

TRUMPET

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VIEWS AND NEWS FROM TRINITY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE



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God Became Man at Christmas

By Rev Dr Edwin Tay

Singaporeans will be transported to a different world this year when they walk down Orchard Road over the Christmas season. Lining the 2.88km stretch from Tanglin Mall to Plaza Singapura are thematic displays and characters from the films of Disney and Pixar. Gardens by the Bay offers another out-of-this-world experience as luminary lights transform the tourist attraction into a magical “Christmas Wonderland” under the night sky.

As it is with Yuletide celebrations around the world, the Christmas experience for the masses is a curious amalgam of popular culture, commercialism and Christianity. One may protest, rightly, that Christmas is not to be associated with Mickey Mouse, Buzz Lightyear, or walking in the winter wonderland. Despite the wrong associations, Christmas as a festive season does have its advantages. It reminds the public of at least the name of Christ and offers Christians the opportunity to speak of the subject after which the festivity is named.

What then is Christmas about? At its heart, Christmas is about God becoming man in the person of Jesus Christ. Both Holy Scripture and the Church’s tradition affirm this. Matthew’s and Luke’s Gospel provide numerous details surrounding the birth of Jesus. There is the angel Gabriel’s visit to the young virgin Mary, Joseph’s and Mary’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, the birth of Mary’s boy child in a manger, and the night appearance to the shepherds of angels in joyous praise.

Although these details have found their place in some of our cherished Christmas carols, we must not mistake the scaffolding for the building. They

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as a theological conundrum to be solved with logical precision. That would not only be methodologically inappropriate, but impious and impudent. Rather, we are to behold, by faith, Jesus of Nazareth as the exact imprint of deity in sinless, human form. And having apprehended him as such, to confess as Thomas did, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28).

Granting the Incarnation, what then is its meaning for us? The author of Hebrews gives us one of the clearest answers: “He had to be made like his brothers in every respect...to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” (Hebrews 2:17). The Incarnation of Christ makes his atoning death possible for sinful humanity. This sounds morbid and dampens the celebratory mood of the Christmas season. But unless we grasp the connection between the Crib and the Cross, the meaning of Christmas has not been fully understood.

serve merely as floodlights to illumine the identity of the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths. “What child is this?” is the key question that is answered by the birth narratives of Jesus of Nazareth.

The Gospel writers are clear in their answers. Jesus is called “the Son of God” by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:35). He is named “Immanuel” (God with us) in fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy (Matthew 1:23). John’s way of conveying the same point is succinct and theologically profound: the eternal Word who was with and is God, “became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). The baby born in Bethlehem is the Son of God made fully flesh and blood. The Gospels record the human life of God.

Church tradition is instructive on what is and is not admissible in the claim that the birth of Jesus is the birth of God’s eternal Son. Jesus is not a phantasm (Docetism) or the supreme creature (Arianism). Neither is he two persons, human and divine (Nestorianism), or a single person in whom is found a mixture of human and divine natures (Eutychianism).

Responding to heretical teachings such as those above, the Church made clear in the Chalcedonian Creed that the doctrine of Christ concerns a single person who is “consubstantial (i.e. of the same nature) with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood.” Simply stated, the Son of God became fully man without ceasing to be fully God. Charles Wesley puts it memorably in versified form: “Our God contracted into a span; Incomprehensibly made man.”

The unfathomable mystery of the Incarnation lies at the heart of Christmas. None of the Biblical authors sought to decipher the mechanics of the way divinity and humanity are met in one individual. It cannot be done. How God is made flesh can only be expressed, not explained. The Son of God in the crib is not to be treated

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When the cries of the Christ-child were heard in Bethlehem, they were not only cries of vulnerability as a human baby. They anticipated the cry from Calvary’s cross that signalled the death of death, the devil’s destruction, and sin’s forgiveness to all who would believe.

Pascal, the 17th century French philosopher and mathematician, made the following observation in his famous work, *Pensées*: “Diversion – As men are not able to fight against death, misery, ignorance, they have taken it into their heads, in order to be happy, not to think of them at

all.” Perhaps this is what makes walking down Orchard Road this Christmas so alluring. A diversion from the pains and fears of life in the make-belief world of Disney is not a bad thing. But neither is it good news. There is still sin and death to be faced when the magic fades.

Numbing the symptoms of a humanity gone wrong is not what Christmas is about. At Christmas, God became man, entered fully into the world’s brokenness, and began to heal a sin-diseased humanity from its roots. This is the glory of Christ that the early Christians saw through the eyes of faith: “We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1:14). Have we seen it too?
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Rev Dr Edwin Tay
 Vice Principal



Beyond the 70th Anniversary: Pondering the Future

The 70th Anniversary celebrations of Trinity Theological College are over but the memories of the year-long celebration will remain in our hearts and minds. TTC was blessed by the presence of past principals, former lecturers, partners in theological education, pastors, church leaders and many alumni at the Anniversary Service and Thanksgiving Dinner on 5 October. It was altogether a joyful reunion of the TTC family from near and far. We hope that this issue of *Trumpet*, with stories and highlights of the occasion, will become your collector’s item.

