



Created in His Image

By Rev Dr James Lim

Gen 1:26-27 recounts God creating humans, male and female, in his image and according to his likeness on the sixth day. What does “created in God’s image” mean? To understand this, two aspects need to be considered: (1) how did the ancient world view images, especially images of gods, and (2) what does Genesis have to say about “image”?

In the ancient world, images of gods and kings were regarded as representatives of them. As for kings, they were regarded as being made in the divine image. Thus, kings were representatives of gods on earth. Gen 1:26-28 says that man was blessed by God with the privilege to subdue and rule over the rest of creation; ruling is clearly the role and function of a king. Psalm 8 further affirms man as being created a little lower than the angels; he was crowned with glory and made to rule the rest of creation.

While the ancient world views only kings as representatives of gods, Genesis affirms that every man and woman bears God’s image and is his representative on earth. Nevertheless, this does not mean that kings or humans resemble God physically; they only mirror God in terms of his power and prerogatives.

Gen 5:1-3 further associates God’s image in Adam with Adam’s image in Seth. John Walton suggests that a parent-child imagery is used in Gen 5 to describe man as created in God’s image. Although babies

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can be considered to be in the image of their parents, the resemblance will likely be no more than physical. As babies mature, based on the intrinsic image and relationship between child and parent, the image of their parents in them continues to develop. Soon, children begin to reflect the attitudes, expressions and character traits of their parents. Similarly, the parent-child imagery in Gen 5 suggests that humans have the capacity to grow in the image of God. God created us with the potential to reflect his attributes such as love, faithfulness, justice and wisdom, among many others.

In summary, being created in God's image means that we are God's representatives on earth with the responsibility to govern creation, and have been given the capacity to grow in God's image and reflect his attributes to creation.

Climate change, saving the environment, creation care and other similar phrases remind us of the grim impact of our actions on the environment and the animal world. They highlight our failed responsibility in governing creation. In a recent sermon on creation care, my TTC colleague concluded by saying that creation care is "for God, for us, and forever". The phrase "for God" urges us to move away from a human-centred view of creation; God created the world primarily for himself, not for us. God made us stewards by granting us the role of subduing and ruling over creation. The world is not ours to use as we wish but it has been put under our care to manage for God, its owner.

Imagine that you have rented your apartment out to some tenants with a list of expectations laid out in the tenancy agreement, such as servicing the air-conditioner regularly, looking after the furnishings, paying the electricity bills, while you allow them to live in and use the apartment. When the tenancy is over and you inspect your apartment, you find the kitchen cabinets damaged, the toilet bowls clogged, the curtains torn, and the furniture wrecked. How would you feel? Disappointed? Upset! Furious! Imagine how God feels about the way we have ruined his wonderful creation!

We are like the tenants, and our stewardship of the world is not just for our sake or for the sake of the rest of creation. It is primarily for God's sake—he is the creator and owner of the whole universe. We are accountable to him for how we care for or abuse the world. Many suggestions have been made for us to practice creation care, but much more is needed, as observed by Tony Campolo:

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Christ came to transform us into his likeness and reflect God's image to creation

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Too often, when I read the books or listen to speeches of environmentalists who are not Christians, I recognise a basic shortcoming. Too frequently, they build their pleas for temperance and self-control on enlightened self-interest. Adopting a more environmentally responsible life-style, they point out, is the only reasonable thing to do if we know what is good for us. But much more than that is needed. We, ourselves, have to become completely different people.

Campolo's call for us to become completely different people draws our attention to the fact that our self-centred actions can be traced to human sin. Indeed, the capacity of human beings to grow in God's image and to reflect his attributes has been ruined by the sin of Adam and Eve, also known as the Fall. As such, God saves us not only from sin and death, he is also working to restore his image in us. Paul tells us in Rom 8:28-29 that in all things, God is working for the good of those who love him. Rom 8:29 tells us what this good is: "the good" is God's purpose for us, which is to be conformed to Christ's image.

Growing into Christlikeness is an ongoing, lifelong journey that involves transforming our thoughts (heads), feelings (hearts) and behaviour (hands). This transformation involves three parties: God, others and ourselves. In Col 3:1-14, Paul describes the things of the old and new selves that need to be put off and on; 3:9 states that the new self is "being renewed in knowledge *in the image of its Creator*". Col 3:14 further highlights the primacy of love over all the virtues listed; Paul's statement echoes Jesus' greatest commandment to love God and neighbour. As Christmas draws near, may we remember that Christ came to transform us into his likeness and reflect God's image to all of creation. Let us grow in love for God and neighbour, including creation, which is key to that transformation. ❖



Rev Dr James Lim
Lecturer in New Testament



A Tribute to Our Students

Trinity Theological College is blessed with an able team of committed teacher-scholars who mentor students with a pastoral heart. Their camaraderie as colleagues, nurtured over the years, has enhanced the quality of theological education at our college. As role models of authentic relationships, the faculty plays a major role in consolidating the TTC ethos which is reflected in our community life.

