

LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

信義宗神學院

ITS

NEWS

HONG KONG, AUTUMN 2012, N° 82

Kingdom

왕국

βασιλεια

Königreich

王國

Kerajaan

MATTHEW 6.25

hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.^c

And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our

debtors.

And do not bring us to the time of

trial,^d

but rescue us from the evil one.^e

r If you forgive others their trespasses,

heavenly Father will also forgive you;

if you do not forgive others, neither will

Father forgive your trespasses.

Concerning Fasting

And whenever you fast, do not look

Kingdom



I love it when I find coins with Queen Elizabeth in my pockets. This is something so unique about Hong Kong reminding everybody that we live in a Special Administrative Region with a special history. But it is not the political situation I like to be reminded of. Nor am I anywhere competent of saying what was better or worse when Hong Kong was Part of the British Empire. I just love those little signs of some past kingdom in my pockets. It is somehow subversive and hidden and reminds me of God's kingdom among us. The difference to the United Kingdoms rule over Hong Kong being, of course, that God's kingdom is not past, but present and definitely with a future.

“The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say: ‘Look, here it is!’ or: ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.” Luke 17:21

Sometimes we would love the kingdom to be more visible. And indeed it can and should be seen. But it is normally much less grand and often much more hidden than we would love it to be. It's the little signs, the small changes often unnoticed by the masses that constitute the reign of God. I believe the slightly subversive character of his kingdom is intended by God. In this time after Easter we realize again: only through suffering did God make the victory

possible. A truth that transcends the obvious will by nature be more difficult to be detected. The Pharisees were waiting for the clearly visible signs of God's rule. That reminded me of how the Chinese government is building dramatically oversized government-buildings all over the mainland. That is a fair thing to do and conveys a clear and visible message. But God's kingdom transcends this worldly demeanour. The way Jesus lived and what he taught goes much deeper. Love and compassion grow better in hidden surroundings. An act of love is more authentic unnoticed in the neighbourhood than on a big stage. Weakness and suffering have a new significance in this kingdom hidden among us.

Yes, occasionally, this kingdom will burst into the open. Moments of revival and grand worship will be visible for many. But until Jesus' return, the kingdom he spoke about will keep growing rather unspectacularly in our midst. It will turn single hearts one by one, rather than masses. It will grow more often in little rooms than in football-stadiums. Those coins in my pocket remind me of a hidden kingdom already present and a vision of the future when this kingdom will have come for everyone.

Editorial

Dear Readers,

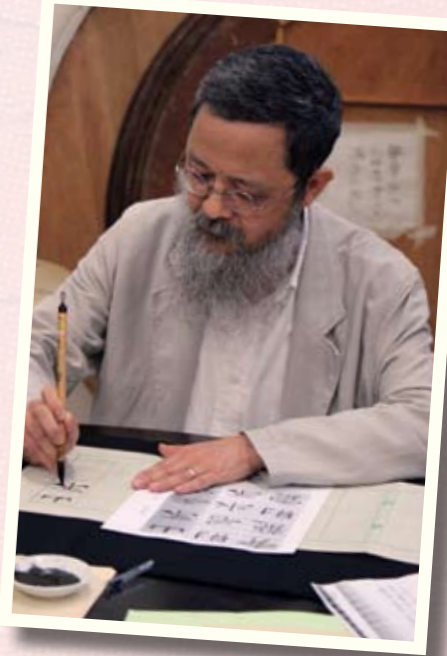
Thank you for opening a new issue of LTS news! We strive to improve our little magazine to document some aspects of our colourful life up here on To Fung Shan and its effects on the life of the church wherever we come from. It comes later than planned, but our next issue will follow shortly.

I grew up with the teaching that the life of the Church can be characterized by four Greek terms, each of them of the same importance, like a four legged stool: 1) **martyria** means everything connected to Christian witness, studying and teaching, 2) **koinonia** is fellowship, standing for a truly shared life as a characteristic of the Christian life-style, 3) **leitourgia** comprising all that has to do with worship and spirituality, and last but not least, 4) **diakonia** which refers to Christians actively engaged in works of healing and justice and changing the world.

While issue 81 focused on spirituality, these few pages emphasize the diaconal side of the Kingdom, so you will find a description of our new MA in Diakonia. Knud Jørgensen is one of the heads (and hearts) behind this programme and we are happy that he agreed to inform us, as we also thank Lilian Chan (one of the first students in the programme) for sharing her experiences.

