



Lutheran Theological Seminary News

President: Rev. Dr. Lam Tak Ho English Editor: Rev. Hanns Hoerschelmann (intlstuco@lts.edu) Assistant Editor: Queenie P.Y. Wong and Katrina E.Vigen Publisher: Lutheran Theological Seminary
Mailing Address: 50 To Fung Shan Road, Shatin, Hong Kong Tel.: (852) 2691-1520 Fax: (852) 2691-8458 E-mail: info@lts.edu Website: www.lts.edu

Team Spirit

A 14th Century Byzantine lay theologian, Nicolas Cabasilas, once said in his book, *Life in Christ*, “When Jesus Christ leads us to His holy table and gives us His own Body to eat, He transforms us and changes us into what He is Himself.”

At one of our faculty retreats I joined the small group on “Team Spirit.” The group had to find out ways to build up a good team spirit within the Faculty. In order to find out more about this subject, I asked my counter-parts at other seminaries “How is their team spirit?” One told me that they had a strong hierarchy within the Faculty, another said that there was too much academic competition between his colleagues and some who were less accomplished were looked down upon.

When I look at our own Faculty, I must thank the Lord that we can learn, teach, work and live in harmony, that we have mutual respect for one another and appreciate each other’s contributions to the Seminary. How did we achieve that? The answer is that our Seminary has a good worship and sacramental life.

During the season of Lent we have the Stations of the Cross, we start from Tao Fong’s big cross and walk up the hill. When we saw Dr. Tueffel carrying the heavy wooden cross up the many steps in the rain, we didn’t just see a German Systematics Professor, we actually saw Christ in our presence carrying the cross and suffering for us. And tears filled our eyes. When we saw Rev. Patrick Chan washing the feet of our students, Faculty and staff at the Maunday Thursday worship, we didn’t just see our Chaplain doing it, but we saw Christ who emptying and humbling Himself and washing the feet of His disciples. Seeing this we are no longer capable of being arrogant and proud of ourselves.

For we are all sinners and are unworthy to be washed by Christ.

At the monthly Eucharist, no matter who is giving us the bread and the wine, Dr. Simon Chow, Dr. Ted Zimmerman, President Dr. Lam Tak-ho etc., we are receiving it from the Lord Himself, who gives us His own body and blood for the remission of sin and the removal of the hostility and the barriers between humans and God, and between individuals. At the Eucharist, the Lamb of God grants us peace and reconciliation as we eat the bread and drink the wine.

The true body of Christ is manifested as we kneel down around the holy table and share the meal with Christ, and we are changed into what He is Himself. This mystical transformation of the faithful into the one body in Christ takes place in the Eucharist and we are made “*flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone*”. Those who share the meal are no longer strangers but brothers and sisters in Christ.

Dear friends of LTS, our worship and sacramental life are the foundations of our strength and our “*Team Spirit*.” Though we are from many countries and different cultural backgrounds, we are baptised into one body in Christ.

At the road to Emmaus the disciples recognized Christ at the table when He took bread, blessed it, and gave it to them. Therefore, as we continue to share the Lord’s supper, the risen Christ will come to open our eyes to His mystical presence and to leave our hearts burning with His love.

Ms. Mabel Chung-yuen Wu

Assistant Professor of Spirituality and Worship at LTS

Roots - Vision - Transformation

Celebrating the 95th Anniversary of Lutheran Theological Seminary

The year 2007 was the 200th Anniversary of Robert Morrison's Arrival in China, and 2008 is the 95th Anniversary of the founding of Lutheran Theological Seminary in 1913. It is a little known fact that the birth of the Seminary began at the Morrison Centenary Conference in 1907...

by Tang Sui-tung



The Birth of the Seminary

In 1907, 1,170 missionaries and church leaders met together in Shanghai to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Arrival of Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary in China; and they took this opportunity to actively discuss their future visions for China. At that time, the various Lutheran missions and church leaders also used the occasion of the China Missionary Centenary Conference for discussion and prayer. As a result, they received a vision from God to lay the groundwork for a united Lutheran seminary, in response to the perceived needs of the church in China over the next 100 years. Thus, in 1913, by the grace of God, Lutheran Theological Seminary was born in the town of Shekou, in Hubei Province (about 15 km north of the city of Wuhan); and on October 19 of that year the dedication of the school took place.



