving grace, I can then operate out of the love and grace that I have received to extend God's hand to those who are hurting. This posture calls us to be selfless, to reflect on others' needs before our own, and to sit in the silent places of people's pain while holding onto hope on their behalf. ■

Zachary Hair is a Master of Pastoral Studies student at Knox College.



"This posture calls us to be selfless, to reflect on others' needs before our own, and to sit in the silent places of people's pain while holding onto hope on their behalf."

At left: Zachary Hair managing the "Inn from the Cold" Warming Centre at West Edge Church (Mississauga, Ont.). Above: Zachary, his wife, Vanessa, and their dog, Whistler. Photos provided by the author. Facing page: Photo by Vishal Shah from Pexels.

BECOMING A DIFFERENT KIND OF DISCIPLE: 'Do your work, not for mere pay'

By Christine Samuel

Excitement fills the air as I sit in front of my Sunday school class and we belt out “Deep and Wide” and “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know” in the hamlet called Christian Village, Calcutta, Trinidad and Tobago. My father sits at the back of the sanctuary to ensure law and order. At thirteen, I was the Sunday school teacher and choir coordinator, and later I added youth group leader to my list of involvements. Just a wire fence separated our house and the church, and therefore we had no excuse to miss Sunday service. My childhood life revolved around church, school, and home.

As a young adult I studied finance, because I preferred numbers to writing. Finance took my husband and me, equipped with God’s armour, beyond the borders of Trinidad and all the way to Canada. God’s grace and protection led me throughout the tumultuous years in the world of finance, where power and the bottom line fought to erode my foundation of kindness and service. Working in the concrete jungle of Toronto, using cars and trains seemed to takeover my life. But I stole moments to spend time with my God; my private moments on the train and at my desk were sacred and precious.

My first language is English, but my English was not Canadian. My culture was similar, but not Canadian. As I struggled to find my identity in a new country, my Bible covered

in floral gift paper was my cozy blanket. I was determined to succeed, whatever that meant in this strange, cold country I had to now call home. Every step was a risky balancing act to maintain integrity, develop trust, and find my vocation and purpose.

Life got hectic after our kids were born. With no other family in Canada, our support came from church. A new identity was forming in me – with the health and spiritual well-being of my family in my mind. I had many conversations with God, although I did most of the talking. I found a bit of home and peace in teaching Sunday school and choir at church, coming full circle. But life was still unsatisfactory. I yearned for peace and fulfilment.

I began to question the corporate culture that for 24 years had consumed a part of my being. I considered Paul’s words to the Romans: “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect” (Romans

12:2). How could this transformation take place while I was constantly fighting to meet deadlines and keep up with motherly tasks? My head was buried in Financial Statements, yet I was unable to store up my assets with Jesus as I should. I sought purpose and questioned myself. With God as my auditor, how would my balance sheet appear on the day of judgment?

The answer and opportunity came in 2016. After a life-changing event, I made the decision to leave the world of finance and become a different kind of disciple of Christ.

I started to spend time in prayer and meditation. During the colder months this happened in my kitchen; and in the summer, in my garden as I tended the plants and enjoyed God’s creation. Every flower looked more beautiful, and every colour, more vibrant. I could hear God’s calling everywhere: in my garden, my home, at church and in every hymn. One day, I opened my heart and responded, saying, “Here I am Lord. I dedicate myself as your servant. Take my hand, and I will follow.”

From that moment, my life felt light and free. I had made a breakthrough. This was my purpose. How then, could I become equipped to share God’s Word? I needed to empty myself, fill up with strong theology, and spread God’s Word.

In 2019, sitting in a class at Knox College’s orientation, I remember feeling intimidated as I saw

young faces peeking over their laptops. However, the luncheon reception quickly quelled my insecurities as faculty, staff, and students mingled. Knox, in all its grandeur, felt like home.

Currently finishing my second year of the Master’s of Divinity program at Knox, I am training to be a minister of Word and Sacrament. Despite the program’s rigorousness, I am enjoying this journey. This year I was especially excited to do my Theological Field education practicum, which has allowed me to identify some spiritual gifts and experience the pure joy of serving Christ. I have a new appreciation for evangelism, mission, hymns, contemporary songs,

and Christian Education. During my years at Knox, I have learned one has to be open, flexible, and willing to learn and listen. My passion for the gospel has grown, and I am open to go wherever God calls. ■

Christine Samuel is a Master of Divinity student at Knox College.

Title quotation: “Do your work, not for mere pay, but from a real desire to serve” – 1 Peter 5:2b, Good News Translation.

“I began to question the corporate culture that for 24 years had consumed a part of my being.”



Facing page: Anugrah Presbyterian Church in Christian Village, Calcutta, Trinidad and Tobago. Photo provided by the author.

Above: Christine Samuel with Claudette Zabsonre at 2019 Knox College Orientation. Photo by Stephanie Hanna.

At left: Photo provided by the author.

MAKING SENSE OF SUFFERING:

Does God always get what God wants?

By Tim Reddish

I returned to my pew, having just received the bread and wine of Holy Communion. It suddenly dawned on me that the same power that had raised Jesus from the dead was now mystically embodied within Anne, my wife, and me. The risen Christ was not just with us, but in us. At that moment, I suddenly felt warm, as if I had been wrapped in a hot blanket. I felt that the Holy Spirit was pouring healing, hope, courage, and peace into the core of my being.