However, lecturers do not make up the entire school. Although it is sometimes claimed that a school can only be as good as its teachers, I believe it is also true that a school is as good as its students. And in the case of TTC, the measure of this goodness may be observed in the practice of charity among members of the student community. Let me elaborate.

First, persons who applied to study theology must have discerned a calling from God. Through interviews and assessments by the faculty, if it is found that there is ambivalence or lack of certainty of divine calling on the part of applicants, they will be advised to delay their study plans until there is further confirmation. As a theological institution of the church, TTC owes it to the body of Christ to be stringent with candidates who wish to serve in Christian ministry.

Second, contrary to some misperception about our admissions policy prioritizing the academic credentials of an applicant, it should be said that equally important is the prospective student's readiness for the rigour of theological education. A basic degree in theology can be very demanding when the curriculum includes spiritual formation, community life, field education and other vocational preparations over and above academic studies. An applicant must also have the endorsement of the leadership of one's congregation.

Third, amidst the enlarging mission of the church, we celebrate the fact that God's call is not restricted to

the pastoral and church ministries or missionary service. In today's context, many are called to special ministries within their occupations or professions. Indeed, the witness of theologically educated laypersons in their secular workplace complements the full-time ministry of pastors and parish workers in the church. Our TTC community now consists of students with clear conviction of God's calling to both forms of ministry.

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We do not claim to be a perfect community. But listening to their testimonies shared at Friday chapel services, we do know that TTC students have a deep sense of God's calling.

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Cohorts of students have come to learn and to be equipped, contributing to a vibrant community at TTC. Our Singapore students (who are in the majority), extend hospitality that makes our overseas students experience the love of Christ on campus. But this is not a one-way traffic because in their own way, our overseas students also reciprocate that love, thus, blessing our Singapore students. This makes campus life rich in Christian charity, which is more than we can ask for (1 Peter 2:12).

Though hard-pressed by the rigour of studies, our students still initiate outreach projects to the youthful students of neighbouring St Francis Methodist School. A few years earlier, when the Downtown Line was being constructed, our students extended their hand of friendship to migrant workers who would gather near our premises.

We do not claim to be a perfect community. But listening to their testimonies shared at Friday chapel services, we do know that TTC students have a deep sense of God's calling. We are also blessed by their diverse cultures, ethnicities, talents and abilities; they all help to build a better future for our college to be 'Light of the World' – Lux Mundi. And for this and all the blessings upon our college over the past seventy-one years, we give thanks and praise to God. ❖

Sexual identity and the *Imago Dei*

By Rev Dr Maggie Low

On 30 August this year, the Straits Times reported: “No ‘gay gene’, but study finds genetic links to sexual behaviour”. The headline highlights the genetic links despite the researcher saying that genetic components have a less than 1% effect on same-sex behaviour.

The article continues, “This means that non-genetic factors—such as environment, upbringing, personality, nurture—are *far more significant* in influencing a person’s choice of sexual partner, just as with most other personality, behavioural and physical human traits, the researchers said”. (emphasis mine)

Nonetheless, sexual rights campaigners welcomed the study, saying it “provides even more evidence that being gay or lesbian is a natural part of human life”. They imply that homosexuality is a consequence of living in one’s environment and should thus be accepted.

I agree that one’s environment can shape a person in such a way that he or she may not experience a choice in sexual tendencies, but to deny that this person can change or he should be held responsible for his decisions raises difficulties. An addict or alcoholic may also say that their compulsions should similarly be accepted due to their genes and background. Who is the judge of what is right and wrong? For Christians, it goes back to the Word.

In this short article, I will only highlight Gen 1:27, “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them”. God’s image (*imago Dei*) is seen in the complementary (not hierarchical) relationship between male and female. For further study, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* by Robert Gagnon is an excellent resource.

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The *primaeval* history (Genesis 1–11) tells us that the *imago Dei* is also reflected in the relationships between parent and child (Gen 5:3) and between persons (Gen 9:6). These three texts in Genesis contain the word “image”. Thus, the male-female relationship is not the only reflection of God’s image, which is invaluable for our understanding of singlehood.

Going back to Gen 1:27, God originally intended for a person to be holistically male or female, that is, to have a male body with male gender identity or to have a female body with female gender identity. However, the Fall resulted in fragmentation at all levels—with God, between husband and wife, parent and child, with the environment, and within oneself. Such flaws in genes and the environment result in negative consequences, including our struggle with homosexual feelings.

Are we to accept or alleviate the consequences of the Fall? With the coming of Christ, restoration has begun and will be completed when he returns.