The China Missionary Centenary Conference in Shanghai during the 100th Anniversary of Robert Morrison's Arrival in China (1907).

missionaries who have reflected upon and followed the evangelical spirit of Robert Morrison; who have received the vision of God for China; and who have thus created a transformational event in the establishment of Lutheran Theological Seminary. In 1948, the Seminary moved south to Hong Kong. At that time the Faculty and students reflected on their roots in the mercy and mission of Christ; received the vision to proclaim the Gospel to the large number of their refugee compatriots, and were thus transformed by God into the tools necessary to establish the Lutheran church in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. In the 1980s, when the Hong Kong church was facing a crisis of confidence related to the 1997 handover, Lutheran Theological Seminary reflected on the fact that God is the Lord of history; received God's vision to do a new thing by building a new campus (Isaiah 43:19); and enthusiastically established itself as a Hong Kong seminary that warmly welcomed China.



Dormitory of LTS in Shekou, Hubei Province.

Dynamic Growth

The theme of the LTS 95th Anniversary Celebration is **Roots-Vision-Transformation**. Looking back on the history of the development of the Seminary, it is not difficult to discover that these three important points undoubtedly have provided the continuous impetus for the Seminary's dynamic growth; and that they have all been endowed by the power and merciful love of God. The birth of LTS is the result of the actions of



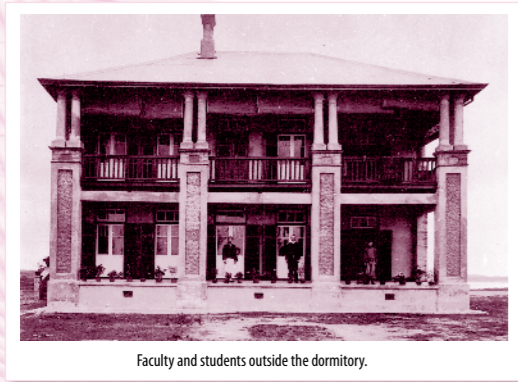
LTS academic building in Shekou, Hubei Province (constructed in 1913, the building still stands on its original site).

Development Up to the Present

The new Seminary campus was completed in 1992, and those professors and students who had experienced the marvelous work of God in building the Seminary, once again conscientiously sought their roots in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and sought God's vision for LTS. As a result, LTS received a three-part mission, and actively transformed itself according to these three points.



LTS's first professors. Dr. O.R. Wold (Back, Left 3) is the Seminary's first President and Dr. K.L. Reichelt (Back, Left 1) is the founder of Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre.



Faculty and students outside the dormitory.



The Third Meeting of the Lutheran Church in China in 1928, held at LTS.



The completion of the new campus in 1992.



LTS's new campus at To Fung Shan in Shatin, Hong Kong.

Hong Kong

Lutheran Theological Seminary, in addition to committing itself with confidence to the people of Hong Kong and to the church in the face of 1997, has even more positively deepened the areas of intellectual preparation and spiritual formation within theological education in Hong Kong. The seminary has established the "Tao Fong Spiritual Formation Institute", so that on the peaceful and beautiful mountain of To Fung Shan there is a place for seminary students and Christian ministers to receive spiritual guidance. The Institute provides a space for "spiritual calmness," modeling a theology of vital spirituality. However, spiritual training is not only individual and internal, but also concerns itself with proclaiming the Gospel to the masses of people and to "the other." Therefore, every theological student at LTS studies courses in evangelism and participates in the work of cross-cultural mission. Actually, in the campus life of Lutheran Theological Seminary, learning about evangelism is not something that is only to be found far in the future, somewhere on the horizon. Local students are able to have contact with students from scores of different countries, right on the campus of LTS (students come from the Chinese mainland, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia and Malaysia, to name a few countries of origin). Every day, students are able to discuss significant issues related to evangelism: How does the church face communism? Under a military dictatorship, how does the church continue to strive for justice and share the good news? How do believers proclaim the Gospel to Buddhists and Muslims? In addition, for the purpose of promoting mission education and research, and joining together with the Hong Kong churches in exploring the theme of mission, the seminary has established the "Institute for Mission and Inter-Cultural Studies".