Some who read these words may find this weird and emotional; others will recognize it as a gracious anointing. This special moment didn't last long. In my experience, such occasions never do. But it was, for me, a quiet but vivid reassurance of God's presence in our situation. It was a confirmation, if one were needed, that God was on the case: God was powerfully at work.

This was in 2010. Anne's breast cancer had been diagnosed in late 2004, and we had been on an arduous journey since then. Throughout this expedition, climbing emotional mountains and travelling through deep valleys, I devoured many theology books relating to suffering. Traditional "explanations" were unhelpful and unsatisfying. I wanted to know: How do we make sense of "God and suffering"? Can we make sense of it? Should we even try?

From the start, doctors had told us that the cancer was virulent, so they wanted to treat it aggressively. Anne was energized for that; she was determined to live! After surgery, she underwent chemotherapy followed by radiation, long-term medication, and periodic scans of various kinds.

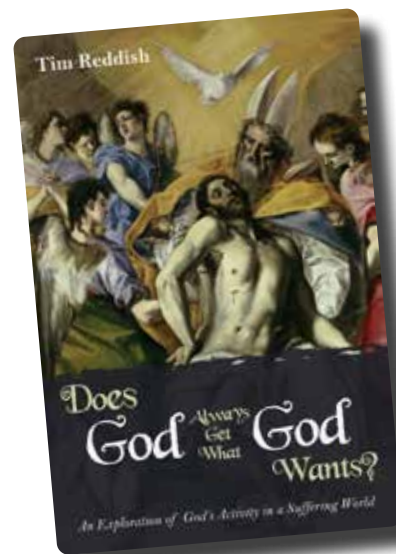
Even so, as time went on, the cancer metastasized in her vertebrae – requiring surgery, radiation, intensive pain management, and bone strengthening drugs. At one point Anne described herself being "locked within her pain-filled body – a

prisoner to pain." The disease later spread to her liver, requiring further chemotherapy, and it reoccurred in her breast, requiring a mastectomy and more radiation.

Then we learned that Anne had multiple brain tumors. This was particularly devastating, as the brain is one region where standard chemotherapies cannot reach. Returning home from hearing that diagnosis, I pulled an old hymnal from my bookshelf and found *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*, the well-known Charles Wesley hymn that we had sung at our wedding. I was crying as I read out loud the last verse to Anne:

*Finish then Thy new creation:
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee,
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.*

As we cried in each other's arms, I told Anne that heaven was now a step closer for her than it had been before. The journey wasn't over yet; for a time, treatment reduced the size of those tumors. But in 2011 Anne died, at the age of 49.



If we are honest, suffering causes us to doubt or question our understanding of God. Whether we are considering cancer or COVID, the questions remain the same: Where is God in this crisis? Why doesn't God do more? Why is there suffering in the world anyway – and so much of it? Do our prayers make any difference?

Our experience of suffering makes us think about three things: the *kind of God* we believe in, the *kind of world* God has created, and the *relationship between the two* – God's action in the world. I found a good place to begin exploring the problem of suffering is the question: "Why did Jesus have to die?" How we respond to that question inevitably colours how we regard God when we experience pain and suffering. Personally, I see the cross as the ultimate expression of the Trinity's identification with a suffering creation. This means a suffering God, the *antithesis* of a deity that is invulnerable to – or uninterested in – creation. God's character matters.

The biblical record is not just about Israel: it is God's ongoing story, one that we find ourselves in. In this narrative, we not only recognize and experience God's presence, but we also see that our God is not distant or disinterested. God is intimately involved in history – in our suffering world. This, I believe, brings genuine hope in suffering and purpose to our communal lives, and – with the Spirit's help – enables us to live in faith, hope, and love as we carry our sufferings and scars, and trek onward.

From the very beginning, Anne and I had a special sense of God being with us, of Emmanuel, of Jesus walking alongside us day by day. Christ was with us and gave us hope, strength, peace, and a quiet assurance of his love as we walked on this unwanted path of suffering together. That moment of warmth during Communion in 2010 was a special and vivid reminder.

I can't explain it rationally. I just think it has been one of those profound gifts that God gave us, which neither of us expected at the outset and one which, de-

spite the deep sadness that we felt, resulted in us having no major crises or crippling fear.

Christians trot out the biblical phrase "the peace that passes understanding" (Phil 4:7) all too glibly. But I would describe it as "having a quiet, calm awareness of God's peace and presence in a way that defies all logic in the circumstances."

Of course, we were not saints or perfect in our situation. Nor were we stoics. We were human. It hurt, we wept, and we quietly mourned the loss of our future relationship together. But somehow we knew that it was not just two of us on this walk, but three; Jesus himself shared with us in the good times and the funny times, as well as in the very sad and painful times. This, to me, was the most important aspect of our journey.

This was aided by close friends, God's agents, walking alongside us and supporting us in wonderful ways, such that we will never be able to truly express our gratitude. Thank God for his family, the church; when it functions well, it is awesome.