As the activities of the busy year wind down, the 70th milestone invites us to pause and reflect on the future of our college amidst changing circumstances. Theological education is not insulated from the disruptions of the present digital age, and we need to brace ourselves for new developments that impact us for better or for worse.

At a recent ETHOS conference, I shared with the audience that the digital age has brought advancement in ways we could never have imagined. It has made teaching and studying more convenient and efficient for the seminary. Library books and journals have been digitized, reducing the requirement for shelf space to store print copies, and therefore overall costs. Essays and articles on faith and theology are easily accessible anywhere in the world via the internet. Online courses can be taught to students thousands of kilometres away and degrees are even awarded by seminaries which have no campus but operate from an administrative office.

Yet, there is a downside that has bearing on the preparation of students for fulltime Christian ministry. For instance, if it is possible to obtain a theological degree by e-Learning, without physical participation in worship and community life, without supervision or mentoring, spiritual formation in the traditional sense could be undermined.

The digital revolution is also producing a generation who read digital texts and are used to bite-sized chunks of information because they are quickly or easily comprehended. However, according to a recent study published in the *Straits Times* (6 August 2018),

“a preference for reading digitally may not mean better learning outcomes”. Not surprisingly, it is observed that this decline in the ability to read, especially when it comes to Christian literature, has resulted in the lack of biblical and theological understanding among younger people in our congregations. Church leadership will need to address the detrimental effects on the personal faith of the next generation.

As Christians, whether lay or clergy, we are urged to think, to inquire, and to ask critical questions (Acts 17:11), and theologizing (engaging Scripture and reflecting), is an integral part of being a believer and follower of Jesus Christ. So we need to make a concerted effort to reach the bite-sized generation in order to build a sturdy church for the future. This is a call to theological schools to work even more closely with churches towards that goal.

We are reminded that, in this modern era, seminaries may tend to neglect its obligation to the gospel. We may not be at the forefront of evangelistic work, but theological schools have a role to play in this respect. We are well placed to bear witness within academic

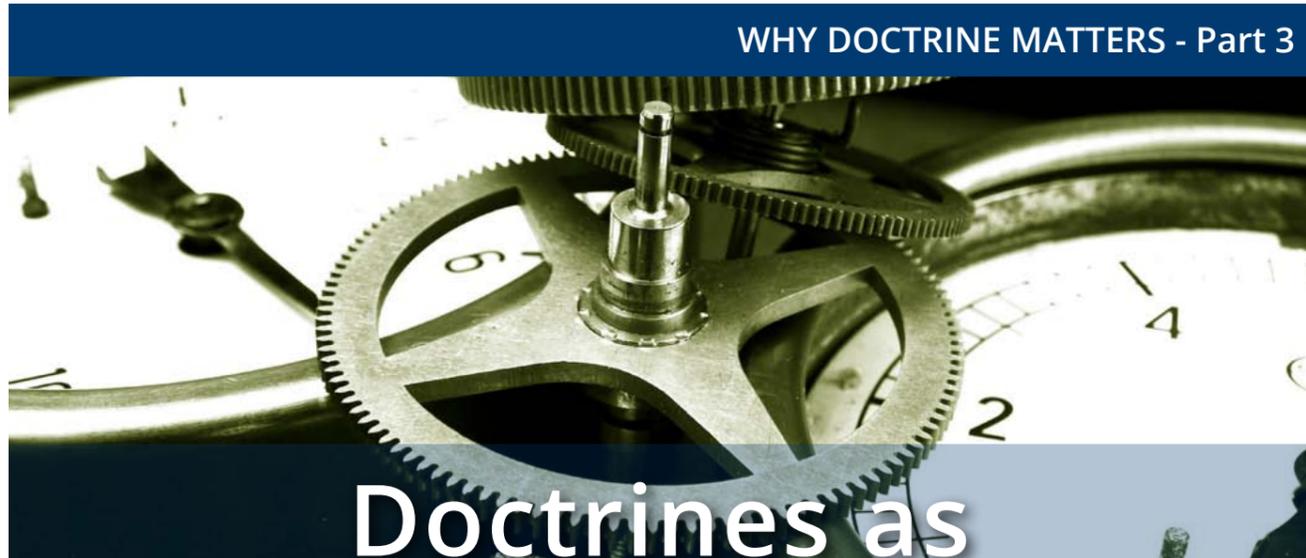
settings taking into consideration inter-faith sensitivities in the context of the multi-racial and multi-religious society we live in. One of the ways TTC participates in this mission is through the ETHOS Institute for Public Christianity, whose mission is to communicate the Christian faith in the public square.

As TTC ponders its future direction, one thing is clear: this union college still affirms its identity as a theological school intricately involved in the life of the Church and will continue to do so. The digital age may bring disruptions and a host of challenges, but together with the strong partnership of its founding churches and a promising vision of hope from God, Trinity Theological College is ready for the future. ❖

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**TTC wishes you a
 Joyful Christmas
 and a God-blessed
 New Year**



Doctrines as Precision Tools

By Rev Dr Simon Chan

In Part II we learned that doctrines develop to meet new challenges. Over time, old terms or concepts that no longer function adequately need to be redefined and new ones introduced. This is how the Church acquires an increasingly complex theological vocabulary. But for many modern Christians used to the internet culture with its user-friendly approach to learning, and where everything comes in small, easily digestible “byte” sizes, this poses a real problem. The common complaint is that there are so many unfamiliar and technical terms in theology. If doctrines are necessary guides to correct interpretation of Scripture (as we saw in Part II), why can't theologians make the study of Christian doctrines simpler?