The Christian freedom is not about the freedom to be one’s supposed sexual identity; it is the freedom to be in the *imago Dei*, which includes right relationships with God, self, family and community.

LGBT groups are rightly up in arms against “reparative” or “conversion” therapy of the sort that uses electroshock treatment or of the religious kind that insists on exorcism. Indeed, these may cause more harm than good.

However, gay advocates argue against any therapy at all. The American Psychological Association (APA) states that homosexuality “does not require treatment and is not changeable”. This statement is a barefaced assertion with no scientific proof. Given the latest in scientific finding that genes make up less than 1% of the causes, then a great deal can be done to address the environmental, psychological, and social factors.

For instance, Bryan Shen, a professional counsellor and author of *The Un-Affirmed Core*, points out many psychological and external factors that might contribute to homosexuality. A child’s gender identity development can be affected by his or her temperament and the primary care-giver’s parenting style, which results in different types of attachment, such as the “Anxious-Attachment Style” or the “Avoidant-Attachment Style”. Shen’s focus, though, is not about converting a homosexual orientation into a heterosexual one, but to help the person, whether hetero- or homosexual, deal with the emotional repercussions of such experiences.

Theologically, all of us are sinners, and we have also been sinned against. While fallen nature and nurture form us with unchosen tendencies, our emotional and behavioural responses may be sinful. We need the skills of a psychologist to work through deep-seated emotional issues, and we also need the power of the Spirit to enable each broken person, regardless of sexual orientation, to experience the depth of God’s love and to live in the *imago Dei*.

Such a holistic approach is a continuing process of sanctification until we are all glorified in Christ. Thus, Shen stresses both the spiritual-pastoral as well as the psychological-assistive approaches, saying that one without the other is only half as good.

In a 6-year study reported in 2011, psychologists Stanton Jones and Mark Yarhouse found that 23% of



religiously motivated persons experienced complete change and 30% reported a considerable change in their homosexual orientation. Results vary with different factors, but this already refutes the APA’s claim.

In fact, Robert Spitzer, who had promoted the removal of homosexuality as a mental disease in the American Psychiatric Association’s Manual in 1973, became convinced that gay people can change. This about-face took place through a 2003 study in which Spitzer had originally set out to refute such changes.

In a case I witnessed, a counsellor helped his client with Same-Sex Attraction deal with underlying family struggles. Along the way, a pastor guided this person to bring those issues before God in prayer. The goal of the ministry was to resolve the individual’s fear, anger and depression, but it led to the young adult experiencing Opposite-Sex Attraction soon after. What is of far greater significance is that this person is now living a life assured of the Father’s embrace. ❖



Rev Dr Maggie Low
Lecturer in Old Testament



By Dr Roland Chia

2020 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act, a unique piece of legislation passed by Parliament that addresses the relationship between religion and the state in Singapore. The Act came about as a result of the arrest of Catholic lay worker Vincent Cheng and his associates in 1987 for allegedly plotting a Marxist conspiracy to overthrow the government.

unrelenting ideological opposition to religion is patently unhelpful. In fact, this “negative secularism”, as Levey calls it, distorts our received understanding of “what the secular state was, is and should be”.

In recent years, scholars like Tariq Madood from the University of Bristol have been advocating a moderate secularism that does not see itself at odds or in conflict with religion.

In his 1987 National Day Rally Speech, then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew famously promulgated the separation of religion and politics, in anticipation of the legislation, with these memorable words: “Churchmen, lay preachers, priests, monks, Muslim theologians, all those who lay claim to divine sanctions of holy insights, take off your clerical robes before you take on anything economic or political”.

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 Religion - especially Christianity - can keep both society and the modern secular state sane

Although the Act advocates an “institutional” separation of religion and politics, as Mr Lee’s 1987 statement made clear, some have interpreted it as sanctioning the total exclusion of religious voices from public debate. Their perspective corresponds to trends evident in certain Western societies that aggressively push for the “privatisation of religion” and its expulsion from the public square.

One of the central characteristics of moderate secularism, according to Madood, is the inclusion of religious identities and organisations in the public realm, not their marginalisation or ostracisation. In addition, moderate secularism also debunks the old myths associated with its narrower and more dogmatic instantiations, such as the notion of secular neutrality and the (mostly contrived) private / public divide.

In moderate secularism, we find, in many ways, a more mature and realistic assessment of the role of religion in society (including its political life) in the wake of the demise of the secularisation thesis. It recognises the significance of religion in people’s lives and the incredulity of the notion of a “private” religion. As Linda Woodhead has pointed out: “A religion which is never expressed does not exist; once it is expressed it is communicative and public”.

In addition, unlike its more fundamentalistic cousin, moderate secularism is not as forgetful of the

However as Geoffrey Levey has argued persuasively, this narrow and militant form of secularism that sees itself as being in constant and

contributions religion has made — and continues to make — in society. Consequently, moderate secularists have been advocating that political authorities and society in general should encourage the broadening of the role of religion in the civic and political affairs of the nation.