An important reflection on diakonia is given by the expert Nicholas Tai, putting the question into a political and historical context. Our former bishop held this year's Rev. Daniel Wong Lecture

on *Pastoralia* in March and offers a short summary here. If you closely look at the photos of this autumn's faculty and student retreat on Cheung Chau you will realize what an extraordinary good start of the new academic year these days were.



If you should ever have wondered what the Coordinator of International Student Affairs at LTS is doing, here you will get the answer in a fresh and entertaining article by Christa von Zychlin. I certainly got inspired! After all, paperwork and attending meetings can be an unavoidable part of diaconal service too.

This autumn we are glad to look back to an important moment in summer: The president and members of our faculty met in the palace of Erlangen in southern Germany. Please read Gabriele Hoerschelmanns account of what happened in this old university-town. And finally we have the privilege to follow up on a contribution from our Epiphany-issue. Anna Hsiao has contributed her memories about her life as a true seminary child.

We end by sharing two small photos taken at this year's LTS Art exhibition and events with you. This is our colourful life up here on To Fung Shan!

JMD



FIVE somewhat unpleasant Things a Coordinator of international Student Affairs* at LTS must do and ONE very, very Pleasant Thing

Reverend Christa von Zychlin

What does a Coordinator of International Student Affairs at LTS do, anyway?

This is the very question I asked when I was approached to consider this job less than a year ago. Now I have been in this job for about one year and I can begin to give you an answer. Actually, I will give you six answers:

1. ANSWER QUESTIONS: I get to answer email questions about LTS from aspiring seminary students from the Mekong (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam) and from some of the other places from which students have written me so far this year: Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Pakistan, Ghana, Tanzania, the USA, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. This task is only unpleasant because so many of these hopeful students must be told that either their academic background is not the appropriate one or there are no scholarships available for them.

2. PAPER WORK: Q: How many forms must be filled out and how many faxes must be sent

to apply for a student visa in Hong Kong?

A: As many as it takes until we get that precious visa properly placed into an international student's passport!

I get to work with our other LTS office colleagues to fill out paper work for the Hong Kong Immigration Department in order to get student visas. In some cases that has meant dozens of emails, copies, scanned documents, downloads, more copies, and faxes between the student, LTS, and the HK Immigration Dept. Sometimes the stack of documents can be quite high. What's worse is sometimes the process can take many months.

3. MORE PAPER WORK: In addition to helping students receive that first visa, I get to write letters and fill out documents for visa and passport renewals.

4. ACCOUNTING: Q: Which currencies do the following initials represent?

KHR, HKD, CAD, AUD, MMK, THB, EUR

A. (in backwards order) the European Euro, Thai Bhat, Burmese Kyat, Australian Dollar, Canadian Dollar, Hong Kong Dollar, and the Cambodian Riel.

How many of these did you get right? As the Coordinator of International Student Affairs, I depend on our LTS office staff to help me make budgets for future years' international students in accordance with the LTS Catalogue, double check payments that are made, communicate with all the different scholarship donors, and sort through all these interesting currencies, making sure neither I nor our kind donors confuse

HKD's with USD's or AUD's or THB's!

5. PARTICIPATE IN MEETINGS: I will confess to you that I detest meetings. This was always the thing I liked least in my 18 years of parish ministry. Meetings. I thought they only take up my time and accomplish too little. However, I'm just reading a best-selling book¹ which suggests that I'm wrong! The author looks at a university study in which participants who emailed information to each other were much less creative in finding good solutions to problems than similar groups which "wasted time" by meeting face-to-face with the same amount of information. So I may have to humble myself more often and realize that some of these face-to-face "business meetings" have an important place in our work lives.

The importance of face-to-face meetings brings me to the one thing I truly love about the job of Coordinator of International Student Affairs at LTS.

6. WORKING WITH, MINISTERING WITH, VISITING WITH, EATING WITH, WORSHIPING WITH, CELEBRATING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS THEMSELVES!! This is the one very, very pleasant thing a Coordinator of International Student Affairs at LTS gets to do.

* First in a 2 part series. I actually have two roles at LTS, I am both the "Coordinator of International Affairs" and the "Mekong Mission Forum/NIC Assistant Coordinator". I will share about the MMF work in a future newsletter.