Before answering this objection, I would like to pose a counter-question: Why do modern Christians think that the study of doctrines must be stripped of technicalities when they don't make the same demand of other fields of study? Anyone who wants to get a good education in sociology, computer science, or medicine, will have to struggle through a set of technical terms peculiar to each discipline.

I'm not saying that theology cannot be made simpler. For a start, theologians could do with a simpler syntax. There is no need to make already

difficult ideas more obscure with unnecessarily long and convoluted sentences. The great Anglican theologian Austin Farrer (whose own writing is marked by precision and poetic elegance) once complained about his fellow-theologians who wrote “like Hegel with a hangover” (Hegel was a not-too-easy-to-read nineteenth century German philosopher).

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Yet, however we simplify theological language, technical terms are unavoidable. Even a common word like “person” acquires a specialized meaning when applied to the Trinity. If we think of the three persons of the Trinity in the same way as we think of Peter, James and John as persons, we would be grossly distorting the doctrine of the Trinity. We can substitute unfamiliar terms with familiar ones, but technical terms cannot be avoided altogether. In fact, it's the ordinary words used in a specialized way which trips the beginner.

Here is not the place to render technical theological terms into readily accessible concepts. That would require a whole book! What I hope to do is to show why we need to come to terms with the church's distinctive vocabulary so that doctrines could be properly acted out (which we do in the liturgy) and the mystery of the Trinity encountered

afresh (as noted in Part I).

Technical terms exist in any field of study because of the need for precision. They carry a fixed or generally-agreed-upon meaning, whereas layman's terms may suffice as approximate descriptions but are often imprecise. For example, the same bird may be called by different names while different birds may be called by the same name in different places. A finch in one country is a sparrow in another.

We use technical terms in theology to make accurate distinctions. Accuracy is important because the difference between orthodoxy and heresy may only be a hair's breadth apart. The difference between the orthodox trinitarian doctrine and the Arian heresy is the difference of one Greek letter. Orthodoxy says that the Son is of the same substance or essence (*homoousia*) as the Father while the Arians claim that the Son has a similar substance (*homoiousia*).

A slight difference in spelling, but the difference is worlds apart! If the Son is only similar to and does not share the same essence as the Father, then he is only a creature; and even if he is the highest and purest creature, he cannot be the saviour of the world. Only God can bring sinful creatures back to God. It is not coincidental that Arianism, both ancient and modern (its modern form is seen, for example, in the beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses), ends up with a doctrine of salvation by works. This is because, as a creature, the Son can only bring us so far; we have to make up for the rest. Linguistic precision is needed to maintain doctrinal integrity.

There is also a practical reason why we need to deal with theological terms. Extending our example from the world of birds, it may satisfy a novice bird-watcher to identify a flock of birds as munias; for him, a munia is a munia. But an ornithologist would want to know which species the novice saw. There

are more than thirty species of munia, and some are endangered.

Within Christianity, too, we have to deal with different “species” of Christians. Some would retort: “Why should it matter? Aren't we all Christians?” But it does matter immensely to a non-Christian. The challenge is often thrown at us: “If you Christians worship the same God, why are there so many denominations?” Our divisions are a stumbling block. To provide an adequate answer, we need to probe more deeply, and that requires us to go beyond distinguishing a Protestant from a Catholic by the churches they attend on Sunday. It requires a modicum of technical knowledge about their respective histories and theologies that led to their parting of ways. Having such knowledge also enables us to appreciate not only why they differ but also to what extent they differ. Such knowledge is indispensable if one is to engage in meaningful inter-church relations or inter-personal relations across denominational divides. It may come as a surprise to many of us to discover that evangelical Protestantism shares more in common with Catholicism than with liberal Protestantism.

But there is a more compelling reason for ordinary Christians to come to terms with theological language. Just as a specialized knowledge of birds may alert us to endangered species, a nuanced understanding of doctrines may alert us to dangerous “species” of Christians promoting heretical teachings that often go undetected in our churches until they have done their harmful work. ❖



Rev Dr Simon Chan

Former Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology is retired and serves as editor for the Asia Journal of Theology

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“A time of silence to experience and listen to God in a meaningful and purposeful way.”



Year 2018 In Review



Row 1 (L-R): Light of the Word Preaching Symposium (English; 8-9 Mar), Light of the Word Preaching Symposium (Chinese; 8-9 Mar), Theological Symposium on Salvation & Eschatology (23-27 Jul).

Row 2 (L-R): TTC Heritage Trail - Changi Prison Chapel (3 Sep & 4 Oct), TTC Heritage Trail - The Old Chapel at Mt Sophia (3 Sep & 4 Oct).

