



*A theological education pathway for
Churches of Christ around the world.*

GCS News - August 2021

*Updating our sponsors, informing our current students,
and reaching out for others to partner with us.
Copies available at the [GCS website](#)*

In this newsletter:

- [GCS as Mission Work Student](#)
- [Updates](#)
- [GCS Spotlight](#)
- [From Our Students](#)
- [Word from HST](#)
- [Invitation to be a Sponsor](#)
- [Financial Report](#)
- [Message to Potential Students](#)



GCS as Mission Work

Much has happened in the past 6 months, so we have a lot of updates to let you know about. We'll try to keep it brief, but we're so excited about what's going on that we want to tell you all of it! As you keep reading you'll hear about how our students are doing (quite well), the new advisory council, and some changes that have happened at HST.

Underlying much of this year has been the uncertainty about what will happen next with COVID. Things seemed to be improving, but now they're getting worse again, and it's hard to tell what will happen from here. That uncertainty is uncomfortable.

The good news is, the work of GCS can largely continue unaffected by lockdowns and outbreaks. There are some difficulties (we talked in the last newsletter about students taking Advanced Theological Research in Memphis, and how HST has been working with them to ensure their studies are not hindered by their inability to take ATR), but they can largely be overcome.

In the meantime, the work of our students in their countries continues. We aren't waiting for visa approvals to travel to Nigeria to minister to the church—Jasper already lives there. The same for Australia, Bolivia, Ghana, Switzerland, and Ukraine. These ministers are continuing their training in spite of COVID. They are continuing their ministry in spite of COVID. They are doing God's work in their countries in spite of COVID, in ways no American missionary could.

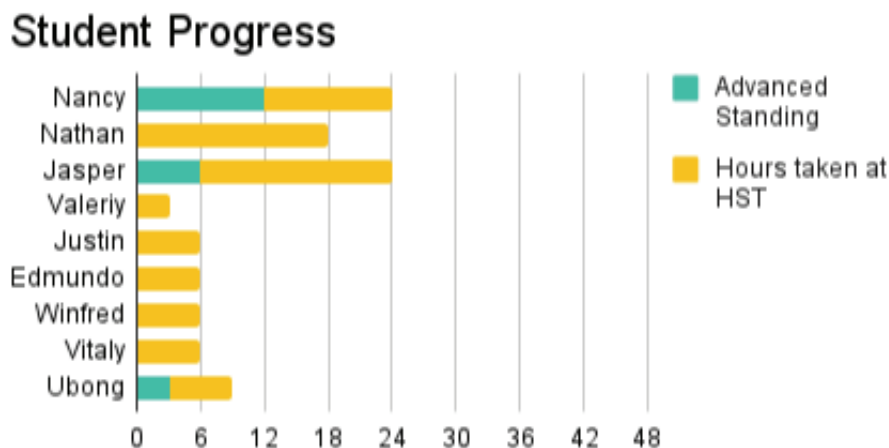
This is one of the strengths of GCS—we connect churches with ministers who are on the ground, who are already working but nevertheless want to improve their ministries. No travel necessary. No survey trips, no language learning, no cultural adaptation, no colonizing evangelism. Just empowering our brothers and sisters abroad so they can be better prepared to do the work God has called them to.

Traditional mission work is important, and in many ways GCS is standing on the shoulders of it. We want to honor the work of traditional missionaries. But at GCS our mission is not to re-plant where has already been planted; our mission is to empower what is already growing, so that it might grow more and more.

And if you would like to be more involved in this work, let us know!

--John Coffey

Student Updates



Global Christian Studies aims to direct and help national leaders in churches of Christ to obtain a graduate degree in order to enhance their role in serving God's kingdom. The clearest picture of our effort revolves around our current students and their efforts to obtain the degree.

Ubong took Global Evangelism under Alan Howell. They discussed cross cultural communication, short term missions and other useful aspects of Christian Ministry. Ubong, who lives in Nigeria said, "This class really impacted my ministry in Nigeria."