My quest for a theological framework that was more constructive and faith-enhancing eventually resulted in me writing a book, titled, *Does God Always Get What God Wants?* (Cascade, 2018). I also discovered that I was enjoying theology significantly more than physics. I had been Professor of Physics at the University of Windsor (Ont.) since 2002. Twenty-five years earlier, however, I had considered becoming a minister. Before Anne died, I told my minister that I sensed this present journey would lead eventually to a new direction in my life.

Following Anne's death – and now with much more life-experience – I left my tenured professorship. No one close to me was surprised to hear of my prayerful decision to pursue this new path. Beginning again as a seminary student at Knox College was the next step – continuing to walk alongside the suffering God of love each day. ■

Tim Reddish (Knox 2015) is the minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Amherstburg, Ont., and was formerly a physics professor. He is the author of three books, and his forthcoming The Jesus I Didn't Know I Didn't Know will be published by Wipf & Stock later this year.

"If we are honest, suffering causes us to doubt or question our understanding of God. Whether we are considering cancer or COVID, the questions remain the same."

Facing page: Photo by Erkan Utu from Pexels.

Above: 2018 book *Does God Always Get What God Wants?* by Tim Reddish (pictured below). Photos provided by the author.



Honouring Professor Nam Soon Song

AS SHE RETIRES AFTER 21 YEARS AT KNOX COLLEGE

Dr. Nam Soon Song has served as Ewart Professor of Christian Education & Youth Ministry at Knox College since 2000; she retires on June 20, 2021.

Following are excerpts from a few of the many tributes submitted in her honour. Find the complete submissions from all contributors at knox.utoronto.ca/namsoonsong.

From Eun-ju Chung, Knox student

What I've learned from Professor Song is to expand the scope of Christian education from the basement Sunday school to the whole church, and then all the way to the whole community. **Professor Song's teaching is convincing, because one can see it is an integral part of her everyday life.** Even outside the class, she always kept her interest in educational ministry towards the surrounding community.

From Angela Schmidt, Knox faculty

Nam Soon is a beloved faculty member at Knox who always makes time to connect with her students and others. Her calming presence is reassuring, and her competence in leading so many graduate students through their degrees is extraordinary. Nam Soon's passion for hiking, her children, and ministry through both teaching and research shine through in conversation. I thank Nam Soon for the way **she models supporting students according to their abilities and always sees their strengths.** She does this with humour and love. To say she will be missed at Knox does not touch the crevasse that will open without her teaching and guidance. She is irreplaceable, and that is a good thing since her contribution cannot be replicated. However, we treasure her legacy and hope to build something new upon it.

From Sun Young (Sunny) Choi, Knox student

I was a shy and timid MDiv student when I first crossed paths with Prof. Nam Soon Song over ten years ago. I was so happy and proud to have a professor who was from Korea, just as I was, and I felt welcomed and comforted by her presence, caring heart, and expertise. I loved how she incorporated her theology to practice – and I was challenged by the way **she tirelessly worked to create Christian communities where people of all cultures, ages, and backgrounds found their place and sense of belonging.** She believed in me and advocated for me so that I could discover my very best self to serve the body of Christ.

From Sarah Yoo-Han, Knox 2021 alumna

Whether it was asking about how I was balancing student life with ministry/marriage/parenting life, or advising me on how I could navigate important life decisions, Prof. Song has always had such a shepherding heart. I recall when I returned to Knox to pursue further studies after my M.Div, Prof. Song was the one to inspire me to dig deeper into theological questions that I had, and she went out of her way to personally encourage and guide me onto the academic trajectory that I am now on. Her recent book, *People of Faith, People of Jeong*, is a gift to the following generations of Asian-Canadian scholars and practitioners, and **she is leaving a legacy of breaking barriers as a forerunner in exploring new theological horizons as a female Asian academic in Canada.**

From Bongchan (Paul) Ko, Knox student

Dr. Song is not only one of the most prominent professors having dedicated many years to educating students at Knox, but she has also been a great mentor to those who are looking forward to the future and development of Christian education. As a Korean student, I would like to express special thanks to Dr. Song for her warm and abiding care for Korean students. She has been like a mother to countless Korean students of Knox College who have left Korea to study. For Korean students who are struggling with language barriers and unfamiliar culture, **Dr. Song has inspired and encouraged us to overcome our fear and loneliness in faith and love.** She has made a real difference in the lives of the students she taught.

From Brian Irwin, Knox faculty

Nam Soon has been all about education and bridges. In her passionate advocacy for, and supervision of, the college's English and Korean lay education programmes, she extended Knox's influence into congregations and communities beyond our downtown campus. In her time as the director of our Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry, she acted as a bridge between Knox and an important and vital part of its constituency. Her decades-long commitment to organizing the college's Crossing Cultures Together events have joined people in meaningful conversations about what it means to serve Christ in a multicultural world. Outside of the college, she has worked and prayed for churches where congregational life includes multiple ethnicities as equal participants and co-workers in Christ.

At the faculty table, I have come to appreciate Nam Soon's integrity, thoughtfulness, and gracious manner. Her perspective and comments have always been rooted in understanding and caring for others, and her insight is something that I have valued as I have worked to understand and serve the students in my classes. In each context, she has been generous with her time and wisdom. I have valued Nam Soon as a trusted colleague who throughout her career has shown a heart for students, her colleagues, and the church.