Row 3 (L-R): Anniversary Service (5 Oct), Chinese Churches & Chinese Worldwide Conference (18-19 Apr).

More photographs of the anniversary celebrations are available on our website www.ttc.edu.sg



TTC Has Helped to Build a Harmonious and United Singapore

DPM Addresses Gathering at 70th Anniversary Thanksgiving Dinner

“A Harmonious and United Singapore”

The Right Rev Rennis Ponniah, Chairman of the Trinity Theological College (or TTC) Board of Governors, The Right Rev Terry Kee, Vice Chairman of the TTC Board of Governors, Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghian, Principal of TTC, Members of TTC, Alumni, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to join you tonight to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Trinity Theological College. This is an important milestone for TTC. Over the past 70 years, TTC has made many contributions towards building a stronger and more united Singapore.

A Multi-Racial and Multi-Religious Singapore

Today, it is more important than ever for all communities in Singapore to continue to work for a harmonious and united society. A report by the Pew Research Centre in 2014, which many of you would be familiar with, found Singapore to be the most religiously diverse among 232 countries. Yet, we are able to live together in peace and harmony, and even participate in one another's religious festivals. We see non-Muslims breaking fast with their Muslim friends during Ramadan, and non-Hindus joining the colourful Deepavali celebrations in Little India every year. And Christmas is a favourite holiday for many Singaporeans, regardless of their faith. We greet each other “Merry Christmas”, “Happy Deepavali” or a “Blessed and Peaceful Ramadan”.

This harmony that we enjoy today did not happen by chance, and must never be taken for granted. In many places around the world, exclusivism and intolerance are coming to the fore, whether in race or religion. In our own region, the threat of religious extremism and terrorism continues to threaten our peace. In Singapore, we continue to detect radicalised individuals. The rapid growth of digital technologies and social media has also created new challenges by making it much easier

to spread intolerant and radical ideas, or to deliberately spread false or distorted messages to pit one community against another.

To safeguard our peace and stability, we need to take a firm stand against these ideas and send a strong signal to support mutual respect and harmony. This is why the Government has consistently worked closely with our community groups and organisations, especially our religious organisations, to expand our common space and promote greater understanding among different social groups; through various policies such as education and housing, and programmes and platforms such as Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles or IRCCs.

By working together, we can prevent malicious individuals or groups from exploiting these differences to divide our society and tear apart our social fabric. Where there are differences, and there will always be differences, we should engage in respectful dialogue, focusing on our similarities and common humanity, rather than accentuating our differences, and tearing our communities apart.

Trinity Theological College: Working Hand-in-Hand

Over the past 70 years, TTC has helped to build a harmonious and united Singapore. This is grounded in the vision of your founders, who were the leaders of the Protestant churches incarcerated at Changi Prison during the Second World War. These leaders, in the darkest of times, saw beyond the prison walls to conceive of a better day, where different Christian denominations would work together for the development of the Christian Church in Singapore and the betterment of our society. Soon after the war ended, the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches came together to found the union College in October 1948. In 1963, the Lutheran Church joined the three denominations and further strengthened the college.

The College has not only trained pastors from mainline Protestant denominations, but also those from independent churches in Singapore. More importantly,

TTC has helped to contextualise the training of Christian pastors across the denominations to our multi-racial and multi-religious society in Singapore. This means understanding and respecting others and their beliefs that promote togetherness, and rejecting teachings and practices that promote segregation, and that denigrate other religions. This contextualisation requires opening both our hearts and our minds, and is instrumental to building a harmonious and united Singapore.

Through your degree programmes, you have helped to train scholars and servant-leaders not only for Singapore but also in the region, including countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, India and China. Today, about 2,300 TTC alumni serve in churches and Christian organisations in Southeast Asia and across the globe. It was wonderful to see the enthusiastic response of all the alumni, who are able to make it here tonight. I congratulate all of you, and I wish the College all the very best.

You have also collaborated and launched exchange programmes with leading seminaries and institutions around the world. These include Yale Divinity School in the US, Fudan University in Shanghai, China, and the University of Otago in New Zealand. These collaborations reflect the high regard that these reputable institutions hold of your College.

As one of the key Christian institutions in Singapore, you have also actively reached out to other religious groups to organise inter-faith dialogues to promote religious harmony. For example, together with the National Council of Churches of Singapore you organised a seminar with the Association of Muslim Professionals in 2004 on the theme ‘Secular State, Moral Society’. This seminar brought Muslim and Christian leaders, scholars and professionals together to discuss the role of religion in Singapore.

More recently, you participated actively in the inaugural ‘Building Bridges’ programme jointly organised by NCCS and the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura, Islamic Religious Council of Singapore. Your lecturers have also

given talks organised by MUIS and the Harmony Centre. TTC has also signed an MOU with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at NTU to offer modules in RSIS's Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies Programme. I commend you on these efforts, which help to bond our diverse faith communities and foster meaningful dialogue.

