

— THE —
FORMAN

CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

— STORY —





Forman campus photo credit: Anil Joseph
Cover photo of Forman College's Sinclair Hall: Anil Joseph

In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the world's second largest Muslim country and fifth most populous nation, exists a remarkable Christian college with a storied past. This school has educated Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Christians together in a peaceful, tolerant atmosphere for over 150 years. Founded in Lahore, it is known as Forman Christian College. Today it is supported In the United States by Friends of Forman, and this is the college's story of its founding and flourishing once again.



Banyan Tree – Lahore

In 1847, at the time when the British rule of India was pushing west and would soon annex the Indian region of the Punjab, a young American minister stepped off the sailing barque *Coromandel* in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

Charles Forman came to the Indian subcontinent after graduating from Princeton Theological Seminary and immediately met with Rev. Dr. Alexander Duff, a prominent Scottish mission educator. Duff persuaded the 26-year-old Forman to take up the service of education to reach young elite Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh boys with scientific studies and the Bible. By teaching English to give access to Western literature and an education of morals through Scripture, Forman hoped to open the souls of his students to examine the gospel and be persuaded to the Christian faith.

In 1849 Forman journeyed to Lahore, a historic city that had long played a significant cultural role in the Punjab region. Travel was difficult since trains and electricity had not yet been introduced. Rudyard Kipling would arrive in Lahore a few decades later as a young journalist and observe that this city was so diverse and fascinating that the short distance “from the Taxila [Gate] to the Delhi Gate...would yield a score of novels.”

EARLY DAYS 1849-1888

Europeans often struggled with the triple-digit heat of the summers, tropical diseases and monsoon rains, but nothing seemed to deter Forman's hardy constitution and missionary spirit. He started right away teaching four boys under a banyan tree and within a year had a school of 80 pupils of diverse backgrounds: 55 Hindus, 22 Muslims, and three Sikhs. Forman and his mission partner, John Newton, would split the teaching in the day and then preach in the streets at night. The work was so successful that buildings to operate the school were procured by 1850. Eventually, there were 445 students in this location and 1,192 in associated branch schools around Lahore.

From the beginning, Forman used an English-based education to bridge the multilingual communities of India. His schools were Christian led with interfaith enrollment, joining Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs in classes together without prejudice or partiality. British government leaders and Europeans offered financial support to the work, and Forman was tapped to help with educational institutions springing up all over the central Punjab region.

“ Forman was a true pioneer in every sense of that word.”

As the years passed and the government became more involved in public education, Forman aspired to open a college, which he believed would be necessary to train the

country's future leaders. In 1864, his mission finally backed the idea to form a college for young men. Mission College of Lahore commenced that year, affiliating with the University of Calcutta in granting degrees. It would grow to become a leading school in South Asia. At Forman's death in 1894, it was renamed Forman Christian College in honor of his sacrificial service.

Forman's legacy ran deep, with future principals advancing his ideals. He welcomed native teachers and believed that locals should be equal to foreigners in



Street scene of Lahore, 1890s



Forman faculty in the 1880s

church leadership. Forman favored the sciences while teaching the fundamentals of the Christian faith. His belief in the education of women led the college to admit women in 1902. Forman was a true pioneer in every sense of that word.

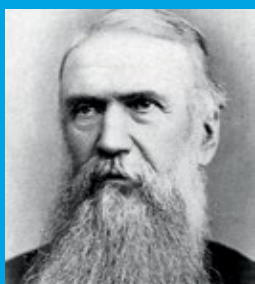
GROWING AND FLOURISHING 1888-1971



J.C.R. Ewing

Dr. J.C.R. Ewing followed Forman as principal of the college from 1888 to 1917. He had the distinction of being the only American to be knighted by the British for his educational leadership and service to humanity. He was also the vice chancellor of Punjab University, displaying educational leadership in the city like his predecessor. In this period, Forman Christian

FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE'S FOUNDER CHARLES WILLIAM FORMAN



Charles Forman

Hard work, hardships and heartfelt faith were all evident in Charles Forman at an early age. Born into a large family on the frontier of Kentucky on March 3, 1821, Forman had to grow up fast. His father died suddenly when he was just 13 so Forman had to step up and help his brothers. At 15 he remembered being introduced to a devout Presbyterian minister who visited the family. When he was 20, Forman requested baptism in his village church saying that he did so as, "a surrender of myself to Christ to live for him alone."