Facing page, from top: Profs. Dong-Ha Kim and Nam Soon Song with the Rev. Sebastian Kim (centre), Laidlaw Lecturer, March 2018. Photo provided by Prof. Kim. Prof. Song with Debora Rolls (K'20), November 2018 class. Photo by Stephanie Hanna.

Prof. Song with graduate Robert Hayashi, 2019 Knox College Convocation. Photo by Terry Ting.

Prof. Song's final class, Leadership Development for the Intercultural Church, April 2021. Screenshots provided by students.

Above, from top: Prof. Song with Bongchan (Paul) Ko (K'17 and current doctoral student) at his ordination service at Gibbeun Sohrae Presbyterian Church, August 2020. Photo provided by Bongchan Ko.

Hiking with students, December 2020. Photo provided by Heejin Choi and Eser Kim.

Prof. Song with Sun Young (Sunny) Choi, 2011 Knox College Convocation. Photo provided by Sun Young Choi.

Profs. Kim and Song receive a Louisville Institute project grant, January 2019. Photo provided by Prof. Kim.



From J. Dorcas Gordon, Principal Emerita, Knox College

Right from the beginning of her time at Knox, Nam Soon promoted and worked diligently to establish a relationship between our two countries. It was and continues to be a relationship in which each values the other as a partner in providing quality theological education. **With great humility yet with great persistence (gradually I began to realize just how persuasive Nam Soon could be), she kept before Knox how important this relationship was for intercultural learning (something that over the years has benefitted Knox greatly), faculty and student exchanges, and graduate student enrolment.**

What I consider one of the most important aspects of our visits to Korea, one that stayed with me long after my time in Korea was over, was the outpouring of love she showed for our Korean graduates, how much their careers, their well-being and that of their families genuinely mattered to her. In turn, it was equally clear how much she meant to them. **Surely there is no better compliment for a teacher than to receive such deep respect, a respect that continues long after the student-teacher relationship has ended.**

From Hyunjun Bae, Knox 2021 alumnus

What is the most important aspect of education, particularly Christian Education? It is not just content or method for learning, but rather who the educator/teacher is. Those that I can recall from distant memory as my teachers are not just people who passed on information; rather, they are people who showed me their love. **A great student is born through the love from their teacher. Prof. Song showed me such love, and she consistently inspired me to delve into what religious education and Christian educators should be.**

From Dong-Ha Kim, Knox faculty

I was most fortunate in having had the opportunity to follow in Prof. Song's footsteps as the Director of the Centre for Asian Canadian Theology and Ministry. **She had left behind a legacy of inspirational leadership, especially amongst the members of the Asian-Canadian Immigrant communities.** What I walked into, when I first began my work, was the gift of camaraderie from the Asian Council members and Knox College. Inspired by her vision and undergirded by Asian Council members and the College, I was blessed to have been part of the meaningful research and intercultural endeavors that continued to unfold.

Competent leadership aside, **Prof. Song is widely admired for her propensity to mentor others with opportunities** – academic, publication, and experience – that are otherwise difficult to come by. The recently published research, *People of Faith, People of Jeong (Qing): The Asian Canadian Churches of Today for Tomorrow*, was largely possible as a direct of Prof. Song's persistent encouragement and mentorship towards others, especially to a relatively inexperienced scholar like me. Prof. Song has been a respected mentor, a colleague in work and in ministry.

From Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng, Prof. Emerita, Emmanuel College

Those of us from Asia committed to the vocation of education – including theological education, religious education, and ministerial formation – have ever before us Master Kong himself as a figure to emulate: “A model teacher for ten thousand ages (in other words, for posterity): 萬世師表.” As we, members of the Toronto School Theology, send best wishes for a well-deserved retirement to a treasured colleague, **what more fitting tribute can we bring than to declare her exactly such a teacher and scholar?**

From Stuart Macdonald, Knox faculty

Nam Soon has been the driving force behind the Crossing Cultures Together gatherings that have challenged all of us to build an inclusive church. She was vital to our lay education programs, in both English and Korean. Her work with graduate students has been tireless and so many students have benefited from her mentorship, support and guidance. She has constantly stressed the importance of educational ministry to all of our students and then demonstrated that in her classes and her commitments. We have been truly blessed by her teaching, leadership, and friendship.

From Joan Pries, Knox faculty

When I think of Dr. Nam Soon Song, I think first of her dedication to her students and to Knox College. She is a woman of integrity and quiet strength, qualities that are reflected in her teaching and interactions with students and colleagues. Nam Soon tirelessly supervised numerous graduate degree students, inspiring them to strive for the best. **Her deep faith, wisdom, and care for others have been integral to her unselfish service throughout her tenure at Knox College.** Faculty appreciated the thoughtful responses in meetings – whether they were questions, reflections, or critiques, all were spoken with kindness and care. Nam Soon has always been a cheerful and positive presence that will be greatly missed.

Facing page, from top: Rev. Dr. Paul Choi (K'07, 11), Prof. Nam Soon Song, Knox Principal Emerita Dorcas Gordon, Knox staff Megan Shin, and Rev. Dr. Yongsoon Cho (K'15) in Ilsan, Korea, in May 2017.