Mainland China

For the further development of the church in China, our vision is that the training of teachers of theology is urgent. Although we are a small school, we still want to be used by God in cooperating with the China Christian Council (CCC) and the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) in doing our best in the area of theological education. Already prior to 1997, we

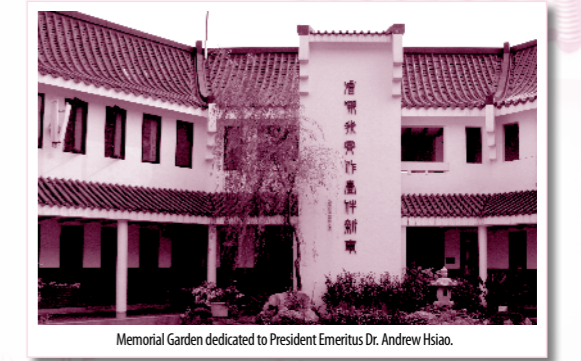
had many opportunities for exchange with the church in China. In 1992, the President emeritus of CCC and TSPM, Bishop Ting, personally visited the Seminary and participated in the dedication of the new campus. The CCC and TSPM, in order to develop better understanding between Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland before the handover, in 1995 sent for the first three church leaders to study at LTS, the first group of students sent by the CCC and TSPM to any Seminary in Asia. Having this opportunity to study and live together with students from the Chinese mainland provided an opportunity for our local students personally to understand the development of the church in China. Following the graduation of these first three students, the number of mainland Chinese seminary teachers studying at LTS has grown continuously, and the exchange of experiences between Hong Kong and mainland China has grown ever closer. Bishop Ting, in 2006, hosted the President and Faculty during a visit to Nanjing. As we watch group after group of mainland Chinese students graduating and returning to various seminaries as professors, deans and seminary presidents, we are witnessing with delight the transforming work of God. This year, Rev. Gao Feng (President of the Shandong Theological Seminary), a student in our doctoral program, has by the grace of God been elected as the President of the China Christian Council. The acts of God are truly amazing!

Asia

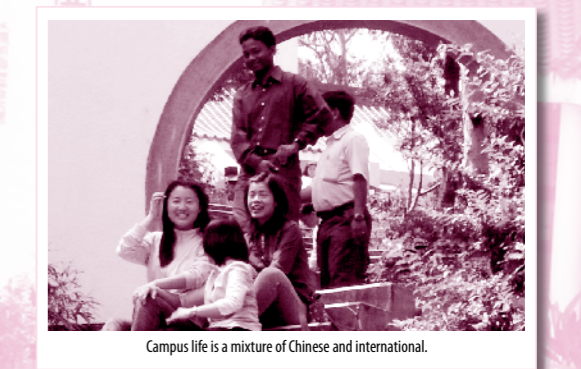
Beginning in 1992, Lutheran Theological Seminary has resolved to be a regional Asian seminary, hoping to prove itself to be a loyal servant in the training up of leaders in God's word. LTS not only diligently trains biblical scholars and theological professors for Asian seminaries, but also seeks to share with the Asian church the rich tradition of Lutheran Theology, through the "Institute for Luther Studies in the Asian Context". It is hoped that Luther's approach to the word of God and to Christ may lead to reformation in the Asian church and provide the strength for transformation. In addition, as a result of the rapid development and pluralization of Asian society, the human spirit is experiencing greater and greater pressure, and the demand for specialized counseling is enormous. Our "Regional Counseling Training Centre" meets this need.



The new academic building.



