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# Go into All the World

By Meredith Jones-Gray

**IN THE 1930s AT EMMANUEL MISSIONARY COLLEGE**, the forerunner of Andrews University, the commission culture consumed the campus. Every school activity focused on the call to serve, especially in overseas mission fields. The school paper, the *Student Movement*, regularly published letters from EMC alums working around the world. In 1940, the *Student Movement* researched that 111 former students had gone out from the small school from 1909, when the first EMC missionary was commissioned, until 1940. The yearbook, the *Cardinal*, featured images of faraway cultures and missionaries arriving in distant lands. The 1931 yearbook memorialized Herbert K. Smith, an EMC alumnus serving in China who was killed by road bandits on one of his evangelistic trips. Chapels and club meetings centered on international mission topics. Year after year, the graduating class aims echoed the call: “Into the Midst of the World’s Needs” (1935).

For the EMC students of the 1930s, answering the call meant getting on “canoes, rafts, houseboats, frigates, windjammers, liners. . .and biplanes. . .” (“Foreword” to *Cardinal*, 1931). For the Andrews University student of the 21st century some 80 years later, the call still echoes, the students still answer, but the response, as it should, has a new and contemporary approach.

One of my favorite classes to teach is College Writing II, which emphasizes source-based writing. My section of the course is built around the theme of the millennial generation. My students research and write about various aspects of the millennial cohort — young people born roughly between 1982 and 2002. They are themselves millennials, of course. I find them thoughtful, spiritual and committed to service, and they inspire me every day to consider what Christ’s commission to go into all the world means in our contemporary culture.

The millennials who sit in front of me come from all over the world: Haiti, the Philippines, Mexico, Korea, Germany; they bear witness to the truth that, in North America, this is the most diverse generation in history. They are preparing to go into all the world; in fact, they already do, every day. Millennials are a globally connected generation. They explore and communicate across cultures and worldviews daily. When I ask them, as one of their assignments, to interview a millennial from outside North America, they instantly reach out to friends and family around the world.

The millennials I teach go into all the world, not just geographically but in every aspect of life. They are preparing to teach and preach and run businesses, engineer new technology, heal people, design buildings and serve their communities. These digital natives and global citizens are preparing to carry the gospel into all the world with their enthusiastic dedication. They are eager to serve their church and their God — in many ways and in all the world. They have a new vision of Christ’s commission, and their church will be blessed by embracing both them and their contributions to its mission. They are changing the world. ■

Meredith Jones-Gray is the chair of the Department of English, Andrews University



▲ China martyr Herbert Smith and his wife, Thelma Chew Smith, in 1929.