

# cgcm News

Center for Global Christianity & Mission

## Alumni Fill Theological Posts Around the World

The BU School of Theology has a history of sending scholars throughout the world to provide theological education. Recent graduates maintain the tradition.



Edwardes College, Pakistan

Page 3

## Truman Collins Chair of World Christianity & Mission Fully Endowed

Inspired by newspaper accounts of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, 1910, T.D. Collins—a Methodist layperson—contacted the Boston University School of Theology. He promised the institution \$100,000 for the endowment of a chair in missions, possibly the first such in the United States. By 1912, the Truman Collins Chair was established, and the School of Theology’s commitment to Christianity around the world was solidified.

Close to a century later, the Collins Chair of World Christianity and Mission becomes only the second fully endowed chair in the School of Theology. The recent completion of the endowment secures the vision of T.D. Collins in a substantive way. Henceforth, the Boston University School of Theology will have a professor of World Christianity and Mission in perpetuity. The

Continued on Page 4

## Fall Events

- 9/21 Celebration of the full  
11:00 am endowment of the Truman D. Collins Chair of World Christianity & Mission, Marsh Chapel
- 9/23 Fall Doctoral Research  
Noon Lunch Series: “Whither the Student Christian Movement?”, STH 325
- 10/12 Mark Gornik – *Word  
3:00 pm Made Global: Stories of African Christianity in New York City*, and response from Rev. Dr. Nimi Wariboko
- 10/27 Lowell Lecture: James  
7:30 pm Lawson on the Practice and Power of Non-violence, George Sherman Union Conference Auditorium

Continued on Page 4



Truman D. Collins generously supported missions at the Boston University School of Theology, though no prior connection between Collins and STH is known to exist.

## Doctoral Research Seminars

As an initiative to foster collaboration in the study of Global Christianity and Mission, the CGCM is sponsoring a series of lunch presentations. Students currently writing their dissertations share their findings with a group of students and faculty. The format is relaxed, but the discussion is lively. Ideas are exchanged, encouragement is offered to the author, and tips are shared with students yet to embark on their dissertations. Recent events have focused on ChaoLuan Kao's research into Protestant piety as it is revealed in early modern private prayer books, and Douglas Tzan's work on William Taylor, the Methodist missionary, mission promoter, theorist, and bishop.

The range of current dissertation subjects explored by students at BU hints at the breadth of global Christianity. Topics include John Eliot's missionary ecclesiology, missions and global networks in Malaysia, a social analysis of the Pastoral Letters on Peace from the Catholic bishops of the DRC, a study of missionaries Walter and Ingrid Trobisch, an investigation into the burial rites among Barolong members of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, and the legacy of Frontiers in Mission (FIM)—a missions program for young people sponsored by mainline congregations in the United States.



### Bruce Yoder Presents at the African Studies Center

Bruce Yoder, a doctoral student associated with the CGCM and a Mennonite missionary, participated in the annual BU African Studies Center Graduate Student Conference, a student-run event that brought graduate student presenters from across the USA. Yoder showed how local social structures influenced how African Initiated Churches (AICs) emerged in Southeastern Nigeria during the twentieth century. The experience, he noted, was useful both for the feedback received as well as for the experience he gained about the workings of academic conferences.

## African Studies Center



The BU African Studies Center provides a variety of valuable opportunities for students whose study and interest are largely focused on Global Christianity, and African Christianity in particular. The study of African languages and courses in the fields of religion, anthropology, history, theology, political science and public health, among others, are open to students across the university. The Center regularly sponsors public lectures on pertinent topics and provides a meeting space for those interested in the continent. The Center's multidisciplinary approach allows students to participate in courses and other activities with Africanists from a variety of disciplines—a fruitful method for interaction and learning.

## STH Alumni Move Around the Globe

The tradition of STH alumni serving Christ and the Church around the world has been strengthened this year.

Kevin Xiyi Yao, Titus Presler, and Gift Makwasha are crossing continents to serve in new capacities. Assuming posts in institutions of theological education, each one seeks to prepare God's people for works of service.