Conclusion

Members of TTC,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Congratulations once again to you on your 70th Anniversary! Over the past 70 years, TTC has worked hard to live up to its motto of *Lux Mundi* which means ‘Light of the World’. Your service to both Church and society has made your College shine brightly in Singapore and in the region. As we look to the future, the role of religious institutions like TTC will continue to be key to help us safeguard and promote Singapore's peace and harmony. I urge you to continue working closely with the government and across communities to foster mutual understanding, forge closer friendships, and build a more harmonious and united Singapore.

May you and your congregation be showered with many blessings and much happiness.

Thank you very much. ❖

Mr Teo Chee Hean

Deputy Prime Minister and
Coordinating Minister for National Security



Photograph: Courtesy of Ministry of Communications and Information

“Lord for the Years”: A Service of Thanksgiving

By Dr Michael Mukunthan, Chief Librarian

Nations shall rise and knowledge grow ... for only from the Master flow those insights true ... Through Christ alone can people find that secret spring ... This we have known at TRINITY...

These phrases drawn from the Trinity anthem have echoed within the walls of the College's chapel through the years. It was no different on the morning of 5 October 2018 when the College held its 70th Anniversary Service. A full house was in attendance for this special milestone in TTC's history. The College had hosted many events during the course of the year in celebration of its seventy years of existence. The annual service was a culmination of this eventful year as the entire community, past and present, offered thanks to God through the words of a hymn by Timothy Dudley-Smith: “Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided ... Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.” Among those present for the service were several former principals and faculty members, local and overseas alumni and special guests of the College.

The speaker for this year's service was Rev Dr Chong Chin Chung, the Bishop of the Methodist Church in Singapore, who is a TTC alumnus. Reflecting on the College's motto *Lux Mundi*, the Bishop stressed that it served as a reminder of the call to witness to the true light of Jesus Christ for all who walk through TTC's

doors. This was further reinforced by the College being providentially located on two hills – Mount Sophia in the past and the present Hillview campus. This, Bishop Chong declared, “reminds all of us, faculty, students, alumni and the school board that we are not hidden ... we are exposed and visible to the world.” The desire to live as *Lux Mundi*, Bishop Chong added, was a trait he had witnessed appreciatively in his interactions with many alumni both locally and worldwide. They exemplified the College's motto through their ministries by “taking up heavy responsibilities, working hard without complaining, and being a blessing to various churches, communities, ethnic groups, special groups and countries.”

Bishop Chong also gave thanks for the College's sound academic, infrastructural and financial planning. This, the Bishop reiterated, was a positive sign of the College's maturation. This also underscored the institution's commitment to continuing the vision of her founding fathers in establishing the College for the training of pastors, co-workers, missionaries, theological educators and servants of God.

The community also witnessed the presentation of Long Service Awards to Rev Yap Seok Chin (20 years), Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng (10 years) and Ms Dawn Lee (10 years). ❖



Bishop Dr Chong Chin Chung (right), guest preacher



Receiving the bread and cup



Special guests and faculty



Enjoying a sumptuous lunch

Celebrations at the Banqueting Table

By Rev Dr Edmund Fong, Lecturer in Theology

Laughter over the sharing of fond memories, exchange of warm greetings of fellowship, enjoyable conversations over a delectable menu, and most of all, hearts of praise and gratitude to God for his sustenance — such was the atmosphere that permeated Orchid Country Club on Friday evening, 5th October 2018 as TTC hosted her 70th Anniversary Dinner celebration. Over a thousand guests gathered, comprised of distinguished guests, the heads of TTC's governing churches and other board members, representatives from churches and partner organisations, alumni, faculty and students. We were especially honoured to have Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security, Mr Teo Chee Hean, join us as our Guest of Honour.

Guests were already present an hour before the official start of the dinner, comfortably engaged in conversations in the foyer outside the ballroom, with many alumni seeing this as a wonderful opportunity to catch up with former classmates and lecturers. By 7.30pm, we had taken our seats at the more than one hundred tables spread across the ballroom. Following an official welcome for DPM Teo and the spirited singing of two praise songs, the food was served.

Besides the lively conversation transpiring at the different tables — a highlight in itself — the other crowning moment of the evening was the Guest of Honour's address. DPM Teo took the opportunity to congratulate TTC on her 70th anniversary and thanked the College for her contribution in building a harmonious and united Singapore. He commended TTC's participation (under the auspices of NCCS) in joint seminars with other religious bodies like MUIS, and her partnership with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at NTU. Following his address, DPM Teo was presented with a commemorative gift. Then he, together with the heads of TTC's governing churches and the principal, proceeded to cut the 70th anniversary cake, complete with the happy birthday chorus!

Two other high points during the dinner should be mentioned. The first was the speech by the principal which also served as the occasion for the launch of the TTC video. In five brief minutes, the video narrates the events that led to the birth of TTC, explains our motto *Lux Mundi*, showcases our academic programmes and spiritual formation platforms, and highlights our involvement in societal issues through our partnership with ETHOS and RSIS. Many of the guests found the video to be a succinct and memorable way of encapsulating who we are as a college.

The other high point was the presentation of two songs by the TTC choir, who performed so well that some guests mistakenly thought it was a professional choir! After the singing of the College Anthem and the benediction, DPM Teo extended his stay with us before taking his leave.