1 Jonah Lehrer, *Imagine: How Creativity Works* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2011), 207



Social Responsibility, Politics and the Church — A Lutheran Point of View

Prof. Dr. Nicholas H. F. Tai

The Hong Kong churches are facing tremendous challenges in this post colonial era. Under the Special Administration Region, Hong Kong is part of China but at the same time the voices for keeping our way of life and more democracy are ever increasing. How are the churches in Hong Kong reacting to these challenges? Most Hong Kong churches are related to evangelicals. They hold a certain model in their relationship to social responsibility and politics, the so called “separation of Church and State.” But what does this mean?

For most Chinese Evangelicals, politics is not a matter for the Church. The Church cares nothing about this worldly business. Politics is dirty and sometimes demonic. Spiritual persons should not be contaminated through involvement in political affairs. In looking at it from another perspective, some Christians contend that politics and the worldly power of government are autonomous and independent of the Church. It is not the business of the Church and therefore, the Church should not interfere in the political activities of the Government. This was the position of the Deutsche Christen in the Nazi German era and also the position of many of the churches in USA during the Iraqi war.

Of course there are other churches which have adopted other models. For Anglicans and Lutherans in Scandinavian countries, the Church is subordinate to worldly power, a “Constantinian model”, in which the Church benefits from the worldly power but is also under her control. For Roman Catholics, the Reformed tradition, and some radicals (for instance Thomas Müntzer), in the course of history, they tend to hold that the Church has both spiritual and worldly power.

How about the Hong Kong Lutherans, how do we relate to this issue? The Lutherans have given the impression that they are politically conservative or even apathetic. From the sixteenth century onwards the Lutheran Churches have been upheld by territorial overlords and have enjoyed their protection. We Hong Kong Lutherans have a different political situation, how are we dealing with it? In the colonial past, the Hong Kong Lutheran Churches have played an important role in social service, education and public health care.

The Church should continue to reflect on her engagement in social responsibility. It is also the duty of the Lutheran Theological Seminary to carefully consider and enable the Church to reemphasize the diaconal aspect of Mission in this society. Therefore, LTS has started a new program, the “Master of Arts in Diakonia”.

Concerning politics, the Hong Kong Lutheran Churches are mostly influenced by the so called “separation of Church and State”. But we should reconsider our political theology. Luther’s distinction of the two regiments of God is still an important contribution to Hong Kong Lutherans and indeed, to the Christian Church as whole. We Lutherans should be aware of how easily we mix up the distinction between law and gospel as well as the crucial distinction between God’s everlasting Kingdom of preaching the Gospel and the worldly temporal “kingdom” (authority). On the other hand, we Hong Kong Lutherans tend to become apathetic to politics. We know that God rules the world through two regiments, and we are especially mindful of the importance of preaching the Gospel and administering the sacrament, through which heavenly grace is bestowed upon the children of God. But at the same time we must not neglect the fact that we are all called by God to serve our neighbor through our occupations and roles.

As Lutherans we should aware of how our Lutheran teaching was distorted in the past, especially during the Nazi German era. It is the duty of the Christian to get involved in politics in order to speak up for the speechless and to protect the unprotected but at the same time not to be involved in politics for the sake of wielding power or receiving personal political gain.



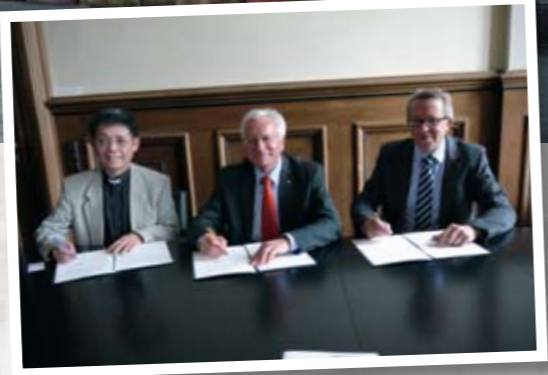
Erlangen Cooperation Agreement

The Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) and the Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU), Germany will have a close cooperation in the future. On July 12th, at 12 noon time, the President of LTS, Dr. Simon Chow signed a partnership agreement together with the president of the University in Erlangen, Professor Dr. Karl-Dieter Gröske and Prof. Dr. Jürgen van Oorschot, the Head of the School of Theology

This cooperation includes the launch of a D.Th

double-recognition, where doctoral students have the chance to earn a doctor degree recognized from both institutions, LTS and the university in Erlangen (FAU) (see extra text). In addition, it also promotes student and faculty exchange and joint international research conferences, as well as seminars and field trips.