For example, the prominent secular philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, in his more recent writings, eschews what he calls “an overly narrow, supposedly secularist definition of the political role of religion in the liberal frame”. He argues that the secular state has “an interest in unleashing religious voices in the political public sphere and in the political participation of religious organisations as well”.

In agreement with Habermas, Bhikhu Parekh adds that the silencing of religious arguments in the public square can ‘deprive political life’ in two ways: (1) with regard to the unique insights that religion can offer and (2) the moral energies that religions can mobilise for justice and the common good.

Happily, the secularism embraced by the government in Singapore is of this “moderate” variety. Acknowledging the multi-religious nature of our society, the government, although secular, is not dismissive of religion in the lives of individual citizens and its value in society.

Professor Jayakumar, who was Minister for Law and Home Affairs when the Act was passed by Parliament, was at pains to emphasise this point when explaining the state’s attitude towards religion embodied in the legislation. While the government is not pro-any religion, he said, it is not “anti- any religion” either. “It believes religion should be a positive factor in society,” he adds.

Scholars such as Linda Woodhead and Bhikhu Parekh have taken a further step. Not only do they acknowledge the positive role of religion in society, they have also argued that secularism itself can benefit from authentic and constructive dialogue with religion.

Religion, they insist, can prevent modern secularism from becoming illiberal and undemocratic. Secularism, Woodhead maintains, must not only welcome religious criticism but also opposition because “it keeps it on its toes; reminds it of its inbuilt limitations; and prevents it from becoming illiberal”.

In welcoming religion and taking seriously its contributions to society, secularism must also come to terms with its own inadequacies and its indebtedness to religious traditions. For example, secularism is unable to supply the requisite moral vision towards which society should strive, but must rely on liberal values which are parasitic on the Judeo-Christian tradition. In addition, by welcoming the contributions of religion, the modern secular state shows itself to be truly inclusive and thus truly democratic.

There is still another way in which secularism can benefit from creative interaction with religion.

Religion can warn secularism against what Woodhead calls a “political messianism” and detach it from an “easy alliance with doctrines of inevitable progress”. In other words, religion can provide the necessary and timely critique of and corrective to the distorting triumphalism and progressivism to which modern secularism is inherently predisposed.

Simply put, there is a profound sense in which religion — especially Christianity — can keep both society and the modern state sane. ❖



Dr Roland Chia
 Chew Hock Hin Professor of Christian Doctrine
 Theological and Research Advisor of the Ethos Institute for Public Christianity

Spiritual Retreat For Lay Leaders



Retreat directors:
 Rev Dr Simon Chan | Rev Dr Jimmy Tan

Join us in 2020
 Mar 6-7 | May 8-9 | Nov 6-7



May 2019 participants share their experiences ...

“I cherish the time to go into prayer. It is lovely to let God speak to us instead of us giving him our lists of concerns.”

“The retreat is a time to pause and enjoy a time of fellowship with God.”

“The retreat helped me to draw closer to God who loves us and wishes to bless us.”

Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education

By Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun, Dean of Students,
Lecturer in Church History

Since 2002, Trinity Theological College has been the beneficiary of four endowed professorial chairs that underline the college's commitment to Christian academic scholarship. On 29 August 2019, TTC reaffirmed this academic commitment with the installation of Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng as the Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education. This fifth professorial chair was endowed through the generosity of the family of the late Rev Lee Huai Kwang, whose son, Rev Dr Lee Chong Kau, was a former member of the TTC faculty. The senior Rev Lee pastored Bethel Presbyterian Church for 55 years, and founded Ming Sin School, Presbyterian Hight School, All Saints Memorial Chapel and All Saints Home. He received both the Outstanding Senior Citizens Award from President Ong Teng Cheong and the Public Service Star from President S.R. Nathan.

The five professorships reflect not just the level of expertise at TTC, but also its responsibility to pursue both sound theology and academic excellence. The Lee Huai Kwang Professorship follows the Chen Su Lan Professorial Chair of New Testament (endowed in 2002 by the Chen Su Lan Trust), the Earnest Lau Professorial Chair of Systematic Theology (in 2002 by former students of the late Mr Earnest Lau), the Chew Hock Hin Professorial Chair of Christian Doctrine (in 2008 by Paya Lebar Methodist Church), and the Bishop William F. Oldham Professorial Chair of Old Testament (in 2009 by Barker Road Methodist Church). Dr Tan Kim Huat currently holds the chair in New Testament, Dr Roland Chia in Christian Doctrine and Dr Mark Chan in Systematic Theology.