Edmundo was in Managing Conflict in Ministry by Dr Carlos Gupton. He said the class was "transformational," and has already used the class to deal with some local conflict in Bolivia.

Nathan was in class with Edmundo. He said, "I love studying at HST." He also added his wife Katrina has health issues and asked us to pray for them. They live in Australia.

This spring **Justin** completed the class Advanced Introduction to the Old Testament with Lance Hawley. Justin noted, "I found the in-depth study of select texts in Genesis and the thematic and structural overviews of the books of the Pentateuch to be... insightful and useful for ministry..." Justin works with French speaking Switzerland.

Nancy took the class on Biblical Preaching with Dr Bland. Nancy concluded, "I definitely feel this course has helped me prepare for being able to teach women in a class or workshop." Nancy lives in Australia.

Jasper took Hebrew poetry with Lance Hawley. Jasper, who is from Nigeria, noted, "This class has enriched my understanding of the poetic section of the Old Testament as well as developed in me a flair for Hebrew poetry scholarship."

Valery completed Spiritual and Theological Formation with Dr. Gupton. Valery said, “I learned how to take care of my spiritual life, how to stay faithful in my faith walk and ministry. I also learned of different ways churches are organized and run.” Valery is from Ukraine.

Vitaliy, who is from Kiev, said, “I had a good experience with my first course at HST. I believe that it will be very helpful in this ministry.”

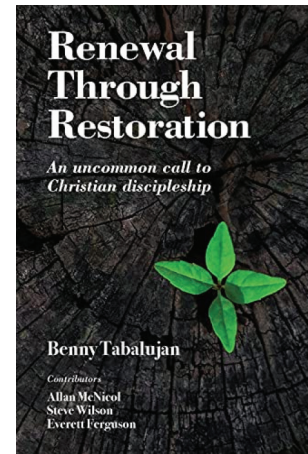
As we all go about our busy lives, we must remember how the efforts of GCS touch specific students in different countries around the world! Your work is valuable!



April GCS Collaborate meeting: Collaborate is a chance for all the students, elders, and staff associated with GCS to see one another and pray for one another. We had 10 students, 2 GCS staff, 2 elderships, 4 Advisory Council members, and Dr. Black (from HST), covering 8 different countries.

GCS Spotlight--new books and the AC

***Renewal Through Restoration* by Benny Tabalujan**



Benny Tabalujan, one of the elders at a church overseeing GCS, has long been associated with Global Christian Studies. This summer Benny along with two others have released a new book. Harold Shank, Director of Global Christian Studies, writes this about the new volume:

"After preaching for over fifty years, I've often wondered what one word would describe my preaching. Perhaps with some hubris I decided it would be discipleship. When I read in *Renewal Through Restoration* how "discipleship is arguably the noblest pursuit for a human being" I realized this book was a confirmation of my own thinking and a needed companion for our journey.

The solution to the drift of contemporary Christianity away from the core Gospel is restoration. This book likens it to "rebooting" the church computer. We get messed up; we need to restart.

Jude's point of "once for all" offers a remarkable invitation which these three writers explore. They seek something unique and recoverable. It has great personal appeal. It makes us want to find 'common ground.'

Let me suggest you sit down with this book and drink deeply of its wisdom!"

Kindle copies are available on Amazon.

***Judges and Ruth* by Dr. Harold Shank**

Congratulations to Harold Shank, Director of Global Christian Studies and Old Testament scholar, who has recently completed a commentary on the books of Judges and Ruth for the Truth for Today commentary series.



Copies available from: <http://resourcepublications.net>

The GCS Advisory Council

An Advisory Council (AC) plays an important role in enhancing the growth of GCS in two ways. First, they provide a network of GCS friends who advocate for GCS and connect GCS to potential donors. Second, the AC offers a network of GCS friends who help identify and vet potential students.