“It is really significant for LTS as our D.Th degree will be internationally recognized even more. LTS is currently receiving requests from



Dr. Simon Chow, Enoch Wong, Dr Gabriele Hoerschelmann

overseas asking about our D.Th program, what a right time for us to answer them!” said Dr Simon Chow. For Asian people the date and time of signing the partnership agreement is significant as it stands for one-heart, one-mind and united for the whole life.

Friedrich- Alexander University, who provides 149 university degree programs for about 33,500 students is one of the top 10 Research Universities in Germany, is the second largest employer in Northern Bavaria and “was the first German university to establish a base in South Korea with FAU Campus Busan,” according to the university catalogue in March 2012.

For the University in Erlangen this partnership agreement is very significant as well as LTS is seen as one of the top Seminars of Theology in Southeast Asia. “Students shall be given the chance to study theology in a wider ecumencial horizon,” says Prof. Dr. Nehring, and he underlines that it is attractive for German students to study in Hong Kong and to be exposed to a different culture.

LTS has assigned Dr. Gabriele Hoerschelmann, who is also a FAU alumni, to manage mutual communication, while Rev. Christa von Zychlin, who is LTS’s Coordinator of International Student Affairs, will tackle the exchange program.

“LTS successfully signed this agreement with FAU, thanks to the initiative and engagement of Dr. Gabriele Hoerschelmann, Professor Dr. Andreas Nehring, and our partner Mission OneWorld, said Dr. Simon Chow.”

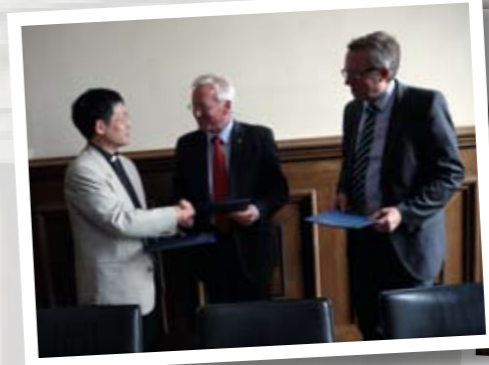
New options for a DTh degree:

From September 2012 LTS offers new options for the D.Th program:

First Option: Normal D.Th degree, accredited by ATA and ATESEA. Defense examination is done as before by a local professor as examiner

Second Option: D.Th degree, accredited by ATA and ATESEA and “in particiaption with” the Friedrich-Alexander University in Erlangen. Additional requirement: Defense examination “in participation with” a Professor of the University in Erlangen.

Third Option: “Double-recognition”, D.Th degree, accredited by ATA, ATESEA and D.Th degree by Friedrich-Alexander University in Erlangen. Additional requirement: One additional research year at the University in Erlangen, Germany and finishing of the thesis in Hong Kong. Defense examniation is in Hong Kong with a Professor from FAU Erlangen as examiner.



New MA in Diakonia Launched

Knud Jørgensen



diakonia in their ordinary curriculum.”

Dr. Simon Chow indicated a strong interest in pursuing this, either as a module within other programmes or as an independent MA programme with a focus on diakonia. Hong Kong would be a good place for combining the studies in theory with practical field service.

The former LWF/DMD director, Dr Kjell Nordstokke, and now professor in diakonia at Diakonhjemmet in Norway, was editing a book on “Diakonia in Context” which is the LWF contribution to the understanding and practice of diakonia. Nordstokke and Kleiven were willing to take part in the preliminary planning, together with Dr Knud Jørgensen from MF Norwegian School of Theology and Areopagos.

The primary goals of the programme are:

equipping students in Hong Kong and from the East Asian and Mekong region for diaconal service in church and society;

providing insights into and understanding the content and task of diakonia;

helping the students to develop diaconal attitudes and identity as a basis for service in church and society;

facilitate the students in developing the ability for teaching diakonia to others;

equipping the students for leadership roles in diaconal projects and institutions.

Information on the plans was shared widely

with churches and agencies in the region and particularly in China. All of them signaled interest in sending students. Local churches and social institutions in Hong Kong were also kept informed. Last spring Kleiven, Nordstokke and Jørgensen spent time with LTS staff to present diakonia as an academic discipline - to secure that the LTS staff would gain ownership of the programme.

The feedback from churches and agencies made it clear that it would be necessary to conduct both normal semester-long courses and intensive courses to accommodate some students from China.

LTS relates to several institutions in Norway (Diakonhjemmet, Diakonova, MF Norwegian School of Theology and Areopagos) in regard to the programme.

