



**Center for Global Christianity and Mission**

*Boston University School of Theology*

**NEWS**

## Dr. Sung-Deuk Oak Appointed to UCLA Center for Korean Studies



*B*oston University School of Theology graduate, Dr. Sung-Deuk Oak (Th.D. 2001) has been appointed to the faculty of the University of California Los Angeles as the Im Assistant Professor of Korean Christianity at the Center for Korean Studies. Dr. Oak wrote his dissertation on the subject of North American missionaries' attitudes towards Korean religions, 1884-1910.

For more information on Dr. Oak, please visit his [UCLA webpage](#). Also, check out the *UCLA Daily Bruin* [interview](#).

**Look for the next issue of  
the *cgcm news* in September**

May-June

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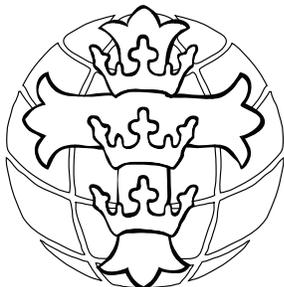




### *Dr. Benjamin Hartley Receives Prestigious Jesse Lee Prize*

Dr. Benjamin L. Hartley, who graduated with a Th.D. from Boston University School of Theology in 2005, is this year’s winner of the prestigious Jesse Lee Prize. Dr. Hartley’s dissertation, *Holiness Evangelical Urban Mission and Identity In Boston, 1860-1910*, was awarded the quadrennial recognition of historical scholarship by the United Methodist Church. The most recent prior award was given to Dr. David N. Hempton of Harvard University (then at Boston University School of Theology). Dr. Hartley is also the author of a book entitled, *The Deacon: Ministry Through Words of Faith and Acts of Love* (1999). Please visit Dr. Hartley’s [website](#).

Dana Robert; Andy Crouch, BU alum – MDiv '94 (“emerging church” leader, religious writer, senior fellow of the International Justice Mission’s IMJ Institute, member of the editorial board of *Books & Culture*, and head of the “Christian Vision” project of *Christianity Today*), and Ruth Padilla DeBorst (doctoral student, president of the Latin American Theological Fellowship, and missionary on furlough from El Salvador).



**cgcm pictures**

# Doctors Glory & Jacob Dharmaraj's Visit to Boston University

Contributed by Septemmy Lakawa



Clockwise from Left:  
Dr. Jacob Dharmaraj;  
Dr. Glory Dharmaraj;  
School of Theology stu-  
dents at a discussion forum  
with the Dharmarajes;  
Dr. Glory Dharmaraj.

## Dr. Glory Dharmaraj

“Mission as Tending the Hearthhold of God”

Locating her presentation in her recent experience while working with the Bible women in Angola, Africa, Dr. Glory Dharmaraj proposed a metaphor of mission as the “hearthhold of God,” which was developed by Mercy Amba Oduyoye, an African woman pioneer theologian; it draws upon the African imagery of a “fire place,” a place of family or community gathering. This image speaks to the Gospel’s message of healing and solidarity as central to the life and the role of the African Bible women. Applying and connecting this metaphor across cultural boundaries in her work in Africa, Asia, and in the US, Dr. Dharmaraj highlighted several major missional challenges for churches in the US, including: working with polarized churches; affirming the image of God in every person in the context of the feminization of immigration and migration (including human trafficking); contextualizing the Gospel’s message as it relates to the corporate and individual structure of sin; finding a balance between security and freedom, and; developing partnership in mission. These new challenges call for the church’s missional response to be rooted not in a fear-based mission but in a shalom-based mission.

## Dr. Jacob Dharmaraj

“Ministry in a Cross Cultural and Cross Racial Context”

Dr. Jacob Dharmaraj began his presentation by asking “Do you really want to be a pastor?” The context of this question is a changing reality of the local communities in the U.S. that has become multi cultural and multi racial. This context provides both an opportunity and uncertainty for the churches to develop ministry across borders in which the church is challenged to change the way it perceives reality; including the categories it uses to define the identity and the role of pastors. Are pastors volunteers or professionals? Are pastors generalists or specialists? How does the process of recruitment take place? What is the function of ordination? Responding to these challenges necessitates the ability of the church to reclaim its ministry in the face of denominational polarization, the decline in church membership, and the need to define its mission in this new context.



## Graduate Profile: Ruben Rivera – Ph.D. 2007

### 1. What is the title/subject of your thesis? What would be your thesis statement?

*Alberto Rembao (1895-1962): Mexican American Protestant for Internationalism and Christian Holism.*

Up until now, what little has been written about Alberto Rembao has been as part of an assessment and critique of what some call the liberal phase or “face” of Latin American Protestantism and its North American counterpart in the first half of the 20th century. The shortcomings of the liberal face are assessed often in comparison to liberation theology in the second half of the 20th century, which is viewed with more sympathy. However, this work shows that Rembao’s life and work cannot be limited to the paradigm of Latin American Protestant liberalism. Rembao was strongly influenced by the ideals of internationalism and renewed social concern that flourished among mainline Protestant denominations and mission agencies in the period between the two world wars, and these and other factors in his upbringing and experiences caused him to search for holistic models of mission and Christian presence in the world. These contributions by Rembao have never been given proper credit or exploration.

### 2. How do you feel your work is going to impact the academic community as well as the faith community? What contribution are you expecting to make?

