These are proud days at Sungkonghoe University (SKHU). Not only is this stalwart CUAC institution welcoming member representatives from around the globe as the host of the 8th International CUAC Triennial, it also celebrates a major milestone of its own: 100 years of Anglican identity and service to the Korean people. As CUAC General Secretary Canon James G. Callaway noted, “To take on the organization and running of our Triennial during their Centenary reflects a deeply-ingrained Anglican ethos: a commitment to hospitality, to service and sharing, to building bridges and making connections—the very things they have been doing for 100 years. We are honored to help them celebrate all they have become.”

Today’s bustling university of some 3,000 undergraduates and over 400 postgraduate students began more humbly on April 30, 1914, when the Anglican Church of Korea established Saint Michael’s Theological Seminary on Gangwha Island. The first class comprised eleven theology students from across the Korean peninsula, including Mark Heejun Kim, who was the first Korean to be ordained an Anglican priest. Seven years later, the seminary was moved from Gangwha Island to Incheon.

During this time, the grip of Japanese imperial domination was tightening in Korea. The colonial situation worsened with an official directive on the observance of Japanese imperial-religious customs, which the seminarians refused to obey. As a result, the Japanese forced the closure of St. Michael’s in 1940. It was not until after the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule and the subsequent Korean War that the seminary re-opened, when it relocated to the provincial capital of Cheongju in 1952. In 1961 it moved again to its present site in the southwestern outskirts of the capital city of Seoul. A thirty-year period of growth and development followed: in 1982 the school was legally reinstated in accordance with the official policy of the higher education system as Cheonsin Theological Seminary; ten years later it was re-named Sungkonghoe Theological Seminary (“Sungkonghoe” translates as “the Anglican Church”). Finally, in 1994 the school was granted an official charter of full university status with the power of conferring degree on its own—and the evolution to Sungkonghoe University was complete.

This change in name to “University” heralded a new and exciting era in the institution’s history. The stage was now set for the school to become a comprehensive university, teaching a wide range of subjects not only in Christian theology and ministry but in humanities, social sciences, electronic engineering, information technology, and computer science. Over the next two years SKHU’s admittance to both CUAC and the worldwide Anglican University Cooperative Committee gave the institution membership in the international network of Anglican higher education.

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I envision Christian colleges and universities as an in-between experimental space.... Slouched toward preferential compassion toward the oppressed and marginalized, these educational provinces are committed to learning for living. In this critical and creative location common grace of the spacious God is celebrated, common work for restoring life is shared, and care for the ravaged cosmos is undertaken. Christian education mission may not make everyone Christian, but their colleges and universities will be directed toward equipping young men and women in our global twenty-first century context to best serve their respective life-enhancing vocations.

Sathianathan Clarke, PhD in the Second Dr Rowan Williams Annual CUAC Lecture Lady Doak College, Madurai, India, November 11, 2013

CUAC is not a primary community where people live and work but is a network, a liminal collective that connects our members with the experience of their peers globally. Only triennially do we actually come together face-to-face for gatherings that build new links of fellowship and association with the opportunity to collectively learn and explore together. Most of the Anglican Colleges and Universities are essentially solitary, living out their church foundations and associations in the secular marketplace where they have to complete for students and recognition. In fact, the majority of colleges and universities the church launched have broken their moorings and ventured forth on their own. But for those who have continued their affiliation, CUAC builds partnerships for deepening their values while broadening their reach. While Anglican schools may be solitary locally, regionally and globally they can be connected.

Triennial Conferences are the opportunity for our network to come alive.

On July 5th CUAC’s Eighth Triennial Conference convenes at Sungkonghoe University in Seoul, Korea with the theme Education as Hope: Working toward transformation in our common World. Keynote speakers include Dr. Clarke, quoted above in his recent lecture, a fourth-generation Indian Anglican who now teaches at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., and Dr. Jenny Te Paa Daniel from New Zealand, the first indigenous Anglican laywoman to lead an Anglican seminary. They will be joined in keynotes from Anglican educators from Korea, Liberia, the UK, and US. An innovation this year is the addition of a two-day Post-Triennial Conference for chaplains, as we recognize the vital importance they play in mediating Anglican spiritual values to the university communities of many faiths or none.

About one third of our members will be present, including Vice Chancellors, presidents, chaplains, and faculty. Then there are those of you who wanted to come but were constrained by timing or finances, as well as those of you we didn’t hear from. CUAC’s purpose is to strengthen the capabilities and practice of us all. I expect that the seventy delegates who participate will work hard to broaden the boundaries of how Education as Hope comes to life in transformations that define our place with the students and communities we serve. A concrete goal at this Triennial is to foster and build exchanges, especially within CUAC. We trust that this will be a critical mass that expands to the wider body. Another top goal is to deepen the ties within regional chapters so that the momentum of Triennials can reach out regionally in the two years in between them. So for all, whether present in Seoul or not, we seek to build on the strength of our common missions in that transformations that will strengthen Anglican colleges and universities to equip the next generation to lead productive lives. A network only succeeds when its members are strengthened.  

