

# CITY

# TODAY

SPRING 2023



## *100th Anniversary Celebration*

1923-2023

EVENT RECAP *and* EVENTS TO COME

# CIU **TODAY**

**CIU TODAY** is published as a service to CIU alumni and friends by the Office of University Communications at Columbia International University.

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Columbia International University admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs and complies with Title IX regulations.



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# Thank You, Dr. Smith

I was settling into my seat near the left aisle around the mid-section of Shortess Chapel just as the worship team was gearing up for their first number, when the new university president sat down in a seat next to me.

“Great job on the CIU Today magazine,” Dr. Mark Smith whispered to me.

Accolades from the person at the top is always appreciated. Especially when he’s only been on the job a few months and you’re not sure what to expect. I was a little surprised that he was not sitting in the front row as most of the presidents had in the past.

“I can’t stay. I’ve got a lunch meeting with the Richland County sheriff,” he explained answering the question in my head about why he chose the aisle seat.

“Oh, you’ll like him,” I answered with the assurance of one who had lived in Columbia for over 25 years.

“I’ve already met with him before,” was the president’s reply.

From then on, I realized I was now serving under a president who didn’t sit still for very long. And I suppose that’s the way it is with a visionary. Always making important connections, and always thinking about what is possible. CIU is better for his five years of leadership. Where do I begin?

CIU experienced record enrollments each year under Dr. Smith. Today over 2,300 students are enrolled, many of them learning online. Academic offerings have expanded, perhaps most notably, nursing and biomedical science programs. Smith also improved CIU

facilities, overseeing the building of the William H. Jones Center that houses the nursing skills center and the Cook School of Business. And lest I forget, there is the sheriff’s department substation at the bottom of Monticello Road built by CIU to help improve the neighborhood. No wonder he wanted to have lunch with the sheriff.

There is a whole lot more that could be written about his accomplishments, but space is limited, and I must mention his passion for biblical education. I saw it up close on one of his last days on the job — the opening of the Global Mission Conference in November that began with the parade of flags down International Boulevard. I knew he had not been feeling well. A golf cart was available, yet he chose to lead the procession, walking the quarter mile to Shortess Chapel.

At the Chapel entrance, Dr. Smith told local media that he was humbled to be a part of the festivities. Speaking of CIU alumni, he said, “There are so many giants who have gone before me.”

“I just want to lay my crowns at the feet of Jesus, and say, ‘Jesus give them all the credit,’” CIU’s seventh president continued. “I just want to worship with them.”

And that is a future vision all who are in Christ look forward to. Thank you, Dr. Smith for your passion and Christ-centered leadership. ■



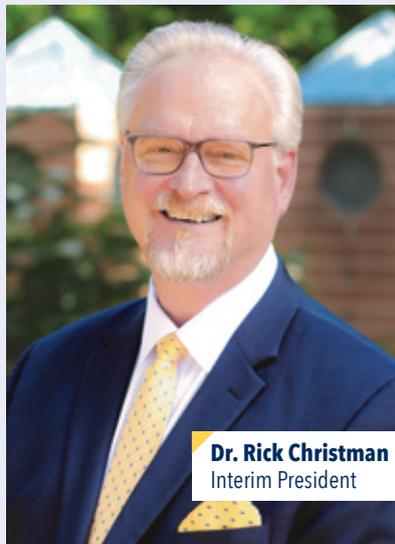
**Dr. Mark Smith** leading the Parade of Flags kicking off the Global Mission Conference in November.



**Bob Holmes**  
CIU Today, Editor-in-Chief

# LETTER FROM THE *Board of Trustees*

**W**e were thrown a curve for our 100th anniversary. Little did we know that our president, Mark Smith would become disabled and unable to continue to serve as our president. In February, Dr. Smith resigned as president due to ongoing health concerns. Dr. Smith's contribution to the University in his five years have been remarkable. We thank God for bringing him to us and for the energy Dr. Smith devoted to renewal and expansion of the University. He laid the groundwork for the many events we are holding in 2023 to celebrate 100 years of *knowing Him and making Him known*.



**Dr. Rick Christman**  
Interim President

In December of last year, the board determined that the uncertainties regarding Dr. Smith's recovery necessitated the appointment of an acting president. We unanimously chose Dr. Rick Christman. Following Dr. Smith's resignation, Dr. Christman continues to lead CIU with the title Interim President. As Executive Vice President, Dr. Christman has led CIU in the wonderful growth of the student body over these last three years of his employment. He also led the University during Dr. Smith's cancer treatments. Dr. Christman has built a great team around him allowing for the delegation of his current responsibilities, and we have every confidence that our momentum will continue under his leadership.

It has been my honor to serve on the CIU Board of Trustees for the past 29 years. I attended CIU during the 50th anniversary of our university — that gives you a hint at my age! I graduated from CIU/CBC in 1974 and have always loved the University and what it stands for. It changed my life and set my course for a life of ministry. Now 50 years later, we are celebrating our 100th anniversary. It has been my honor to be associated with the University for half of its life!

What does the board of trustees do, you might ask? We have three big jobs: *Selecting* and *Supervising* the president and *protecting* the school. We hire our presidents and we hold them accountable. I have served on the board during the tenures of Johnny Miller, George Murray, Bill Jones and Mark Smith. In terms of protection, we the board of trustees, are the guardrails that protect the school from drifting away from our roots theologically, morally, ethically, spiritually and financially. We currently have 22 men and women board members that all love the University and are deeply committed to our mission of *educating people from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ*.

This strong confidence in Dr. Christman is based on the following credentials and character:

- Loves CIU and is committed to our mission
- Holds extensive experience and qualifications in higher education and administration
- Leads the current growth of CIU's enrollment — online and on campus
- Works with integrity, diligence and sincerity
- Leads with service and stewardship.

The board is meeting in late April and is in the process of forming a search committee for our next president. We need your prayer for God's clearest direction as we seek our next leader.

Happy 100th! ■



**Dr. Hans Finzel**  
Chairman

# Unity Within Community

## A CLOSER LOOK AT CIU'S STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)

By Alex Brickley, SGA President 2022-2023

Columbia International University's Student Government Association (SGA) stimulates a positive, Christ-centered culture on campus.

The Association comprises CIU's student-led clubs and organizations responsible for several events throughout the year. From acting workshops to financial investing competitions, students connect their peers with activities that not only provide a respite from the daily grind of schoolwork, but also provide a space for community development.

There are over 16 student-led clubs and organizations represented on campus, providing an outlet for CIU students to engage in various activities based on interests and hobbies. Thespians is a popular club that specializes in theater and the performing arts, producing

a play and a musical each year. Other clubs include Psi Lambda Delta (Psychology and Human Services), The Fellowship of Christian Professionals (Business), The Adventure Club (outdoor enthusiasts), Lvl 99 (gaming), The Exchange (the arts), The Rambler (campus newspaper), and the Credo (writers and poets).

Some organizations represent various demographics. MuKappa helps former missionary kids transition back to the United States and adapt to campus life. Other organizations include the African American Student Association, Grad Life Council, International Student Association and class clubs.

The ExecTeam is made up of the student body president, student body vice president, director of student activities, student athletic coordinator, treasurer, director of

communications and secretary. These seven positions oversee the details of event approval and scheduling for all clubs and organizations on campus.

The student body president, along with the rest of the ExecTeam, is also responsible for listening to the needs of the student body and expressing the questions and concerns of students to administration through the proper channels of communication. One of these channels is the Senate comprised of student organization leaders and is led by the student body vice president.

CIU's campus culture thrives with the help of the men and women serving with clubs, organizations and the ExecTeam. These students truly help put the unity within community as they serve their peers with their time and talents. ■



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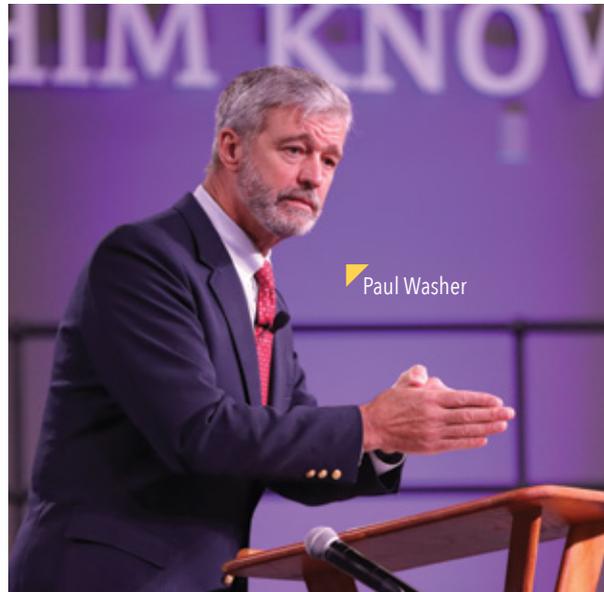
## Powerful Message

### PAUL WASHER BRINGS IMPACTFUL WORDS TO STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

Noted for his straightforward and passionate biblical messages, Paul Washer told the Columbia International University student body that he has been serving the Lord for almost four decades and every year he has a greater recognition of his weakness.

The founder of HeartCry Missionary Society was preaching from 2 Corinthians 5 when he said with a tremble in his voice, “people are so wrong about how God uses people.”

“You see a man or a woman who is willing to fight hell — to go in anywhere, anytime for the cause of Christ or you see someone with exceptional piety and devotional life, you automatically attribute it to something within them,” Washer said. But he quickly added, “That is not the case. They have absolutely nothing but the wisdom of God’s Word and the power of God’s Spirit —that’s what causes them to walk so close to Christ.”