My dissertation brings, I believe, a more complete picture and assessment of an important figure and period of Latin American Protestantism than has heretofore been the case. I am sure there will be those who will continue to interpret Rembao and his generation according to the liberalism of the period which, they argue, focused on reaching the liberal elite of Latin America with a liberal Protestantism connected to North American white bourgeois values. But my work shows, through a detailed reconstruction of Rembao’s life and his context (with a focus on his background and the interwar years), as well as a large amount of relevant primary sources, that internationalism and Christian holism were central concerns of Rembao. Rembao’s contributions in these areas in many ways prefigured (and in some instances influenced) the current generation of Latin America Protestant evangelicals concerned with holism.



### 3. What are you learning as a result of your work? How do you see the world & church differently as a result of your research?

I realize increasingly that one of the most important factors for interpreting and (hopefully) understanding anything is context: both the context of the past being studied and the context of the person doing the study. Just as the many quests for the “historical Jesus” have often revealed as much or more about the authors and their time as Jesus, so I believe that several authors who have written about Alberto Rembao and Latin American mainline Protestantism in the first half of the 20th century seem to have imposed a bit too much of their own political-theological context in evaluating that past generation. In any case, the liberal paradigm is simply not the full story on Rembao and his generation. This research (with the help, above all, of my Ph.D. advisor and main reader Dr. Dana L. Robert), has taught

me that as a Christian, Latino, and historian, cultural context influences me as much as it did the subject under my study. It is a humbling thing to realize the extent to which all world views (Christian or otherwise) are influenced by the given cultural contexts. I have also learned that far from being merely part of a now allegedly defunct Latin American liberal Protestantism, Rembao and many of his colleagues struggled with and sought solutions to many of the same issues and challenges that Christians have struggled with throughout the centuries, including today. Many of the basic questions seem to have been asked already. New contexts and developments seem only to revive and expand on them. History is as much relearning as it is discovery.

### 4. What are you currently doing now? Or what other projects are you currently involved in?

I am trying to finish the last chapter (all other chapters have been read by my readers and revised by me) in the midst of my full-time teaching and other duties. I am involved in racial reconciliation and cultural competency work both at my home institution and among inner city high school youth in the Twin Cities (Minnesota). I have started work for a book on questions and lessons I’ve learned both in and out of the classroom on certain Christian and culture issues of much interest to me. That work is of course on hold until my dissertation is done.

Contributed by Sun Hee Kim

## Graduate Profile: Shawn Daggett – Th.D. 2007

### 1. What is the title/subject of your thesis? What would be your thesis statement?

*The Lord Will Provide: James A. Harding and the Emergence of Faith Missions, 1892-1913*

By 1890 the Churches of Christ had earned the reputation of being “anti-missionary” because they opposed as unbiblical the American Christian Missionary Society. This thesis contends that James A. Harding reversed the anti-missionary trend of the Churches of Christ by appropriating faith missions as an alternative model for missionary support. He and his followers propagated and refined his teachings so that his “trust principles” embodied a missionary identity for the Churches of Christ in the twentieth century.

### 2. How do you feel your work is going to impact the academic community as well as the faith community? What contribution are you expecting to make?

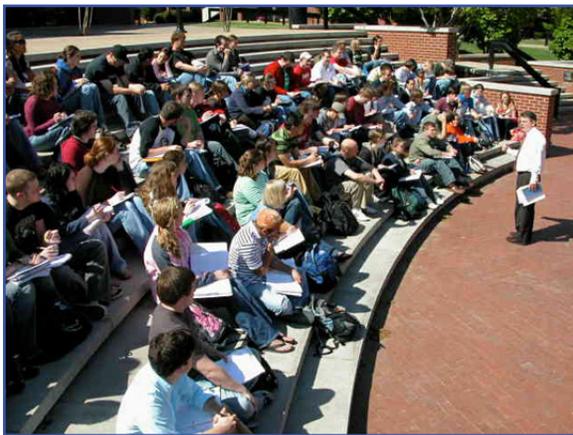
If my findings are correct, then by implication, my dissertation would call for a re-examination of the history of the Churches of Christ in light of its faith missions movement that shaped its identity.

### 3. What are you learning as a result of your work?

The surprising discovery for me was that the missionary movement of the Churches of Christ was a deeply spiritual one, characterized by saintly figures willing to take great risks based on their faith in God. I've also learned that the earliest missionaries of this movement were motivated by the inspirational teaching and example of James A. Harding. Spirituality and missions seemed to feed off of each other.

### How do you see the world & church differently as a result of your research?

My research has led me to see that when missionaries return from the field, to use the words of Dana Robert,



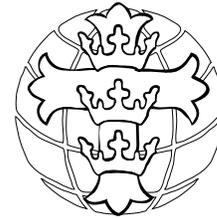
Shawn Daggett pictured on platform.

they put a face on the foreign peoples of the world. They shape attitudes of Christians at home toward countries, cultures, faith, and God.

### 4. What are you currently doing now? Or what other projects are you currently involved in?

I am an Assistant Professor of Missions and New Testament at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas. As teachers we are principally involved in the training of Christians as vocational and full-time missionaries both domestically and overseas. I am currently guiding students in the taking of oral histories of missionaries. We've completed 36 of them so far. My biggest project is getting ready for the defense of my dissertation on May 16th.

Contributed by Sun Hee Kim



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If you have items you would like to contribute to the CGCM Newsletter, please send these along to the Center at the email address above.