These institutions have made available Nordstokke, Kleiven and Jørgensen for teaching courses (2 week intensives) within the new degree once or twice a year for an initial period. In a longer perspective there is a need for professional human resources in diakonia at

LTS. The plan is therefore for one or two persons to undergo academic studies in the discipline. In the meantime Mrs. Po Chu Grønvold will be the LTS coordinator. She is also working on translating materials into Chinese.

The understanding of diakonia, which undergirds the programme, is:

Carrying out the tasks given to us in terms of communicating an important message, acting as a “go-between” and being a “pathfinder” in implementing the call of the church in the world. This will also include working for reconciliation and for the marginalised in society.

Care for and help individuals and the community: Health, care, counseling.

Preventive work to avoid or reduce human need. This is often called ‘advocacy’, i.e. speaking out on behalf of the voiceless.

Social action in terms of getting involved in important social issues in our community.

15 students are enrolled in the programme this first year. They come from China, Hong Kong, Cambodia, USA, Sweden and Norway.

I have always been interested in working with people, using my social science background. I was therefore very excited when I learned about the new MA course in Diakonia. This would certainly provide me with a good opportunity to learn more about how to serve and how to lead in a good way. My studies have provided me with a much broader perspective and understanding of Diakonia.

Lillian Chan

Diakonia is the very essence of the Church and it is a core component of the Gospel. Diakonia is a call to the Church and to each and every Christian. It is also the foundation of Christian discipleship. Diakonia is not merely about serving, it is also a power to transform, to reconcile and to empower. According to Jesus’ example, Diakonia is also a prophetic voice in society for the oppressed and marginalized.

I am certain that my studies in Diakonia have provided me with a strong sense of mission in whatever kind of service the Lord will lead me to in the future. Whether I am serving in a commercial organization, in a church or in a NGO, most important of all, this year’s training has trained me to be a diaconal person.

Days on Cheung Chau

The faculty and student retreat at 2012

Dr Jan Martin Depner

As it has become a tradition: also the academic year 2012/2013 started with a retreat; or actually, with two retreats. Before being joined by the students, the faculty of LTS met on the beautiful island of Cheung Chau. It was a remarkable and promising start for the academic year in which our centenary will be celebrated.

other. We were professionally coached to reflect on trust and our sense of unanimity. I know these are big words: but most of the faculty – if not all – were quite enthused about the outcome, a clearly experienced renewal of our love and unity.

So the faculty felt they already were in the middle of what was the theme of the following Faculty and Student Retreat: “The Quiet Journey of Spiritual Renewal”. With it’s start a time of

The first days our faculty focused on working together and relationships among each



inspired talks, intensive community and deep spiritual experiences took place - and all that in an atmosphere which was even more joyful and lighter than that of previous years. We all

felt blessed and are confident that a journey of spiritual renewal for LTS has begun and will continue.



Seminary Children II

By Rose Chue

“A child of the seminary?” laughed Anna Hsiao, LTS Librarian Emeritus and widow of Andrew Hsiao, the first Chinese President of LTS. “Which seminary? I am a child of the five campuses!”

Anna Hsiao, who was to become Director of the Chinese Library and responsible for the women students, was born in the first incarnation of LTS, on the Shekow campus in Hupeh. “That was very big and we didn’t really have the chance to be a close community. I was too young to remember much about that time.”

It could be said that her father, Wang Siet Yao, was also a child of the seminary as he was raised by Lutheran missionaries and when he started at the Lutheran Bible School in Hunan, the President, Rev. Olav Dalland, took an interest in the young Wang, making time in his busy schedule to give him individual tuition in Greek, a subject outside the normal curriculum at that time. So that when Wang eventually went onto the Shekow campus his Greek level and knowledge of the Greek New Testament was so high that the language professor there started him on classical Greek philosophical books. That was why he was later invited back after graduation to be the faculty member teaching Greek and Chinese.

“My mother, Tien Chuen Yang, was wonderful. She had to look after the six of us. During the Sino-Japanese War first we moved to Hunan and then to Sichuan as the seminary had transferred to Chungking. I remember it was very difficult to get transport and when we had

to stay in one mountain town I nearly died when I fell into the river there while doing the family washing. By some miracle there was one man there amongst all the women and he was strong enough to pull me out.”



At the end of the war Anna and her family returned to Shekow. As there were no schools there she and her older brother had to attend boarding schools in Hunan and it was there at her school that she first met Andrew who was accompanying a missionary carrying out youth evangelism. Andrew then entered the seminary and shortly after joined the exodus to Hong Kong, to Tao Fung Shan, where the seminary was to enjoy the hospitality of the Mission to the Buddhists from 1948 to 1955.