CIU Student Body President Alex Brickey said after the message that he was especially impacted by Washer’s emphasis on the fact that we bring nothing to our salvation “except our sin” as Washer stated it, and that we’re wholly reliant on Christ.

“He also emphasized that if you are gifted with a particular skill it is your responsibility to use it to glorify God through helping others,” Brickey said. “Paul Washer provided such a great reminder of the necessity of Christ within my life.”

In an evening message attended by about 500 students and community members, Washer preached from chapter three of Romans, noting the great divide between sin and the greatness and holiness of God.

He started in verse 23: For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

“Does that terrify you?” Washer asked. “Has it ever terrified you? You can hear something over and over until it loses its meaning.”

He said people in today’s culture do not deny being sinners, but they don’t care.

“And why do they not care?” Washer continued to question. “They do not know the One against whom they have sinned, because so little is preached today in the modern-day pulpit about the attributes of God.”

Washer’s visit to CIU included guest appearances in classes, and a lunch with about two dozen local pastors and church staff members. ■

## U.S. News & World Report

### CIU RANKS HIGH FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY, VALUE

The 2022-2023 U.S. News & World Report rankings show Columbia International University **#5 for Social Mobility** among Regional Universities South.

The Social Mobility ranking is important for students who are economically disadvantaged and less likely to finish college. The survey indicates CIU is among the best in making sure these students succeed.

CIU is also ranked a **Best Value for Regional Universities South at #15**.

This calculation considers a school’s academic quality and the net cost of attendance for a student who received the average level of need-based financial aid. The higher the quality of the program and the lower the cost, the better the deal.

Also, in the area of finances, CIU is **#15 among Regional Universities South for “Least Debt” accumulated by graduating students**.

Of interest to military veterans, CIU is **#16 for “Best Colleges for Veterans” among Regional Universities South**.

Overall, CIU remains **in the Top 40 for Regional Universities South at #38**.

CIU Provost Dr. James Lanpher says the rankings show CIU continues to have a solid academic reputation, and is a great economic value.

“CIU’s rankings demonstrate our commitment to academic excellence as well as our commitment to creating an engaging and supportive campus community,” Lanpher said. “CIU is proud of the accomplishments of our students who are overcoming economic challenges, our students who are veterans, and, indeed, all of our students.” ■



## FBI Inspired

### REMEMBERING ALUMNA WHO INSPIRED A TV SHOW

CIU alumna Sue Thomas, who had a unique career as an FBI agent, went home to be with her Lord on Dec. 13.

Thomas, who was deaf since she was 18 months old, was an FBI “secret weapon” because of her mastery of lip-reading. Her success inspired a popular television show starring Deanne Bray in the early 2000s, “Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye,” that was loosely based on her experiences.



▶ Sue Thomas (left) on the set of Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye with actress Deanne Bray who played her on the show, and their hearing-ear dogs.

In spite of her FBI career, Thomas realized, that she still wasn’t happy with her life, because she was unhappy with God for allowing her to be deaf. So, she left the FBI in 1984 to attend CIU, a decision that changed her life.

“I came to this school for one reason,” Thomas said in a CIU Chapel message. “To prove that God had made a mistake ... but I’m the one who wound up doing the confessing.”

She said she was selfish and wanted to name herself the great I Am, which was destructive. Rather, she came around to naming God as her great I Am, a decision she said every believer must make.

Although she did not receive a degree from CIU, Thomas received something much more valuable – her salvation. Reflecting on CIU’s motto “To Know Him and to Make Him Known,” Thomas said in another Chapel message, “Friends, I know Him, and with every breath I want to make Him known.”

Thomas used her platform as a former FBI agent and a television personality to share the message of God’s salvation to all who would listen to her.

Sue Thomas was 72 years old. ■

## Award-Winning

### CIU ALUMNUS WINS AT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Congratulations to CIU alumnus Dr. Victor Carrera. The movie he co-produced is the winner for Best Leading Actor at “168 Film,” an international film festival held in Atlanta.

Carrera, who lives in Quito, Ecuador, earned a Ph.D. in Intercultural Studies from CIU in 2021, focusing on arts, culture and mission in his dissertation.

His award-winning film is titled “The Son Of My Life.” It’s about a strained relationship between father and son who reconnect through love, acceptance, and the rhythm of a harmonica. The film had a total of 12 nominations and fit well with the theme of the festival which was “Restoration.” ■



▶ CIU alumnus Dr. Victor Carrera (left) is congratulated by “168 Film” host and actor Cameron Arnett. (Photo by Randi Rose Varner)

**In Other News** ■



**Falcon Certified**  
**NEW BEN LIPPEN HEALTH SCIENCE ACADEMY LEADS TO NURSE AIDE CERTIFICATION**

Ben Lippen High School has launched a Health Science Academy. The first course offered in the fall semester was Health Science 1, an introduction to the five career pathways that fall within the health science cluster: Health Informatics, Therapeutics, Diagnostics, Support Services, and Biotechnology. Topics of discussion included healthcare trends, professional skills, communication, workplace safety, legal/ethical issues in healthcare, basic medical terminology, medical mathematical conversions, and technical skills. Students chose a specific healthcare profession to research and presented their topic to the class in professional attire.

Meanwhile, the Health Science Academy has been approved as a South Carolina Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Training site. Students in the CNA course who fulfill requirements will be eligible to take the national CNA test and earn their South Carolina Nurse Aide Certification. ■



**DR. BRIAN SIMMONS** moves from associate provost to vice president of CIU Global, CIU's online college.



**PROFESSOR DR. AMY DUBOIS** is the new dean of the Cook School of Business replacing Dr. Scott Adams who has taken a position with a business in Columbia.



**ROB HARTMAN** is now CIU's vice president of operations.



**TIM THOMPSON** is the new director of track and field and cross country. Thompson comes to CIU from Southwestern College (Kansas). He replaces Coach Jud Brooker, who built CIU's first intercollegiate cross country and track and field programs beginning in 2012. Brooker is now the elementary school PE teacher at Ben Lippen School.



**JEN BOOTH** has been promoted from registrar to associate provost.

*This is the fourth of five  
CIU Today articles highlighting  
CIU's five core values.*



# EXPERIENCING GOD'S PROVISION THROUGH *Prayer & Faith*

*By Dr. George W. Murray, Fifth CIU President*

**W**hen I first became acquainted with CIU's five core values, I remember thinking to myself, "Well, actually there are six, because Prayer & Faith are two separate things." And they are. But in Scripture they are so inseparable that it's perfectly fitting to put them together as a single core value.

An example of this is Jesus' parable of the ungodly judge and the insistent widow in Luke 18:1-8. That account starts by telling us that we "should always **pray** and not lose heart." And it ends with a question: "... when the Son of Man comes, will he find **faith** on the earth?" So, prayer and faith go together.

## A Youth Group, an Envelope, and a Teachable Moment

My first-hand experience with prayer and faith at CIU began during my freshman year in 1963. Oswald J. Smith, pastor of The People's Church in Toronto, Ontario, challenged the student body to be generous financial givers. I felt I was "off the hook" because I had no cash. The earnings from my on-campus job were simply deducted from my school bill. Then he said this, "Students, I challenge you to trust God for *that which you don't have* in order to give it back to Him."

So, I asked the Lord to provide me with \$30 to give to a campus missionary project. Months went by and, though I continued to ask the Lord fervently for that amount, nothing happened.

That semester I was ministering to a local church youth group who, one Sunday night, gave me an unexpected Christmas present. They had secretly passed around an empty envelope into which each of them contributed some money. Most of the cash was in coins and the envelope was quite heavy.

That evening in my dorm room, I poured the contents of that envelope onto the surface of my desk and counted it out, coin by coin. To the very penny, the exact total was \$30! With joy and amazement, I thanked the Lord, and the next morning I happily took that envelope with its contents and dropped it into the missions project offering box.

That began a growing lifelong series of adventures in trusting the Lord through prayer for His provision of my every need (and not just financial), which continues to this day.

## The CIU President needs Prayer & Faith

If ever I needed to experience the reality of CIU's core value of Prayer & Faith, it was as CIU's fifth president! One example: In those years, we had an "allowance" system of trusting the Lord for a specific amount of cash contributions each month. If the amount did not come in, all CIU employees (including the president!) would take a pay cut in that month.

In a good sense, that kept all of us on our knees!

If, by the last month of any fiscal year, we had received enough in contributions by then to retroactively go back and "make up" any of the monthly pay cuts during that year, we would do so. But if that was *not* the case, the refund of pay cuts would *not* carry over from one fiscal year to the next.

Praise the Lord, we never had a year when we were not able to fully replenish monthly pay cuts. That is, until the end of the 2004 fiscal year...

In 2004, we had several months when CIU employees suffered a pay cut, a couple times substantially. So, we were all praying for a better-than-normal amount of gift income in the final month of that fiscal year. One particular foundation always gave us a \$100,000 gift in the last month of every fiscal year that could be used to make up any salary shortfalls. But we found out at the last minute that their gift was *not* coming that year! We began praying even more fervently for God's full provision, knowing the time was very short.

## Unexpected Provision

A couple days later an alumnus called to say that his sister (also a CIU grad who had never married and had taught Bible to low-income school children in Arkansas) had just died and that he was executor of her estate.