Joining their ranks, Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng is a most worthy appointee. He is the Associate Dean of TTC, a long-serving faculty member (who served briefly as the Principal of the Baptist Theological Seminary in 2007 - 2010), a member of the ATESEA Theological Union Senate and an ordained Baptist minister. Dr Lim's appointment stands out as, unlike the other occupants of professorial chairs, he teaches primarily in Mandarin. Dr Lim's inaugural lecture in the college chapel was also delivered in Mandarin, with simultaneous translation into English via headsets.



The newly minted Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education, Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng



Dr Lim Teck Peng, his wife, Yong Kiang with donors Mrs Lee Cheng Yeng and Rev Dr Lee Chong Kau



Forging ahead in Christian Scholarship. L-R: Vice Principal, Rev Dr Edwin Tay; Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education, Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng; Chew Hock Hin Professor of Christian Doctrine, Dr Roland Chia; Chen Su Lan Professor of New Testament, Dr Tan Kim Huat; Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology, Dr Mark Chan and Principal, Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghain

Dr Lim's lecture was entitled, "Faith, Tongues and Religious Education", a strident call not only for the church to recognize the significance of vernacular languages in religious education, but also for the church in Singapore to draw on its rich resources in Tamil- and Chinese-speaking congregations to develop mother tongue-based religious education. The lecture was divided into three parts, beginning with a look at vernacularisation of the Gospel in Acts 2 with the descent of the Holy Spirit, moving on to an examination of the relationship between the church and the bilingual policy in Singapore, and finally considering whether mother tongue-based religious education is plausible in Singapore when mother-tongues have become a second language.

Dr Lim drew attention to the link between vernacularisation and the spread of the Gospel. He noted that while there was a high degree of bilingualism in Singapore, English was becoming the dominant language in homes across all racial groups. Nevertheless, the promotion of bilingualism in churches could be a blessing by increasing a sense of community, expanding community service and aiding cross-culturalism.

Dr Lim's conclusion was that bilingualism was a challenge the church in Singapore could rise to. If the challenge is surmounted, this might even inspire the Chinese and Indian diaspora churches around the world.

The challenge of bilingualism is one that TTC has faced head-on since the start of Chinese language instruction at the college in 1952. Much effort has been made since to provide sterling instruction in Chinese, so much so that the college has been able to attract an increasing number of students from China and other countries. Beyond superior Chinese instruction by highly-qualified faculty, care has also been taken to treat both English-medium and Chinese-medium students equally. This extends from bilingual chapel services to fair representation of Chinese-medium students in the Student Council. The appointment of Dr Lim further highlights the bilingualism of the college. In fact, the appointment of a Baptist minister to a professorial chair named after a Presbyterian minister also emphasizes the inter-denominational character of the college.

We look forward to great things from the new Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education. May God bless him richly in his service. ❖

Fulfilling the Great Commission: TTC 71st Anniversary Service

By Dr Michael Mukunthan, Librarian

Trinity Theological College celebrated its 71st Anniversary with a Thanksgiving Service at the college chapel on 4th October, 2019. The morning's service was graced by faculty, students, alumni and guests of the college. The Principal, Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghian, began with a note of thanksgiving, highlighting the many blessings the college received over the course of the year. These included the college's continuing contribution to ATESEA and ETHOS, our long-term commitment to the Chinese-speaking churches in the region as exemplified by the induction of Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng as the Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education, as well as the developing relationships and collaboration with other seminaries in Singapore.



Rt Rev Keith Lai, guest preacher

The Rt Rev Keith Lai, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore, was the speaker at the service. Developing on the theme of "The Ultimate Goal", the Rt Rev Lai encouraged all to commit themselves to the gospel's call to finish the great commission. This, he noted, has been made possible in the modern world in unprecedented ways, with opportunities abounding through new means of communication and ease of travel.

This year also saw the presentation of Long Service Awards to Rev Dr Maggie Low (10 years), Rev Dr Jeffrey Truscott (15 years), and Dr Michael Mukunthan (20 years). The service ended with the official unveiling of the TTC Heritage Gallery, a fitting marker which describes the history and mission of the college. ❖

An Evening of Thanksgiving and Challenge

By Rev Dr Samuel Wang, Lecturer in Theology, Associate Director, Field Education

Last year's anniversary thanksgiving dinner saw TTC celebrating seventy years of God's faithfulness. Our anniversary dinner this year is marked by a forward-looking perspective that is open to the leading of God in fulfilment of our God-given mission in theological education.

As well-wishes and alumni mingled in the Orchid Country Club Grand Ballroom, the highlight of the evening was the Principal's message. He reiterated TTC's role as a "teaching institution of the church" and emphasised the need to remain faithful to the apostolic mission of propagating the gospel even while values and attitudes in society are changing.

He made clear that, for TTC, propagating the gospel is fulfilled through the laying of theological foundations where the apostolic faith is passed on faithfully. It also involves counter-cultural engagements, such as the work of ETHOS Institute, that through its publications and forums, challenges the culture of secularism.