Overall, the main sentiment of the evening, echoed by those present, was that the 70th Anniversary Dinner had a simple yet elegant feel to it. We would like to think that such a manner of celebration embodies the motto of the College, where the way we shine as *Lux Mundi* is by pointing others to the True Light who has come, Christ our Lord — who has sustained us by his grace over the past 70 years and is the One whom we look to for the years to come. ❖



Guests singing praises to God



TTC Choir in action

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”: Anniversary Reflections

Among the many guests at our 70th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service and Dinner were 12 former faculty members, 23 overseas alumni and 195 local alumni. Some overseas guests had arrived earlier to walk down memory lane by participating in the TTC Heritage Trail on 4 October. Others came just in time to join the main celebrations on 5 October. Both those who attended our celebrations and those who could not come sent their heartfelt greetings. Here is a selection of their reflections:

“Returning to the old campus at Mt Sophia was nostalgic, especially the unique design of the old chapel. Although it was not completed when I was a student, seeing it now evokes the sense of rapid change through the passage of time.” *Rev Dr Li Ping-Kwong, BTh 1962*

“The contrast between my time at TTC and now is so marked: then, we were mostly expatriates. Now, the faculty is virtually entirely local and TTC has become the primary theological institution in the region. Being in the College for the celebration was a truly great experience. There was a palpable sense of joy about and a strong sense of commitment to theological education of the highest order.” *Rev Dr Graham Ogden, TTC Lecturer, 1968-1972*

“The high point was the thanksgiving service at the new TTC Chapel. In the Chapel, the old and the new members of the TTC Community gathered again before God to sing praises and thank God for his faithfulness and protection in these many years.” *Rev Dr David Wu Chu Sing, TTC Lecturer, 1977-1996; Acting Principal of TTC, 1979-1980 & 1988*

“The climax of the Anniversary Dinner was DPM Teo Chee Hean’s affirmation, as a representative of our nation, of TTC’s contribution to the training of Christian leaders and pastors, and to Singapore’s religious and racial harmony.” *Rev Dr David Koh Ah Chye, MDiv 1997, MMin 2007*

“I am a proud beneficiary of the excellent education that TTC has offered over the years. TTC gave me the foundation to do what I am called to do today as a leader in theological education in the United States. For that, I am deeply grateful.” *Rev Dr Jeffrey Kuan Kab-Jin, BTh 1980*

“I feel a deep sense of awe at the continuing grace of God upon TTC - seeing the large number of students currently enrolled, as evidenced by the size of the choir, many of whom are from other countries. God has indeed blessed us and He has made us to be a blessing to others. To be used of God as a channel of his blessing is an awesome privilege.” *Bishop Kuan Kim Seng, BD 1988*

EQUIP: A TTC Lay-Training Initiative Name Change and Expanded Vision Beyond CDCM

By Rev Dr Leonard Wee, Lecturer in New Testament, Director of EQUIP

Recognising the increasing need for lay people to be well equipped as witnesses in today’s society (church, marketplace and family), TTC is expanding its role in lay training. We signal this development with the change of name of our lay training programme from the “Centre for the Development of Christian Ministry” (CDCM) to “**EQUIP: A TTC Lay-Training Initiative**” with effect from 2019. Along with this change, EQUIP is adopting a new logo that encapsulates TTC’s expanded vision in providing quality theological education for the laity.



EQUIP currently offers its certificate and licentiate programmes at three venues—Wesley Methodist Church, St Andrew’s Cathedral and the TTC Campus. Participation in these locations, both for the English and Chinese evening classes, has been increasing in the last two years. Going forward, EQUIP will offer new course formats such as seminars and workshops, open new locations, and introduce a flexible curriculum for participants to maximise their learning experience.

New partnerships will be formed with churches, Christian groups and the marketplace, to reach more people with courses in line with TTC’s tradition of excellence in theological education. We also welcome our supporters to pray for us and participate in the ministry of EQUIP. You can obtain information about upcoming EQUIP programmes by sending an email to equip@ttc.edu.sg or by visiting our College website www.ttc.edu.sg. ❖

Theological Education in Singapore: Retrospect and Prospect An ETHOS Conference

This year’s ETHOS Annual Seminaries Conference saw the principals and presidents of seven theological institutions in Singapore come together for the first time to reflect on the role, shape and function of theological education in our ever-changing cultural landscape. Held at the Bible House on 29 September 2018, the conference dealt with three main aspects of theological education, with speakers drawing examples from the institutions they serve.

Dealing with the issue of theological education as intellectual formation, Dr Philip Satterthwaite (Biblical Graduate School of Theology) and Rev Dr Clement Chia (Singapore Bible College) began by defining “intellectual formation” in the Christian context, how it takes place, and also exploring the importance of scholar-pastors for the Church and public.

Tackling the aspect of theological education as spiritual and ministerial formation, Dr Wan Chee Wan (Discipleship Training Centre) advocated the character-building aspect of spiritual formation as a key feature of

theological education. Rev Dr Chan Chong Hiok (East Asia School of Theology) and Rev Dr Casey Ng (ACTS College) explored a holistic and transformational approach to equipping Christian leaders for service, and also various avenues to meet its evolving challenges.