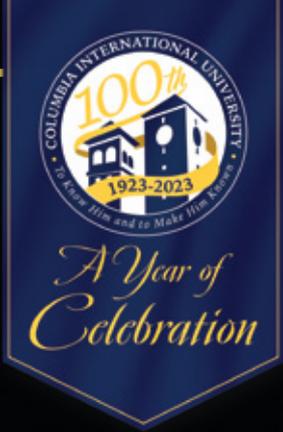
He expected his sister would have little or nothing to leave behind. Instead, in her bank lock box was a cash amount that she had been frugally saving and adding to every year. Her written will said that those funds were to be given to CIU to be used "where most needed." The amount? \$100,000!

I started this article by showing the indispensable link between prayer and faith as shown in Jesus' parable about the ungodly judge and the insistent widow (Luke 18:1-8). The purpose of that parable is not to *compare* the ungodly judge with God, but to *contrast* the two. In other words, when we go to the Lord with prayer and faith, we're not seeking to overcome His *reluctance* to help us. Rather, we are simply laying hold of His infinite *willingness* to help us.

May God continue to teach us and enable us, as a CIU family, from our upper administration to our far-flung alumni, to completely depend on Him by faith through prayer. Amen! ■

Students praying in the CIU Prayer Towers





# CIU'S 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY GRAND FINALE HOMECOMING 2023 | NOV. 3-4

*A celebration of the God who has answered a century of prayers!*



## CIU ROOTS TOUR

Visit the historic **Robert Mills House**, a part of CIU's downtown campus prior to 1960 and tour other locations that highlight CIU's heritage and importance to South Carolina's capital city.



## FLAG PARADE

on CIU's International Boulevard led by 50-YEAR ALUMNI



## LAURA STORY CONCERT

featuring the CIU AMBASSADOR CHOIR



# ALUMNI & FRIENDS DON'T MISS IT!

Join alumni, friends and the community for three days of exciting events featuring singer/songwriter Laura Story and best-selling authors Paul Tripp and Rob Morgan. It's not every day an institution celebrates a 100th birthday. So, mark your calendar, gather friends and family, and be sure to register to attend.

➔ REGISTER AT [CIU.EDU/CELEBRATION](https://ciu.edu/celebration)

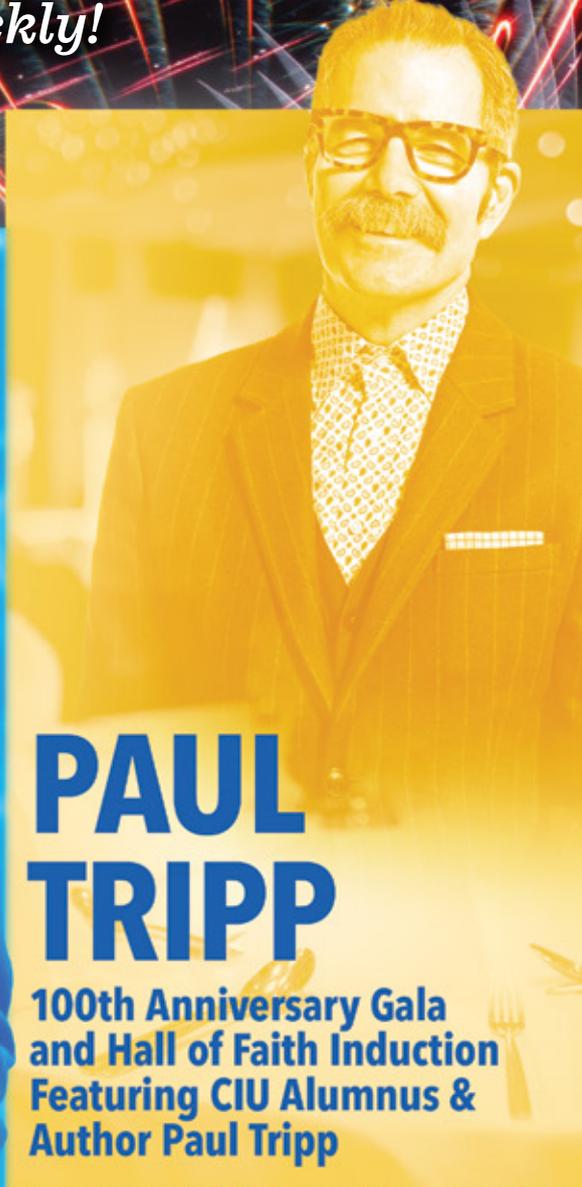
*Register early as space will fill up quickly!*

## CLASS REUNIONS



## ROB MORGAN

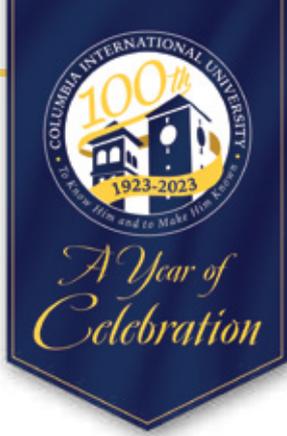
Breakfast with CIU alumnus and author Rob Morgan



## PAUL TRIPP

100th Anniversary Gala and Hall of Faith Induction  
Featuring CIU Alumnus & Author Paul Tripp

# & FIREWORKS!



**YOU'RE INVITED!**

## *Engaging the Culture for Christ Seminar*

**MAY 14, 2023**



**BRAD BRIGHT**  
President & CEO  
of Bright Media  
Foundation

**The Clinical Counseling Program** is hosting the “Engaging the Culture for Christ Seminar” featuring author and speaker Brad Bright on May 14 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Bright is the president & CEO of Bright Media Foundation whose mission is “To recruit, equip, train, and resource individuals to more effectively make God THE issue, both in their own lives and in culture.”

Bright is the author of the book, “GOD is the issue — Becoming an Agent of Real Change,” helping Christians co-opt the cultural dialogue, making God THE issue in shrewd and compelling ways. He is also the youngest son of Bill and Vonette Bright, the founders of Campus Crusade for Christ.

In addition, the founder of CIU’s Clinical Counseling program, Dr. Al McKechnie will be recognized with a scholarship named in his honor.

**This event in Shortess Chapel is FREE to the community.**

## *Virtual Distinctive Teaching and Learning Conference*

**AUGUST 2-4, 2023**

**The College of Education** is hosting a free Virtual Distinctive Teaching and Learning Conference, Aug. 2-4, 2023, introducing educators to past and present faculty and over 20 alumni who will share their stories, their varied ministries, the impact of their CIU education, and lessons drawn from experience. These alumni represent various fields — public, Christian, and international schools. They serve as administrators, teachers, and leaders in their respective fields in the United States and around the world. This conference offers two CEU credits.

**For more information and to register for this conference, visit [distinctiveteachingandlearning.com](http://distinctiveteachingandlearning.com).**



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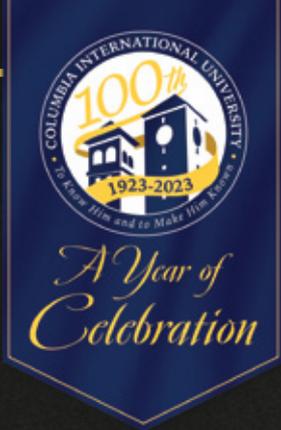
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Columbia International University admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin and complies with Title IX regulations.



# church 2023 refreshed

## JANUARY 2023 CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON MINISTERING *Victoriously*

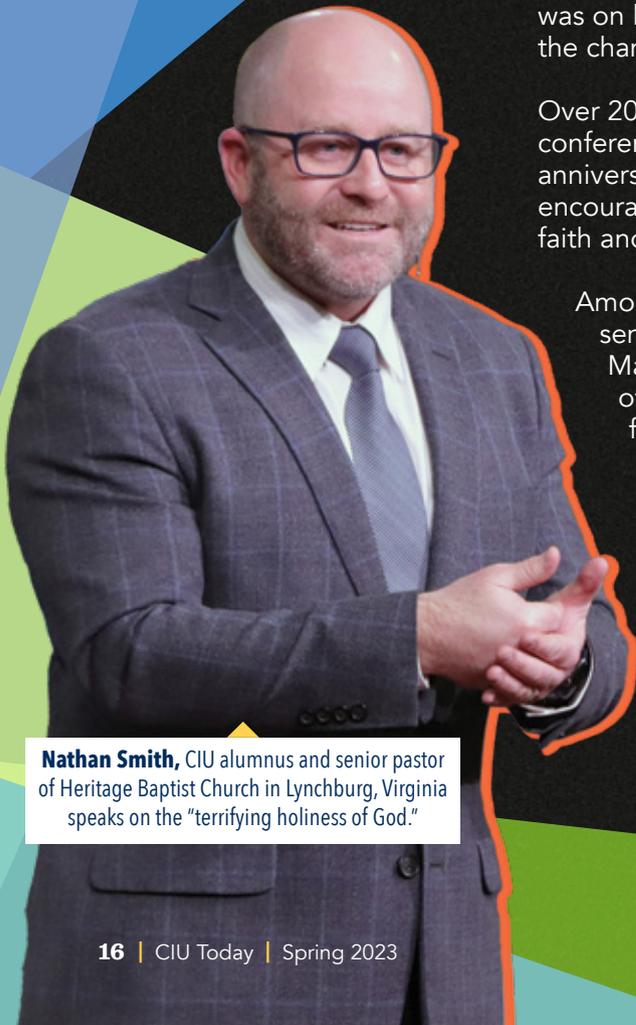
Columbia International University's annual Church Refreshed conference began in 2021, as a way to encourage regional churches struggling to find their footing in the midst of the COVID pandemic. Three years later, the conference emphasis was on living victoriously and leading congregations through the changes and adjustments the pandemic left behind.