Dr Ngoei also shared about TTC's involvement with "Dial-A-Religion". Organised in conjunction with the International Conference on Cohesive Societies held from 19 to 21 June, "Dial-A-Religion" was an initiative that encouraged the public to ask questions about the different religions in order to clarify misconceptions and foster greater interfaith relationships. Several TTC lecturers availed themselves to answer questions concerning Christianity through the phone. This is an example of TTC's commitment to engagement with our society.

The evening meal concluded with a rousing rendition of the college anthem as friends, alumni, faculty and students reaffirmed the mission of TTC in song. ❖



The TTC Choir: developing strongly through the years

CODEC Presentation on 'Being Human: AI, Cyborg and Transhumanism'

By Rev Dr Edmund Fong, Lecturer in Theology

On Tuesday 22 Oct 2019, Trinity Theological College had the privilege of hearing Rev Dr Pete Phillips, Director of CODEC Research Centre for Digital Theology, speak on the topic of "Being Human: AI, Cyborgs and Transhumanism". CODEC is a research centre that seeks to further the conversation between digital culture and theology. Dr Phillips began the lecture by rousing the participants to consider what it means for humanity to be created in the image of God. Drawing mainly from movies and fictional works, he showed us the opportunities afforded and the ethical challenges posed by recent developments in Artificial Intelligence. Along the way, Dr Phillips brought to our attention the growing sentiment of transhumanism these developments have evoked. While the presentation provided more questions than answers, it further prompted consideration on the important question "what is man that you are mindful of him?" (Ps 8:4, ESV) and the challenges posed by technological advancements to the status of humanity. ❖



Rev Dr Pete Phillips with his attentive audience

Build Up in Love

By Alvin Ong, MDiv2



The climax of the day...when wax was applied on the crosses for the final shine

"Build up in Love" was the theme of the 2019 Day of Prayer. Quite deliberately, it resonated with what Student Council President Daniel Lee shared at the beginning of the year when he spoke on "building each other up" as a TTC Community. The theme unfolded through the sub-themes of "Accepting, Shaping, and Reconciling". All participants were issued an unfinished wooden handheld cross and were guided through a series of steps to sand down the cross as they reflected on these sub-themes. In the process, everyone had the opportunity to meditate and pray while engaging the task at hand thus turning these moments into times of contemplation. There was also a variety of prayer stations for personal prayer and meditation, each one meticulously prepared so that participants could be fully immersed in an atmosphere of quiet contemplation. Lunch was eaten in silence — a first for our Day of Prayer. The entire dining hall was transformed into a sacred space for receiving one's meal in gratitude. In a fitting climax, Family Group mentors applied wood wax on their members' crosses, finishing them to a shine. The point was clear: accepting, shaping and reconciling takes a while, sometimes a long while, as we seek to build each other up in love. Yet the finishing of the crosses reminded us that it is God who supplies the grace for the entire process. This reality dawned on us once more as we closed the day at the Lord's Table. ❖

Lessons in Spiritual Formation at TTC: A Testimony

By Bernice Lim Meng Choo, MDiv2



I first stepped foot into Trinity Theological College as a young youth pastor. I was a typical “servaholic” and dropped out of TTC after my first semester, as ministry took precedence over studies. Three years later, I burnt out and left the ministry altogether, and became a journalist, lecturer and parent of four boys. Almost 30 years later, God called me back to TTC to learn the most basic of lessons: spiritual formation – the personal and communal aspects.

At TTC, the morning prayers, mid-day chapels, evening vespers, days of prayer and college retreats help students inculcate discipline and form rhythms that help us to remain centred on God throughout the day, so that we can stay refreshed and renewed amidst the busyness of life.

At TTC, I also experienced the communal aspect of spiritual formation through Family Groups with a faculty mentor and a small accountability prayer group. In my Family Group, we discussed how to integrate our studies and daily life, in addition to dining, playing and

praying together. In my prayer group, we laughed, cried, prayed and helped each other weather the storms of life and pressure of studies.