Knox alumni with Profs. Gordon and Song at Hanil University and Theological Seminary, Wanju, Korea, in May 2017.

Knox College alumni with Profs. Song and Gordon at Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary in Seoul, Korea, in May 2017. Photos by Megan Shin.

Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry at Knox College, November 2005. File photo.

At right, from top: Prof. Song with graduate Casey Park and friends, 2019 Knox College Convocation. Photo by Terry Ting. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry at the public forum, “Yearning for Connectedness: voices of young adults,” September 2015. File photo.

Profs. Nam Soon Song and Esther Acolatse lead the faculty procession at Knox College's 2018 Convocation. Photo by Jason Chuan Der-Shum.



Celebrating the class of 2021

MASTER OF DIVINITY



With the Diploma
of the College
Cecilia Appiah-Agyei
B.Th.



With the Diploma
of the College
Gerald Leo Gallant
B.Ed.



With the Diploma
of the College
Mark Oteng
B.Com.



With the Diploma
of the College
Candice Leah
Shivana Bahadoor
B.A. (Hons.)



With the Sangjoon
Hall of Theology
Certificate
Joshua Heo
B.A.



In Kyu Cho
B.Sc. (Hons.)



With the General
Assembly Certificate
Thomas S. Mason
H.N.D.

MASTER OF DIVINITY & MASTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



With the Diploma
of the College
Eun Oae Koh
B.Sc. (Hons.)

MASTER OF PASTORAL STUDIES



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Grace Kan Cheung
M.Div.



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Clement Thau
Hau Shim
B.Eng., M.Div.



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Loys de Fleuriot
de la Colinière
B.Com., M.T.S., Ph.D.



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Antonio Siracusa
B.Sc.N.



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Jessica Theresa
Jinjoo Lee
B.A.



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Perry Ho Fai So
B.A (Hons), MDiv.



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
David Mikael
Ramkhelawan
B.A. (Hons.)



With Spiritual Care &
Psychotherapy Certificate
Jonathon Brendon
Zarb
B.A. (Hons.)

MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES



Hyeon Joo (Karen)
Kim
B.A., M.A.



Mirim Kim
B.Sc. (Hons.)



Anne McGillivray
B.A., B.Sc., M.L.S.

MASTER OF ARTS



Dong-Jin Park
B.Ed, M.Div., Th.M

MASTER OF THEOLOGY



Konnie Jane Vissers
B.A., M.Div.

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY



Jonathan Mark
Schmidt
B.A. (Hons.), M.Div.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY



Hyunjun (David) Bae
B.A., M.Div.



Sarah Yoo-Han
B.A. (Hons.), M.Div.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Awarded November 2020 at the
University of St. Michael's College

Hyunho Shin
B.A., M.A.

Knox College conferred degrees, certificates, and diplomas upon twenty-four graduates *in absentia* and held a virtual celebration on May 26, 2021, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 200 family members and friends gathered to celebrate the graduates at the virtual event.

In his remarks, Principal John Vissers told the graduates, "This evening is about you. You are a remarkable group of students who have persevered, in the full sense of that word, to complete your programs of study under the conditions of a global pandemic. As a college, Knox is proud of what you've accomplished."

He said, "Tonight we celebrate together the conclusion of what has been a remarkably challenging year. We've studied together, we've taught together, we've worked together, we've eaten together, we've prayed together, we've wept together, and we've laughed together. All at a distance.... But we've done it together."

Continued on page 16.

"You are a remarkable group of students who have persevered, in the full sense of that word, to complete your programs of study under the conditions of a global pandemic."



2021 GRADUATING STUDENT PRIZES

Knox College Gold Medal – *Top prize for MDiv:*
Joshua Heo

The Mathewson Memorial Scholarship –
Top prize for MTS or MPS:
Anne McGillivray

Chris Vais Community Award:
Gerald Gallant

Robert & Elizabeth McKay Memorial Prize
(Ewart; Community Life):
Antonio Siracusa

Lillian Matthews Prize (Ewart;
Christian Education):
Eun Oae (Grace) Koh

Walter W. Bryden Prize (Church History):
Eun Oae (Grace) Koh

Walter W. Bryden Prize (Ethics):
In Kyu (Anthony) Cho & Joshua Heo

Gordon Mortimer Clark Prize (Ethics):
Eun Oae (Grace) Koh

Rev. Stanley W. & Eleanor Vance
Memorial Prize (Preaching):
Thomas Mason

R. M. Boswell Prize (Preaching):
Candice Bahadoor

Roberta Kinnon Prize (Preaching):
Candice Bahadoor

Rev. Dr. Harry B. Somers Memorial Prize
(Old Testament):
Eun Oae (Grace) Koh

D. K. Andrews Memorial Prize (Old Testament):
Gerald Gallant

New Testament Scholarship:
Thomas Mason

Rev. Wm. James Walker, D.D. Prize
(Systematic Theology):
Eun Oae (Grace) Koh

John Robson Award (Urban Ministry),
Practical Theology (Inner City Ministry):
Mark Oteng

Mr. & Mrs. W. G. Ridell, Manchester (Auburn):
Cecilia Appiah-Agyei

*Find a complete list of 2021 prizes and
scholarships at knox.utoronto.ca/2021prizes.*

Continued from page 15.