Over 200 church leaders attended the two-day 2023 conference, Jan. 30-31. The event was a part of CIU's 100th anniversary celebration offering pastors and staff members encouragement and resources to overcome fear, reignite their faith and confidently focus on the future.

Among the plenary speakers was Bishop Michael Blue, the senior pastor of The Door of Hope Christian Church in Marion, South Carolina and the chief presiding prelate of the Christian Covenant Fellowship of Ministries. In a fiery message he encouraged fellow pastors not to go back to outdated pre-pandemic approaches.

*Bishop  
Michael Blue*

"As we endeavor to refresh the church, I want to encourage you not to apologize for innovation, I don't want you to apologize for doing things differently. I don't want you to apologize for the fact that some of what existed pre-COVID is now reconstituted," Blue exclaimed from the stage of Shortess Chapel. "Some of those things should have died a long time ago."



**Nathan Smith**, CIU alumnus and senior pastor of Heritage Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia speaks on the "terrifying holiness of God."





Worship led by Rock Springs Church from Milner, Georgia.

Attendee Eric Rush, senior pastor Bible Way Church of Sumter, noted the positive church changes that came from COVID, saying, "we are confident and seeking God for ways we can better connect with people digitally."

Sitting near Rush was 2016 CIU alumnus Ethan Brown, senior pastor of Stephen Greene Baptist Church in Winnsboro who has attended all three Church Refreshed conferences and appreciates the fellowship the conference offers.

"To be around everybody, to learn from other people, to know everybody cares — that is refreshing in and of itself," Brown said with a big smile.

The event organizer each year is CIU Dean of Students and Campus Unity Dr. Andre Rogers. Looking around the Chapel, he noted the energy in the room and the reaction to a concert by local church choirs on the evening of day one.

"We had a time where the heavens opened, and the Lord really blessed us," Rogers said of the concert.

As the conference ended, CIU alumnus Dr. Clarke McGriff, who has been in ministry for 44 years as an army chaplain and now as a local pastor, was glowing about Church Refreshed and his CIU education.

"Great, great school," said McGriff who earned his CIU Doctor of Ministry degree in 2019. "And I love (Church Refreshed). This was my third year." ■

## Reminiscing at Homecoming '22

CIU Homecoming '22 included some reminiscing from a couple of well-known alumni. And a bit of true confessions.

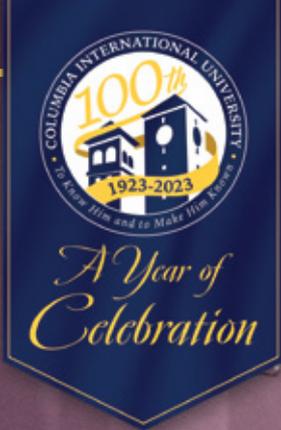
"I was such an awkward kid," confessed Grammy and Dove-Award winning singer/songwriter Laura Story during her Homecoming concert that bridged CIU's Future of Global Mission Conference and Homecoming Weekend. "Only God knew that He would do something through the life of such an ordinary kid."

Meanwhile, Christian author and retired pastor Rob Morgan returned to his former dorm room in Memorial Residence Hall where in 1971, he says, "I gave my life to the Lord Jesus Christ."

Ann Dye from the Class of '62 includes among her fondest CIU memories, her marriage to Dick Dye. It was the second wedding ever held in the new Shortess Chapel, and was officiated by her father and revered CIU Professor Buck Hatch.

Other Homecoming '22 activities included a Youth Ministry Alumni Reunion Brunch attended by nearly 80 alumni. ■





# NOVEMBER 2022 FUTURE of GLOBAL MISSION CONFERENCE

## *Leaves Big Impact on Students*

Music major Harrison Burnette was so impacted by Columbia International University's three-day "Future of Global Mission Conference" that he immediately called his parents after the closing session to tell them about it.

"I think that was probably the truest form of worship I've ever been a part of," Burnette said after the conference, referring to the nine-member IziBongo Band that led the musical worship in a variety of languages and cultural styles.

"For me it painted a picture of what the Kingdom of God will look like. It will sound like all these different sounds and cultures," Burnette said. "They knew the ethnodoxology really well and I really appreciated how it was all very scriptural."

The Future of Global Mission Conference signaled the opening of CIU's yearlong 100th anniversary celebration that continues through November of 2023. CIU's student

body filled the conference plenary and break-out sessions along with CIU alumni and community members.

Among the plenary speakers was 1984 CIU alumnus Steve Richardson, the president of the mission agency Pioneers.

"Your life is a unique strategy of God that is unfolding in history," Richardson told the students.

For CIU Student Body President Alex Brickey, he is working toward a strategy of using education to further the gospel. He attended a workshop with 2020 CIU Alumnus of the Year Dr. Danny McCain founder of the world-renowned Global Scholars that equips Christian professors to serve Christ in secular universities.



CIU alumnus Steve Richardson of the mission agency Pioneers.



The worldwide cultural worship music of the IzyBongo Band was a hit with students. "One more song," was the cry from the audience.

"Dr. Danny McCain's approach to working as a professor in the public university was inspiring," Brickey said. "The way in which he approached academia and training up pastors and others about the Bible served as an example I seek to follow in some form or fashion."

Business Administration major Tiara Batterman said she learned believers in Africa and Asia are now the forerunners on mission.

"I see them being the prominent people pushing forward the gospel nowadays," Batterman said. "I was so touched to know that there are that many people praying ... for global Christianity and followers of Jesus."

In a closing call to action, CIU Executive Vice President (now Interim President) Dr. Rick Christman told the student body, "I want to challenge you to devote your life to ministry — whatever you are called to do."

"You do not know students, where God will take you,"

added Christman. "Work with urgency. Be strategic. But be urgent."

Bible Teaching major Olivia Humphrey summed up the impact on the student body, saying that the message to go to the nations was made clear.

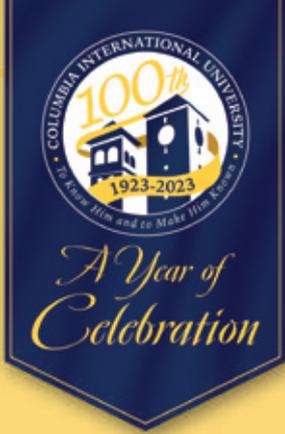
"More than anything I think it was just a massive encouragement for the campus to just get to work rather than just sit around and enjoy the privilege of being here," Humphrey said. "We have to implement it rather than just absorb it." ■



Bekele Shanko, vice president of Global Movements for Cru, discussed the conversion of his father, a former village witch doctor in Ethiopia.



View Future of Global Mission Conference plenary sessions at [youtube.com/@ciugrowth](https://youtube.com/@ciugrowth).



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*You won't want to miss this book that celebrates  
God's faithfulness to Columbia International  
University over the years!*



# “A Century of God’s Faithfulness”

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of CIU with heartwarming memories and dozens of photos, this commemorative book is organized by decade and each section ends with alumni memories and recollections.

“  
*What a mighty power for missions and for **soul-winning evangelism** the school may be!! There is no limit to what our God is willing and able to do.*  
”

—FROM THE ACCEPTANCE LETTER OF R.C. McQUILKIN, CIU’S FIRST PRESIDENT



◀ Colonia Hotel  
Early home of CIU

Students at  
mailboxes in 1950s ▶

The Pointe  
in 2008 ▶



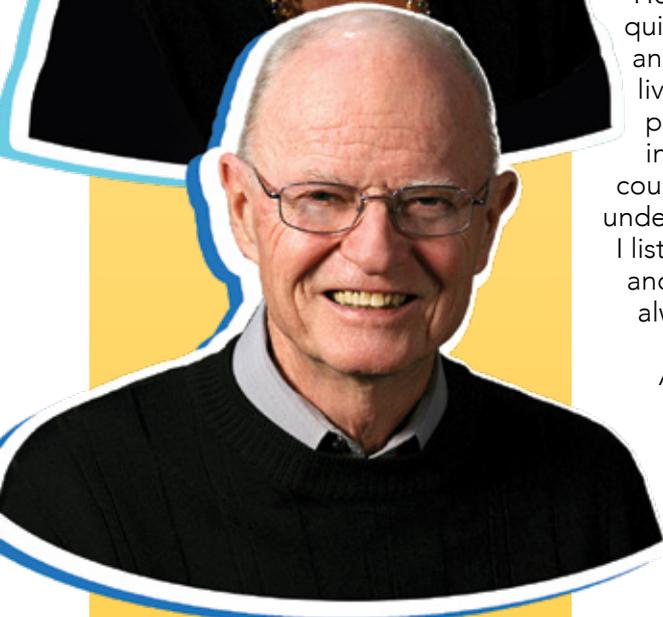
▶ Professor Buck Hatch  
with student at  
downtown campus



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“I do not want this great material lost to succeeding generations.”

Deb McQUILKIN ('82)



Robertson McQUILKIN ('47)

# Daily Devotional

## IMPACTFUL BIBLICAL INSIGHT FROM ROBERTSON McQUILKIN

Deb McQuilkin says she needed her late husband's diverse essays in a format that she could ponder and apply one concept at a time. And if she needed it, she thought others could benefit as well.

That's why Deb edited a new devotional titled "Transformed, Daily Readings in Christian Living" featuring the writings of her husband, Robertson McQuilkin, the third president of Columbia International University. He was president of CIU for a quarter of CIU's 100 years of existence. She offers the book as a gift, especially to CIU alumni, to celebrate the heritage and DNA of CIU.

Deb says she was prompted to write the devotional because Robertson "was fully committed to God in an uncommon way."