*"It will be a privilege to serve God's mission through higher education..."*

Dr. Kevin Xiyi Yao (ThD, 2000) is moving to Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary to become the Associate Professor of World Christianity and Asian Studies. Anticipating the move in January 2012, Yao comments, "I am very much looking forward to starting my work there and being part of the missiological community in Boston." For the past seven years, Yao has been an associate professor at the China Graduate School of Theology (CGST) in Hong Kong. He is a native of Beijing, and has built an impressive publication record on Christianity in China. He is perhaps best known to both English and Chinese-speaking audiences for his work, *The Fundamentalist Movement among the Protestant Missionaries in China, 1920-1937*. More recently, Yao has explored such diverse topics as Protestant pacifism in China, missionary encounters with Chinese religions, and the relationship between Christianity and modernization in China. His new assignment at Gordon-Conwell will utilize his strengths in Asian Christianity as he prepares students to engage the global reality of Christianity.

The Rev. Canon Dr. Titus Presler (ThD, 1994) was appointed Principal of Edwardes College in Peshawar, Pakistan. Having earlier served as academic dean at General Theology Seminary in New York and as president of the Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas, Presler brings valuable experience to his new assignment. Leading the century-old college of 2,000 undergraduate and

graduate students, Presler believes that "As a church institution, Edwardes has much to contribute to the formation of young Pakistani professionals at a sensitive time in the country's national and religious life." With a diverse student body of 1,800 Muslims and 200 Christians, and a majority Muslim faculty, Presler adds, "It will be a privilege to serve God's mission through higher education with Muslims, Christians and others in an intensely inter-religious environment." The Church Missionary Society founded Edwardes High School in 1853, and expanded the school into a college in 1900. It continues as part of the Church of Pakistan's Diocese of Peshawar.

The Rev. Dr. Gift Makwasha (ThD, 2009) was appointed academic dean of the Anglican Church's Bishop Gaul Theological College in Harare, Zimbabwe. Having completed his assignment at St. John's Episcopal Church in Roxbury, Massachusetts, Makwasha returned to Zimbabwe. Unfortunately not long after his arrival in Harare, the recently excommunicated bishop attempted to regain control of various church properties in the diocese and had Makwasha and his family forcibly removed from their home. No further information is currently available, but the *cgcm* asks for prayers for Dr. Makwasha—and all STH alumni—as they seek to bring justice, reconciliation, and peace in divided communities all around the globe.

## Continued from page 1

chair represents Collins' original appeal to the school to pay attention to missions, the fact that BU has done that for a century—educating Christian leaders who have served around the globe, and it promises that mission will always remain a focus for the institution.

The historic connection between the Collins family and Boston University helped to complete the endowment in June 2011. When offered a generous matching grant from the Collins Foundation to fully endow the chair three years ago, Boston University alumni, faculty, and students worked together and raised \$210,000—the final \$75,000 of which was donated in less than eight weeks, finishing the drive six months faster than anticipated.

Dana L. Robert, who has been the Truman Collins Professor of World Christianity and Mission, will become the first to assume the Chair. Robert's research and teaching interests span the fields of mission history, the history of world Christianity, and mission theology. At Boston University she has directed nearly sixty doctoral dissertations, and former students hold teaching and ministry positions around the world. In 2010 she delivered the Alexander Duff and the Henry Drummond Lectures in Scotland, the opening keynote lecture at the historic Edinburgh 2010 conference, and the Henry Martyn Lectures at Cambridge University. Her most recent books are *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), now in its third printing; and *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914* (editor, Eerdmans 2008). She wrote the study *Joy to the World!: Mission in the Age of Global Christianity* for the 2010-2011 summer schools of mission for The United Methodist Church. With M.L. Daneel, she edits the book series "African Initiatives in Christian Mission" (University of South Africa Press). Robert received her BA from Louisiana State University and her PhD from Yale University. She will deliver the keynote address at the Global Christian Forum in October 2011.



First Annual Peter Berger Lecture in Religion and World Affairs (11/11)

## Events cont.

- 11/1 Malidoma Somé, an initiated elder of the Dagar on the wisdom and spirituality of West Africa
- 11/4-5 American Society of Missiology, Eastern Fellowship in Maryknoll, New York: "International Development in Missiological Perspective."
- 11/11 4:00 pm First Annual Peter Berger Lecture in Religion and World Affairs presented by David Martin, STH B19
- 11/15 12:30 pm "Pietism and Mission in British Methodism, 1930-1960," presented by Dr. Andrew Cheatle of Hope University, Liverpool, UK, STH 325