



Lutheran Theological Seminary News

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Community in Christ

by Theodore Irl Zimmerman

A new year in the Chinese calendar – the year of the Ox 4707 - and a new semester at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong has just started. A new situation and a new beginning can be a big challenge at times. They bring with them new demands, new struggles and, at a seminary, new people to deal with. And even though there aren't as many new faces around as at the beginning of a new school year, we still welcome 2 new teachers, several new students and also new staff among us. In other words, we have a new community to learn about and become adjusted to, and that is not always an easy thing to do.

A bible passage which deals with the question of community and its challenges is Matthew 18:15-20. It is a passage about what to do when a community is broken, what to do when people in the church do not get along with each other. When we are faced with brokenness in our community, when we are hurt by another, or when we are offended by someone in the community, Jesus tells us, through Matthew, what we should do.

We are first to talk individually to the person who has hurt us, then bring in two or three others to be witnesses, then take it to the whole church, and finally, if they don't listen, then we are to treat them as outsiders, as a Gentile or a tax collector. I must admit that this is a little hard for me to take, personally! I don't like to hear that we are told to treat people as outsiders!

But I do think we should still look at this text carefully and consider its context and purpose. First of all, it is written for the sake of the church. The church has the right to settle its own questions of discipline, and to deal with its own people in its own way. Matthew 18:18, about binding and loosing on earth and in heaven, is Jesus' way of saying that the church has the authority to do that. It is not each one of us individually who can "bind" or "lose" other people, or throw people out of the church – but it is only the whole church together as a body.

It could be that this text is largely about discipline in the early church during a time when there were many different ideas, and many people who disagreed with each other. Yet, I think they still speak to us today in our community here at LTS or the wider LTS community around the world. I think this text calls on us to care about our community, to speak responsibly with each other, and not to let disagreements and struggles grow into big problems.

Remember that Jesus' words in Matthew 18:15-20 are in the context of stories of Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners, and in the section immediately following, Jesus tells the disciples that they should forgive each other seventy times seven times! Therefore this is NOT meant as an encouragement for us to treat other members of our community like they

were Gentiles or tax collectors! Instead, it is an encouragement for us to talk to each other, to share with each other, and to build up our community – the community here at LTS and all the communities we live in around the world. And, it is certainly very encouraging for us to read that "wherever two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them!"

Jesus himself is also part of our community! He is with us! And that is very encouraging for us as we enter into this new year of the Ox or are beginning a new semester. Jesus, the one who accepted tax collectors, Gentiles, and sinners, is here with us in our diverse community at LTS, and he accepts all of us. Through him, God is calling all of us into a caring, responsible community life, both in the church, in society, this seminary and around the world.

I pray that this year will be a good one for everyone at LTS, that we will learn and grow as we prepare ourselves for service in the church as we study here. And I also pray that this year will bring us closer together as a worldwide community in Christ.

Dr. Zimmerman is Director of Liaison and Professor of New Testament at LTS

A rich gathering

LTS celebrated 95th anniversary and the Seminary Open Day



LTS Choir



China Student Dancing



Drama



Exhibition

by Andrew Law Chi Ki

The annual Open Day or Founder's Day as it is also called, took place on 28th November 2008. It was a big event in the seminary calendar as it also marked the end of celebrations during the year of the 95th anniversary of the Lutheran Theological Seminary. A huge crowd of people connected to the seminary past or present gathered on campus: Alumni came back in the morning to remember their past moments in the Seminary and present students invited their families and friends to come in the evening for a joyful gathering, to give them a feeling of what life at LTS is all about.

Although it was quite a cold night, the variety of presentations created a warm and joyful atmosphere. Visitors arriving at the Seminary had the feeling they were coming to a Mid-

autumn gathering. Lanterns, additional lights and decorations had transformed the campus into a colourful place. In addition visitors and guests could enjoy many interesting presentations: Students and professors – local and international - presented a variety of cultural shows and songs; the Lutheran Women Association performed a "Praise Exercise" which formed an atmosphere of joy; in the Ming Yee lecture hall overseas students had put up a cultural presentation of their home countries. With photos, cultural accessories, food to taste and other information displayed, visitors could travel around Asia and even to Europe in no time. Additional information gave an inside view of the past and current situation of the Christian community in the different countries. If all of this did not warm you



Sermon: Mr. Tang Sui Tung



Thanksgiving Prayer: Dr. Ted Zimmerman



Student Sharing: Mr. Fong Tai Wai



Service Leader: Mr. Lau Lap Yan



Alumni: Rev. Tse John



Alumni: Rev. Kwok Meng Siew



Alumni: Rev. Lai Kwok Lun



Alumni: Mr. Au Chun Shing



Alumni: Ms. Lee Kwok Wah

up, one had the chance to visit the newly created Coffee Corner where students offered different coffees from their home country which brought warmth and cosiness.