One morning at chapel, I heard the robotic voice of a Bible app breaking the silence. I saw a brother sitting behind me putting his phone to his ear and immediately jumped to the conclusion that he was the inconsiderate culprit. Then someone asked me, “Is it your phone?” To my horror, I had accidentally pressed the play button from my own Bible app! God reminded me about seeing the speck in my brother’s eye but not the log in my own, a fundamental lesson about humility in community living. Indeed, the personal and communal aspects of spiritual formation at TTC have shaped my practice of theology. ❖



Evening Classes 2020

Details at www.ttc.edu.sg

Old Testament Survey	Life in the Spirit	Missionary Nurture, Selection & Care	The Drama of Christian History
Mondays @ Wesley Methodist Church	Tuesdays @ Trinity Theological College	Wednesdays @ St Andrew’s Cathedral	Thursdays @ Trinity Theological College
Dr Yee Chin Hong (Instructor)	Rev Dr Simon Chan (Instructor)	Ms Susan Kaur Ms Yeo Hwee Joo (Instructors)	Dr Leow Theng Huat (Instructor)
Dates : 6 Jan — 24 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm	Dates : 7 Jan — 25 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm	Dates : 8 Jan — 26 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm	Dates : 9 Jan — 27 Feb Time : 7:30pm - 9:30pm

Welcome to the Family

Trinity Theological College’s commitment to theological education ensures that younger lecturers join its ranks regularly, so that the church will be well served into the future. TTC is also grateful to the churches who have committed to a special partnership of faculty support. Here we introduce two new lecturers who will join us in Jan 2020 and the churches supporting their ministry at TTC.

Rev Bernard Chao is an ordained elder of The Methodist Church in Singapore (Trinity Annual Conference) and has been a Methodist pastor since 2005. He is presently attached to Aldersgate Methodist Church and has served as a youthworker, pastor and pastor-in-charge in a number of Methodist churches, as well as a school chaplain in several Methodist schools. A former litigation lawyer, Bernard read law (LL.B.) at Leicester University (UK) and was called to both the English bar (Lincoln’s Inn, 1993) and the Singapore bar (1997).

An alumnus of TTC (MDiv 2005), Bernard has previously taught at the Cambodian Methodist Bible School (Phnom Penh), and TTC’s EQUIP classes. Presently, Bernard is a PhD Candidate in practical theology at Fuller Theological Seminary (USA). In the final stages of his dissertation, his research interest lies in the intersection of practical theology, Christian pedagogy, leadership, and critical theory. Bernard is looking forward to interacting and learning with students when he starts teaching in the areas of Christian education and leadership in January 2020.

Bernard is married to Ai Jin, a church counselor at Barker Road Methodist Church, currently studying for her Master of Arts in Theology with Fuller Theological Seminary (USA). They have three children, Elijah (15), Emma (14), and Ezrela (10).



A Presbyterian, Dr Yee Chin Hong joins the faculty of Trinity Theological College with the support of Bethel Presbyterian Church and All Saints Memorial Chapel, and the endorsement of the Synod of The Presbyterian Church in Singapore.

Before coming to TTC, Chin Hong taught Old Testament for four years at East Asia School of Theology, a ministry of Cru Singapore. He joined Cru in 1994 in response to God’s call to full-time ministry. Over the years, he has served in various capacities with Cru’s student and missions ministries, in the areas of discipleship, teaching, training and leadership development.

Chin Hong earned his Bachelor of Theology and Master of Arts at the Singapore Bible College. In 2016, he completed his PhD at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, USA. His thesis was “The Covenant of Peace in the Book of Isaiah”. He will be

teaching Old Testament in the Chinese department at TTC.

Chin Hong is married to Lishan, whom he met while they were both serving with Cru. They have two daughters, Jaymyn (14) and Jacy (11). The family worships at Bethel Presbyterian Church, where Chin Hong serves as a lay leader. He is thankful to the Lord for leading him to serve with TTC and for Bethel’s partnership that enables him to do so.

Note: TTC presently has three persons in its faculty-in-development programme. They are pursuing their doctoral studies at the Universities of Edinburgh, Oxford and Toronto. ❖



"United Nations" at TTC

By Kirk Tan, MTS1

This year's Cultural Night saw God's people yet again in blessed harmony and unity in him across various nationalities, ethnicities and languages within the TTC Community.

The evening started with a pampering spread of over 30 foods and beverages ranging from Cambodian pork rice, Chinese dumplings, English scones, Indian mutton briyani rice and payasam dessert, Indonesian bakso noodles, Japanese sushi, Malaysian LokLok, Myanmar Mohingan noodles, Taiwanese bubble tea, Thai desserts, Turkish kebab and Vietnamese pho to local Singapore food of laksa, mee siam, popiah, muah chee and ice-cream!

Then began a cultural showcase of lively performances hosted by our adorable emcees, Isaac and Vinn. First was a taste of China with an enchanting dance by our sisters dressed in beautiful white gowns and using embroidered handheld fans, followed by a tai-chi demonstration by James who wowed us with his swift sword swings and agile body turns. Next were our Myanmar friends, with brother Shine Lukar singing a Myanmar song in his husky voice followed by a delightful group song item. We got into the "blues" when brother Derrick from Papua New Guinea sang us a beautiful "Oro Kaiwa" song while

playing on his guitar — this is a welcome song when tribes visit each other. Our Malaysian group singing in Bahasa next got us clapping, singing and holding hands across the aisles. Our Indian friends took our moods on a roller coaster when brother Joseph first ministered a romantic song sung in Carnatic fusion style followed by a highly charged performance which got all of us up on our feet, swaying lifted hands and twirling around as we sang *Endban Yesuve* (Jesus I am Yours). Then came the Year 1 performance singing "What a Wonderful World this Would Be" which had the audience laughing and participating with its lyrics suitably adapted to speak about theology, history, Missions and Evangelism and liturgy and, of course, Dr Maggie!