"He was an incredible thinker — quite brilliant — and could see and word principles of Christian living that are soundly biblical yet personal," Deb wrote in an email interview. "Those who took the course Principles of Christian Living under him saw life transformation. I listened to his sermons for years, and heard them over and over. I was always convicted!"

And so, came her idea to share the wealth of spiritual insight with others.

"One daily reading, of one principle, of walking with

Christ. That I can manage. I figure if I need that, others do as well," wrote Deb. "Plus, I do not want this great material lost to succeeding generations. Who else is saying some of this stuff so practically?"

For example, she appreciates how Robertson brought out God's affirmation of the value of each of us. One devotional reads:

*Talk about self-worth! If that knowledge of who you are in Christ doesn't liberate and fill life to the full, what will?*

*(We are) created on the pattern of God, not a monkey.*

*(You are) purchased by the most precious commodity this world has ever known, the blood of Jesus.*

*Living a life planned by the master Designer of the planets, the suns, and every atom.*

*A constant companion of the King of Kings. Indeed, theology can liberate and fill a person full.*

"Isn't that what we all want?" Deb asks.

—Robertson McQuilkin was the son of CIU's first president R.C. McQuilkin and served as CIU's third president from 1968 to 1990. He passed away on June 2, 2016 at age 89. ■

"Transformed, Daily Readings in Christian Living" is available as an email daily devotional through CIU's Robertson McQuilkin Library. Sign up for the devotional at [mcquilkinlibrary.com](http://mcquilkinlibrary.com).



# Going for Gold

## AFTER TWO KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS, CIU ALUMNUS PRESSING ON

Taylor Novinger says about his life that he “would not change anything that has happened to me. It’s made me who I am today.” That includes two kidney transplants.

The CIU Teacher Education alumnus has what he simply refers to as a “one in a million” kidney disease. When asked the name of it, he doesn’t try to pronounce it or spell it. It’s pretty long.

But Novinger is an overcomer and has several gold medals to show for it. Not to mention the silver ones. No, he is not an Olympian, but a big winner at the 2022 Transplant Games of America in San Diego. The event is held every two years, a gathering of thousands of transplant recipients in a celebration of life as they compete in sports and games from badminton to volleyball to darts, depending on their physical capabilities.

Novinger earned medals in six of the ten events he entered. It was his third time at the Games and put him on the front page of *The Link*, his hometown newspaper in Cheraw, South Carolina.

“I just really enjoy being around those people and hearing their stories and sharing our experiences,” Novinger told *The Link*.

Back on the CIU campus in the fall, Novinger said taking part in the Transplant Games is not about all those medals he has won over the years, but something more important.

“Those medals are a way of God showing what He has done through my life, and what He can do through others’ lives by getting that second chance at life — for being their Savior and through organ donation,” Novinger said.

Novinger was just 13 years old when he was first diagnosed with his disease, and says that through it, God caused him “to grow up very fast.” “Very fast,” he added for emphasis. “I really had to give it all to Him. My faith journey came a lot quicker.”

He gives a lot of credit to the members of his hometown church, Cheraw First Baptist for helping him in that growth and for being a Christlike example.

“I had 20 people (at church) try to give me a kidney,” Novinger said. “When all this happened to me I had two ways to go. I could run away from God or go straight to Him. I have a good church that guided me that way — to keep pressing on, even when it got hard.”

One of Novinger’s kidneys was donated by a cousin and another from an aunt. So, it goes without saying that family means a lot to him. Another family member was instrumental in helping him compete in San Diego. His 18-year-old sister Abbey was his partner for the dancing competition in the “Jive” category. They choreographed their routine to the song “Come So Far” from the movie “Hairspray” in just three weeks.

“I almost got the whole thing in one weekend,” Novinger said.

They won the gold medal.

Taylor Novinger graduated from CIU in December with a bachelor’s degree in Teacher Education and is now completing his master’s degree in Education at CIU. ■

“*I had 20 people (at church) try to give me a kidney.*”

**Taylor NOVINGER ('22)**



Taylor Novinger and his sister Abbey after winning gold in the dance competition. (Photo provided)

“ It was a great experience. I learned tons. I love the mission of CIU. ”

**Travis GREENE ('20)**

## Full of Energy

### CIU ONLINE DEGREE FITS THE SCHEDULE OF BUSY PASTOR AND MUSICIAN

Pastor Travis Greene of Forward City Church says that every church service should be a celebration that is full of energy. That's why there's a DJ in the lobby of Forward City, bells are rung announcing first-time visitors, and the host on the shuttle buses shouts, "Hey, are you ready for church?"

"There is excitement, there are smiles," says Greene. "The energy is everywhere. It is contagious."

Greene, who earned this master's degree in Theological Studies online from CIU in 2020, founded the 2,000-member church in Columbia, South Carolina in 2016. Its location moved a number of times before renovating a former Best Buy into a state-of-the-art facility.



▶ Pastor Travis Greene with his wife and co-pastor Jackie (Photo: Forward City Church)

## HE'S ALSO A MUSICIAN

Energetic is also the way Green describes what he is known for worldwide — his music. He is a singer, songwriter and producer who has had five Grammy nominations. Perhaps his most popular song is "Made a Way," which he wrote in 2014 after the premature birth of Marcel, the first of his three children. It followed a difficult pregnancy for his wife and co-pastor, Jackie. The song begins:

*Made a way  
Don't know how but You did it  
Made a way  
Standing here not knowing how we'll get through  
this test  
But holding onto faith You know that  
Nothing can catch You by surprise  
You got this figured out and You're watching us now  
But when it looks as if we can't win  
You wrap us in Your arms and step in  
And everything we need You supply  
You got this in control  
And now we know that You made a way ...*

Today, Marcel is a healthy eight-year-old who "loves, loves, loves people," Greene said, adding, "I think maybe he gets that from both of his parents."

## THE PLACE YOU'D LIKE TO BE AT

After attending church since he was a child, Greene says he was not finding what he needed in the "institutional church." So, when he planted Forward City Church, he says he was following the Lord's leading to "create the place you'd like to be at."

Greene says many of the churches he attended over the years either had a very strong theological base in the presentation of the Word of God, but he "tolerated" the worship music because "it wasn't the most energetic, it wasn't the most enjoyable." Or at other churches he says "the music was just amazing," but he would question the doctrinal accuracy of what was being preached.

He says at Forward City Church "worship will take you to a place where you can receive insight and inspiration through the worship experience" while at the same time you



▲  
*CIU's seventh President Dr. Mark Smith crossing paths with Pastor Travis Greene at the airport.*

“  
*There is excitement,  
there are smiles. The  
energy is everywhere.  
It is contagious.*  
”

don't have to "settle for the preached Word that is not theologically sound."

"The worship experience is going to be energetic, and the message is going to be one that you can comprehend, infused with humor, and truth and grace and relevance," Greene explained. "You get to see yourself in the Scripture, but also through that you are able to see God in a new and profound way."

And when it comes to children's ministry, Greene says Forward City has the largest indoor playground in the region. But more importantly, the children are learning the Bible, noting that his own son was able to list every book in the Bible at age two.

"Our kids are learning Scripture, they are learning about God," Greene said. "The experience is interactive. People dress up as Bible characters and do reenactments. It's a church that we all wish we went to as a child," Greene says with a laugh.

## A CIU DEGREE FIT HIS BUSY LIFE

As for his CIU experience, Greene's degree was earned completely online. He even took classes and wrote papers while travelling through Africa on a concert tour.

"My professors were so gracious, especially once I informed them of all I did and what tours I was on," Greene said. "It was a great experience. I learned tons. I love the mission of CIU. It helped expand my heart toward outreach, in-reach, and sharing the gospel with people no matter where they are in life and that's what CIU is all about." ■



Annabelle Clinton

# “Hands and feet of Christ”

The new Columbia International University nursing program is off to a solid start in the 2022-2023 school year with over 40 students.

Students in the traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program are testifying as to how God led them into the program and why they are pursuing a nursing career.

Jeremy See, who is originally from Ohio, served over two decades in the Air Force as an active-duty intelligence analyst, but wanted a change in career.

“I was actually targeting people and sending guys to go take care of them — to kill or capture,” See said about his role in the military. “But I decided when I retired I wanted to spend the next 20 years instead of taking life, giving life — healing — my next appropriate step.”

Megan Pifer appreciates that at CIU, she is learning nursing from a biblical worldview at a university that also has World Evangelization as a core value.

“Having these tools to train people to go into places as the hands and feet of Christ, and to really serve, love and care in a truly tangible way — it’s really neat to learn from that worldview, and to put that into practice in a real way,” Pifer said.

CIU’s online RN to BSN program is also well underway. Among the students is Registered Nurse Annabelle Clinton who says the program is “not

like nursing school all over again.”

She says a big part of that is because now as a working professional, she is experiencing a different type of relationship with her professors and those in her online cohort.

“You’re an adult. You’re a peer. Which is a really great feeling.”

The 26-year-old earned her associate degree in nursing from Midlands Technical College in Columbia and serves in the Intensive Care Unit of Prisma Health Baptist Parkridge Hospital in Columbia.

Clinton said that studying nursing was not her first choice when considering a career, but now she refers to it as, “a calling.”





**Jeff McCormack** (second from right) delivers a check for \$50,000 to Advancement Officer David Finklea (left), Interim President Dr. Rick Christman and CIU Vice President Diane Mull.

