

Annual Alumni Issue

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS GRADUATES ARE DOING NOW?



PUBLICATIONS
A SAMPLE OF NEW BOOKS



POSITIONS
A SAMPLE OF NEW ASSIGNMENTS



EXPANDING PROJECT
NEW GRANT, NEW POSSIBILITIES

CGCM NEWS

CENTER FOR GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY & MISSION



STH Mennonite Connections: Bruce Yoder (second from left) celebrated the successful defense of his dissertation in 2016 with fellow Mennonite missiologists Anicka Fast ('20), Jonathan Bonk (STH Research Faculty), and James Krabill. Also pictured are CGCM co-founders M. L. Daneel (center) and Dana Robert (right).

Bruce Yoder Named Co-Executive Coordinator of AIMM

The Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM), a network of African churches and their partners who engage in ministry together across the African continent, selected Bruce Yoder ('16) to share its leadership position. The roots of this collaborative Mennonite mission date from 1912 when Mennonite missionaries started working along the

AIMM includes approximately 2,000 churches in Africa and six different Anabaptist or Mennonite denominations in Europe and North America.

Kasai River in the Belgian Congo. Organized as the Congo Inland Mission, a number of North American Mennonite denominations cooperated in this mission engagement during the twentieth century: sending missionaries and establishing churches, schools, and health care institutions. By the last decades of the century, the work had expanded to other regions of the African continent. The name of the mission agency was changed to Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM), reflecting both the extension of the work outside of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and collaboration among different North American Mennonite groups.

In 2004 the network of people, churches, and associated bodies that this mission had birthed re-organized itself into national partnership councils. Currently, in each of the African countries, churches invite their North American and European partners to sit on a partnership council that envisions and guides shared mission initiatives. The International Central Council (ICC), which provides a leadership umbrella for the national councils, is composed of representatives of the collaborating churches.

Yoder's role with AIMM will be as Co-Executive Coordinator of the ICC with his colleague John Fumana of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Previously, North Americans have provided executive leadership, but the International Council has chosen a team approach in an attempt to embody leadership that represents its diverse stakeholders. Fumana and Yoder have the challenge of developing and reinforcing practices and structures that keep the institution and its varied ministries on a path to greater equity and intercultural integrity.

This position allows Yoder to draw on his experience working in West Africa over two decades. Prior to accepting the new position, Yoder taught mission studies and church history in institutions of theological education in Burkina Faso and the Republic of Benin, which provided a fascinating window into vibrant African Christian movements. Working on capacity building initiatives with church leaders and young adults across the region instilled an appreciation for the Pentecostal expressions of the faith that drive theological reflection and religious practice among many African Christians. The School of Theology at Boston University and the Center for Global Christianity and Mission provided an academic context in which to reflect on such experience and to develop his own research skills. He enters this new position, "Nurtured by experience and study, and [with] trust that it might be a faithful and invigorating vocational endeavor."

Other Alumni News



Sung-Deuk Oak ('02) received three prizes for the revised and expanded Korean edition of *The Making of Korean Christianity*. The Korean Christian Publishers Association named it "Book of the Year"; the *Kungmin Daily News* said it was the year's best book in theology; and the government made it a King Sejong academic book (one of twenty from the year).



Anneke Stasson ('13) co-authored *Women in the Mission of the Church* with Leanne Dzubinski. Their historical survey extends from the first century to the mission movements of the twentieth century.

Alumni News (cont.)



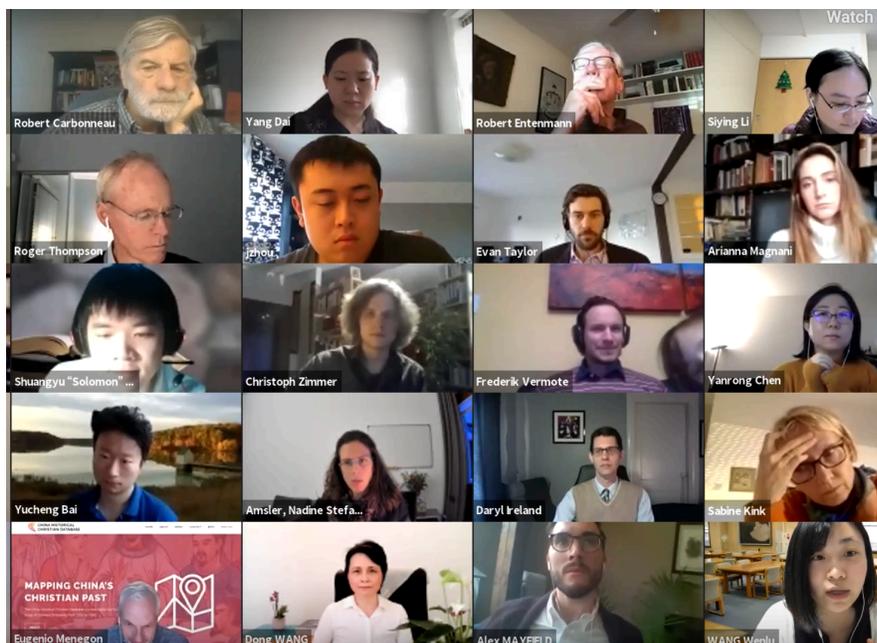
Dr. Daewon Moon ('18) was appointed successor pastor at Daegu Dongshin Church, a congregation of 8,000 members which has been devoted to world mission since 1974. Today, the congregation supports 65 missionaries (full-time) and 72 missionaries (part-time) who are working in 41 countries in the world.