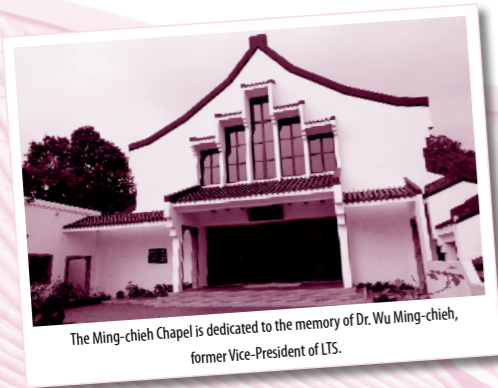
Memorial Garden dedicated to President Emeritus Dr. Andrew Hsiao.



Campus life is a mixture of Chinese and international.



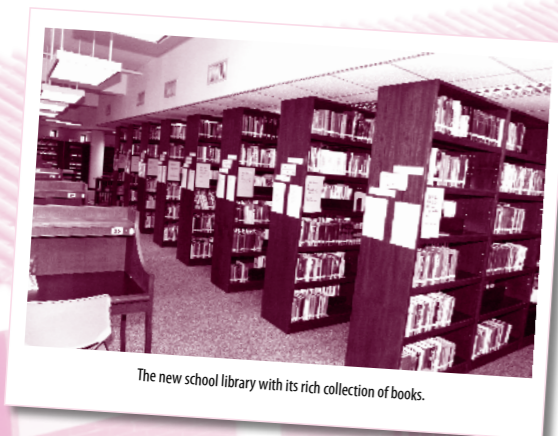
Our 29th Graduating Class and Faculty.



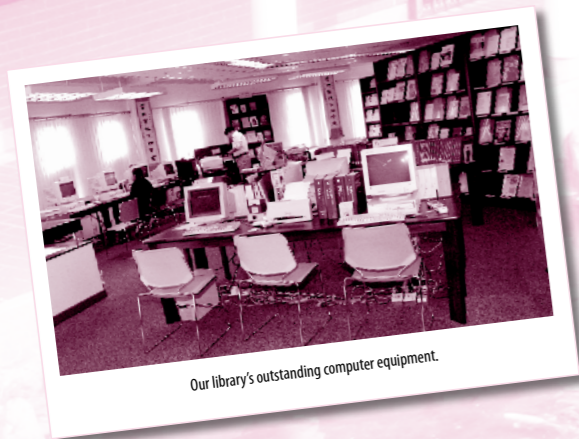
The Ming-chieh Chapel is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Wu Ming-chieh, former Vice-President of LTS.



Our Chapel can accommodate more than 200 Faculty and students.



The new school library with its rich collection of books.



Our library's outstanding computer equipment.

It is hoped that God will use LTS to provide Asian pastoral co-workers with specific abilities within the area of psychological treatment, bringing together faith and indigenous culture to renew and transform counseling methods.

Roots-Vision-Transformation: this has been the power of Lutheran Theological Seminary's growth from the very beginning. Fifteen years after the building of the new campus, this power has continued unabated. Under the merciful hand of God's leading over these short fifteen years, the number of our students has increased from a few score to more than 300, becoming one of Hong Kong's largest seminaries. Our Faculty has also increased from just a few to more than twenty, developing into a recognized theological faculty in Asia. The LTS library has grown from 50,000 to more than 80,000 volumes, becoming the largest Chinese seminary collection in the world. The school's yearly budget has increased from HK\$3,000,000 to HK\$10,000,000, but God's provision remains abundant. This truly is grace.

Looking Toward the Future

As Lutheran Theological Seminary approaches 100 years, may we once again humbly turn toward God; as the prophet Isaiah says: "In returning... you shall be saved" (Isaiah 30:15). May we learn from the prophet Habakkuk to go up to our watch tower, position ourselves on the rampart, and once again receive a One Hundred Year Vision from God (Habakkuk 2:1). In prayer, may we understand God's good and perfect and joyous will, so that our Faculty and students will be able to "renew and transform their minds" (Romans 12:2). It is deeply hoped that this year's 95th Anniversary Celebration may be a year of thanksgiving; a year of seeking God's even greater vision; and a year of being transformed even further by God.