Lastly, Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghian (Trinity Theological College) gave a historical overview of the relationship between the theological institution and the Church in Singapore, and how it might look like for the future. Dr Daniel Wu (Baptist Theological Seminary) evaluated six models of this relationship and their usefulness in our unique context.

Moderated by Dr Roland Chia, the conference concluded with a panel discussion involving all the speakers. Rev Dr Edmund Fong, Dr Leow Theng Huat and Dr Tan Loe Joo also served as moderators for the panel discussions for each section to help participants have a better understanding of the issues.

The papers presented at this conference will be published under the ETHOS Engagement Series. ❖

CSCA: Contributions & Closure

By Rev Dr Mark Chan, Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology

The Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia (CSCA) was launched on 4 October 2001, with the expressed aim of being a missions research centre of Trinity Theological College. The initial focus on missions studies under its first director, the Rev Dr Hwa Yung (2001-2004), was expanded to include research clusters on "Asian Christianity" and "Faith and Society" when Rev Canon Dr Michael Poon (2005-2014) took over as Centre director.

Study groups, seminars and conferences were organised in the intervening years, along with academic publications on Christianity and the Law, young Asian theologians, and Christian witness in religiously pluralistic societies among others.

After 17 years of fruitful labour through the Centre, the time has come to re-consider its future. After a long process of deliberation and reassessment, the College leadership has decided to wind down CSCA by the end of 2018.

With the available resources the College has to meet the expanding needs of theological education, and the new challenges entailed in resourcing Christian public engagement, particularly through the work of the ETHOS Institute for Public Christianity and the National Council of Churches of Singapore, prudence demands that we streamline our commitments.

The closure of the Centre owes more to TTC's change in strategic direction than the non-viability of CSCA's vision. Given the College's reprioritisation of its resources, to continue with CSCA would only compromise the latter's ability to deliver on its projects.

There are a few outstanding publications currently in process that would be completed by 2019, by which time CSCA would have published 67 titles in total. These will continue to be resources for future research endeavours.

In addition, the missions archival work begun under Dr Poon has been transferred to the TTC Library. This work of sourcing, collating and archiving documents on Christianity in Southeast Asia will continue under the supervision of the TTC Library and made available for research purposes. We see this, along with its many publications as gifts from CSCA that will keep giving and giving for years to come. For this, we thank God! ❖



EQUIP
A TTC LAY TRAINING INITIATIVE

Details at www.ttc.edu.sg

<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #f9e79f; padding: 5px;">Philippians: Standing Firm in Love</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mondays @ Wesley Methodist Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rev Dr Leonard Wee (Instructor)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dates : 7 Jan - 25 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm</p>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #f9e79f; padding: 5px;">Spirituality of the Early Christians</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesdays @ TTC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr Lai Pak Wah (Instructor)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dates : 8 Jan - 26 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm</p>
<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #f9e79f; padding: 5px;">Cultural Anthropology</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesdays @ St Andrew's Cathedral</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rev Dr Andrew Peh (Instructor)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dates : 9 Jan - 27 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm</p>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #f9e79f; padding: 5px;">Genesis: A Covenantal Perspective</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursdays @ TTC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rev Dr Soh Guan Chin (Instructor)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dates : 10 Jan - 28 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm</p>

TRINITY News

Congratulations to...

The following alumni on their ordination by the Methodist Church in Singapore.

Chinese Annual Conference (15 Nov 2018)

As Deacon

Pastor Stefanie Oh Wen-Ying (MDiv 2013)

As Elder

Rev Patrick Chen Guek Fah (BD 2011)

Rev Peace Choi Pyong Hwa (MDiv 2013)

Rev Simon Cheo Hsun Shen (MDiv 2014)

Trinity Annual Conference (22 Nov 2018)

As Deacon

Pastor Eddie Ho Wen Loong (MDiv 2016)

Pastor Poh Zhi-Hui (MDiv 2014)

Pastor Byron Teo Yong Xin (MDiv 2016)

Pastor Timothy Yong Yun Hin (MDiv 2016)

As Elder

Rev Adrian Ng Han Boon (MDiv 2013)

Rev Kandiah Karunasekara (MTh 1999), who was elected as a district chairperson at the annual conference of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka earlier this year. He will be inducted in Jan 2020 and take office for five years.

Condolences to...

The wife and daughter of Elder Fu Xianwei (Chairman of the TSPM National Committee of the Protestant Churches in China and a close friend and ministry partner of United Bible Societies) on his passing on 20 August 2018. He was 74.

Gordon Aw Chye Yen (BD 1992) & Ding Chih Ing Rebecca (MDiv 1991) on the demise of her father, Pastor Ding Bing Hock, on 2 Sep.

The family of Rev Dr Scott Sunquist (former TTC lecturer) on the sudden departure of his son-in-law, Timothy Joseph Becker, on 22 Sep 2018.

Rev Martin Peter Jungnickel (MDiv 2012), Jo Anne and family, on the peaceful passing of his beloved mother, Mrs Doerte Marianne Erika Jungnickel, 2 Nov 2018 in Germany.

