

Alumni Spotlight: Sam Kim (MDiv '16)



Current title: Senior Pastor, Chaplain, Yuhbo (honey in Korean), Appah (Daddy in Korean)

Family: Wife: Sejung, Children: Song and Caleb

Favorite Professor: Dr. Niehaus and Dr. Spencer

Favorite Class: Theology of Worship with Dr. Emmett Price

Favorite Memory: Lying under the pine trees outside of Kaiser Chapel (which formed a little hidden room) in between classes to pray and ponder the ways of God I was learning and wrestling with, while hearing and seeing the feet of busy students walking by.

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and where are you serving now?

I have been blessed to pastor an intentionally intercultural church family in North Andover, MA for the past six years, where we embrace the constant awkwardness and complexity of worshiping and doing life together with many different cultures and languages. I also have the honor of being a chaplain for the Massachusetts State Police, and I serve both formally and informally as a chaplain, coach, and/or mentor to other organizations, ministries, and ministers including Emmanuel Gospel Center, American Legion post, and pastors near and far.

What do you love about your work?

I love that I am trusted and allowed to care deeply for and minister to people in the name of Jesus, especially in their most intimate, joyous, painful, and heartbreaking seasons.

What are the particular joys and biggest challenges of planting a church in your context?

My church was a dying church, but its remaining dozen elderly members were willing and committed to begin again and embrace new traditions, cultures, languages, and generations—even before they convinced me to join them in relaunching/replanting this church with them. We are celebrating our sixth anniversary since my formal installation and public relaunch of our church family on September 11, 2016. We chose this date because September 11, 2001, is when I watched the twin towers fall while at my law firm office. The sudden realization that thousands of people may die in a moment without knowing Jesus led me out into the streets of Boston to share the Gospel, to leave the law practice to pursue missions work, to study at Gordon-Conwell, and finally

to my current church. We chose this tragic date as our church's rebirth, replant, and resurrection date to always remember and testify that God can and does redeem all things, even the most tragic and horrible for His good and for His glory.

It has been messy, complicated, hard, and challenging, even with willing and committed hearts, to change how we worship, minister, and live together as an intentionally intercultural church family. But there has also been much joy and blessing as we continue to witness our Lord's faithfulness and grace in bearing fruit through us as a growing intercultural and intergenerational church family, and for us to be able to bless the increasingly intercultural communities around us.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

He redeems all things – everything in our lives. I am a living testimony of this. Every experience I've had as a Korean American immigrant, U.S. veteran, corporate lawyer, drama and music person, Emmanuel Gospel Center staff, Gordon-Conwell student, husband, and father, etc. has been redeemed for my service for Him as a pastor, chaplain to people in uniform, counselor, coach, advocate for racial justice, and friend to people of diverse origins, professions, cultures, generations, and languages.

For example, as I was finishing my studies at Gordon-Conwell and trying to decide between a large church in NYC and a national intentional interim ministry, a business friend from my corporate lawyer days contacted me and tricked me into meeting, and ultimately becoming the pastor of, my current church family. That friend became the first person I ever had the honor of baptizing, and his wife was the second person I had the honor of baptizing the following year. After a few years, my friend and his family had been growing apart from mine when he suddenly and tragically died last winter. We reached out, grieved with, comforted, and ministered to his surviving wife and daughters. On the same date this year at the same beach where I had baptized my friend, I had the honor of baptizing both of his daughters as they committed their lives to the same Lord who their father and mother committed theirs to. He redeems all things for His glory.



What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on your ministry?

My time at Gordon-Conwell equipped and enabled me to better discern and weave Christ into every fabric of my service for Him and my interactions with others. I was also affirmed and given a language and framework for many of my theological wrestlings and

convictions over the years, so I can now communicate the Gospel more understandably and adaptively.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are just entering pastoral ministry or are considering church planting?

Do not enter ministry, let alone church planting, hoping to prove or find your identity, self-worth, validation, fulfillment, or joy from it. Firmly establish and confirm them all in Christ and Christ alone so that you may bring that all of those things to your ministry, your church plant, and the people you minister to – regardless of your successes and disappointments. Always remember that you may have much to do in your ministry, but you have nothing you need to prove about yourself through it because God has already proven it all for you – your identity and worth are fixed in Christ Jesus.

Do you have any publications, links, or resources to share?

Learn more about Sam's church, [Intercultural Mission Church \(IMC\)](#), located in North Andover, MA.

Learn more about IMC's North Shore Gospel Partnership, *Let's Talk*, a multi-denominational network of churches dedicated to Christ-centered truth on their [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Learn more about the [Emmanuel Gospel Center](#).