The Rev’d Canon James G. Callaway
General Secretary
With this new identity, students, parents, and educationalists increasingly recognized the university to be a unique institution: open, progressive, inclusive, innovative, socially committed, and boldly experimental. SKHU is reflecting on, and dreaming of, the second century of its mission even as it celebrates its Centenary in 2014. That second hundred years will certainly lead to an even greater level of engaging with the world through higher education: at the same time, the inevitable challenges and difficulties that will arise can be reminders of the school’s original educational mission, expressed in the English translation of its motto: “Openness, Service, Sharing.”

From the SKHU website:

Openness refers to our goal of accepting, embracing, welcoming and incorporating ideas, beliefs and practices from different groups, cultures and identities. The inclusive ideal embodies the university’s willingness to allow itself, and encourage others to be, as receptive and tolerant with each other as possible. Sharing refers to our objective of helping and supporting others to realize their life’s chance. By sharing with others we believe that we can create a much better society than we can by pursuing our own self-regarding interests individually. Service refers to our Christian belief that, by serving God, we serve ourselves. The university believes that all of us should be servants of ourselves so that everyone is at once the master and the servant all at the same time.

Yet SKHU is well aware that a consensual educational principle must be accompanied by corresponding goals with a realistic focus. On that concrete level, the university has broken ground in innovative curriculum development along the lines of the above principles and goals: human rights, peace, gender studies, reunification, and international development. Due to its emphasis on these subjects, SKHU is widely known in Korean society as “the university of human rights and peace.” It aims to study and find ways to contribute to the building of a civil society, vibrant local communities, and a better Asian society based on the practical frame of human rights and peace.

At The Rev. Dr. Jeongku Lee’s 2012 inauguration as SKHU president, he pointed out a new educational goal of the university: to cultivate in individuals a mature, civil spirit and a progressive mentality that helps neighbors coexist peacefully and productively in society. However, every university in Korea today is facing a critical moment as the demographics of the Korean population rapidly shift; the number of young and college-age adults will shrink rapidly in the near future. Reductions in government support will force universities and colleges to reduce the number of applicants admitted each year. For this reason, SKHU’s centennial year will be an opportunity to highlight the unique contributions of Sungkonghoe University to Korean society and beyond—to demonstrate, in effect, why they should exist for a second hundred years.

That is a stark and challenging question, and on the answer hangs the destiny of an institution that has evolved and grown over a century of trials and triumphs. But the values that have guided it in its journey so far—openness, service, and sharing; an emphatic humanitarianism that fosters peaceful, productive interactions with one’s neighbors and one’s environment; and that Anglican ethos of respect, wonder, and joy that seeks to bridge all the gaps that divide us—these values have made SKHU what it is today, and they will surely continue to be reliable guides into an uncertain future. But even more important, they will help SKHU shape that uncertain future into a more just, peaceful, and harmonious world for all.
Delegates to the 8th International CUAC Triennial in Seoul next month will have a brand-new technology resource to help them keep track of information, events, venues, and contacts, thanks to the mobile web app “SCHED” which has been customized especially for the conference. Delegates with any type of web-enabled device—smart phones (iPhones or Androids), tablets, Blackberries, laptops, desktops, or anything else that can get online—will have access to an up-to-date schedule of sessions, including any last-minute changes. Photos and bios of speakers will be at one’s fingertips, and attendees will have the option of uploading their own profiles and pictures, as well. With the ability to create lists of friends and new contacts, the app will also be a tremendous aid in networking, while a map of Sungkonghoe University and the locations of Triennial events will help delegates navigate the campus. Other features will be described in an overview of the app during Orientation.

The suggestion to use SCHED for the Triennial came from The Rev. Dr. Robert Derrenbacker, Vice-Chancellor of Thorneloe University in Ontario, and a member of the CUAC Board of Voting Trustees. “My Distance Education Coordinator at Thorneloe University, David Macdonald, had just returned from a conference where the app was used quite effectively, and he suggested we try it,” Derrenbacker explained. “I’m not a techie, but I wanted to create a mobile app for my iPhone for the first time.” CUAC is grateful for his curiosity and willingness to tackle the substantial task of customizing the app—which promises to expand the ways this Triennial conference benefits delegates, and to enhance greatly their experience in Seoul.
Putnam P. Flint
“Put”
1918 – 2014

Many members of CUAC and the Association of Episcopal Colleges (AEC) will remember Putnam P. Flint (“Put”), trustee and treasurer of AEC from 1986 to 2001. His business acumen kept both organizations in good financial shape, overseeing the budget and advising on investments of endowment and unrestricted funds.

