

FAMILY, TRUST, CONNECTION: TWO STUDENTS ON WHAT GOD IS TEACHING THEM IN 2020

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THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF THE FAMILY OF GOD REALLY IS INCREDIBLE, TRANSCENDING ALL OF OUR TRADITIONAL DIVIDES.

Hannah and Chris Agnew, a language teacher and medical doctor from Northern Ireland, joined the Regent community in January 2019. Chris is currently finishing his MATS, while Hannah graduated with a GradDipCS this spring. Their son, Joel, was born just a few weeks later. In this interview, Hannah and Chris share some of the lessons of the past year, and their Regent journey as a whole.

What has God been teaching you in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Hannah: This season has shown me the beauty of God's family, which transcends geography and ethnicity. God made this very clear through the process of having a baby far from home, with biological family unable to travel to be with us. We could have felt so alone, but we found ourselves among a community of God's people who rallied around us. People came to walk with me, clean our house, look after Joel and offer sage advice, and we didn't have to cook a main meal for nearly six weeks after he was born! The depth and breadth of the family of God really is incredible, transcending all of our traditional divides.

Chris: I've always been geared toward planning and strategic thinking. This season has been a reminder to trust God for the next step, not the next five. Walking with God is one step at a time; he is with us on the journey. At one point we were realistically looking at the need to return home, and then financial provision was given. Why do I continue to doubt his hand moving and choreographing with immense beauty and exquisite timing? In the midst of this ongoing pandemic, I

think we're being invited to new dependence, to slow down and trust in the next step with him.

What has God been teaching you through your studies since you arrived at Regent?

Hannah: I resisted the idea of attending any kind of "Bible college" for a long time, even as Chris was very keen. It was seeing Regent's attention to marketplace theology that won me over to thinking it might be a place for me. And indeed God has been teaching me that there is no sacred/secular divide. Studying at Regent has given me a greater awareness of the movement and work of God in all things. It has really helped connect the dots in my mind and heart, and that has rekindled a sense of awe and wonder.

Chris: Studying at Regent has reconnected me to the depth of the stream of history. There's so much more to the church's story than what's happening today. God has been teaching me about the beauty of the past, and the debt that we owe to the Christians who came before us. These are our people, our family, stretching back through the centuries. As Bruce Hindmarsh notes, "every generation is equidistant from the Holy Spirit." There's a profound humility in that, and an invitation to plumb the riches of our ancestors.

Want to support students like Hannah and Chris? In this challenging season, the Regent community is relying on donor generosity more than ever. If you're able, please consider making a gift this year-end.