

Dr. Diane Stinton, Dean of Students and Associate Professor of Mission Studies & World Christianity, Open letter showing the goal of Christian Higher Education. Regent College, Vancouver, n.d.

The Sukuma people of Tanzania have a proverb: “I pointed out the stars to you, and all you saw was the tip of my finger.”

This short-sightedness is in all of us: we are limited in our scope, limited by our busy lives and our self-preoccupations. We need each other to direct our gazes outward and upward. We need each other to lift our eyes to the heavens.

As a professor of World Christianity at Regent, I look outward at what God is doing in and through his people around the globe – and they point me back to Christ. As a college community, we open our doors to students from around the world – from China to Brazil, Egypt to Switzerland, India to the United States – and they open our eyes to the work of God in their homelands. Together, we look outward at creation to care for the earth, outward at diverse vocations to join in God’s work, and outward at different disciplines to engage them theologically.

We need your help to keep pursuing this vision.

Looking outward and opening up is so essential, yet so rare in 2017. Awash in news of terrorism, continuous war, and unprecedented numbers of people driven from their homes, we have become territorial and fearful of the other. We retreat into our own enclaves, be they nations, ethnicities, communities, or families.

Christ calls us to something different. He calls us to recognize that we are first and foremost part of God’s people: diverse in culture, language, and background, but united in him.

That’s why **Regent’s embrace of the whole people of God is so important.** The diversity of our student body is not a quirk of demographics or a nod to Canadian multiculturalism. It’s deeper and more theological than that. It reflects the very heart of the gospel – that this is good news for all people.

The beauty of living and learning in this community is that you see the importance of the gospel for all people: for homemakers, artists, engineers, and pilots; for women and men of every age, ethnicity, calling, and background. And all of us, looking together, see more of the vastness of who God is.

So, I'm asking you to support what we're doing here. I'm asking because you too are part of this community. We need you because we live in a world, and belong to a church, that needs what Regent is offering. So many forces in our societies are trying to pull us apart: the lure of factionalism, the temptation to cynicism, the urge to withdraw. Against all of this, Regent reaches out with an expansive view of God's kingdom and human history. It offers a perspective that urges us to look away from ourselves, away from our fears and divisions, and toward the vastness of God's beauty, goodness, and truth. That's what Regent is about. And your support makes it happen.

As you celebrate the birth of our Lord in this season, may your eyes be drawn outward to the world, upward to the heavens, and ultimately, always, toward the incarnate Christ.