Vancouver School of Theology Principal Richard Topping gave the Convocation Address, “Passion and Compassion.” He said, “I think there may be no greater sign of the divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ than this: he was moved by compassion. When compassion gains traction in a life, it makes leadership and service a Christlike thing.”

Mary Jane Bisset, President of the Knox-Ewart Graduates’ Association, presented the Knox College Gold Medal to Joshua Heo, the graduating Master of Divinity student with the highest academic standing in the 30-credit program. Anne McGil-

*“I think there may be no greater
sign of the divinity of Our Lord
Jesus Christ than this: he was
moved by compassion. When
compassion gains traction in
a life, it makes leadership and
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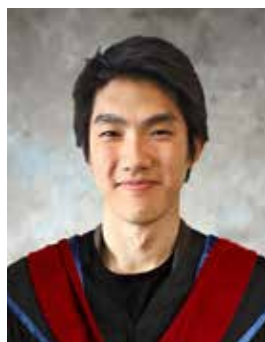
livray received the Mathewson Memorial Scholarship, the top prize for a student in the 20-credit MTS or MPS programs. *Many other awards were also given; see knox.utoronto.ca/2021prizes.*

Knox College Principal Emerita J. Dorcas Gordon offered the Invocation Prayer. Knox College Board of Governors Convenor Randal Phillips and University of Toronto Chan-

cellor Rose Patten brought greetings. Toronto School of Theology Director Dr. Pamela Couture, along with fellow staff Jesse Billet and Diane Henson, gave creative congratulations in Latin and English. The evening featured musical performances by Vice Principal and Academic Dean Stuart Macdonald and by the Knox College Virtual Choir, led by MTS student Claire Lemiski.

The ceremony also included special recognition and appreciation for Professor Nam Soon Song, retiring after 21 years of distinguished service as Ewart Professor of Christian Education & Youth Ministry at Knox College. Principal Vissers said, “Since her arrival at Knox College in 2000 . . . Dr. Nam Soon Song’s influence has been deep and wide and transformational, for her students, the College, and the Church.” He concluded, “Knox College extends its deep gratitude to Professor Song as she transitions to a well-earned retirement; we honour her for her outstanding contribution to our community of faith and learning; and we pray for God’s blessing upon her and her family.” More at knox.utoronto.ca/namsoonsong.

The May 26, 2021, ceremony acknowledged graduates’ accomplishments and officially conferred their degrees according to requirements of the University of Toronto, the Toronto School of Theology, and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. Knox College also intends to recognize and celebrate the Class of 2021 at a future in-person Convocation.



Joshua Heo, recipient of the Knox College Gold Medal, top MDiv prize



Anne McGillivray, recipient of the Mathewson Memorial Scholarship, top MTS/MPS prize



Watch this year’s ceremony at knox.utoronto.ca/convocation.

Gerald Gallant receives Chris Vais Community Award

Congratulations to Gerry Gallant, recipient of the 2021 Chris Vais Community Award! This award is given annually to a graduating theological student who has contributed to the Knox Community in an exceptional way – by having a pastoral and community-building influence on the College. Knox’s faculty, staff, and students select each recipient.



Gerald Gallant

Gerry, who has just completed his Master of Divinity degree at Knox, works in English language ministry at London Korean Christian Church, his home congregation. In 2020-2021, Gerry served as president of the Mission & Theology Society (M&T) Executive Committee, and before that he served as vice president.

“Gerry contributed so much to the community at Knox when we were all physically present in the building, and he has done an exceptional job of staying connected as we’ve gone remote. The fact

that the M&T has continued to function so well while we studied remotely speaks volumes to his gifts and his hard work in building our community,” said Vice Principal Stuart Macdonald.

Classmates of the Rev. Dr. Chris Vais (K’87) established the Chris Vais Community Award in Vais’s memory in 2002. Knox is grateful to the donors who faithfully give each year to make this award possible. Read more at knox.utoronto.ca/2021vaisaward.

CLASS NOTES

1950s

Dorothyann Summers (E’54) passed away on January 21, 2021.

1960s

Kenneth G. Knight (K’61) passed away on January 15, 2021.

Dorothy A. Wilson (E’61) passed away December 22, 2020.

John W. Burkhart (K’62) passed away January 24, 2021.

Helen Goggin (K’65, Professor Emeritus) passed away on February 12, 2021. See knox.utoronto.ca/helen-goggin.



1980s

Patricia J. Hanna (K’80) passed away on March 15, 2021.

John B. Henderson (K’82) retired on June 1, 2020.

J. Dianne Ollerenshaw (K’83) retired on January 31, 2021.

Eric A. Beggs (HDD’84) passed away on January 11, 2021.

W.L. Shaun Seaman (K’86) retired on January 1, 2021.

Peter Coutts (K’87) retired on February 1, 2021.

James T. McVeigh (K’89) passed away on April 5, 2021.

1990s

Alan Goh (K’92) was inducted at Toronto Chinese PC on April 18, 2021.

Ed Hoekstra (K’99) was inducted at St. Andrew’s, Owen Sound (Ont.), on February 28, 2021.

Cheryl Horne (K’99) retired on March 1, 2021.