Mr. Tang is the Convener of the 95th Anniversary Celebration Committee and Head Librarian at LTS.

Roots - Vision - Transformation



Celebrating the 95th Anniversary of Lutheran Theological Seminary

April 12 (Saturday)

95th Anniversary Commencement and Sacred Music Worship

Psalm Festival

May 19 (Monday)

Rev. Daniel Wong Lectures on Pastoralia

Roots-Vision-Transformation: Prospects of Mainland China and Hong Kong Theological Education

May 26-30 (Monday-Friday)

Roots Tour

Lutheran Ties in Hubei and Henan

August 27-29 (Wednesday-Friday)

Student and Faculty Retreat

Roots-Vision-Transformation

October 17 (Friday)

Theological Lecture

Christians Without Denominations? Reflections on the Asian Situation

November 28 (Friday)

95th Anniversary Worship and Open Day

Vision and Transformation

Youth@online

The International Youth Conference

by Cheung Po-chu

"Hey guys, How are you, I am Eric... I miss you and still pray for all of you..."

"This conference has been the happiest time in my life since my childhood! I have learnt so many things in this conference..."

"Dearest all, I am Lucia, something new & nice to share with you... to John Martin in Norway, I want a conference next year, too!"

"Hi everybody! I and my friends (also your friends) from Laos are very fine. We are serving God and we pray for you. ...we all miss you and want to keep in touch with Youth@online. We look forward to seeing you someday."



Over the last months, e-mails like these have been popping up in my inbox. I know the senders. They were participants in the International Youth Conference at To Fung Shan from September 27 to October 2, 2007.

The conference was organized by Norwegion Mission Society, Areopagus, Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong, The Chinese Rhennish Church Hong Kong Synod, The Evangelical Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK) and Lutheran Theological Seminary. The planning took one year. The purpose of the conference was to connect youth leaders from different countries and teach them skills they could use in Christian service. There were 29 participants coming from Singapore, Philippines, Laos, France, Norway, Thailand, Taiwan, Mainland China and Hong Kong.

The conference began with ice-breakers (games), socially themed problem-solving puzzles, evangelically themed magic tricks, and heart-to-heart sharing. A speaker was invited from Norway to conduct lectures on two topics: "To Lead and To Be Led" and "Youth and Leaders".

On Friday evening, our friends were taken out to Mong Kok to observe young people's lives in Hong Kong and they were led to discuss the nature of the values leading young people in Hong Kong.

In addition, a workshop was held. Instructors were invited to explain, demonstrate and teach them how to use religiously themed magic tricks, drama and dance to communicate the Christian message. In the same evening, the youth leaders were invited to LTS. President Dr. Lam Tak-ho introduced them to the Seminary. What they had learned in the workshop they performed to students and professors who came that evening.

On the following day, after Sunday Services

in different Lutheran Churches, they gathered together at Amazing Grace Church (formerly known as Mong Yan Church) of the ELCHK. There they performed for the congregation, showcasing to them the evangelically themed magic tricks, dance, and drama, which they had learned in the workshop. The meeting was led by a participant from Philippines. It began with songs of praise led by the praise team of Amazing Grace Church and ended with a testimony from a participant from Thailand. They were obviously fast learners and their performance was well received, while the performers themselves were well content. A Singaporean said, "I never thought that I could dance!" A lady from Mainland China said excitedly, "I have never danced a Christian dance before!"

The conference was closed on Monday through morning worship with holy communion and intercession, and in the afternoon participants went sightseeing in Stanley and on the Peak. The committee found that the conference was a success because: (1) everyone said that they had learned many new things they could bring back with them to their churches and were hopeful that there might be a sequel; (2) only one participant from Mainland China could not understand English at all, but still he was able to understand and participate through the whole program. (Many people offered their help to him. He was fascinated by the magic tricks whose lessons were built on the Gospel that he had come to witness and learn. He was the one who said that he had never had such a good time in his life since his childhood); (3) they wanted to continue connecting with each other. They set up a mailing list for their communications. Since the outcome of the conference was so positive, I feel good about all the efforts we put into this conference. May God bless each one of them.