With an ever-present twinkle in his eye, he was beloved for his sense of humor and admired for his wisdom. Always on the side of the angels, he was careful with money but clear about using it when needed for good purposes, including providing vital support to Cuttington University during the civil war in Liberia. He was a devoted churchman, chalice bearer, lay reader, and vestryman of St. Anne’s-in-the-Fields, Lincoln, Massachusetts. He was a generous donor not only to CUAC and AEC, but also to each of the historically black U.S. colleges, to Cuttington University, and to Trinity University of Asia in the Philippines. Put visited Church Teachers’ College in Jamaica, West Indies, and he attended the inaugural conference of CUAC in Canterbury, 1993.

He served as 1st lieutenant in the U.S. Army in WWII, leading his company from Marseilles to Berlin at the end of the war. While in his 80s, Put returned to those same battlefields with author John Gimlette, bringing the past to life for the 2011 book, Panther Soup: A European Journey in War and Peace.

Put’s wife of almost sixty years, Dorothy, died in 2002. He is survived by three children, ten grandchildren, and thirteen great-grandchildren.

Linda Chisholm, Ph.D.

Rest eternal grant him, O Lord; let light perpetual shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace—and rise in glory.
By Canon Dr. Titus Presler

“Church of Pakistan college principal beaten, told to leave,” ran the headline of an Anglican Communion News Service article on March 11, 2014. I was that principal. The event was shocking not only to me personally but to the already pressured Christian community in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

More important, the attack dramatized the ongoing effort by a provincial government in Pakistan to seize control of the one college still nominally under the management of the Church of Pakistan—which was formed in 1970 from the union of Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians—through the Diocese of Peshawar. Religious freedom is at stake, specifically the Pakistan Constitution’s provision that all religious groups have the right to manage their own institutions.

So the plight of Edwardes College in Peshawar is a concern for Christian institutions not only in Muslim-majority countries but in any context where Christians are a minority and where religious extremism of any kind—Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim or whatever—may be growing. More generally, Edwardes and the Diocese of Peshawar welcome the concern and support of all Anglican colleges and universities, which by definition are committed to a Christian contribution in higher education.

The attack on my person was the culmination of a series of threats and attacks that began on Dec. 5, 2013 when unidentified agents visited Bishop Humphrey Sarfaraz Peters of the Diocese of Peshawar and threatened him and his family with harm. The same agents visited me at Edwardes College on Dec. 10 and warned me to leave the country in three days or face arrest (I stayed and left later as regularly scheduled for Christmas). When faculty members who assaulted Vice Principal Yar Muhammad on Dec. 11 were disciplined, they instigated student disruptions that resulted in the College being closed early for Christmas. On Dec. 26, the Governor of Khyber Pakhunkhwa and other provincial officials installed a rogue administration at the College, and on Epiphany the agents from December visited the College, intimidated faculty and staff with a show of force and assaulted the estate manager.

When I returned to Pakistan on Jan. 22 I was advised to monitor the situation from Islamabad, but, accompanied by my Muslim host, I appeared in Peshawar High Court on Feb. 14 in support of a lawsuit initiated by the diocese against the government’s takeover. On our way out of the city, the same agents from December and January, now saying they were from Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), flagged us down, hauled me into their vehicle and proceeded to beat me with their fists, warn me to leave Pakistan, and rip the work visa out of my passport. I was badly bruised and limped for awhile but am now mostly recovered. Ironically, destroying my visa meant that the Islamabad exile lasted a couple more months while the Pakistan government clarified my status enough for me to be able to leave the country safely. With relief and joy I arrived home to my family in the USA on Maundy Thursday night. It had been an arduous Lent.
How did prestigious Edwardes College, established in 1900 by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) as the first institution of higher education along the Afghan border and long a model of dignity and decorum, become the scene of threats, agitations and violence? Why would the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government, which in January 2013 gave the College the equivalent of US$ 3.125 million to assist us with attaining degree-awarding status, now try to seize the college from the church? The answers are complicated but important for Anglican colleges and universities that must wrestle with governmental relationships in their own contexts.

CMS managed Edwardes directly until 1940, when it handed management over to a Board of Governors chaired by the Bishop of Lahore and consisting of church appointees. In 1943 the governance structure was set forth in a constitution that was revised incrementally over the next 30 years in response to the college’s growth. In 1956 CMS transferred its many properties in Pakistan, including Edwardes, to the Lahore Diocesan Trust Association, so that both management and ownership were then entirely under the indigenous church. From its founding Edwardes has served primarily the majority community, and today 92% of its 2,800 students are Muslim, 7% are Christian, and 1% are Hindu and Sikh, with similar faculty proportions.