Global Christian Studies is pleased to announce the first Advisory Council for the ministry. These Christians assumed their role in the spring of 2021. We welcome them to our effort.



David Allen was born and raised in South Korea where both his parents and grandparents were long-term missionaries. David and his wife, Michelle, were part of a mission team that served in northern Thailand for 25 years. Their primary works among the Buddhist people were evangelism, discipleship, and church planting.

David holds a BA from Texas A&M University and a MA from Abilene Christian University. At Mission Resource Network (MRN) David is a trainer, coach, and mentor helping to build relationships with Asian partners to empower disciple making movements.

David and Michelle have two daughters, Brianna and Brielle.



Jack Goodwin is an independent executive educator and consultant in Richmond, VA. His areas of interest include execution of strategy, management of strategic change, and increasing organizational effectiveness.

He has taught and consulted in both the United States and abroad for the past fifty years. Jack holds several visiting professorships including: Visiting Professor at The Darden School, Distinguished Academic Fellow at the Melbourne Business School in Melbourne, Australia, and

Extraordinary Professor at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, the Graduate Business School of the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He has also been a Visiting Professor of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. He works actively in community affairs and serves as an Elder of his church.



Dale Hartman serves with the North MacArthur Church of Christ in Oklahoma City. Dale ministered in Sydney, Australia, for nearly twelve years and he continues to make annual trips to work with the church in Australia. They were supported by the Eastside Church of Christ in Midwest City, OK, while working in Australia. Eastside asked them to work with them when they returned in December of 1991. Dale served as the pulpit minister with the Eastside congregation for forty-one years and began work as an associate minister at the North MacArthur congregation in January of 2020. He holds a D.Min. degree from Harding School of Theology.

Dale and his wife Sheila are the parents of three married children, Luke, Heather, and Annaleise



Tan Beng Chuan has been the lead minister of the Pasir Panjang Church of Christ in Singapore for the past seven years. Prior to his ministry work, he served in the business world in sales and marketing including twenty-seven years in the insurance industry. He is a chartered financial consultant. He holds diplomas from the Singapore College of Insurance and the American College.

He and his wife Woon-Ching Leong have two children, a son Yi Chen and a daughter Ting Chen.

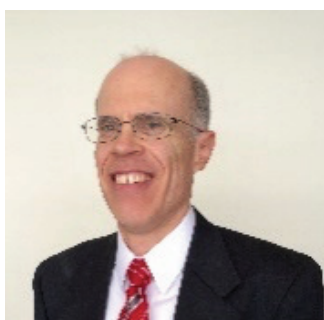
consultant. He holds diplomas from the Singapore College of Insurance and the American College.

He and his wife Woon-Ching Leong have two children, a son Yi Chen and a daughter Ting Chen.



Stephen Teel is President of Baxter Institute and Clinic in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. He took that position in 2013. Mission work took him to Argentina from 1980 to 1995. He has also done mission work in Guatemala, Honduras, Uruguay, Chile, and Brazil. He preached for churches in Louisiana, North Carolina and Florida.

Steve and his wife Dianna have an adult son, Jonathan. Stephen holds the D.Min. degree from HST.



John Wiegand is the editor of the hymnbook *Praise for the Lord* (Nashville: 21st Century Christian, 1992 & 1997). He leads singing and serves as worship and education coordinator for the Pleasant View Church of Christ, Pleasanton, CA. He has directed hymns for numerous lecture series, including the Freed Hardeman University Bible Lectures, the Faulkner University Bible Lectures, the National Lectureship, and the Tahoe Family Encampment, and has led singing workshops for congregations in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore.

Wiegand is an attorney in the San Francisco office of the Federal Trade Commission. He practices antitrust law, primarily in the health care industry, and has litigated hospital merger and physician price-fixing cases. He earned his J.D. in 1985 from the University of Illinois, and his A.B. in Economics in 1982 from the University of Chicago.