The beautiful voices of the student choir led by Mrs. Mabel Wu during the service after dinner was the climax of the night. The sermon titled "Vision and Transformation" by LTS head librarian Mr. Tang Sui Tung took up the theme of the 95th anniversary celebration and deepened our understanding of

the history and task of the Seminary. It also helped us to reflect on the meaning of resurrection. The witness of Mr. Fong Tai Wai touched the souls of many. It was a witness to the miracle and guidance of God for all theology students. A warm and joyful expression could be recognized on people's faces when they left the campus after such an eventful celebration. What a rich gathering!

Andrew Law Chi Ki is a 2nd year M.Div. student at LTS

At the end of last academic year Dr. Jochen Teuffel left LTS and returned back to his home country Germany. After teaching Systematic Theology in Hong Kong for more than 6 years he had become a well known and respected teacher among students and colleagues. As it is his nature his farewell address to students and faculty was more a theological summary of his experiences as a teacher and mission co-worker in Hong Kong and Asia during these years. The publication of these thoughts in a German daily newspaper, the Sueddeutsche Zeitung, has led to the engagement of Dr. Teuffel to write a book about mission, which will be published in Germany in the near future. The working title is "Mission as a Testimony of Names". LTS is happy to publish Dr. Teuffel's "farewell" in an English translation.



I am a Missionary

Does Christian Mission do more harm than good?

by Jochen Teuffel

Granted, I'm a missionary. Back in the 19th century being a missionary was an honorable calling. Missionaries going overseas enjoyed widespread respect in German society. Au contraire, today being a Christian missionary exposes one to criticism. Winning other people for the Christian faith is often seen as destructive of a people's own culture. The German heart is moved by calls for help in time of catastrophes, but for the salvation agenda, "everybody knows" that people work out their salvation in their own way. No outside help--even worse, interference--needed or desired.

Being a missionary today in Hong Kong does not put me in the front ranks. Young Chinese Christians telling their circle of friends about their own conversions are much more convincing than attempts by those of us who were cradle-Christians. Consequently my work at a theological seminary

consists primarily in teaching theology students from Southeast Asia the grammar of Christian theology. Today's missionaries aren't missionizing any longer. Instead we serve an indigenous partner church in its own efforts to promote the Christian faith.

If you confront Hong Kong Christians with a German-style critique of mission work, they will shake their heads. Why not promote the message that you have experienced as healing for yourself? So it is no surprise that among Christians in Hong Kong there is a strong impulse for Mission. Congregation members use their holidays to make mission trips to China; various churches send missionaries to other countries. In doing so they are following a widespread trend. If mission in earlier years was the work of Europeans and North Americans, mission activity today--already since

the mid 20th-century--has become the agenda of churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Nowadays Germans, weaned away from church life in secularized Europe, can hardly imagine that Christianity on other continents is "hot." It is received in these places as a resource, not only for coping in one's own life, but also for improving it. The grounds for this is a dimension of reality that is fundamental for non-European cultures. Beyond the visible world that is susceptible to scientific analysis, there is the sphere of the intangible, highly influential, powers and spirits. They operate organically and symbiotically in human life with either positive or negative consequences. So keeping good relations with them by proper actions and behavior is crucial.

It is this organic symbiosis of daily life that is the Petri-dish-culture from which conversion to Christian faith arises in Asia. The Christian Gospel comes across as an effective teaching for spiritual well-being, "dietetics" in the Greek classical sense of a healthy way of life. That Gospel offers rescue from personally-known guilt, and then access to God's own superior power, his protection, his healing, his blessing. Finally these Christians often find themselves empowered by the Holy Spirit and hear God's call to a new way of life in the world--and to live that life in confidence.