The evening ended on an appropriate note with Dr Edwin Tay singing a song "Living out His Love" in Mandarin(!), with his daughter Chloe alongside in beautiful violin accompaniment, amidst a room warmly lit with flashlights from our phones! With Dr Tay's comment that the evening was like "a slice of heaven", Rev Dr Edmund Fong closed our wonderful evening in prayer with the promised hope that one day, we will see every tribe on earth praising God in their respective languages! ❖



Students from Myanmar in traditional dress dishing out a taste of home



Everybody likes kungfu... students with a martial arts display



Students performing with zest



Friends from across the causeway lead in song

TRINITY NEWS

Congratulations to...

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

Chinese Annual Conference (14 Nov 2019)

As Deacon

Pastor Jacqueline Ho Sow Fong (MMin 2017)

Pastor Glenn Tan Tze Meng (MDiv 2016)

Pastor Jasper Ngoh (MDiv 2017)

As Elder

Rev Cynthia Choo Bee Lay (BD 2001, MTh 2017)

Rev Ian Jew Yun Shern (MDiv 2004)

Trinity Annual Conference (21 Nov 2019)

As Deacon

Pastor Jacob Lim (BD 2017)

Pastor Anthony Phua (BD 2015)

Pastor Collin See (MDiv 2016)

As Elder

Rev Benjamin Fong (BD 2014, MTh 2016)

Rev David Ho Seng Hian (MDiv 2014)

Pastor Xie Li (MDiv 2012) on her ordination as pastor of En Community on 1 July.

Pastor Gabriel Ling How Sian (MDiv 2016) on his ordination as Deacon at the 44th Sarawak Chinese Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Malaysia.

Condolences to...

Lim Cheng Cheng (MTS 2014) on the passing of her beloved mother, Mdm Sng Chwee Hong, on 6 Aug 2019.

Rev Tay Hong Ern (MDiv 2014), on the passing of his beloved father, the late Mr Tay Thian Teck, who was called home to be with the Lord on 18 Aug 2019.



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
- keep tuition fees affordable
- offer financial subsidies to less fortunate students
- house an outstanding theological library in the region
- organise workshops and conferences at minimal cost
- furnish and maintain our 18-year-old campus

Here are some ways you may contribute to our ministry:

- By Cheque to 'Trinity Theological College'
- By Bank or ATM transfer to our DBS current account 033-017261-3
- By scanning this QR code or <PayNow> to UEN No. T01CC1488C
- 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 6767 6677



The Trumpet is published in English and Chinese. To view the Chinese edition, please visit our website www.ttc.edu.sg



2020
OPEN HOUSE



22 Jan 2020, 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
<http://ttc.edu.sg/english/open-house/oph2020/>



Trinity Theological College:
Serving the Church for 71 Years

TTC develops in its students a mature understanding of the historic and biblical faith through an academically rigorous, spiritually nourishing, and vocationally formative curriculum that reflects a variety of church traditions from an Asian perspective.

Here are what our students have to say:

“Trinity Theological College is a not only a school for the clergy. If you are looking for a credible institution that provides you with sound knowledge of Church History and Biblical Studies, and if you want to better understand what makes Christianity as it is today, Trinity Theological College is the right place to be.

There is something for every Christian in TTC. It will benefit your walk with the Lord and strengthen you to serve where the Lord has placed you.” - *Serap Kaya, MTS 1, from Turkey*

“Studying at TTC has been a wonderful and fruitful period of my life. TTC is definitely an effective theological college in equipping believers in learning and knowing the truth about God and His love.” - *Rachel Chua (MDiv 2019); National Director, Child Evangelism Fellowship (Singapore); a member of Grace Baptist Church.*

APPLICATION OPEN for academic year starting July 2020

Application deadlines

DIPLOMA

- Diploma in Theological Studies
- Joint Programme with Biblical Graduate School of Theology (BGST)

Singapore : 28 Feb 2020

BASIC DEGREE

- Bachelor of Divinity
- Master of Divinity
- Master of Theological Studies

Singapore : 28 Feb 2020
Others : 31 Jan 2020

ADVANCED DEGREE

- Master of Ministry
- Master of Theology
- Master of Letters
- Doctor of Theology

All applicants : 31 Jan 2020

For more details (including information about financial aid), please visit www.ttc.edu.sg or email registrar@ttc.edu.sg

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