From Our Students

An interview with Nancy Wu Won



Why are you working on a degree at HST?

I have been asked to teach a ladies' Bible class in the past and felt very inadequate. When the opportunity arose to gain a degree through HST, it looked like a good idea so I can be better equipped to teach and encourage growth in my sisters in Christ.

What is your family background (parents, grandparents), and how have they affected your faith?

I'm an Australian born Chinese. My parents were born in southern China and immigrated to Australia in the 1950s and 60s. My paternal and maternal grandparents also left China due to the communists. My paternal grandmother was a very devout Buddhist and my father followed suit. Consequently, when my older sister and I became Christians, my dad was very angry. Despite the persecution, my sister and I have remained steadfast. Perhaps withstanding the anger has strengthened us in some way.

Where do you live, and what is your neighborhood/city like?

I live in Melbourne, which is the capital city of the state of Victoria, Australia. We have about 4 million people here. It's a very multicultural city. It's reflected at Belmore Rd Church of Christ as we have over 12 different nationalities represented. Melbourne is known for its arts and cultural precincts.

What is your strongest quality?

That's a good question. I'm not sure how to answer that. I like to laugh and see the best brought out in others. You might have to ask my friends as to what they think my strongest quality is.

What has your church experience been like?

My sister introduced me to the Church of Christ and after studying the Bible on how to become a Christian, I made the decision that I would be faithful. God has blessed me wherever I have gone. I have lived in 4 states of Australia and have always found God's people to be warm and inviting. I have been the beneficiary of God's grace through others and this has spurred me on to want to pass this on to others. I have always loved the a capella singing and singing plays a big role in sustaining my faith.

Are you married? Tell us about your spouse.

I am single. When I visited HST at the beginning of 2020, the visiting students were asked to stand up and introduce themselves. I told them that I was married to Jesus! We all laughed!

What have you most enjoyed about being at HST?

I have enjoyed the insights gained through studying at HST. Working full time and studying part time is intense. When I am not working as a physical therapist in a rehab hospital, then I am studying. It feels like just about every waking moment is consumed by thoughts of reading, studying, thinking, and meditating on God and His word. It's intense! This intensity draws me closer to God and I am amazed at the insights that I get because of this process of studying at HST. I feel God reveals things about myself that need the light of His presence. It's a privilege to study in this way and have many giants of faith pray for me. I am humbled by this privilege.

What class are you taking next?

My next class is Introduction to the New Testament. Dr Alan Black is teaching this.

How do you see the degree helping you in ministry?

I see this degree helping me serve women in particular. I've just taken Biblical Preaching with Dr Bland and the skills learned in that class will help me prepare lessons for my sisters in Christ. I continue to pray for God's guidance as to where He wants me to serve.

Tell about a recent sermon you preached or class you taught or a person you served

I had to prepare 2 ten-minute sermons for my last class. Having never preached before, I felt like I was in the wrong class. My other brothers in the class had all preached and I felt like I had no idea! Scary! Praise God, He came to my rescue. Dr Bland showed us some principles, I listened intently to my brothers as they preached, and I scurried around finding resources to help me understand the process of writing a sermon. I was able to deliver a sermon on Psalm 23 with lots of God's help.

What do you think about GCS?

Global Christian Studies is a great concept. Although I don't see all that goes on, I am confident that God is using the faithful people who are supporting this endeavor to further the work of the kingdom by assisting others to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ so that His purposes are realized on this earth.

Why should others consider GCS?

If you are considering studying through the assistance of GCS, then I would say, 'Do it!' It's a rich experience; an experience where you find out more about God and yourself.

Do you have a word of encouragement for our donors?

Thank you to all our GCS donors. May God bless you for your generosity in helping to further His kingdom. I feel very blessed to be the recipient of such help.