2000s

Phil Yoo (K’07) has been appointed Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible at the University of British Columbia.

Matthew Ruttan (K’08) is publishing The Pulse Podcast at matthewruttan.com/thepulsepodcast.



2010s

Joanne Lee (K’12) was inducted at St. Andrew’s, Barrie (Ont.), on January 10, 2021.

David W. Hooper (K’13) retired on March 31, 2021.



Robert Reid (K’14) passed away on February 21, 2021. See knox.utoronto.ca/robert-reid.

Nick Renaud (K’18) was inducted as Associate Minister of Knox Spadina, Toronto, on January 24, 2021.



2020s

Susie Choi (K’20) is a spiritual care practitioner in the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, Toronto General Hospital.



Hyunho Shin (K’20) began as Assistant Professor of Christian Education at Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary (Korea) in March 2021.

Sarah Yoo (K’21) begins as Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Tyndale University this fall.



SEND US YOUR NEWS

Have you been called to a congregation? Gotten married? Had a baby? Published a book? Send your news to [Vocations at \[knoxcommunications@utoronto.ca\]\(mailto:Vocations@knoxcommunications@utoronto.ca\)](mailto:Vocations@knoxcommunications@utoronto.ca).

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE (KOREAN):

학생들의 삶을 변화시키는 나스칼리지 교수진

2020년 3월 글로벌 유행병이 시작된 이후 Knox College에서 가르치는 교수들은 온라인 가상 플랫폼을 사용하여 원격으로 수업을 진행했습니다. 그들의 헌신의 결과로 Knox의 학생들은 중단 없이 학업을 계속 진행할 수 있었습니다. 사실은, 등록한 학생수가 더 많아졌으며, 또 대부분의 학생들은 탁월한 학업 성적을 거두었습니다. 우리의 교수들은 학생들 및 교직원들과 협력하여 잘 해냈습니다.

그러므로 잠시 멈추고 신학교에서 교수진이 갖는 극히 중요한 역할을 인정하는 것이 적절하다고 생각합니다. 학장으로서 저는 Knox College가 학문적 탁월성에 힘을 다하는 훌륭한 다양한 교수진을 보유하고 있다는 사실에 감사 드립니다. 1844년에 설립된 이래 목사, 학자, 또 지도자로서의 역할을 다하는 교수들에 의해 나스칼리지는 종종 잘 알려졌습니다. 이러한 교육자들은 목회 사역의 실천이 좋은 신학을 앞서고 또 좋은 신학을 낳으며, 모든 형태의 기독교 사역에 대한 깊은 신학적 성찰이 교회의 신앙과 생활에 아주 중요하다는 것을 알고 있었습니다.

현재 나스 교수들은 교육, 연구 및 서비스 분야에서 이러한 전통을 잘 이어가고 있습니다. 최근 몇 년 동안 Knox 교수진은 다음과 같은 분야에서 연구를 진행하고 책과 논문을 출판했습니다: 아시아인 캐나다 교회의 세대 간 변화; 1945년 이후 캐나다에서 기독교인의 통계적 변화; 회중을 위한 목시적 문헌 해석; 아프리카와 서양의 영성; 성 소수 자에 대한 종교적 가해; 에큐메니칼 및 종교 간 영적 돌봄과 사목을 위한 프로그램; 그리고 신약 성서 해석을 위한 현대 철학의 중요성.

향후 몇 년 동안 Knox의 많은 교수진이 한발 물러나 은퇴를 향해 나아가기 시작할 것입니다. 이사회와 교수진은 학문적 우수성에 대한 Knox의 책무와 예수 그리스도의 교회 봉사에 대한 커다란 중요성을 유지하기 위해 새로운 교수진을 위한 계획을 개발하고 있습니다. 동시에, 우리는 다음 Knox 교수진을 더욱 다양하고 포괄적이며, 글로벌 교회를 대표할 수 있도록 노력할 것입니다.

마지막으로 이 호의 다른 부분에서 언급했듯이 이화트 기독교교육학과 청소년 목회 교수인 송남순 박사는 21년간의 훌륭한 사역을 끝내고 은퇴하게 됩니다. 송교수는 학생들과 우리 학교, 또 교회에 깊고 넓고 변혁적인 영향력을 남겼습니다. Knox College를 대신하여 우리 신앙과 배움의 공동체에 남긴 헤아릴 수 없는 공헌에 감사를 드리며, 송교수가 교육과 학문 및 봉사의 놀라운 경력에서 성취한 모든 것에 대해 존경합니다. 송교수는 우리가 사실이라고 알고 있는 것을 실제로 보여줍니다- 교수들은 학생들의 삶을 변화시킨다-.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE (MANDARIN): 諾克斯神學院的教學團隊: 讓學生們有一個不一樣的學習生涯

自從二零二一年三月全球疫情爆發以來，我們的教授們便透過網絡，在網上教導學生；這樣，我們的學生便能夠不間斷地接受教導。事實上，我們學生的註冊人數不斷增加，且大部分學生都能夠順利完滿地完成學業；當然，這全然歸功於老師們和同學們的共同努力。