## Generous Gift CHRISTMAS VISIT BRINGS GENEROUS DONATION TO NURSING

A Christmastime visit to campus by Jeff McCormack brought great cheer to the CIU nursing program. McCormack is the executive director of South Carolina Physicians Care Charity. In his hand was an envelope containing a check for \$50,000 for the nursing program with \$40,000 designated to four \$10,000 nursing scholarships and the rest for nursing equipment. This is the second gift to CIU nursing from the charity. The first was in 2022 for \$100,000.

The mission of the charity is to provide “grants to other non-profit organizations with missions that promote health and wellness through their various projects within the borders of South Carolina.” ■

“Slowly, but surely, God kept tapping at my heart by meeting people who were nurses or nursing students or in health care,” Clinton said. “I found myself wishing I could be a nurse. It is so wonderful that they help people and directly impact people. Finally, I took the leap. I felt like this is the Lord telling me to change my major and go into nursing. And I did, and I haven’t regretted it.” ■

Nursing Dean Dr. Jill McElheny



## CIU NURSING STUDENTS CHALLENGED TO MEET

# Medical Missions Needs

For the last 12 years, the director of Columbia International University’s nursing program, Dr. Jill McElheny, has served with Samaritan’s Purse International Relief, traveling to many countries around the world. She expresses a deep desire to lead CIU nursing students to serve as the hands and feet of Christ as they care for patients.



▲ Posing at the conference (left to right) student Jeremy See, Franklin Graham, Dr. Jill McElheny, Nursing Professor Angela Condor.

That’s why last fall, McElheny travelled to Florida with CIU nursing students and other nursing faculty to attend the Samaritan’s Purse Prescription for Renewal medical missions conference. It provided the students with exposure to medical mission opportunities.

The students were also introduced to several options to serve in medical missions while making valuable connections with other medical professionals who work

in both long-term and short-term missions all over the world, and learned more about Samaritan’s Purse student internships in all areas of service, including nursing.

And some even got to meet the president and CEO of Samaritan’s Purse, Franklin Graham, eldest son of the late evangelist Billy Graham. ■

# CIU RAMS ATHLETICS



## A BELOVED STUDENT-ATHLETE REMEMBERED

CIU Athletics Director Darren Richie remembers John-Hunter James as “everything you could ever want in a CIU student-athlete.”

James, one of the most decorated athletes in CIU history, passed away after being involved in a traffic accident near LaGrange, Georgia on March 6. He was 21-years old.

James was a senior business major who was known for his love for Jesus and love for his teammates, as well as his intense work ethic.

He was an exceptional pole vaulter and the only CIU athlete in men’s track field program history to have won an NAIA National Championship, winning both the 2020 and 2021 NAIA Indoor Track & Field Men’s Pole Vault National Championship. ■

**John-Hunter James**  
2001-2023



## BRINGING HOME THE CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHIES

The CIU men’s soccer team is the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) DI Men’s National Champion. It’s the Rams first-ever national soccer championship in their 10-year history as an intercollegiate program. With the victory, CIU men’s soccer also becomes the first program in CIU athletics history to win both the Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC) tournament title and an NCCAA National Championship title.

Also, the women’s volleyball team rolled through the reigning AAC Tournament champion Bryan (Tenn.) on their way to a 3-0 sweep. The win gives CIU their first-ever AAC Volleyball Tournament title as they become the first CIU program to win both the AAC regular season and tournament championship.

In addition, Volleyball Head Coach Amber Haver was named AAC Coach of the Year for the second consecutive season, and Kira Rymer became the first player in CIU Rams history to be named the AAC Player of the Year. ■



## ATHLETICS CELEBRATES 100TH WITH HALL OF FAME

Over 200 people filled the Moore Fitness Center to celebrate a decade of athletic excellence at Columbia International University. The September event inaugurated the CIU Athletics Hall of Fame, as the Rams inducted Daniel Mallard as their first honoree into the Hall, and paid tribute to the 2012 men’s soccer team and cross country teams, CIU’s first intercollegiate athletes.

Mallard scored the first goal in CIU men’s soccer history on Aug. 25, 2012, in a 1-0 win over Toccoa Falls (Ga.). The goal would be just the beginning of a decorated career as Mallard is still the all-time leading scorer in program history with 39 career goals and 93 points.

Mallard continues to use sports as a way to reach others for Christ, serving as the camp director for faith-based professional soccer team the Chicago Eagles and as the athletic director at Clapham Christian Classical School in Wheaton, Illinois. ■



## CONGRATS TO AD DARREN RICHIE!



CIU Rams Athletics Director Darren Richie will be inducted into the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) Hall of Fame in June.

With over 30 years of service to student-athletes and coaches, Richie has a love and passion for Christian higher education and has dedicated his career to pursuing godly excellence within the arena. He came to CIU in 2020 after serving as AD at Colorado Christian University and Webber International University.

Richie has seen his programs win seven NCCAA National Championships, two NAIA National Championships and appear in over 50 NCCAA, NAIA,

and NCAA Division II national tournaments. He also worked hard to implement chaplaincy programs and mission/service trips into the DNA of his departments.

Also, kudos go to **Women's Soccer Coach Kara Lail**, recognized by soccer officials for a reputation reflective of the highest standards of professional and ethical behavior. The Frank Jewel Award is given annually to an NCCAA coach by The National Intercollegiate Soccer Official Association (NISOA). Lail just concluded her eighth season as the women's head coach. She is the longest-tenured active head coach at CIU and started the women's soccer program in 2015. ■



## BEN LIPPEN FALCONS ATHLETICS



### A DYNASTY IN THE MAKING?

The Ben Lippen Falcons won their third consecutive state championship in wrestling, defeating cross-town rival Cardinal Newman 59-21. A pin by Branden Mayre was a turning point in the match for the Falcons.

"I had all my friends coming up to me telling me how great I did. And it takes one match to start a fire," Mayre told The State newspaper. "That's all I got to say. To God be the glory."

Ben Lippen wrestlers held up three fingers when taking pictures with the championship trophy. They ended their post-match huddle by yelling "Dynasty." ■

### CONGRATS TO BEN LIPPEN'S SUE DILLON: VOLLEYBALL COACH OF THE YEAR

If Ben Lippen School Volleyball Coach Sue Dillon can be a conduit for healthy spiritual and social relationships, then she counts it a success. She is also a conduit for success on the court, named the 2022 AAAA South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) Coach of the Year



"Relationships in sports are everything," Dillon said. "You also need to realize that as a coach, you need to be open to learning from your players as much as they learn from you."

One lesson Dillon strives to instill in her players is that "life is very much like the game."

"(In life), sometimes you will win, and sometimes you will lose," Dillon said. "And either way, you need to be OK with it. You need to be able to come away with your head held high saying you gave your all." ■

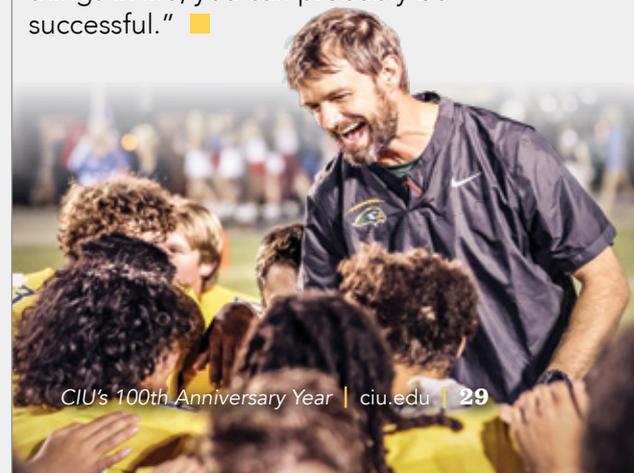
### AMAZING TURNAROUND FOR BEN LIPPEN FOOTBALL

All eyes were on the Ben Lippen School football program in 2022 with the arrival of new Head Coach Bennett Weigle — but he desired to keep his players' eyes on Christ.

Weigle took the team from its 1-10 record in 2021 to 8-3 in 2022, focusing on a player-led team where they hold each other accountable to God and others. Plus, as a coach, he says teaching players life lessons will impact them, not only on the field, but beyond.

He lists three lessons that can change a student-athlete's life if they follow them.

"Be where you're supposed to be, be on time, and give full effort in everything that you do," Weigle said. "If you can do those three things in life, you can probably be successful." ■



## Longest-Serving board member has deep commitment to CIU

**M**arquis “Marq” Ryan is in his 31st year on the Columbia International University Board of Trustees and his commitment to CIU students drives his purpose. He is the longest-serving current board member, but his relationship to CIU goes back much further.

Marq earned a Bachelor’s degree from CIU in Bible Education in 1975. Before enrolling at CIU, he was a student at the University of North Carolina (UNC)-Chapel Hill where he became a Christian, and learned of CIU through the brother of his roommate, CIU alumnus Paul Nasekos (’74).

Marq sensed God’s call to full-time ministry and after two years of active duty in the U.S. Navy, he transferred to CIU where he met his wife, Hilda (Ribi) Ryan (’75) who grew up in Japan where her parents were church planters. Desiring to serve as a church musician, Hilda was attending CIU to get two years of solid Bible training to be followed by formal music study elsewhere.

Marq and Hilda were married in August of 1975. While Hilda was finishing up her music degree, Marq took a job in the CIU accounting office. During those years, he sensed the Lord directing him back into the accounting profession he had originally pursued at UNC.

Marq earned a Master of Accounting degree and was recruited to work for internationally known Arthur Young & Company. Throughout his professional years, he stayed engaged with CIU initially by coordinating a Charlotte, North Carolina area alumni group and was later involved in expanding CIU’s radio ministry with the establishment of WRCM, broadcasting to the Charlotte area.