“Andrew was also a child of the seminary. He

was born one month before his father graduated from Shekow. His father and my father used to share a room but my father was the senior and he graduated the year before. Andrew and I, at different times of course, shared the same midwife, the wife of LTS Professor S.L.Hsieh.”

Anna’s father, her mother and the younger siblings also went to Hong Kong but Anna stayed at school in Hunan.

“In spring, 1950, I came miraculously out of China to H.K. to be reunited with my family at LTS on Tao Fung Shan, just one month before the China-Hong Kong border was closed. My English was not good enough for me to attend high school in Hong Kong and I did not understand Cantonese at that time. Anna Vika, wife of a LTS professor, tutored me in English lessons. She also gave me Anna for my English name. My brother could not leave China and over 34 years passed before he saw my mother again.”

“The faculty families used to live down the hill from Tao Fung Shan. We children were able to be free there and we did not feel restricted by any rules. Andrew and other LTS students formed Sunday School classes and youth fellowship groups for us, the Chinese faculty’s children, as well as for our neighbourhood. We older ones even acted in their religious plays for evangelism.”

Anna finally was able to enter Bethel Middle School where the staff were all highly qualified and dedicated Christians from the mainland. Anna attributed much of her spiritual development to these early years at Bethel and on Tao Fung Shan.

Anna and Andrew were married in 1959. The first part of their married life was spent on the



Pak Tin campus, the fourth incarnation of LTS, where Andrew became a part time lecturer, “We had three children, Philip, Hannah and David, who studied at English schools in Kowloon along with the children of missionaries from other countries. After Form 5 they were chosen for exchange study programmes in the States. It was there that they met their life partners and established families of their own. God has blessed us with us six grand children.”

“Now our family, like LTS, is international and interdenominational.”

Andrew became the President of LTS and it was his reading of Isaiah 43: 18-21 on March 13th 1987 that led to the vision of a new LTS. In 1992 came the move to a ridge on To Fung Shan Road, the fifth incarnation of LTS. Anna finally retired as Head Librarian in 1998. It was here in 2003 that Andrew died.

“He died, without pain, in my arms, in the place where he wanted to be, with the students he had been serving.”

Anna is still a vibrant member of the LTS community, still living on campus, a regular worshipper at Morning Prayers, a comforter to many, and a special favourite mentor of the students from Mainland China.

Coming Up...

Nov 19	Seminary Outing	2013 Centennial Celebration Programs	
Nov 19-23	Reading Week	Jan 14	Commencement of Celebration
Nov 30	Founders' Day	Jan 25	Thanksgiving Banquet
Dec 10	Early Registration	Mar15,17	Public Lectures on Luther Studies
Dec 17-21	Final Examination	Apr 20	Sacred Music Worship
Dec 17-21	Vacations	Oct 4,6	Public Lectures on Biblical Studies
Dec 27-Jan10	J Term	Nov24	Thanksgiving Service

Looking Back



26 March

Deputy Chief (2nd Division) of United Front Work Department of China Ma Li-huai, Chairman of National Committee of Three-Self Movement of the Protestant Churches in China Elder Fu Xian-wei and their fellow workers were greeted by teaching staff and students led by President Dr Simon Chow.



5 April

Dr Pilgrim Lo treated representatives of German YMCA.



6 May

Rev. Dr. Khamphone Kounthapanya (2nd from left) was greeted by President Dr Simon Chow and Rev. Christa von Zychlin.



9 Jul

Rev. Patrick Chan greeted representatives of Taiwan LTS.



11 Jul

LTS signed a cooperation agreement with FAU in Germany (please refer to p.8-9 for details).



7 Sep

Student representatives gifted President Dr Simon Chow in celebration of his 60th birthday.

Staff News

Pro. Dr. Pilgrim Lo delivered a lecture entitled *Luther between Theology and Cultural Studies* on August 10, upon invitation by The International Congress for Luther Research at the 2012 meeting in Helsinki, Finland.

Let us pray for...

Tao Fung Shan, whose residents and owners are fighting against an application to Hong Kong SAR Government on legalizing thousands more illegal niches by a commercial conglomerate. For the sake of reserving the spiritual and cultural legend of TFS, upgrading air quality and resolving conflicts of traffic congestion on the hill, may God grant the government and all parties the wisdom, power and endurance.

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