Life, Translation, Formation

There is more here than just finding meaning in life and coping with contingency. Christian faith proves to be a resource for living, not an imposed "you gotta." People come to Christ because it fits the realities of their life. Biblical patterns of daily life are much closer to the daily-life situations of Africa and Asia than they are to post-industrial Europe. Therefore a simple linguistic translation of the Gospel without extensive hermeneutical efforts suffices. If then people you know verify these truths of salvation, making the move yourself is not too difficult. Conversely, when someone you know becomes a Christian, it confirms your own Christian commitment. So Christians are motivated to speak of their own experience in winsome ways to those who are not yet believers.

It is significant that Christian Mission in

Southeast Asia was especially successful among minority peoples, for example, the Chins in Burma, the Montagnards in Vietnam. In some cases mission was carried out against the policy of the European colonial administrators--e.g., among the Nagas in Northeast India, where over 90% of the population today are Baptist Christians. When ex-Monty Python Michael Palin, doing a BBC TV series on the Himalayas, asked his native translator why the Konyaks (a Naga tribe once headhunters), became Christians, he received a quick short answer: because of education.

It is a fact that Christian mission has been a major agent for education. The school systems in many countries take their origin from earlier mission schools. In contrast to the Koran, the Bible from the very beginning was translated into local languages. Protestant missions were emphatic about making the Bible available in local languages, and thereby created written languages in many cultures that were previously non-literate. God was speaking in people's own mother-tongue. To encounter God's word for your own life, you must be able to read the Bible in your own language. In tribal cultures the incentive is strong to learn one's own written language. The next step then is to use that skill in creating a written record of one's own culture. The significance of Bible translations for preserving the heritage of tribal cultures cannot be overestimated.

Neo-heathen paternalism

Tribal societies today are under constant pressure to assimilate - pressure from colonization, nation-state territorialism or economic globalization. Where traditional gods and spirits are unable to ward off this pressure, a power vacuum arises that can easily lead to culture-destroying fatalism. Christian doctrine embedded in one's mother tongue brings with it the support of God's own power for coping with the dilemma. With that sort of backing, modern influences from the outside can be appropriated while still preserving one's own cultural identity.

Thus contrary to the current (western) prejudice that Christian mission destroys local cultures, the opposite is true. It is precisely such indigenized Christian teaching that protects the identity of tribal

minorities from the onslaughts of assimilation by dominant “state-majority” ethnic groups, such as the Barma in Burma. Without one’s own people-state tribal societies are exiled from the community of nations - but not from the world-wide ecumenical church. This global network of partner churches becomes a protective shield and a resource for creativity, items otherwise denied to them in their own country.

When Europeans reject Christian mission, they are ignoring their own tribal history. European civilization owes its existence to the fact that Christian mission among Teutonic tribal societies more than a thousand years ago was successful. Without the Christian church on European soil, European literacy and its appropriation of classical culture can hardly be imagined. Why not grant this option to other cultures today? If today’s mission is largely the work of local national Christians, the suspicion of paternalism is actually reversed. Europeans who demonize Christian missions are projecting their own neo-heathen conditions onto other cultures. “What we no longer think has any significance for us, can surely not be any good for you either.” So it is not mission, but its rejection that is a Euro-centric attempt to paternalize other peoples.

The claim that we only want to protect other “authentic” cultures signals a NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC-naturalism or romanticism that denigrates other peoples and their own aspirations. The claim to be preserving cultural authenticity reduces such people to exotic candidates for NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC reports, objects for ethnological research or tourist attractions. This attitude is but one step away from a racist distortion whereby such primitive “nature-peoples,” along with wild animals, are supposedly protected in their alleged “natural environment.”

Exactly opposite is Christian mission with its rejection of any form of racism, since all people are addressed--irrespective of race or gender--as having equal status, either as death-destined sinners who are NOT hopelessly lost, or as sisters and brothers in

the Lord. Missionaries do not claim any superiority over others, but offer to others what they themselves have encountered as healing for their lives. When other people appropriate the Christian message for themselves, a community of mutual responsibility is created, and, yes, that frequently results in inner tensions. Exotic “nature-people” can always be kept at a distance. Not, however, fellow humans of whom Jesus said in his Judgment Day parable (Matthew 25) “Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

Dr. Jochen Teuffel was a Professor for Systematic Theology at LTS from 2002 – 2008 and is at present working at Mission EineWelt, Centre for Partnership, Development and Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany

For the original text see Sueddeutsche Zeitung, Wednesday, Oktober 17, 2007, page 15. <http://jetzt.sueddeutsche.de/texte/anzeigen/402488>



With the beginning of the present academic year 2008-2009, Dr. Kam-Kuen Chan was welcomed as a new Professor for Psychology and Counseling at LTS. In this position he is also the newly elected Director of the Asia Pastoral Counseling Training Centre. His personal presentation gives LTS News the chance to continue its series introducing the four Research Centres and Institutes hosted by LTS.