Ms. Cheung is Assistant Professor of New Testament and Counselor for International Students at LTS.

Books Without a Reader have No Life

Thoughts on the Publication of the Romans Commentary

by Simon Chow



In July 2002, with the support of the Seminary, I began a one year sabbatical for the purpose of writing a commentary on the book of Romans.¹ At this time I had just taken up the responsibilities of Academic Dean and I found that my concentration was divided, so that when the sabbatical year was finished the work of the commentary was not even half completed. Over the following few years, I worked on the commentary when I had time, although I was rather occupied with teaching and administrative duties. Then, last year, the Seminary once again accommodated my request to have a further half-year to continue the work of writing. Now, the writing of the Romans commentary has been completed. At this point, in addition to offering my thanks to Lutheran Theological Seminary, I would also like to share my feelings with Faculty members, students and friends of LTS.

1. You Reap Whatever You Sow

This commentary on Romans is not my first book. In 1995, my doctoral dissertation, *The Sign of Jonah Reconsidered: A Study of Its Meaning in the Gospel Traditions*, was published in Sweden, and in 2002 a book entitled, *Let All Who Have Ears Hear*, was published in Hong Kong. The content and size of these works are all quite different, as was the time devoted to producing them and the audiences to which they were addressed. But each time I placed the final draft into the hands of the publisher I experienced a feeling of nervousness, because I knew that by handing over the manuscript the future content of the book had been decided, and that there would be no further opportunity to change it. Handing over the manuscript puts a full stop to the process of writing. Whether the book is praised or criticized will have been decided.

This feeling causes me to think of a passage of Scripture: *"You reap whatever you sow."* (Galatians 6:7) When the day of harvest has arrived, whether the fruit of the field is good or bad will depend upon the diligence with which the crops have been cultivated. Isn't life just the same? Is it not so that a person should repent when the time of repentance is at hand? Because when the *"books are opened,"* (Revelation 20:12), there will be no opportunity for repentance. At that time, what use will it be to shout, "Have pity!"?

2. Those who Sow in Tears shall Reap with Shouts of Joy

This passage from Psalm 126:5 was originally written to describe the joy of the people of Israel as they returned home after being held as captives. The psalmist describes the feeling of returning to Zion after years of wandering and depredation as though it were a dream. The intensity of joy was difficult to express, such that those who had not actually experienced it could not completely comprehend it. The experience of writing the commentary on Romans could not exactly be equated with being taken prisoner, but the process certainly involved its hardships and sacrifices. The captives hoped in God's faithfulness; in the midst of their suffering and wanderings they believed that, in the end, God would lead them back to Zion; and I believe in the wisdom and truth of the phrase, *"sowing with tears and reaping with joy,"* recognizing that the work and determination that have been expended have not been wasted.

I don't want to over emphasize the hard work involved in writing the commentary, but rather point out that after hard work comes tremendous joy. Perhaps there are some things in life that may still be obtained effortlessly, but such things do not provide one with the joy of reaping that comes with the tears of sowing; indeed, the two can't even be compared. The effort that one is able to commit to an undertaking becomes a blessing, a joy that accumulates for the future. As Romans 8:18 says, *"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us."*

3. I Planted, Apollos Watered, but God gave the Growth

In 1 Corinthians 3:6, Paul uses an agricultural metaphor to speak about the church, and explains that the growth of the church comes about through the concerted effort of many people. More importantly, he points out the certain truth that no matter how much human effort is applied, the spread of the gospel remains the work of God. Writing a book is like clearing land for planting: it involves the many tasks and the work of many people. It might be said that writing a biblical commentary is this kind of experience, because for generations untold numbers of people have already been at work in this field. In the process of producing the commentary on Romans, I play the role of a responsible farmer, who works the land that has already been cleared and cultivated by those who came before. On the other hand, there are also publishers, co-workers, classmates and family members who offer their encouragement. Not only do these people express their concern, but they also lend a helping hand with things such as computer expertise, typing and manuscript issues. It is just as the Apostle Paul said about planting and watering. Still, *"unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."* (Psalm 127:1) We hope that God will provide the growth, thirty, sixty and hundred fold, that He will make use of it and will allow it to reveal and expound the truth, so that others will be able to read the Scriptures with even more appreciation.