Rev Phua Chee Seng (BTh 1987, MTh 2004) and family on the passing of his mother-in-law on 1 Nov 2018.

Rev Dr Chiu Ming Li (MDiv 1993) & Jeannie Lee Siat Chun (MDiv 1993) on the passing of her brother, Peter Lee on 9 Nov 2018.



To view the Chinese edition, please visit our website www.ttc.edu.sg

Alvin Ong Yu Kai (MDiv 1) and his wife, Esther Lim, on the birth of their daughter, Caryn Ong, on 27 Jul 2018.

Vo Nhan Tu (MDiv 2010) & Chau Tran Thai An (MDiv 2015) who were joined in holy matrimony on 11 Aug 2018.

Wong Yook Chin (MDiv 2014) on being ordained on 8 Sep 2018 by the Presbyterian Church in Singapore.

Joseph Vasanth Sathyan (BD 2) and his wife, Priyadarsini, who celebrated the arrival of their baby boy, Jonathan Sathyan, on 9 Sep 2018.

Wayne Fu Weikai (MDiv 3) on the celebration of his marriage to Wong Jingyu on 23 Nov 2018.

Dr Scott Sunquist, who has been elected as the President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Dr Sunquist taught Church History at TTC from 1987 to 1995 while serving as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Alumnus Rev. Geng Weizhong (MTh 2003) on his election as the President of the Shanghai Christian Council on 23 Oct 2018.

Rev Prem Tamang (BD 2011) on his institution and induction as Vicar of Church of Christ the Living Hope (Anglican), Kathmandu on Saturday, 17 Nov 2018.

Parents Chua Yan Xin, Caleb (MDiv 2) and his wife, Freda Lee See Fei and to grandparents Rev Chua Ooi Suah (BTh 1985; MMin 1995) & Rev Dr Niam Kai Huey (BD 1985), on the arrival of Oliver Jeshu Chua Li, their son and grandson respectively, on 17 Nov 2018.

We Invite you to Support the Ministry of Trinity Theological College

Your support will enable our college to :

- be equipped with a competent and dedicated faculty
- provide substantial subsidies for tuition fees
- offer scholarships to less fortunate students
- house one of the best theological libraries in the region
- organise workshops and conferences at minimal cost
- furnish and maintain our 17 year old campus

Here are some ways you can make your financial contributions:

- By ATM or Bank transfer to our DBS current account 033-017261-3
- By Cheque to "Trinity Theological College". Mail to: 490 Upper Bukit Timah Road, Singapore (678093)
- By way of Bequests to TTC. We shall be pleased to discuss this plan with you. You may email the principal@ttc.edu.sg or call us at 6767 6677



Trinity Theological College

An Invitation

2019
OPEN
HOUSE

23 Jan 2019, Wed, 8:15am - 2:00pm
TTC Campus
@ 490 Upper Bukit Timah Road

Come join us for lectures, worship at the chapel, interact with faculty and students during community lunch, tour the campus, and have a one-to-one meeting with faculty if advice is needed.

Register today at
<https://ttc.edu.sg/oph2019/>

Trinity Theological College: Serving the Church for 70 Years

Trinity Theological College (TTC) has been at the forefront of theological education since 1948.

TTC is a conducive environment for one's preparation for ministry because of our wholesome community life, the diversity of our student body, our caring teachers who are committed mentors and the rigour of our study programme.

Here's what our students have to say:

"With its dedication to rigorous academic training and proactive engagement with the Church and the world, TTC is unique in providing us with the opportunity to retrieve the abundant heritage of the Church and equipping us to be an effective witness of Christ in an ever-changing world." - *Cai Yu, MDiv 2*

"My time in TTC, a union college, has enabled me to hear and appreciate the different traditions of Christianity. In addition, through the curriculum I have been given a glimpse of what it means to actually think theologically about various issues in our social context. In turn I feel better equipped in providing a pastoral response to social issues that are relevant to our culture." - *Adriel Yeo, BD 3*

APPLICATION OPEN for academic year starting July 2019

<p>DIPLOMA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Diploma in Theological Studies Joint Programme with Biblical Graduate School of Theology (BGST) 	<p>Singapore/Malaysia : 15 Mar 2019</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Application deadlines</p>
<p>BASIC DEGREE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bachelor of Divinity ■ Master of Divinity ■ Master of Theological Studies 	<p>Singapore/Malaysia : 15 Mar 2019 Others: 31 Jan 2019</p>	
<p>ADVANCED DEGREE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Master of Ministry ■ Master of Theology ■ Master of Letters ■ Doctor of Theology 	<p>All applicants : 31 Jan 2019</p>	

For more details and financial aid, please visit www.ttc.edu.sg or email registrar@ttc.edu.sg

TRUMPET EDITORIAL: Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghian (Editor), Rev Dr Edwin Tay (Co-Editor), Rev Yap Seok Chin (Editor for Chinese), Ms Eunice Low, Dr Leow Theng Huat, Dr Tan Loe Joo, Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun, Ms Christine Ting, Ms Pauline Wong

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