Seeing his servant-leadership, dedication to the Lord and to CIU, Dr. Johnny Miller, CIU’s president at the time, invited Marq to serve on the CIU Board of Trustees.

Beyond Marq’s work on the CIU Board, Marq and Hilda’s commitment to CIU includes an endowed scholarship in memory of Hilda’s mother, Evelyn Little Ribi, helping students offset tuition.

“An endowment, particularly for a scholarship, is an investment in the life and ministry of a student that has far ranging implications for gospel proclamation,” Marq said.

He urges others to use their financial blessings to also invest in God’s Kingdom. ■

*“An endowment, particularly for a scholarship, is an investment in the life and ministry of a student that has far ranging implications for gospel proclamation.”*

**—MARQ RYAN**

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# CIU | 100<sup>th</sup>

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- Email: [frank.bedell@ciu.edu](mailto:frank.bedell@ciu.edu)
- Visit: [ciu.edu/plannedgiving](http://ciu.edu/plannedgiving)

## Alumni CLASS NOTES

**LAVONNA (SABIN) CAREY ('54)** has many wonderful memories of her year at CBC, especially the many friends she made. She served as a nurse for 50 years, and has conquered breast cancer four times. ✉ [kevincarey969635@gmail.com](mailto:kevincarey969635@gmail.com)

**1 GEORGE ('64) AND DONNA WARREN** retired after 49 years of full-time missionary service, and continue serving at their home church. ✉ [georgewarren4321@gmail.com](mailto:georgewarren4321@gmail.com)

**2 CECIL ('65) AND PHYLLIS (COLE) ('65) BEACH** serve at Northside Christian School in North Charleston, South Carolina. Cecil is an administrative assistant and Phyllis is school secretary. ✉ [icecilbeach@hotmail.com](mailto:icecilbeach@hotmail.com)

**3 PHYLLIS ANN BEDWELL ('66)** serves in women's ministry, music instruction, counseling and mentoring. Phyllis and her late husband, **RAY ('66)**, served for 47 years with Latin America Mission, in Costa Rica for four years, and in Mexico before his eternal graduation in 2019. ✉ [rppedwell@live.com.mx](mailto:rppedwell@live.com.mx)

**4 PAT MAJOR III ('69)** retired after 41 years in Christian School education, 33 as principal. He served nine years on the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) Executive Board, representing Christian schools in Southern California. ✉ [patwmajor@gmail.com](mailto:patwmajor@gmail.com)

**JOY (THOMPSON) JONES ('72)** is a retired nurse and physician's assistant. She lost her beloved husband Dennis in April of 2021. They served briefly in Niger in the SIM Galmi Hospital. ✉ [Joy.jonesblueeyes@gmail.com](mailto:Joy.jonesblueeyes@gmail.com)

**ED ('74) AND PATSI (HUGHEY) ('74) ISLEY** Ed retired from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in 2019 after serving 21 years. ✉ [isley.edgar@gmail.com](mailto:isley.edgar@gmail.com)

**RICHARD BARRON ('89)** retired from Rabun Gap Nacoochee School in Rabun Gap, Georgia after 41 years

of service. He and his wife Teresa now live in Lexington, Kentucky. ✉ [rbarronpaws53@gmail.com](mailto:rbarronpaws53@gmail.com)

**LARRY ('86) AND DIANA PRITCHARD** have been involved in resort ministry by sharing Christ through puppets to tourists in Virginia, in a Dallas inner-city ministry, and they founded a Boy Scout club. Today they live in the Tampa, Florida area assisting their church in multi-media. ✉ [larrycpritchard@gmail.com](mailto:larrycpritchard@gmail.com)

**DANIEL AND JACKIE (HUTSKO) ('86) SCOTT** are on the field in Central Asia pouring into the next generation of workers. ✉ [jackiemscott59@gmail.com](mailto:jackiemscott59@gmail.com)

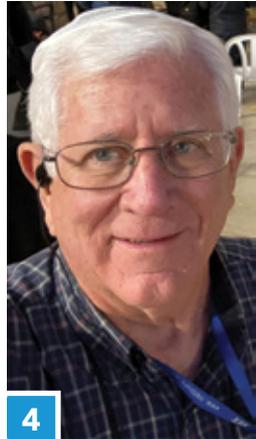
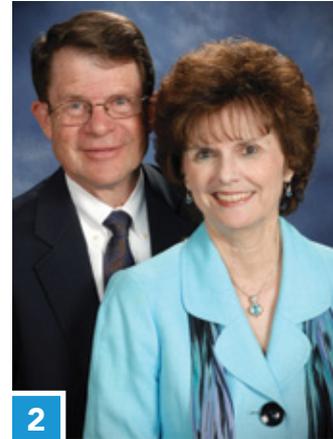
**5 GARTH ('86) AND ANNA WRIGHT** are on the leadership team at Prague Christian Fellowship. Garth preaches and leads church mission teams to Ukraine and Belarus. Both Garth and Anna teach Sunday school. They are foster parents to three children. ✉ [garthemail@gmail.com](mailto:garthemail@gmail.com)

**CINDY (ANDERSON) MCCONNELEE ('87)** is a teacher in a Christian school. She is passionate about helping women experience healing and hope in Christ. ✉ [minilighthouse9@gmail.com](mailto:minilighthouse9@gmail.com)

**6 TIM ('88) AND SHERRY CAMPBELL** Tim recently celebrated his eighth year as lead pastor of Grace Church in Lakeland, Florida. ✉ [timcampbellsr@gmail.com](mailto:timcampbellsr@gmail.com)

**7 RALPH ('88) AND CHARLOTTE STICE** live in France where Ralph is lead pastor at The Bridge International Church in the Paris area, a congregation with over 30 nationalities intent on making an impact in France. ✉ [ralphwstice@yahoo.com](mailto:ralphwstice@yahoo.com)

**JOHNNY HELMS ('91)** retired from the pastorate after 33 years in the pulpit. His wife, Sue Ellen, passed away in 2005 after 31 years of marriage. In 2016, he remarried. He and his wife Beverly attend Crossway Community Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. ✉ [Jh327765@gmail.com](mailto:Jh327765@gmail.com)



**KEITH ('94) AND LILIA KENYON** serve as missionaries to Mexico with the Náhuatl-speaking indigenous communities in the mountains of the Huastecaí region. Their primary emphasis is training believers for effective, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered ministry among the vast number of unreached villages. ✉ [kck@proton.me](mailto:kck@proton.me)

**JOHN FULTS ('96)** has pastored in Columbia, South Carolina and Detroit, Michigan. He recently moved to Greeley, Colorado. ✉ [Johncaratchurch@aol.com](mailto:Johncaratchurch@aol.com)

**8 JACK ('96) AND CLARE MCCULLARS** live in Spain where Jack coaches, consults and mentors in Business as Mission and Business for Transformation (BAM/B4T) with a focus on the Middle East and North Africa. ✉ [jmccullars@fconsult.net](mailto:jmccullars@fconsult.net)

**RANDAL ('97) AND MARY FRANKWICK**, along with their six children, moved from the United Kingdom back to the United States. Randal is a software engineer. ✉ [randynmary@manx.net](mailto:randynmary@manx.net)

**9 DARWIN ('98) AND KAREN (ULLUM) ('01) STOESZ** have been serving with SEND International in Japan for over 18 years. In August, they will be working from Kansas in a new ministry position of international treasurer assistant. ✉ [dstoesz@send.org](mailto:dstoesz@send.org)

**10 MICHAEL ('01) AND GAIL ('04) PURATH** live in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas where they minister to military families. They also have an online ministry, Bible Love Notes, featuring one-minute devotionals each weekday. ✉ [puraths@yahoo.com](mailto:puraths@yahoo.com)

**MICHAEL EBERHARDT-STURM ('03)** lives with his family in Alberta, Canada, where he practices clinical pharmacy and serves in a local Evangelical Free Church of Canada (EFCC). He just published his first book, "Two Testaments, One Story: The Journey to a Panbiblical Theology." ✉ [meberhardtsturm@gmail.com](mailto:meberhardtsturm@gmail.com)

**11 TYRONE HICKS ('05)** has served in law enforcement for 16 years. He and his wife, Ana, have two sons, Nathaniel and Ezra. ✉ [countrytrekker@gmail.com](mailto:countrytrekker@gmail.com)

**12 DAVID AND ANNA (WATERS) ('06) LYLES** minister in the Powdersville/Easley area of South Carolina. David is the lead elder at Connection Fellowship Church. Anna homeschools their three children and serves part time at Connection Fellowship in the ConnectKIDS ministry. ✉ [davidannalyles@gmail.com](mailto:davidannalyles@gmail.com)

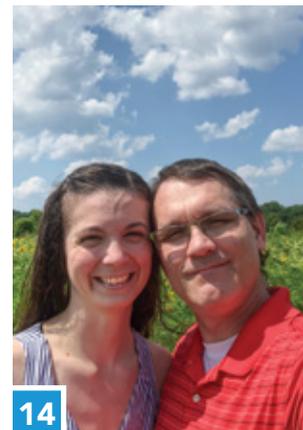
**JAMES ('11) AND MARY SUE SMITH** are missionaries with One Mission Society. James served with OMS in Ecuador, South America for 20 years, then as director of member care for 11 years at OMS World Headquarters in Greenwood, Indiana. ✉ [jsmith7579@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jsmith7579@sbcglobal.net)

**13 JACK AND RACHEL (KRAMER) ('11) STRUTNER** Jack completed his medical residency at University of California San Diego. They will be moving to Kenya this year to serve with the mission organization Serge; Jack as a physician and Rachel as a filmmaker. ✉ [reganstrutner@gmail.com](mailto:reganstrutner@gmail.com)