A man in the brink

During my first year in university, a fellow classmate unexpectedly announced her decision to quit university study. The reason was that she did not want to be “a man in the brink”¹. University study distanced her from her own community in which she was brought up and she could not integrate into the new community in the university. We pondered a lot for her decision for a university place was a dream to many during that time.

I was raised in a housing estate in New Territories. The kindergarten, primary, and secondary schools that I attended are on the very same street where I lived. My world was pretty small. Getting into a university was a rare event in my home school. I did feel I was “quite good” at that moment. After entering the university, I soon discovered that the university was full of brilliant students and many of them came from prestigious schools. They hadn’t even heard the name of my home school. They had a different walk of life from mine. I found it hard to integrate into the university’s life. However, when I returned home every week (I stayed in the dormitory), I found that people around me knew little about university’s life.

The church I attended after my conversion was one ran by a pastor who had escaped persecution from Mainland China during the Civil War. His religious orientation was very conservative but upholding a very pious life. His influence on his congregation was immense. At the

same time, I attended fellowship meetings with the tradition of the Fellowship of Evangelical Students. I thought that that kind of religious orientation and practice were correct and should be upheld. However, both my undergraduate and postgraduate studies had opened me up much challenge to my religious orientation. I also got many chances to get in touch with modern biblical and theological studies too. Their rigorous endeavour in analyzing the Bible and in responding to the challenge of the secular world had attracted me. However, in my home congregation, these were being regarded as a kind of un-belief and should be avoided. I struggled for a long time between these two traditions. With a change in the living arrangement, my wife and I moved to a new residential area and finally ended up attending a Lutheran church, with a more liberal religious orientation. But in religious life, there is much difference with the church I first attended.

In working, I also face many contrasting traditions. My first job after doctoral study was a researcher in a project named “Understanding the Adolescents Project (UAP)” which was an innovative project in identifying potentially at-risk adolescents and in providing preventive services to them. My duty was to measure the effectiveness of the project. As a researcher, I was supposed to be objective, sometimes, at the expense of neglected some

unexpected outcomes, which were beyond the initial estimation, and ignoring subjective experience of the participants. I tried to overcome these conflicts with setting up objective measurements on one hand and participating in some of the adventurous events on the other hand. This enabled me to understand participants’ experience which was something hard to be measured by objective measurement. This shifting between being an objective evaluator and subjective experiencer was really a tremendous experience for me.

Working in the seminary now also enables me chances to moving between different disciplines. Psychology is not concerned with theism which is in opposition to theology. In methodology, psychology searches for knowledge basing on empirical data and objectivity is required. Religion and theology assumed that truth could be found in the Bible and personal experience with God is essential. There is an apparent gap between these two disciplines. Integrating these two disciplines requires a lot of work. I sincerely hope that if God will, I can contribute something to this issue.

Dr. Chan, Kam-Kuen is a Professor for Psychology and Counseling at LTS

1. “A man in the brink” was a film in early 80s describing an under-covered police swinging between justice and injustice during his duty. The film was a pioneer to present day films about under-covered police like “The Departed”.

“FROM NOTHING TO SOMETHING”

Lutheran Theological Seminary – Asia Pastoral Counseling Training Centre

By Jane Tam

Thanks to the graceful leading and work of God the Father, in 2005 Lutheran Theological Seminary, together with Chai Wan Baptist Counseling Centre, established the “Pastoral Counseling Program.” This not only provided specialized training for local ministers, but it was also hoped it would help students from the disadvantaged areas of South and Southeast Asia to be equipped in counseling training. In order to realize this vision, LTS at the same time established the “Asia Counseling Training Centre.” Considering our limited personnel and physical resources, undertaking to establish a “training centre”

might seem to have been “over confident,” but God the Father leads in this way, arranging that the first Master of Divinity graduate majoring in counseling was a non-Chinese student of Asian descent, who would graduate in June 2007. Since the training centre was established over a year ago, more than 10 students have studied in the Pastoral Counseling Course, two of whom are non-Chinese.