Word from HST

Report from the new Dean at HST

Dr. Mark Powell took on the role of Dean at Harding School of Theology on July 1. Dr. Powell is Professor of Theology. He teaches courses in Christian theology, ethics, and philosophy of religion. His research and writing interests include the doctrine of the Trinity, religious epistemology, and theology in the Stone-Campbell Movement.

Mark has served in preaching ministry, urban ministry, and adult education, and he is currently a shepherd at a church in Memphis. He is deeply interested in the intersection of theological scholarship, the ministry of the church, and discipleship.

Mark and his wife, Debbie, have three children. He enjoys sports, cooking barbecue, camping, and spending time with his family.



Dr. Powell recently wrote this statement to GCS supporters:

"The majority of Christians no longer live in the West, but in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. An important next-step in global evangelism is the training of indigenous Christian leaders who will preach the gospel, plant churches, and establish Christian schools and other organizations. Harding School of Theology is honored to partner with Global Christian Studies to provide the highest level of ministry training for global leaders. Training global leaders is hard work, and we anticipate challenges, but HST is committed to doing this work right. I take HST's partnership with GCS to be a key part of our future work."

Invitation to be a Sponsor

GCS has a deep concern that each sponsored national leader complete their graduate program. Central to our support is having a sponsoring church or donor for each student. We want people in the GCS orbit to be praying for the students and for their concerns. Matching a student with a donor or congregation is important.

Currently we have more students than sponsors. Would you consider helping us identify sponsors? If you could help in any of the following areas, please contact Harold Shank.

- I know of a congregation which might be interested and am willing to provide you with an introduction.
- A friend of mine loves to pray and I could connect the two of you together.
- The congregation where I attend might well be interested. Let me contact one of the leaders and get back to you.

Financial Report for January to June 2021

GCS had a total of ten different students during the spring of 2021. Revenue for those students totaled \$16,225. Most of our income comes in August for each year. Expenses for students during the half year was \$15,647,10.

GCS asks donors to contribute the entire cost of a student's education during a five-year period, even though the students may take six to eight years to complete the degrees. This allows GCS a steady cash flow and assures students of funding for their degrees.

Administrative costs were just over \$11,000 for the two part time staff, fund raising, and web site costs. GCS expects the administrative portion of the total expenditures to remain fixed while student expenses will rise. The two GCS overseeing congregations provide all the administrative costs, so all money donated to students goes directly to their education.

GCS Overseeing Congregations

Eastside Church of Christ, 916 South Douglas Blvd, Midwest City, OK 73130

(www.eastsidechurchofchrist.info).

Their elders include Sam Brandon, Ricky Bugher, Ron Cannefax, and David Walton.

Belmore Road Church of Christ, 100 Rostrevor Parade, Mont Albert North, Victoria 3129, Australia (www.belmoreroadchurch.org.au).

Their elders are Charles Hooi, Benny Tabalujan, and David Tabe.

GCS is actively seeking additional students and sponsors. Students are urged to consult the GCS website: www.gcspathway.org for how to engage with GCS. They can also email John Coffey (jcoffey@harding.edu) or Harold Shank (drharoldshank@gmail.com).

Message to Potential Students

GCS seeks students from around the globe who live outside the US, who have an accredited bachelor's degree, and have the full recommendation of their local congregation. The process of being accepted by GCS and enrolling in a US school takes about four months. Students who attend HST can do all their work online (high speed internet is required), but must take the course Advanced Theological Research on site in Memphis. GCS pays the student's expenses for this Memphis trip.

The total cost of an accredited graduate degree in Bible or ministry is about \$50,000. HST provides a generous scholarship, GCS donors give \$5,000 per year for five years, and the student is required to contribute \$2,600 toward their degree.

For more information: visit www.gcspathway.org or email us at gcspathwayinfo@gmail.com

Find out more

[View this email in your browser](#)

Find out more at: www.gcspathway.org
or go to the GCS landing page on the HST website: <https://hst.edu/gcspathway/>
Email us at: gcspathwayinfo@gmail.com