**14 PHILLIP ('12) AND ELISE GILMORE** Phillip has accepted the call to pastor at Airport Baptist Church in Greer, South Carolina. ✉ [phillipjgilmore@gmail.com](mailto:phillipjgilmore@gmail.com)

**DREW ('12) AND JANAE (RIFE) ('12) WILLIAMS** welcomed Rhys Darrell to their family in December. Proud grandparents are Ken (faculty) and Cindy Rife. ✉ [jana\\_e08@hotmail.com](mailto:jana_e08@hotmail.com)

**15 MAX AND CARA (EVANS) ('13) GROENE** welcomed Lily Rie to their family in July. They are living in Tennessee where Max serves as a U.S Army chaplain. Cara works remotely as a global programs project manager for International Justice Mission. ✉ [cararuthevans@gmail.com](mailto:cararuthevans@gmail.com)



**15**



**UPDATE YOUR ALUMNI PROFILE**



[ciu.edu/alumniupdate](http://ciu.edu/alumniupdate)

**16 ANDREW ('13) AND CHALLIE (SHAVER) ('14) MONK** along with Boone and Whit welcomed Emmeline to their family in December. ✉ [challiemonk@gmail.com](mailto:challiemonk@gmail.com)

**17 JAMIE CRAWFORD ('14)** is working for the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps, investing in a diverse multicultural community around the globe. She and her husband, Will, have two children.

**STEVEN KOEHN ('16)** is an EMS Chaplain with Richland County, South Carolina Emergency Medical Services, where he was a paramedic for eight years. He and his wife, Catherine, have three children. ✉ [stephen.koehn@me.com](mailto:stephen.koehn@me.com)

**BRIAN ('16) AND NICOLE MESIMER** Brian is an assistant professor of counseling at Richmont Graduate University. He continues to counsel in private practice at The Christian Counseling Center of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina, while his wife Nicole works as a high school Spanish teacher. ✉ [bmesimer88@gmail.com](mailto:bmesimer88@gmail.com)

**18 MICAH AND NYSSA (KNIGHT) ('16) VELILLA**, along with big sister Brielle, welcomed Asher to their family in September. ✉ [nyssak@live.com](mailto:nyssak@live.com)

**REESE ('17) AND LYDIA (WEST) ('17) BOLTE** welcomed Kylan Mark to their family in July. ✉ [Reese.bolte@ciu.edu](mailto:Reese.bolte@ciu.edu)

**19 MALCOLM ('17) AND PATRICIA ('17) CAMPBELL** along with Kaden and Keenan, welcomed Korbyn Dushawn to their family on Dec. 19. ✉ [mpcampbells3@gmail.com](mailto:mpcampbells3@gmail.com)

**20 ZACK ('18) AND CARLY BRADY** live in Malawi where Zack works with Young Life in the international schools and Carly is the head of emergency medicine training at a local college. Along with Ellie and Miriam, they welcomed Ezekiel in August. ✉ [Zbrady471@gmail.com](mailto:Zbrady471@gmail.com)

**JUSTIN ('20) AND ELLEN TILGHMAN** welcomed their second son, Beckett, in November. He joins older brother John. Justin is the dean of Workforce Development and Public Safety at Lenoir Community College in North Carolina. ✉ [justintilghman@gmail.com](mailto:justintilghman@gmail.com)

**CORWIN HEMINGWAY SR. ('22)** is enrolled in the Master of Organizational Leadership program at CIU. He is the owner of Ultimate Choice Charter LLC. ✉ [mymomsheila@gmail.com](mailto:mymomsheila@gmail.com)

## IN MEMORIAM

- STANLEY GAMWELL ('43) - Dec. 2021
- DONALD OSBORN ('47) - Jan. 2022
- WARREN BECKLEY ('48) - July 2022
- MARILYN "TEDDY" SHAVER CAIL ('50) - Dec. 2022
- MAX SALTZMAN ('50) - June 2022
- HAROLD "HAL" SELLS ('51) - Aug. 2022
- EDWIN WALKER ('51) - Sept. 2022
- LOWELL BAILEY ('52) - Feb. 2023
- KATHARINE POWLISON BAILEY ('52) - Feb. 2023
- DORIS METS BRITAIN ('52) - Dec. 2022
- WILLIAM ENGELS ('52) - Feb. 2022
- LOIS SEGERSTROM HESSE ('52) - Dec. 2022
- JOHN WHITELAW ('53) - July 2022
- EUGENE BRACKETT ('54) - May 2022
- RACHEL HARDY HERRING ('54) - Nov. 2022
- LORRAINE JOHNSON ALEXANDER ('54) - Nov. 2022
- DOROTHY GIBBS SANDERS ('54) - Mar. 2022
- EARL SANDIFER ('55) - Aug. 2022
- IVAN WEBER ('55) - June 2022
- LOIS BAGLEY WINDSOR ('55) - Nov. 2022
- VERNA BIRKEY ('56) - Nov. 2022
- JEFFERSON LILLEY ('56) - Jan. 2023
- JOSEPH STEWART ('56) - July 2022
- ROBERT 'BOB' CABLE - Jan. 2023
- HARLEY REYNOLDS ('57) - June 2020
- INGE FEYLER MARCUS ('58) - Feb. 2023
- LEONARD FROM ('59) - Feb. 2023
- JESSE ROGER TRIPP ('59) - Dec. 2022
- INGE FEYLER MARCUS ('60) - Feb. 2023
- JOHN TRENT ('60) - Jan. 2022
- BARBARA ARDIS COKER ('61) - Sept. 2022
- THOMAS HOBBS ('61) - Nov. 2022
- RAYMOND KOOYER ('61) - Dec. 2021
- WARREN TRIPP ('62) - Nov. 2022
- DENNIS BRINDLEY ('63) - Jan. 2023
- ELIZABETH SUTHERLIN ROOD ('63) - Aug. 2022
- MALCOLM BOWES ('64) - Jan. 2023
- JOHN KEEBLE ('64) - Oct. 2022
- SHARON ROUSE ('64) - Sept. 2022
- GREGORY STOWERS ('65) - Nov. 2022
- CAROL WILEY ('65) - Feb. 2022
- RONALD ALEXANDER ('69) - Dec. 2021
- JIM WESTERVELT ('69) - Dec. 2022
- JAMES LESTER ('70) - Aug. 2022
- LORNA ELAINE WILSON ('70) - Feb. 2022
- BRENDA WALL RICHARDS ('72) - Oct. 2022
- DONNA POST SIMMONS ('72) - Aug. 2022
- ROGER ALLEN ('74) - Oct. 2022
- WAYNE PATTON ('75) - Jan. 2022
- SHARON KRUSE STRADLING ('75) - June 2022
- DENNIS TEMPLE ('76) - May 2021
- DAVID KYLE ('77) - Dec. 2022
- THOMAS FLOWERS ('78) - Aug. 2022
- KIRK MCKEAN ('79) - Oct. 2021
- ROBERT STANLEY ('81) - Dec. 2022
- R. MITCHELL GREGORY ('85) - Feb. 2023
- SUE THOMAS "FB EYE" ('85) - Nov. 2022
- DOREEN CORLEY ('98) - Nov. 2022
- GLENN GRANT ('04) - June 2022
- STUART BRISCOE (Former Faculty) - Aug. 2022
- RICHARD "DICK" LINDSEY (Former Staff) - Dec. 2022



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# Will I Trust God?

**A**s we have all experienced, there are times when life seems to run amuck, go out of control, divert from the plans we so meticulously developed. One minute we are heading down a well-planned path, one that we are comfortable with and seems clear enough, and the next moment, due to circumstances and unplanned events, our path of life is disrupted and we face challenges that require much prayer and an amplified need for clarity.

In reflection of the events we faced at CIU beginning last fall, I recall feeling high levels of anxiety on multiple fronts. The concern for Dr. Mark Smith's health, the pressure to make good decisions when I was named interim president, and my own need for clarity and calm in the midst of the storm, challenged me to reflect on Proverbs 3:5-6:

*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight" (NIV).*

I memorized these verses years ago and could quickly recite them. In my years of academic work and church ministry, I drew on these verses to provide comfort for others, but now could I actually apply these principles to my life? The need to trust God became a reality.

Trust in the Lord ...! I realized the chaos I was feeling was not something God ever felt; the fear, the anxiety, the pressure were all missing from God's dominion. What I was reminded of, as I prayed and sought His guidance, was that God was very present in this situation and that He was not taken by surprise at any moment.

This period in my life challenged my trust, my understanding, and my submission. Can I truly trust God in moments like this? Can I trust God even when I do not understand why the circumstances of life are beyond my control? In the midst of all this, can I submit to the will and sovereignty of God?

British theologian Adam Clarke once noted, *"Self-sufficiency and self-dependence have been the ruin of mankind ever since the fall of Adam. The grand sin of the human race is their continual endeavor to live independently of God, i.e., to be without God in the world."*

Through the experiences of these past months, but even more

importantly for the days that lay ahead, I have once again refreshed my understanding of what it means to trust God and to watch as He works in spite of my humanness. I ask you to pray the following with me:

*Heavenly Father,*

*Would you please:*

- ~ Guard my mind,*
- ~ Guide my steps, and*
- ~ Grant me wisdom!*

Amen!



**Dr. Rick Christman**  
CIU Interim President



**Dr. Rick Christman** was named interim president in February after the resignation of CIU's seventh president Dr. Mark Smith due to health concerns.



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