On October 30, 2007, I saw for the first time this newly baked cake, the published commentary on Romans. I was attending a function at a church on Hong Kong Island, and that evening scores of brothers and sisters were purchasing the book and enthusiastically asking me to sign their copies. Enthusiasm for the book may continue in the future, but I hope that those who buy it will not just put it on a shelf and forget about it, because *"books without a reader have no life."* There must be readers in order for a book to actively reveal itself. I hope that the book buyers will truly be book readers, and will assist me with their critiques, so that the "writer" and the "reader" will both benefit from the exchange, to the glory of God.

Dr. Chow is Professor of New Testament and Dean of Studies at LTS.

¹ In this article, "commentary on Romans" refers to Simon Chow, *Romans*, Chinese Biblical Commentary 33 (Hong Kong: CCLC, 2007).

News and Dates

LTS Art Exhibition

After chapel on February 20, students, Faculty and staff were handed invitations to attend the first LTS Art Exhibition titled **"Show My Passion"**. The Student Association did a fine job of arranging this event. It was so successful that it was extended from February 22 to 26. A wide variety of artwork were on display downstairs in the library, including Chinese scroll paintings, calligraphy, oil studies, pencil renderings, photography, mixed media icons, bookmarks, and needlework. Art books were set out for perusal and inspiration. Visitors could write their comments on a scroll of rice paper placed on the reception table. Appreciative comments urged LTS students, Faculty and staff to participate in such an exhibit again next year.



Annual Sacred Music Worship

The LTS Annual Sacred Music worship will be held **on Saturday April 13, 2008, at 8:00pm, at the Shamshuipo Tsung Tsin Church** (58 Tai Po Road, Shamshuipo, Kowloon). The theme of the worship is **"Psalm Festival"**. The LTS Choir, under the direction of Ms. Mabel Wu, will perform different musical interpretations of the Old Testament Psalms. The Preacher will be the LTS President Dr. Lam Tak-ho and the Liturgist is Dr. Peter Kwong-sang Li. At the same time, the worship will be the Kick-off Ceremony for the LTS 95th Anniversary Celebrations. All friends of LTS and interested persons are welcome to join this special evening in the LTS yearly calendar.

Graduation Service

The Board of Directors and Faculty of LTS invites families and friends to its **Thirtyfirst Graduation Service**. It will be held **on Sunday June 1, 2008 at the Shamshuipo Tsung Tsin Church** (58 Tai Po Road, Shamshuipo, Kowloon). Due to the high number of students there will be two separate services. For the Theological Education by Extension Program (Evening School) graduates from 2:30pm to 3:30pm and for the Day School graduates from 4:30pm to 6:00pm. It is a great occasion to join the students in their joy of achieving academic excellence.

Come and Visit LTS

You are always welcome on the campus of the Lutheran Theological Seminary. Please accept this as an invitation to visit the campus, meet students and faculty, and participate in campus life. If you or a group from your congregation wishes to see LTS, please contact us. We especially welcome friends to come to our daily chapel at 10:00am. We would like you to stay for a tour of the campus and then lunch at 12:30pm. Let us know what date works best for you.

Scholarship Support Needed

LTS will be able to welcome more students, as financial resources become available. If interested in supporting a student, contact Rev. Hanns Hoerschelmann at LTS (intlstuco@lts.edu) or LTS, 50 To Fung Shan Road, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong (info@lts.edu). You may also contribute through "Friends of LTS – USA and Canada" by contacting Dr. Jerry Schmalenberger (JLSchmalen@aol.com) 162 Pelican Loop, Pittsburgh, CA 94565 USA.