Michel Chambon ('19), has been appointed a Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore. As part of his work on "Religion and Globalisation," his research will focus on Chinese Christians and Asian Catholics.

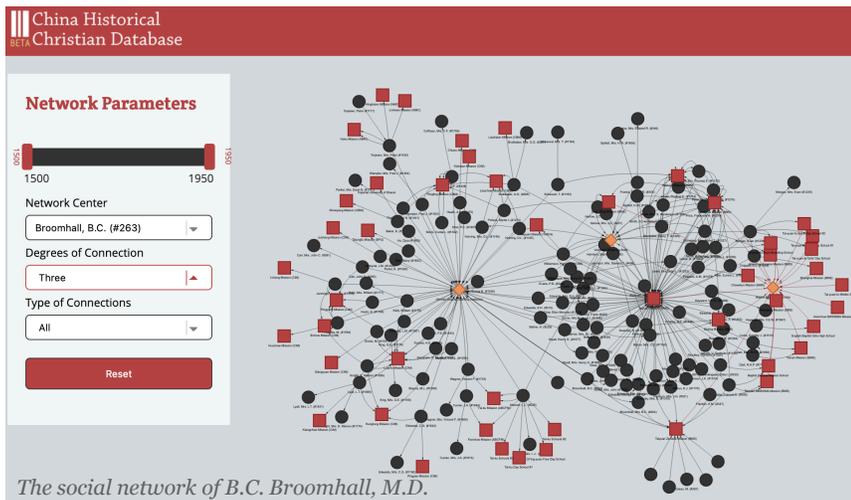
Using 'Big Data' to Reconstruct the Role of Christianity in China

On November 19-21, 2020, the Center for Global Christianity and Mission convened a workshop on "Mapping Christianity in China, 1550-1950" that drew 266 scholars from 28 countries. The Center launched the *China Historical Christian Database* (CHCD) in 2018 to map where every Christian church, school, hospital, monastery, orphanage, publishing house, and the like, were located in China between 1550 and 1950, and the CHCD seeks to record who worked inside those buildings, both foreigners and Chinese. Using that geographic and relational data, the CHCD creates spatial maps of when and where Christians were located in China, and it generates social network maps of Christian actors—revealing who knew whom.



The Mapping workshop was designed to mark a milestone in the project. The CHCD is exiting its proof-of-concept phase. Just the data on Christians in one province, Shanxi, has proven that the CHCD can use the power of computers to quantify and visualize the place of Christianity in China in new and enlightening ways. But before dramatically upscaling to incorporate national data, the CGCM wanted to get input from various stakeholders. With financial support from the Boston University Center for the Study of Asia (BUCSA) and the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs (CURA), the CGCM brought together

scholars, computer scientists, and archivists to work together to lay out a pathway for the CHCD to become truly transformative for the study of modern China and modern Chinese Christianity.



The input received was incredible. Workshop participants described how the CHCD can be used to answer questions about the emergence of literacy among ordinary Chinese girls, Christian responses to climate change, the circulation of biomedical textbooks and practices, and so much more. But to be able to analyze and visualize such different configurations of the data, the CHCD's digital infrastructure will require a significant investment.

\$50,000 Challenge Grant: "A Game Changer"

Six weeks after the Mapping workshop, the CGCM learned that an anonymous donor issued a challenge. The donor would match dollar for dollar every gift given to the CHCD up to \$50,000. When Daryl Ireland, the Associate Director of the Center for Global Christianity & Mission and the Co-Leader of the *China Historical Christian Database* heard the news, he kept repeating, "This is a game changer!"

The Mapping workshop had made it clear that the CHCD needed to advance on several fronts. A software engineer is required so that scholars can upload data into the system from anywhere in the world. A web designer is required so that end-users, who are not familiar with how to run queries in a Neo4j graph database, can still interact with the data in powerful, intuitive, and significant ways. Funds are needed to support archivists and students rifling through stacks of missionary materials in libraries and archives around the globe. It has also become clear that the CHCD needs a managing director. Someone must lead the negotiations with the dozens of institutions who are ready to partner on this project, train people how to enter data, and provide quality control.

Yet all of that seemed out of reach. The CHCD had used every penny of its \$5,662 start-up funds from the Hariri Institute for Computing and Computational Science & Engineering. But with the potential influx of \$100,000 from donations and matching funds, the ambitious dream to quantify and visualize 400 years of Christian history through the CHCD can become a reality. Big data can change the way we see and understand mission history.

To maximize the \$50,000 challenge grant, you are invited to give a tax-deductible donation to the CHCD. Checks should be made out to the "Trustees of Boston University" with a memo: "China Historical Christian Database." Mail to:

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