The governance distortion at the root of today’s conflict began with the nationalization drive of then-Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s, when, in addition to banks and industries, various church institutions such as Forman Christian College in Lahore and Christian Training Institute in Sialkot were put under direct government control. Opposition in Peshawar prevented such a full-scale nationalization at Edwardes, but in January 1974 the provincial Governor issued a notification that installed himself as chair of the Board of Governors, reduced the Bishop to being second vice-chair, and provided for only one other church appointee on a board of twelve, with the majority being government officials. Yet the college constitution was left unchanged, producing an anomalous and self-contradictory governance situation.

The Diocese of Peshawar and Church of Pakistan never accepted the new arrangement, but the combination of government coercion and the increasingly extremist religious environment prevented the church from offering concerted resistance, especially with the Islamization drive of the 1980s that coincided with Pakistan’s support for the mujahedin opposing the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan next door. Instead, church and state coexisted uneasily, with the church periodically calling attention to the problematic and illegal governance situation, which also led to educational decline. Tension rose at every vacancy in the principalship, when some would press for a Muslim principal and the diocese would struggle to maintain the bishop’s prerogative to finalize the appointment.

What precipitated the current crisis was the college’s effort to attain degree-awarding status and thereby enhance its widely recognized educational contribution at the bachelors level and in the future extend it to the masters and doctoral levels. We on the Management Team worked closely with provincial officials on the necessary educational and infrastructure improvements and were grateful for the provincial grant we received in 2013 to assist the effort. A Muslim government seemed to be recognizing the church’s contribution in higher education, but it turned out that this came with a major caveat.

Degree-awarding status required a charter, so we drafted one on the basis of the Pakistan Higher Education Commission’s own Model Charter for Private Universities, which states that the

Dr. Presler (left) and Bishop Humphrey Peters, Diocese of Peshawar
head of the “sponsoring body,” in this case the church, must be the chancellor and that the sponsoring body must have a majority on the governing board. Opposition erupted both from a few Muslim faculty members who had long sought public-sector status, and from the province’s higher education officials, who wanted the government, not the church, to have ultimate control over this flagship institution. Opponents questioned the federal model charter’s applicability to the province, asserted that the Church of Pakistan did not really own the property, claimed that the 1974 notification meant that the church was not the sponsoring body, and even attacked the integrity of the bishop and the diocese. Lacking a legal foundation, they then moved to threats and violence.

This latter-day effort to solidify government control reflects the intensifying religious polarization of Pakistan today. The blasphemy cases of Rimsha Masih and Asia Bibi made international news, as did the Badami Bagh riots in Lahore and the bombing of All Saints’ Church in Peshawar last September, when 128 Christians were killed and about 170 wounded. The Edwardes College takeover attempt is institutional and bureaucratic, but over the long term it affects many people by inhibiting Christian educational witness and restricting the already limited access that the poor and oppressed Christian community has to higher education.

Yet what Bishop Humphrey calls the “hijacking” of the college runs counter to other trends in Pakistan today. The federal Finance Ministry has a Privatization Division charged with returning over sixty industries to private hands and thereby reversing the discredited nationalization of 40 years ago. On the religious front, Christian Training Institute was denationalized and handed back to the Presbyterian Church in 1998, as was Foreman Christian College in 2003. In 2005 St. Joseph’s College and St. Patrick’s College in Karachi were returned to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Karachi. These denationalizations, however, came only after protracted political and legal struggles.

It is such struggle that the Diocese of Peshawar is now being forced to undertake at a financial cost it can ill afford as it seeks to maintain its identity and expand its ministry in the rugged frontier region that includes the Federally Administered Tribal Areas where the Taliban and al Qaeda are based. Yet, as many besieged Christian communities around the world have found, political and legal struggles are often necessary for the church to fulfill its mission. Cricket-star-turned-politician Imran Khan, whose PTI party governs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has promised to restore Edwardes to the church, but if political efforts are not fruitful, the situation may have to be resolved by the Pakistan Supreme Court.

For me, it continues to be a privilege to serve as principal, even in exile, and to assist the church in its effort to retain the college. Being beaten by agents gave me first-hand experience of the persecution suffered by Christians and other religious minorities, including out-of-favor Muslim groups, in Pakistan today. The church’s struggle emphasizes the contribution made by Christian higher education, valued so highly that others conspire to seize it. It highlights the mandate of solidarity in the mission of God that we share together. As the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians in a time of affliction, “You also must help us by prayer.”