Being a studious lad, he completed college and then enrolled in Princeton Theological Seminary, graduating in 1847 and sailing for India as a new appointee of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Forman landed in Calcutta after a five-month sea voyage (having preached weekly and handing out Christian literature to the crew) and stayed there with the prominent Scottish mission educator the Rev. Dr. Alexander Duff. Duff's work inclined Forman to become committed to a ministry of education.

College was now training students in the intermediate program (11th and 12th grade) as well as offering bachelor's and master's degree programs.

Eventually, the mission educators believed that a more complete education and a deeper mentoring of students in the faith would occur if Forman could offer student dormitories. To date, most pupils lived in the city and walked to



Students working in the Chemical Laboratory of Forman Christian College, 1929.

school each day. The mission found a suitable tract of land to build a residential campus outside the city's core, adjacent to a canal on Ferozepur Road. It was so far out that rickshaw operators

Showing great dedication to the work, Forman taught young Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim boys in the day and preached in the bazaar in the evenings. His early lodging included a stay at an empty tomb outside the city where he had to walk three miles to work each day. His fortitude without a doubt impressed the locals.

Forman pioneered the ordering of scientific equipment for the school, wanting to demonstrate a rational understanding of the world. His early success necessitated the procurement of the Rang Mahal palace in the city in 1852. In 1864, he helped to found Mission College of Lahore, which was renamed Forman Christian College at his passing in 1894 at the age of 73.

Forman was lovingly laid to rest in Lahore by a large gathering of family and friends from all walks of life and is best remembered by his son, Henry, who wrote of that day, "those who saw all this can never forget it, or fail to give thanks to God that among men, faith and love still answer to love and faithfulness."



The College's first home – Rang Mahal

charged two fares to take people to the future campus knowing that they would not find a fare back to the city. Nonetheless, it was purchased in 1928 and planning began for a full-fledged campus.

The Great Depression in America delayed those plans for a decade. Eventually, generous gifts poured in, like one from a Miss Kennedy from New York who gave the funds to build Kennedy Hall. In 1940, the college was moved to its present location and settled on 108 acres of the parcel—arguably the most beautiful campus in what is now Pakistan.

In 1947, the British left India resulting in the partition that formed the Muslim-majority nation of Pakistan. The student population at Forman was greatly reduced during this time of social upheaval. Two dormitories were used as refugee hospitals for those affected by the violence, eventually leading to the founding of the United Christian Hospital of Lahore.

Forman continued to grow in reputation in the 20th century; its graduates would become leaders in both India and Pakistan. By the 1960s, the college's more than 1,300 students knew they were attending one of the premier universities in Pakistan.



Forman Co-eds, 1936

TURBULENT TIMES 1972-2003

In 1972, Pakistan went through a socialist revolution and all educational institutions were nationalized. Forman Christian College was renamed FC Government College. Following socialism, a wave of Islamization swept over the country and the college became a seat of unrest and even a place of Islamic indoctrination. Students often



went on strike and professors had a hard time teaching in over-crowded facilities (because many students gained admission from the principal as a favor to their families causing enrollment to balloon to 5,000.) For Formanites (the chosen name of alumni) of earlier times, these were dark days. Because the government did not have a clear title to the land, Christian "squatters" occupied some parts of the campus. No investment was made in the property and the physical plant rapidly deteriorated. Eventually in 1987, the Pakistan Supreme Court ruled in favor of a case brought by Pakistani Christian leaders that the American Presbyterians still had ownership of the college property. Pakistani Christians wanted the PCUSA to claim Forman and the other schools they had lost, but there remained many bureaucratic hurdles to overcome.

An American volunteer, David Stoner, was appointed as the sole negotiator by the Presbyterian Church in the USA to seek the return of the school. After years of fruitless negotiations, consultants worked with him to present a bill to the government for \$55 million for back rent on all of the confiscated Presbyterian properties in Pakistan. The Governor of the Punjab called Stoner to his office on March 19, 2003 to hand Forman back to the Presbyterian Church with an MOU stipulating that a Pakistan Christian board of directors would manage it and an American educator would be the principal of the college as long as no back rent would be charged. Stoner signed the agreement.

RETURN AND REDEDICATION 2003-PRESENT

Dr. Peter Armacost, president emeritus of Eckerd College in Florida, was named as the college's principal and began steps to reestablish the school as Forman Christian College. Students protested this change, marching with signs that said, "Go Back, Peter, Go Back." Some carried a coffin and shouted, "Death to Armacost." Armed police protection was given to the new principal and his family, but Armacost believed that the guns disturbed the educational atmosphere. As a compromise, the police wrestling team members were assigned to his personal protection detail.