Special Aspects of the Course

In Hong Kong, where there are numerous seminaries, deciding to establish a worthwhile counseling course with our own special

attributes was not easy. From the point of view of personnel resources, there were already one or two counseling courses that had assets more comprehensive than ours. Why would we still want to expend our energy establishing one more counseling course? Firstly, this bullet-shaped piece of land that we call Hong Kong has seven million inhabitants; although there are many theological programs, until now those focusing on counseling training are only just beginning and have a long way to go to reach their objective. Secondly, every seminary exhibits its own special characteristics. In the case

I feel that theory of counseling and pastoral care is “founded on faith,” which means choosing counseling’s good points and leaving aside its inferior aspects, and trying to integrate this with faith, leading to a better result. Studying in the D. Min. program of LTS, with a focus on counseling, not only gives me a deeper understanding within the area of counseling, but also gives me deeper understanding in the areas of faith, theology and spirituality. This is definitely the goal of an integrative and collaborative “pastoring of the whole person” that I hoped for. I pray that God will bless me in this endeavor and that I will continue to experience his abundance! Amen!

Mui Yim Wa Shirley, LTS D. Min. Candidate

A wholistic healing ministry is interested in heartfelt listening, head knowledge and sanguine sharing. I am very thankful for this time of learning and interactions with professors and friends at LTS whose lives imprint on me pictures of authentic care.

Akumnaro Keitzer, 2007 LTS M.Div. graduate

I hope that when studying and accompanying others, I will be able to help others experience the companionship of the Lord; that they will have the faith and courage to face themselves; to make good use of the strengths that the Lord has given them, to deal with their troubles; to seek changes; to achieve growth in their life; and to take steps toward holiness.

Lau Sak Han, LTS M. Div. candidate

I chose the LTS pastoral counseling course because it emphasizes spirituality and christian counseling. This will help me better to be familiar with spiritual guidance, to know how to help those near to me through christian counseling, or to care for the spiritual needs of those in the congregation. These two topics together (spirituality and christian counseling) really help me understand that only God is able to heal those with limitations, and they will assist me to become a servant in tune with the heart of the Lord, something that is difficult to learn.

Cheng Sui Fan, LTS M.Div. candidate

of Lutheran Theological Seminary, located adjacent to the Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre, with additional factors such as timing, locality and historical development, our special characteristics are an emphasis on worship, spirituality, and intercultural (Eastern and Western) religious dialogue. With these as our foundation, the structure of our Pastoral Counseling Program, in addition to providing basic counseling skills, also places emphasis on the minister’s personal spiritual life and the individual’s physical, emotional and intellectual growth; Western psychological theory is integrated with Eastern cultural and social factors to provide greater application.

Degree Programs and Courses

The following degree programs are offered at the moment: Master of Arts (Theology), with a major in Pastoral Counseling, Master of Divinity, with a major in Pastoral Counseling and of Doctor Ministry, with a major in Pastoral Counseling. In these degree programs courses referring to Basic Counseling Skills,

Pastoral Care and Personal Growth, Marriage and Family Counseling and Contextual Issues like Christian Contextual Ethics or Chinese Culture and Pastoral Care are offered.

Supervision and Practice

In order to ensure that students genuinely master the full range of counseling skills, theory and practice have been linked. Our curriculum has been designed with a counseling practicum that follows professional counseling training methods, with a supervisor and the requirement of 400 hours (one year) of clinical counseling practice for each student. Only after a student has completed all subjects and eligibility assessments may he or she enter into the practicum at one of our seminary’s cooperating organizations, churches or specialist psychological counseling centres.

For more information please visits our webpage at http://www.lts.edu/about/e_acounsel.htm or contact info@lts.edu.

Dr. Jane Tam Suk-Ching is Professor for Pastoral Theology and Counseling at LTS

I grew up in a Christian environment from the time I was child. When I was a young person I received the Lord’s call to enter Lutheran Theological Seminary. Time has passed, and now I have been serving for more than 20 years. When I looked upon the great fields of the God that lay before us, God called to me again. This call was change the object of my ministry from children, youth and families, to the elderly, because our population is aging to the point that it might even be considered to be experiencing a “tide of the elderly.” I believe that the pastoral counseling program of LTS will effectively prepare me for this calling. I desire to make use of the training that God has given me in counseling to do research for a plan for pastoral care for elders with marriage difficulties.