有見及此，現今是一個合適時刻，去肯定教授團隊是一間神學院所起到的關鍵作用。作為諾克斯神學院院長，我可以感恩的說，我們擁有一群來自江湖四海，學術成就超卓的教授群，他們齊心達致優質教育，並致力達成學院的託負。諾克斯神學院自一八四四年創立至今，我們一直以我們出類拔萃的教學團隊為榮，他們當中包括各牧者、學者和各領袖們。這批神學教育工作者深諳藉着侍奉牧養，是優質神學的先決和創造條件；而在各方各面對牧養群羊上作深刻的神學反省，也是邁向信仰和教會生活的關鍵奠基石。

今天我們的教學團隊，在教學、研究及牧職上，均會秉承這個傳統。屈指一算，我們的教學團隊，在以下教研和出版著作論文上均卓有成就；這包括「在加拿大亞裔教會的跨代蛻變」、「一九四五年以還加拿大基督教人口的蛻變」、「向會眾講解末世書卷的研究」、「解構非洲及西方之屬靈狀況」、「性小眾及性別平權群體的宗教傷害」、「普世教會及跨宗教的屬靈牧養及院牧的研究」並「從當代哲學研究成果看如何演繹新約聖經」。

然而，未來數年，為數不少的老師們，都會步入退休行列。校務委員會及眾教授們正籌劃一個更替班子，力求我們這學院，在保持優質神學教育，提供卓越牧職人材和服侍眾教會方面得以持續發展；同一時間，我們積極招攬來自江湖四海的學術人材加入教授團隊，以致我們的教師更具包容性，更能回應普世教會的需求。

最後，在本期通訊大家也會看到，我們的Ewart 基督教教育及青年事工教授宋南順博士，將於本年六月三十日從她的講壇上退下來，光榮完成她在本院二十一年的貢獻；宋博士對同學們、對學院及眾教會，有着深遠和更新改革的影響。本人代表學院，為她對我們這信仰群體所作無可估量的貢獻，致以感謝；也藉此對她在教學、研究和多方面服侍上的卓越貢獻，向她致敬。宋教授這些年來的成就，印証一件我們一直深信的領受：卓越的老師，造就學生不一樣的命。

VIEW FROM THE KNOX RESIDENCE

► RESIDENT PROFILE

“Being able to interact with people from different fields was very new to me; I previously stayed in a residence with others in my same program. The community in the Knox Residence is so diverse! I got to learn about history, humanities, music, and more – to have lots of very different conversations than I would otherwise have opportunity for. I’ve made good friends in different fields, and it’s been a great experience. I’ll carry many memories with me.”

—Astha Shah, Knox resident

Astha Shah is a dentist, just finishing a specialty residency at the University of Toronto. She lived in the Knox Residence for three years. Pre-pandemic, she enjoyed all of the community interaction at Knox, including special events and meeting up for meals together. Upon defending her research project and graduating this summer, she plans to join the workforce.

Photo by Ryan Cheng.



John Vissers
Principal of
Knox College

THE KNOX FACULTY:

Making a difference in students' lives

SINCE THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC BEGAN in March 2020, the professors who teach at Knox College have delivered their classes remotely using online virtual platforms. As a result of their commitment, the students of Knox have been able to pursue their academic programs uninterrupted. In fact, our enrolment increased, and most students excelled in their studies. Our faculty, working together with our students and staff, made that happen.

It is fitting, therefore, to pause for a moment to recognize the essential role that faculty play in a theological school. As Principal, I am grateful that Knox College has a distinguished and diverse faculty who are committed to academic excellence and to the mission of the College.

Since its founding in 1844, Knox College has often been known by its professors – ministers, scholars, and leaders. These educators knew that the practice of ministry precedes and produces good theology, and that deep theological reflection on Christian ministry in all its forms is crucial to the faith and life of the church.

In teaching, research, and service, the current members of the Knox faculty continue this tradition. In recent years Knox faculty members have pursued research and published books and articles on

such things as: intergenerational change in Asian-Canadian churches; the changing demographics of Christianity in Canada since 1945; interpreting apocalyptic literature for congregations; spirituality in Africa and the West; religious harm to sexual and gender minorities; programs for ecumenical and interfaith spiritual care and chaplaincy; and the significance of contemporary philosophy for interpreting the New Testament.

In the next few years, many of Knox's faculty will begin to step back and move toward retirement. The Governing Board and faculty are developing a faculty renewal plan to ensure that Knox's commitment to academic excellence and to serving the church of Jesus Christ remains paramount. At the same time, we will be working to make the next Knox faculty even more diverse, more inclusive, and more representative of the global church.

Finally, as noted elsewhere in this issue, Dr. Nam Soon Song, Ewart Professor of Christian Education and Youth Ministry, retires on June 30, 2021, after 21 years of distinguished service. Professor Song's influence has been deep and wide and transformational – for her students, the College, and the Church. On behalf of Knox College, I offer thanks for her inestimable contribution to our community of faith and learning and honour her for all she has accomplished in a remarkable career of teaching, scholarship, and service. Professor Song demonstrates what we know to be true: faculty make a difference in students' lives.

Find Korean and Mandarin translations of the Principal's Message on page 18.

“These educators knew that the practice of ministry precedes and produces good theology, and that deep theological reflection on Christian ministry in all its forms is crucial to the faith and life of the church.”

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

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