The school was in shambles. Only 20 Christian students were enrolled, and only four Christian professors had remained during the nationalization period. By May, however, the campus became peaceful, and over the summer aggressive recruitment of new faculty and students were carried out. Knowing the Christian community highly valued the school, Armacost did his best to make 10% of the incoming student body Christian in a country where they are only 1.5% of the population. He started with 3,130 students that fall, including 110 Christians in a freshman class of 1,000.

It certainly helped the cause to resurrect Forman Christian College that the then President of Pakistan was Pervez Musharraf, a Forman graduate himself! Musharraf fondly remembered the missionaries who educated him so he made



Photo credit: Anil Joseph



Photo credit: Anil Joseph

Forman Students Today.



Photo credit: Anil Joseph

NOTABLE FORMANITES

When Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah took the first oath of office as governor-general at the founding of Pakistan, the chief justice of Pakistan administering the oath was Sir Abdul Rashid, a Forman Christian College graduate. Forman has had the privilege to graduate two Presidents of Pakistan — Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari and Pervez Musharraf. Two Prime Ministers of India — Gulzarilal Nanda and Inder Kumar Gujral also chose Forman as their place of study. Other graduates have been Pakistani foreign ministers, captains of industry, governors, prominent artists, supreme court justices, army generals, heads of the navy, doctors, and scientists.

Forman was also served by many famous educators, like Arthur Compton who won the Nobel Prize for his work in physics, and Kauser Abdullah Malik, founding director general of the National Institute for Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering. In addition, Forman is fortunate to have many prominent public servants who came to embody the school's motto, "By love serve one another."

sure that the Islamic names put on the buildings during the nationalization period came down and the names of the original American donors and educators went back up. He provided police protection to the college and in 2004 Forman was given a government charter to become a university, allowing it to set its own curriculum and exams and establish Pakistan's only four-year Western-style baccalaureate program.

What Armacost, Cheryl Burke from Peachtree Church, other volunteers, faculty and staff did from 2004 to 2012 is nothing short of miraculous. Armacost formed Friends of Forman as a 501c3 in the US to raise funds for scholarships, capital projects, and staff needs. USAID was pouring money into Pakistan at this time and they helped Forman build programs, classrooms and Hope Tower, a residence for women. The Pakistan and Punjab governments gave funds as well. Forman was once again becoming a leader in educational innovation and interfaith harmony. The chapel program was reinstated (while keeping a mosque on campus), a center for teaching excellence established and resident hall life reformed. Academic rigor was restored and remedial help was set up for



Photo credit: Anil Joseph

Forman's IT Center.

students struggling with English and substandard educational backgrounds. All of these efforts quickly bore fruit: In 2007, five Forman students won Fulbright scholarships to study abroad. Enrollment grew each year and was over 6,000 by 2012; 33% of the university students were women.

Dr. James Tebbe became the vice rector for academic affairs in 2011 and the rector of Forman in 2012. He had been born in Pakistan to missionary parents; in fact, his father was the last American principal of the school before nationalization. Even though Tebbe inherited a college that was up and running, there were still serious challenges ahead. The men's dorms needed to be updated from the 1940s, the water system was inadequate for a growing campus, security needed to be improved, and campus housing for faculty and staff needed to be addressed. Student enrollment kept growing as did the need for reliable internet access and scholarships. Tebbe's leadership and successful fund raising addressed all of these needs. Forman is now a school with more than 300 faculty and over 8,000 students—1,000 of which are Christians.



Photo credit: Anil Joseph

Forman Christian College still training leaders generation after generation.

Under Tebbe, Forman opened the Light of Hope School, a first-class private elementary school for the campus workers' children; a medical clinic, Mercy Health Center; and began construction of a brand-new student center/digital library at the center of the campus. There are now 23 majors at the bachelor's level, 19 master's degree programs and four PhD programs of study. Forman graduates are accepted into advanced degree programs in the US, Europe and Korea. Many, however, opt to stay home and make a difference in their country, churches and communities.

“ In everything, Forman Christian College is guided by its motto: ‘By love, serve one another.’”

Tebbe's work and contribution to the nation was recognized in 2019 when the president of Pakistan presented him with

one of the highest awards given to a foreigner or citizen—*Sitara-e-Imtiaz* (Star of Excellence)—for his service in the field of education. Today, Forman once again is flourishing as a place of peace and learning, of light and hope, of faith and friendship.. The university looks forward to a bright future and service inspired by the Christian leadership of those who have followed in the footsteps of Rev. Charles Forman. In everything, Forman Christian College is guided by its motto: “By love, serve one another.”