Chui Yan Wai, LTS D. Min. Candidate

WHAT STUDENTS SAY

In the church, I have responsibility for the work with children and parents. In order to be more effective in helping them, I chose to enter this program. I hope that through pastoral counseling I will be able to assist them to deal with problems relating to their life and their spirituality. At the same time, I hope to benefit as well; that through study and practice I’ll be able to know myself, know God better, and that my life will be changed.

Fan Yuen Kay, LTS M.A. Candidate

I entered the pastoral counseling course of LTS in September 2008. I feel using counseling alone will only treat the surface problems of those in need, and will not treat the root problems. I believe that the most effective way to help those in need is to allow them to directly discover that the Lord Jesus is actively involved in their lives. The counseling program of LTS precisely includes spiritual guidance and spirituality content, and I hope to put to use what I have learned together with the counseling.

Wan Po Yee, LTS M.A. Candidate

In the work of pastoral ministry, I have seen many kinds of people in need of care, such as: one-parent families, unhappy love affairs, and those beset by feelings of bewilderment. In helping these people, I have felt that my strength was not sufficient, that I didn’t know how to comfort them. By studying in the counseling course, I hope that through the use of counseling skills I can prepare myself to help those with needs. Over the course of the past year’s study, I have experienced a feeling of happiness, because I have had an opportunity to let myself experience peacefulness and to reflect upon life. I feel I have grown because of this. In addition, through the course work I have gained a confirmation that I am suited to take on the responsibilities of the work of counseling and pastoral care.

Leung Kwan Ying, LTS M.A. candidate

Sharing the Joy of the Christmas Season

LTS launched fund raising activity to support the construction of the new Institute of Bible and Theology of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam South



Rev. Truong Phuc Thai, president of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) and LTS president Dr. Lam Tak Ho exchanging gifts during a visit of a delegation from Vietnam to Hong Kong.



Staff and students enjoying a coffee break during the fundraising week.

by **Samson Tang Fu-Shan**

Through the prayers and the encouraging support of Christians throughout the world, the expansion of the Institute of Bible and Theology of the Evangelical Church in Vietnam (South) will soon be underway in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The Institute of Bible and Theology of the Evangelical Church in Vietnam (South) was established in 1921 in the City of Nhatrang, but it was closed in 1976 due to the unstable political environment. Although the churches of Vietnam have been rapidly developing with more than 1 million members and with about two thousand preaching points during the past 26 years, the number of pastoral workers has been less

than two hundred because systematic theological training has been lacking. However, after the continual striving of the churches, approval was received from the Vietnamese Government and the Bureau of Religious Affairs to reopen the Institute of Bible and Theology in 2003. However, the classrooms, the library and the dormitories could only be located separately due to insufficient resources. They are at present located on the top floor of the Saigon Evangelical Church. More than 200 hundred students plus their spouses are at present enrolled in the B.Th. Program of the institute.

Thanks to God's grace, the prayers and the hard work of Christians for many years, two years ago



the Institute was given official permission by the Vietnamese Government to build a new Theological Seminary in Ho Chi Minh City – district 2. Despite the area given by the government being only 10% of the old campus in Nhatrang, it still could provide a good study environment for nurturing and training students. The Vietnamese churches were eager to donate in order to facilitate the development of the new Theological Seminary. As 70% of the congregations were however poor farmers, local donations were not high enough, and due to of the insufficiency of both local resources and overseas donations, construction has been slow.

Apart from providing scholarships through LTS partner churches and mission agencies around the world to train Vietnamese ministers and professors, LTS wanted to share further God's grace with the Vietnamese community during the time of Christmas. Between December 8-12, the seminary launched a fund-raising activity to assist the building of the Institute of Bible and Theology of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam South. Through the heartfelt sharing during the morning devotion by LTS president Dr. Lam, Rev. Hanns Hoerschelmann, who has been in contact with the partner churches of LTS in the Mekong Region for

the last few years and Rev. Le Tan, who is a lecturer at the Bible Institute and at present a D.Min. student at LTS, students and faculty were informed about the situation of the church in Vietnam. In addition a fund-raising activity was organized: three times a day Vietnamese coffee was sold in the courtyard of the seminary. Altogether the LTS community was able to understand the construction progress in depth and also experience and taste the culture of Vietnam, so to strengthen communication between the LTS community and the Vietnamese Church.

Thanks to our Heavenly Father, within one week the fundraising activity could raise nearly US\$ 3,000. The money will be used to support the construction of the library and the academic building of the Institute of Bible and Theology of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam South. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have given their support. A special word of thanks goes to the students who participated in this fund-raising activity during their busy examination time.

*Samson Fu-shan Tang is the Director of Development
Department at LTS*

News and Dates

Faculty and Staff News

With the beginning of the Spring Semester 2009 LTS welcomes two new Professors: **Dr. Wayne Nieminen** and **Dr. Dieter Mitternacht**.

Dr. Nienminen is a professor for Practical Theology with an emphasis on counseling. He was sent to LTS through the Evangelical Church of America. He moved to Hong Kong with his wife Christa and son Eric. During the Spring Semester he will teach courses on Marriage and Family Counseling and Crisis Counseling.

Dr. Mitternacht is a professor for Church History and New Testament. He was sent to LTS by the Lutheran Church of Sweden. During the Spring Semester he will teach the following courses: Introduction to Church History and Pauline Letters – "A". Please look for a longer introduction to these new faculty members in the next newsletter.

In addition several guest lecturers or part-time lecturers will be teaching at LTS this semester: **Dr. Knud Jorgenen**, acting Asia Secretary of AREOPAGOS, will give a course on Contemporary Missiological Models; **Dr. John Lawrenz** will teach Biblical Hebrew II; **Dr. Hui Hoi Ming** will teach a course on The Development of the Modern Chinese Church Viewed from Missionary Activities and **Dr. Eric Chong**, Dean of Studies of the Ming Hua Theological College, Hong Kong will give a course on the Old Testament Prophet Ezekiel.

The new semester also brought new faces to the administrative staff of LTS: **Ms. Leung Siu Kee** from the Hung En Lutheran Church starts her work as Registrar and Director for the Theological Education by Extension program. Together with her **Mr. Li Yuk Shing** from the Tai Po Peace Evangelical Centre joins the LTS administrative team as the Assistant Registrar.

News and dates

LTS Partnership with United Evangelical Mission

With the beginning of this semester LTS has entered in a partnership with the United Evangelical Mission (UEM). This partnership will focus on studies in Mission and Missiology and involves the training of faculty for UEM partner churches in Asia and faculty exchange with UEM partner seminaries around the world. The first candidate benefiting from this partnership is Rev. Rodion P. Tampubolon from the Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia, who started his studies in the Doctoral of Theology program with the beginning of the Spring semester 2009.

UEM is an international communion of 34 churches in Africa, Asia and Germany, and the von Bodelschwing Institutions in Bethel, Germany. Its administrative office is in Wuppertal, Germany. The UEM also has regional offices in Africa (Dar-es-Salaam), Asia (Medan) and Germany (Wuppertal). Emerging from the Rhenish Mission Society, founded in 1828, and the Bethel Mission, founded in 1886, which came together in 1971 to form what was known as the Vereinigte Evangelische Mission, the new international UEM has been in existence since 1996.

LTS Alumni Association elected new committee members

The Annual General Meeting of the Alumni Association of LTS was held on December 1, 2008, at the Lutheran Building, and new committee members were then elected. They are Rev. Hao Kian Wan (Chairperson), Mr Lee Chau Keung (Vice Chairperson), Rev. Leung Wah Kwong, Ms. Man Ching Han, Ms. Lin Hui Min, Mr. To Chi Pong, Rev. Wong Wing Han, Mr. Li Wai Kwok, Rev. Yau Sui Sang. We would like to express our gratitude to them for despite their busy

schedule, they are willing to serve the alumni and respond to the needs of LTS.

Annual Music Worship

The LTS annual music worship is scheduled for Saturday, 18th April 2009. As preparations have just begun please check www.lts.edu for further details or look for more information in the next issue of this newsletter.

Graduation

If you want to mark down another important date in the year of LTS please note that this year's Graduation Service will be held on Sunday, 7th June 2009.

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 have 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.