Photo credit: Anil Joseph

Light of Hope School Children



Photo credit: Anil Joseph

Dr. Tebbe receiving the Sitara-e-Imtiaz



Photo credit: Sam Schreiner



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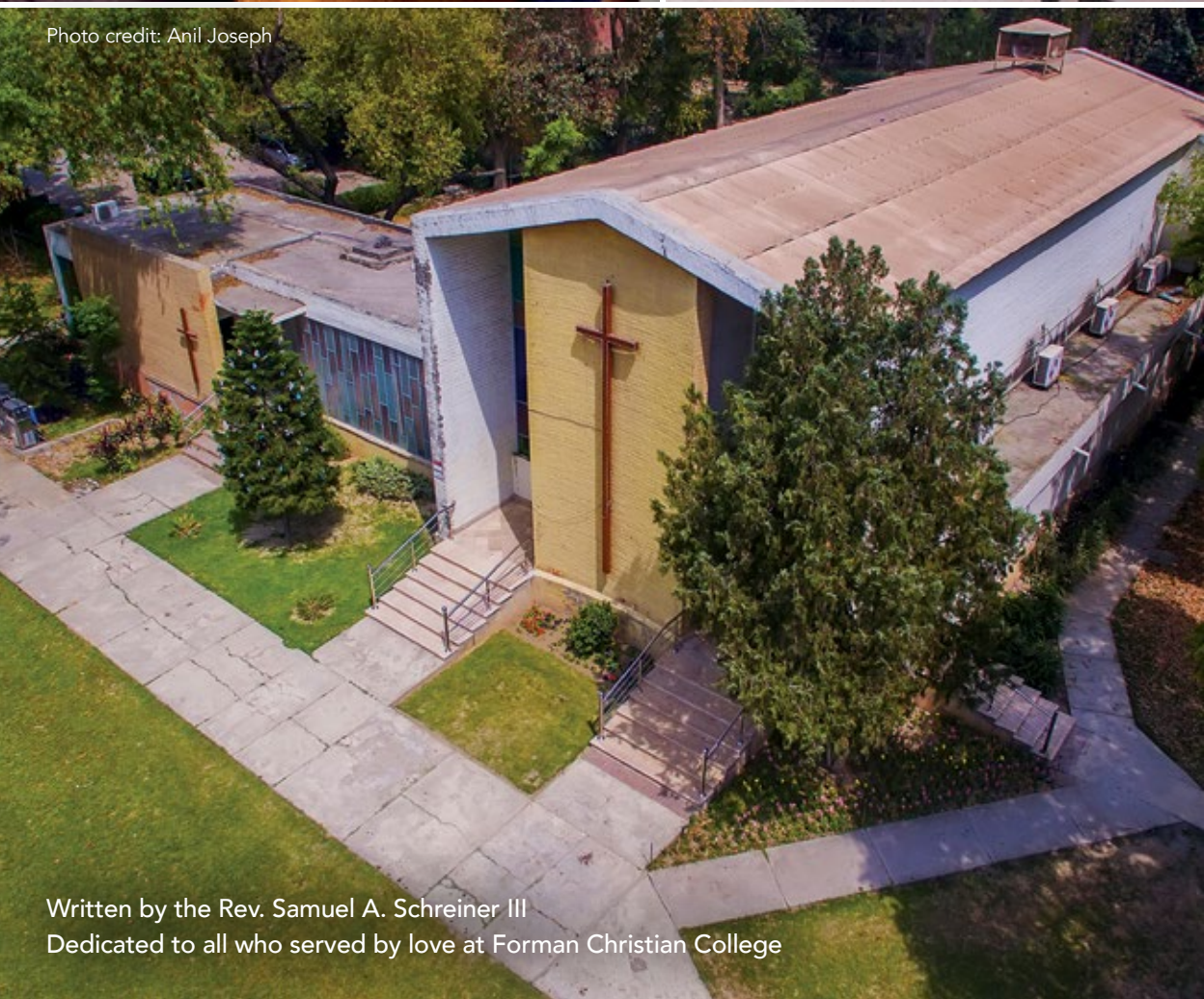


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Written by the Rev. Samuel A. Schreiner III
Dedicated to all who served by love at Forman Christian College



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